PONDERING PROBLEMS OF CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANS



Does the Bible Teach Dispensationalism?

Why is the Pre-Trib Rapture Attacked?

Has Sodom Been Found?

Where is the Real Mt. Sinai?

Is the KJV Inspired?

What is Wrong with Covenant Theology?

What Has Happened to Fundamentalism?



How Old is the Earth?

Should We Worship with Catholics?

HAVE LUTHERANS DEPARTED FROM LUTHER?



Is Dr. Ryrie Dependable?

Can We Trust the Majority Text?

Should We Be Separatists?

Are There Proofs for a Millennium?

Is Limited Atonement Untenable?

Was John MacArthur Heretical?

Once Saved, Always Saved?

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

Does the Bible Teach Dispensationalism?



Why is the Pre-Trib Rapture Attacked?

PONDERING PROBLEMS OF CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANS

Has Sodom Been Found?

Where is the Real Mt. Sinai?

Is the KJV Inspired?

What is Wrong with Covenant Theology?

What Has Happened to Fundamentalism?



How Old is the Earth?

Should We Worship with Catholics?

HAVE LUTHERANS DEPARTED FROM LUTHER?



Is Dr. Ryrie Dependable?

Can We Trust the Majority Text?

Should We Be Separatists?

Are There Proofs for a Millennium?

Is Limited Atonement Untenable?

Was John MacArthur Heretical?

Once Saved, Always Saved?

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.



PONDERING PROBLEMS OF CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANS



DOCTRINE SEMINAR, SPRING 2026

1.	Tue., Feb. 3	**A. Has Sodom Been Recently Discovered?** **B. Is Mt. Sinai Actually in Arabia?**
2.	Tue., Feb. 10	**A. Why Are Evangelicals Enamored with Roman Catholicism?** **B. How Do Contemporary Lutherans Differ from Luther?**
3.	Tue., Feb. 17	**A. What are the Main Problems of Covenant Theology?** **B. Should We Discard Dispensational Theology?**
4.	Tue., Feb. 24	**A. Was Dietrich Bonhoeffer Really an Evangelical Theologian?** **B. Where Has the Creationist Ken Ham Gone Wrong?**
5.	Tue., March 3	**A. Is the King James Version an Inerrant Translation?** **B. Why Should We Prefer the Majority Text?**
6.	Tue., March 10	**A. What are John MacArthur's Theological Problems?** **B. What Makes Charles C. Ryrie's Theology Unique?**
7.	Tue., March 17	**A. What are the Main Proofs for the Pre-Tribulation Rapture?** **B. Where Does the Bible Refer to a Millennial Kingdom?**
8.	Tue., March 24	**A. Does the Bible Teach that Christ Died for All Men?** **B. How Can One Prove that the Believer is Saved Forever?**
9.	Tue., March 31	**A. What is Responsible for the Decline of Fundamentalism?** **B. What are the Guidelines for Biblical Separation?**
10.	Tue., April 7	**A. Is There Proof of the Believer's Intermediate Body?** **B. Will We Enjoy Food in Heaven?**







Both believers and unbelievers ask important questions of us. The Apostle Peter tells us that we ought to be ready to give every man a reason for the hope within us (1 Peter 3:15). I have saved some of the questions folks have voiced over the past few years. Most of the topics will hopefully be of general interest. I trust you can join us as we explore, with Bible in hand, some possible answers. Be sure to bring along your own theological questions.

++ The sessions will begin on **Tuesday, February 3, 2026** and conclude on **April 7, 2026** (although 00the final schedule may vary slightly because of your instructor's speaking engagements).

++We will meet informally and dress casually. We plan to have two different sessions each Tuesday night, the first beginning **PUNCTUALLY at 6:30 p.m.,** the second at **7:30 p.m**. We hope to dismiss promptly at **8:30 p.m**. Between the two sessions we will enjoy a time of refreshments and fellowship. (It is rumored that this is the best part of the evening!)

++There are no scholastic or age requirements for the seminar. The only intellectual requirement is an open mind. This is paramount as we study our current issues and profound questions in the light of God's Word.



++ The minimal cost of the seminar will be **$135.** This includes tuition and an extensive manual in a loose leaf binder. The total amount of the tuition will be **due – PLEASE NOTE - at the first class session, February 3.**

++ With the start of our seminar so soon, perhaps you can let me know by phone or e-mail about your plans to come. **Your response will enable me to have printed manuals for everyone at the first session.** ***Please inform your friends of this unique opportunity!***

++ Visitors are **always welcome** and **anyone** may sit in on our sessions. However, if you are able to let me know ahead of time, I can have a set of **printed materials** ready for our visitor(s). **If you can help with the printing expenses for your guest's notes, it would be greatly appreciated!**

DIRECTIONS: We will meet for ten Tuesday nights at the Fellowship Baptist Church, located at **1503 SE 6th Street** in Des Moines **(Pastor Jared Cline, phone 801-662-9612).** Take East 14th Street to Maury, the first major intersection south of the Capitol area. Turn west on Maury (a right turn if you come from the north), and go until Maury T's on SE 6th. Turn left or south and you will immediately cross the Des Moines River. The church is located on your left just beyond the river. We will meet in the fellowship hall.









Please fill out this form and return with your tuition on February 3.

I wish to enroll in the Spring 2026 Doctrine Seminar on, **Pondering Problems of Contemporary Christians.**

Name(s): _____

Street: _____ **Town:** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please make check out to *Manfred Kober* MKober316@gmail.com (515) 707-0071

PONDERING PROBLEMS OF

CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Has Sodom Been Found? 1

Where is the Real Mt. Sinai? 21

Should We Worship with Catholics? 39

Have Lutherans Departed from Luther? 62

What are the Main Problems of Covenant Theology? 84

Should We Discard Dispensational Theology? 90

Was Dietrich Bonhoeffer an Evangelical Theologian? 103

How Old is the Earth? 115

Is the **KJV** Inspired and Thus Inerrant? 128

Why Should We Prefer the Textus Receptus? 140

What are John MacArthur's Theological Problems? 152

What Makes Charles C. Ryrie's Theology Unique? 172

What are the Main Proofs for the Pre-Tribulational Rapture? 184

Where Does the Bible Refer to the Millennium? 190

Did Christ Die for All Men? 203

Is the Believer Saved Forever? 212

Why is Fundamentalism in Decline? 221

What are the Guidelines for Biblical Separation? 229

Is There Proof of the Believer's Intermediate Body? 239

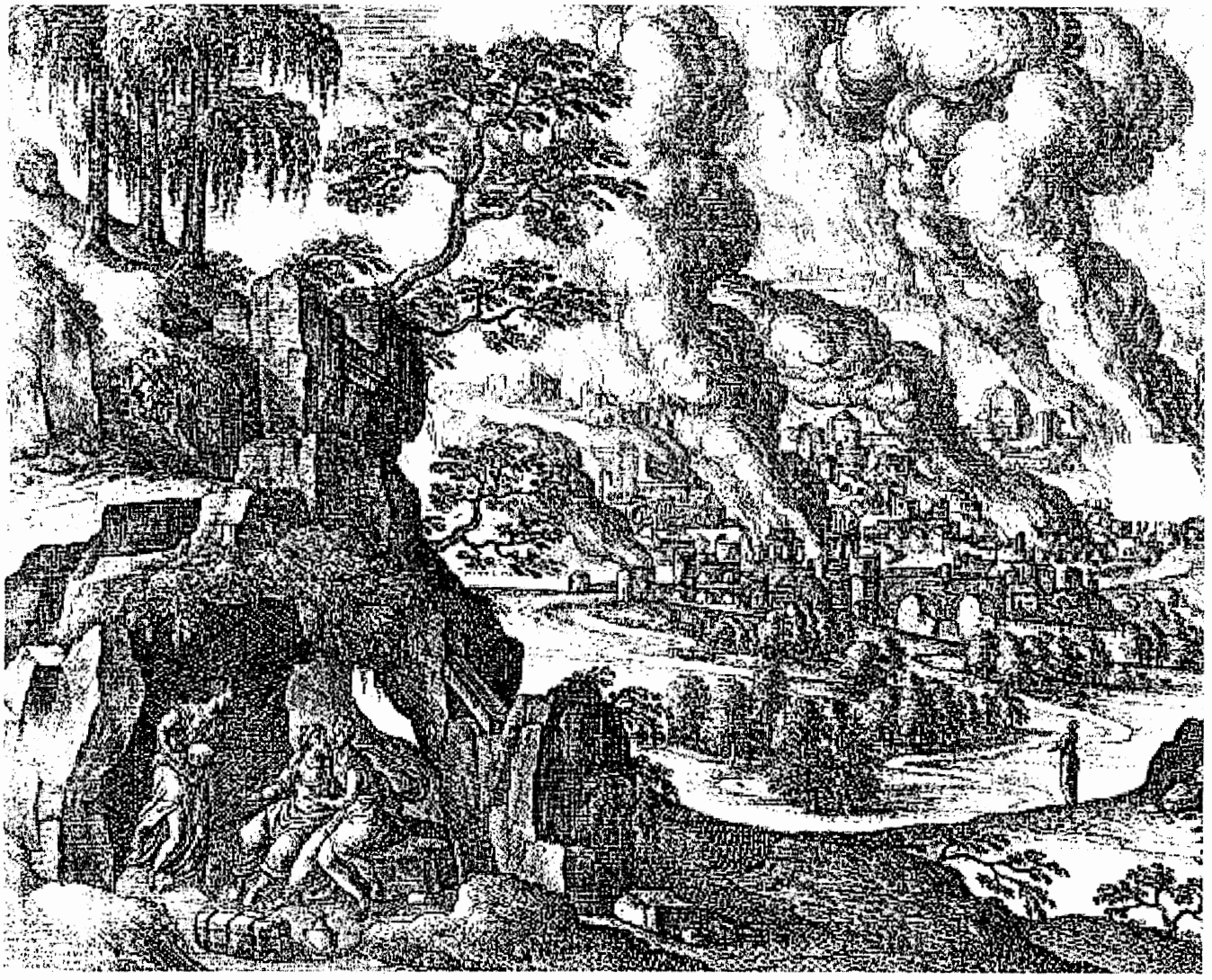
Will We Enjoy Food in Heaven? 254

HAS SODOM BEEN FOUND?

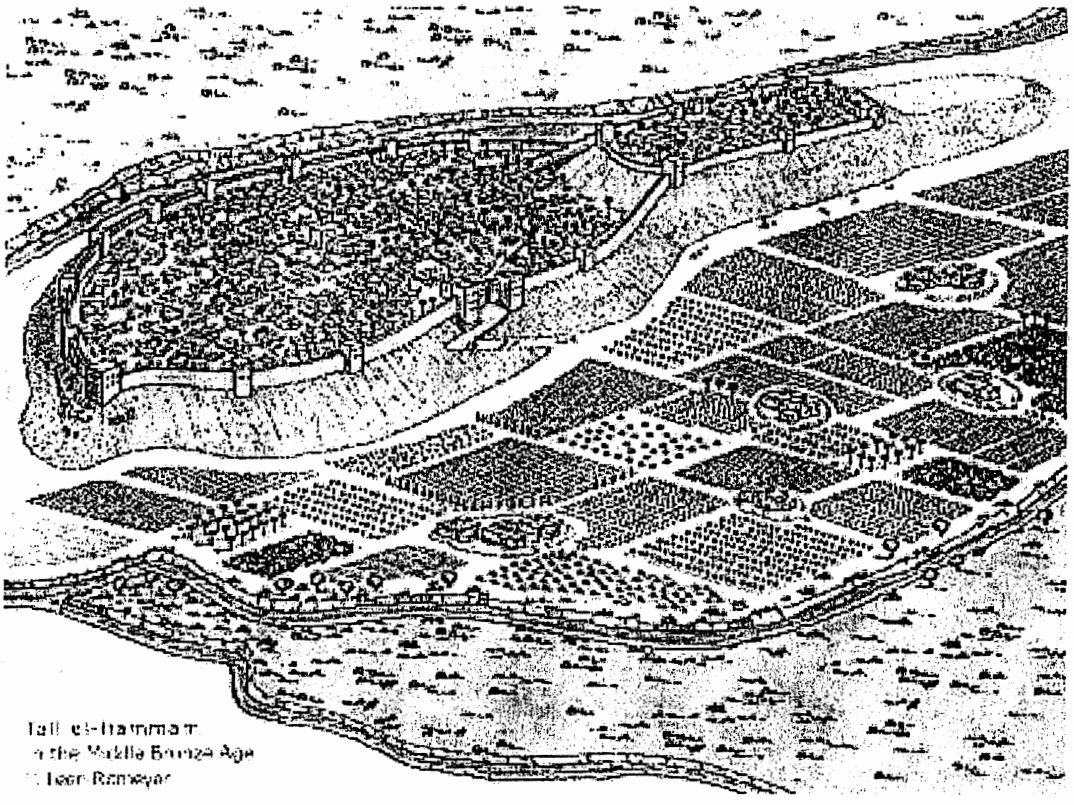


Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

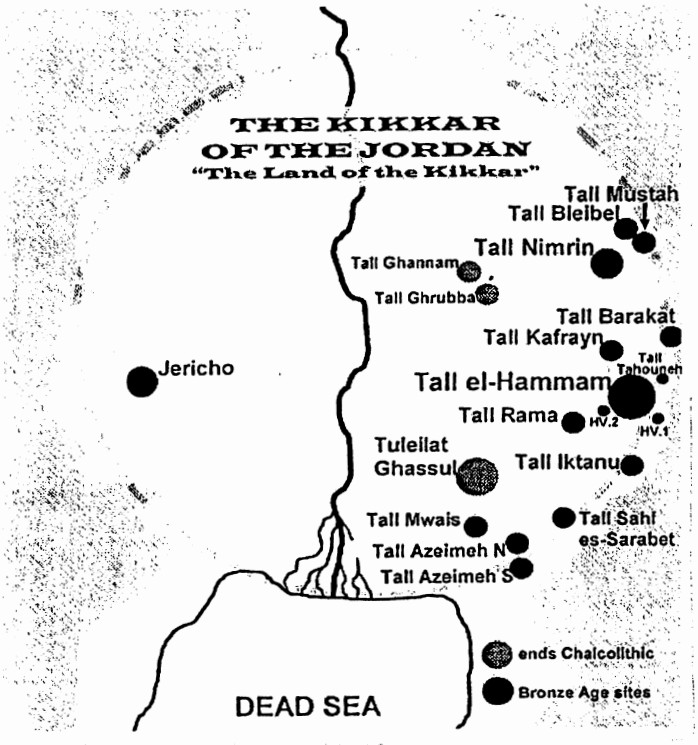
The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, recounted in the biblical book of Genesis, describes two wicked cities God destroyed with fire and brimstone (sulfur) for their extreme sinfulness, saving only Lot and his family (except his wife, who turned into a pillar of salt) as a symbol of divine judgment and warning against human wickedness in Abrahamic faiths, often interpreted as a story of divine wrath against severe immorality, sometimes linked to natural disasters like earthquakes or volcanic eruptions by scholars.



https://www.mediastorehouse.com/design-pics/historical/sodom-gomorrah-destruction-lots-wife-pillar-salt-32815533.html

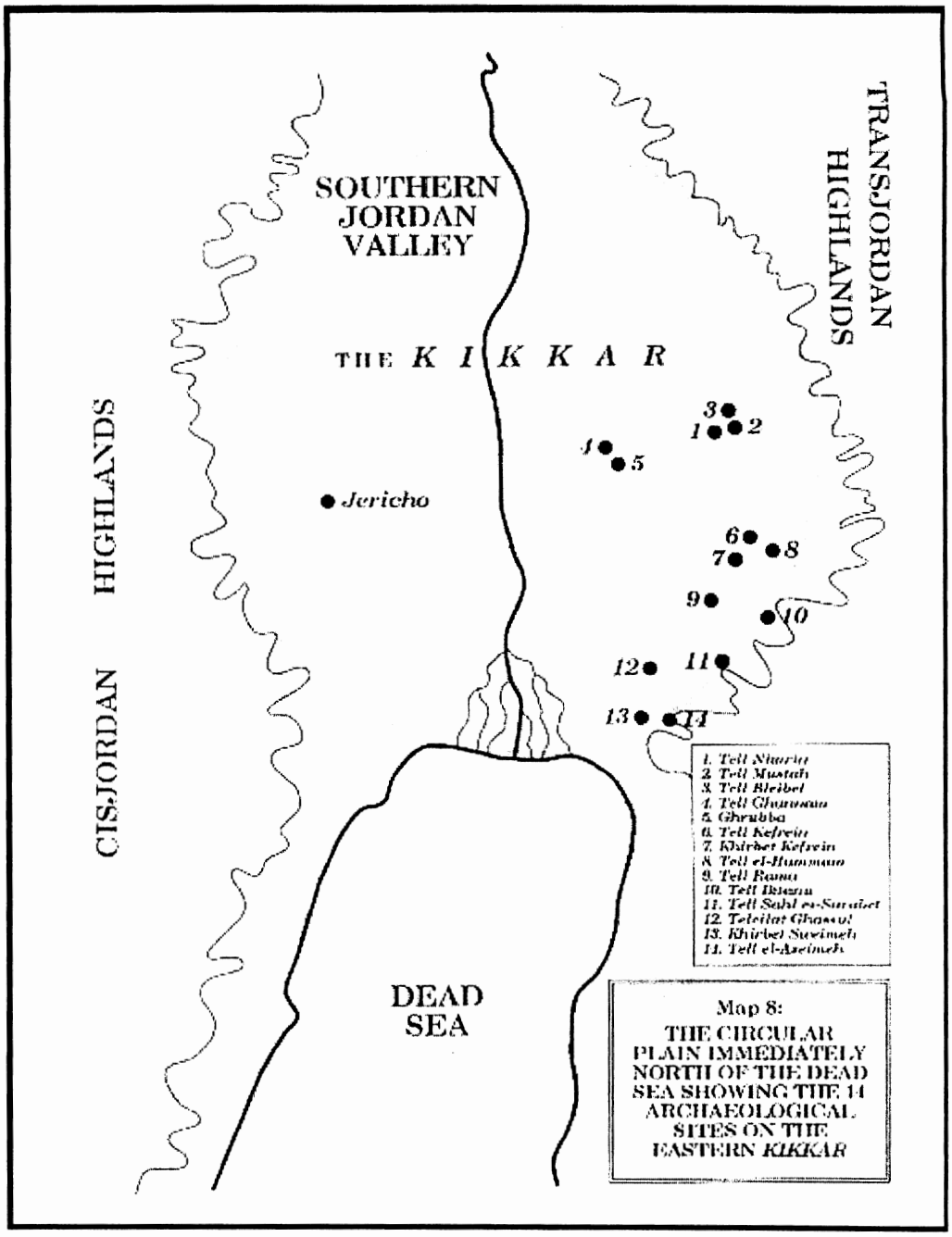


What Sodom looked like based on archaeology in the time of the Patriarchs before destruction (Gen 19).





Tall el-Hammam Excavation-Jordan Valley



Map of the southern Jordan River Valley, the area known as the *kikkar* ('the plain of the Jordan' - Gn 13:10) in the Hebrew Bible. Tall el-Hammam is number 8 on the map, a site which many scholars have suggested was Abel Shittim in the time of Moses and the TeHEP thesis is that the site might have been Sodom in Abraham's time). Note that the sites on the east side are a good distance from the Jordan River and close to the Jordan mountain range, east of the Jordan River Valley - suggesting a river flooding problem and the ancient roadway circling wide along the edge of eastern mountains. It would have been from these mountains that Balaam looked down on the Israelites and tried to curse them (Nu 22-24) and it was to these mountains that Moses ascended up to Mount Nebo and died (Dt 34). Credit: Trinity Southwest Seminary.

The Early Bronze Age: Tall el-Hammam and the Table of Nations

Tall el-Hammam

JORDAN

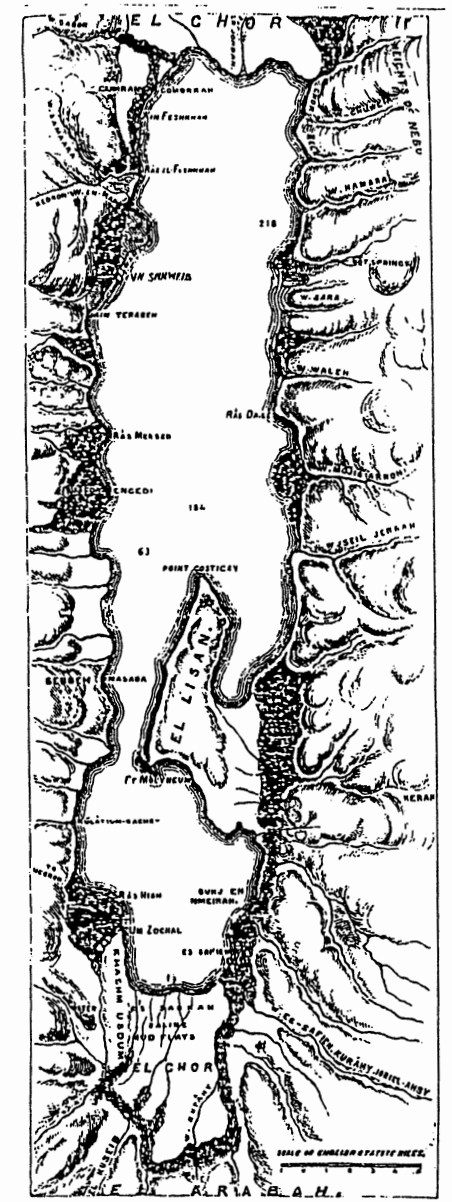


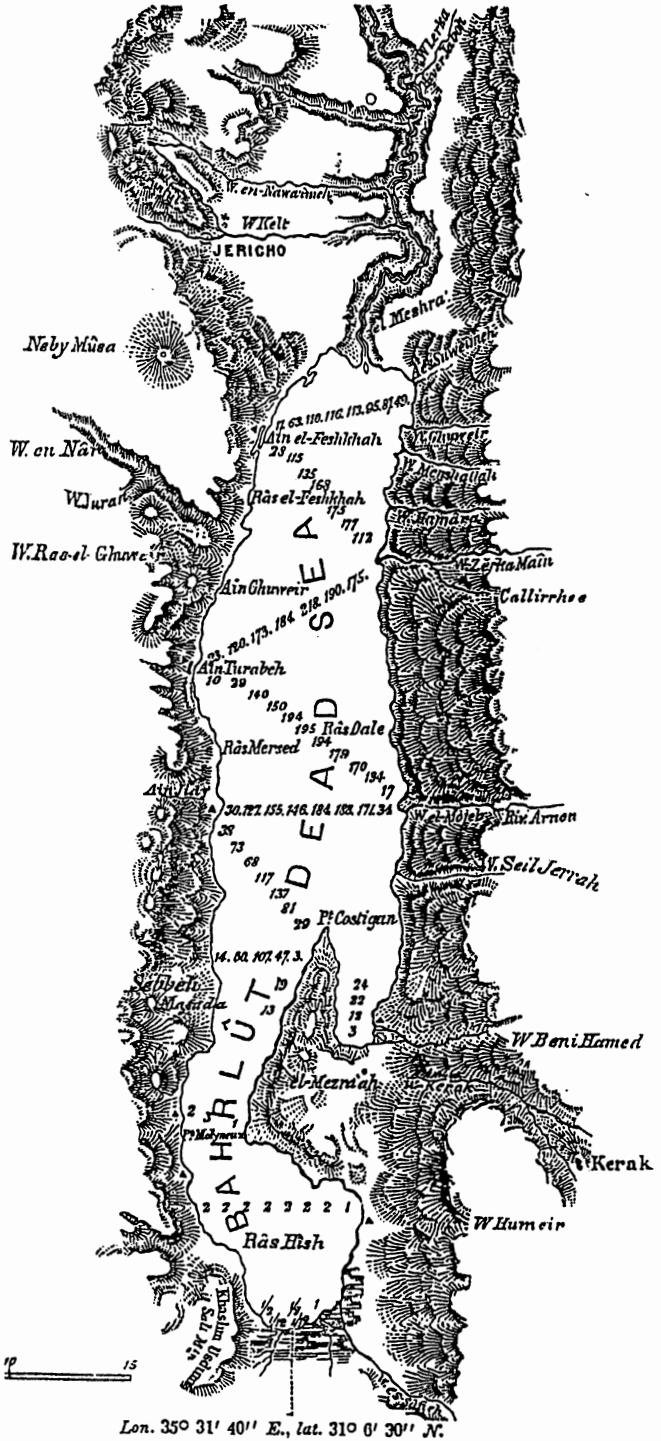
Sifting through the Sands of Sodom

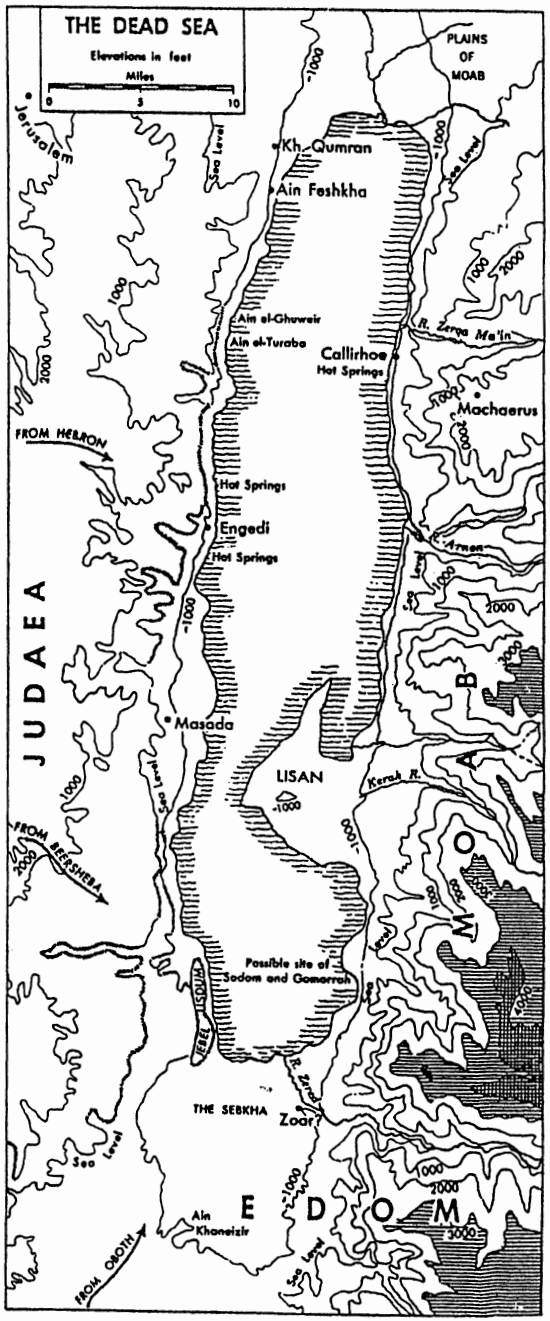
Tall el-Hammam, located eight miles northeast of the mouth of the Jordan River as it enters the Dead Sea, was one the largest Bronze Age cities in the S Levant during the Bronze Age. It anchored a major city-state that is likely identified in the Bible as the Cities of the Plain (referred to as Kikkar in Genesis 13-19). Hammam is a perfect match for Sodom itself (see the March/April 2013 issue of **BAR**). Along with its extensive megalithic field of stone circles, menhirs, and dolmens, the landscape of Tall el-Hammam has also been identified as Abel Mizraim (Genesis 50:11) of Joseph's era, and Abel Shittim, the final camping sites of Moses and the Israelites before they crossed into Canaan (Numbers 33:49).

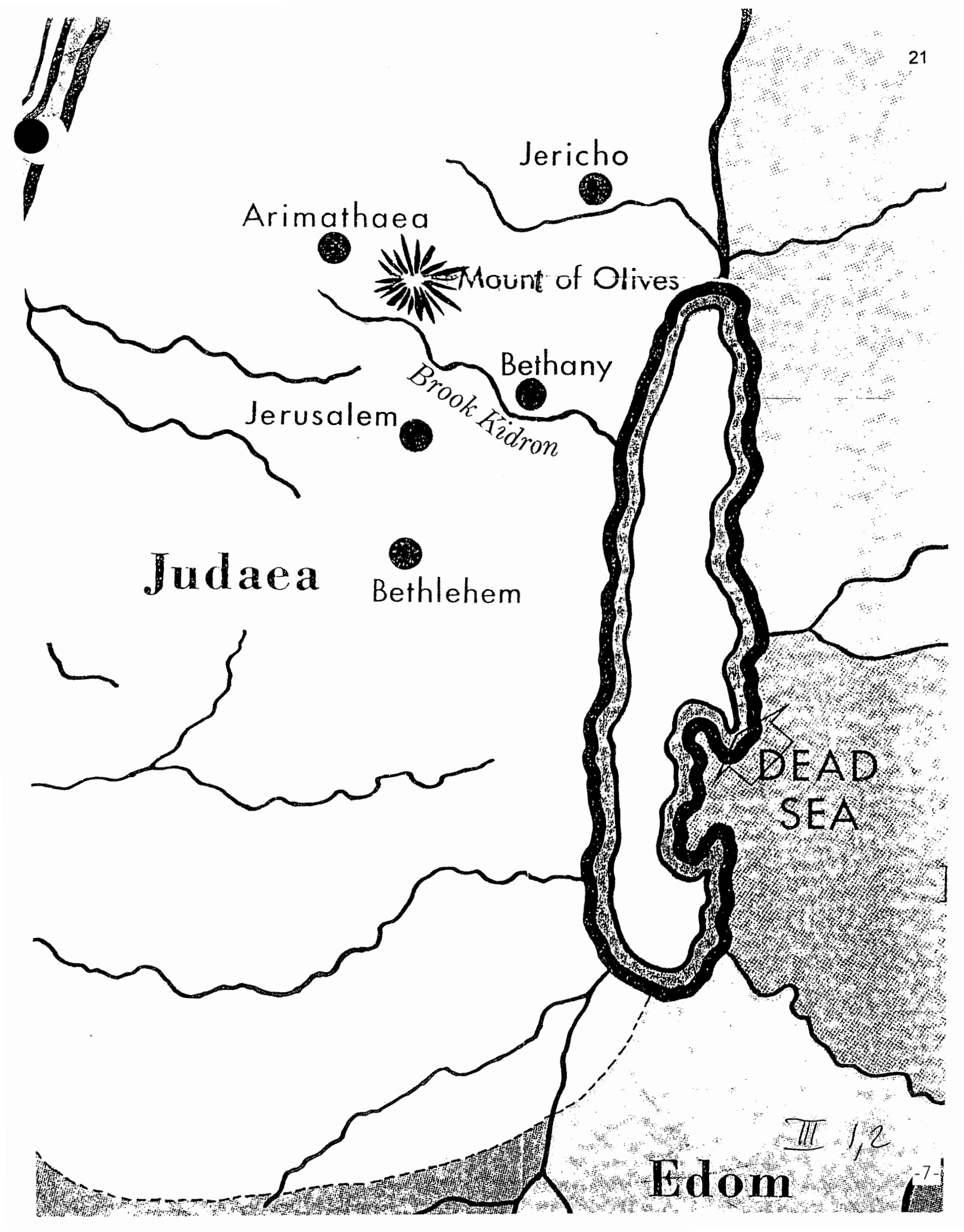
The past eight seasons have revealed a vast history of continuous occupation beginning from the Neolithic Period and extending well into the Middle Bronze Age. An Iron Age II walled town was later built on the upper tall, including monumental towers and gateway. Previous work on both the upper and lower tall has exposed impressive architecture including *an immense Middle* Bronze rampart system constructed entirely of mudbricks, an Early Bronze III blocked gate, a sacred precinct area, and an emerging Middle Bronze gateway and tower complex. Our goals for season nine are to continue work on the Middle Bronze gateway and gatehouse, resume efforts in the temple administrative and domestic areas, and continue a new area begun in season eight that has revealed Neolithic through Iron II material and architecture.

Located in a scenic spot in the southern Levant, Tall el-Hammam is a strategically located site set 500 feet below sea level. Volunteers stay at the new Best Western Grand Hotel in Madaba, located 39 minutes from the site.


EL GHOR
EL LISAN
EL GHOR


JERICHO
Naby Mûsa
W. el-Kelt
W. Qumran
Ain el-Feshkhah
Râs el-Feshkhah
W. Ghuweir
W. Mefjar
W. Hamâm
W. Zerka Main
Callirrhoe
Ain Ghuweir
Ain Turabeh
Râs Dale
Râs Mersed
W. el-Mojeb
Pt. Costigan
W. Beni Hamed
el-Mezra'ah
Kerak
W. Hureir
Râs Ilish
DEAD SEA
BAHR LÛT
Lon. 35° 31' 40" E., lat. 31° 6' 30" N.


THE DEAD SEA
Elevations in feet
Miles
PLAINS OF MOAB
Jerusalem
Kh. Qumran
Ain Feshkha
Ain el-Ghuweir
Ain el-Turabe
Callirhoe
Hot Springs
R. Zerqa Ma'in
Machaerus
FROM HEBRON
Hot Springs
Engedi
Hot Springs
R. Arnon
JUDAEA
Masada
LISAN
Kerak R.
MOAB
FROM BEERSHEBA
Possible site of Sodom and Gomorrah
WADI LISUMA
THE SEBKHA
Zoar
R. Zered
EDOM
Ain Khoneizir
FROM ONOTH


Jericho
Arimathaea
Mount of Olives
Bethany
Brook Kidron
Jerusalem
Judaea
Bethlehem
DEAD SEA
Edom

III 1,2

eugene merrill tel hammam

Sign In

AI Mode All Images Videos Shopping Maps News More Tools

AI Overview



Eugene H. Merrill is a prominent Old Testament scholar who **disagrees with identifying Tall el-Hammam as biblical Sodom**, primarily because its destruction date (Middle Bronze Age, ~1650 BCE) conflicts with his interpretation of biblical chronology, which places the patriarchs much earlier (around 2100-1700 BCE). Merrill argues that Tall el-Hammam's destruction doesn't align with the biblical timeline for Abraham, though other scholars, like Steven Collins, propose that a late Bronze Age dating fits better with broader historical evidence, suggesting Merrill's adherence to a strict, literal biblical chronology is the main point of contention.

Key Points of the Debate:

- **Merrill's View:** Believes the destruction date for Tall el-Hammam is too late for Sodom, as it pushes the patriarchal era too far forward, and he favors an earlier dating for Abraham.
- **Collins' View (and others):** Argues that evidence from archaeology, history, and climate supports a later Middle Bronze Age destruction for Tall el-Hammam, aligning with the period after 1800 BCE, and suggests Merrill's chronological approach is too rigid.
- **Archaeological Evidence:** Tall el-Hammam shows signs of a catastrophic destruction around 1650 BCE, possibly from a cosmic airburst, with the region remaining desolate for centuries, which some see as confirmation of the biblical account.
- **Biblical Chronology:** The core disagreement lies in interpreting the biblical texts about the patriarchs' lifespans and when they lived relative to the destruction of the cities.

In essence, Merrill uses traditional biblical timelines to question the identification of Tall el-Hammam as Sodom, while proponents of the identification use archaeological findings to support a later dating that challenges traditional chronology.

eugene merrill sodom and gomorrah

AI Mode All Images Videos Shopping Maps News More Tools

Biblical Archaeology Society
https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org › biblical-sites-places

Arguments Against Locating Sodom at Tall el-Hammam

Dec 10, 2024 — The proposal that Tall el-Hammam is **Sodom** fails on at least two counts, and these are helpfully summarized by two experts in their respective subjects. Read more

AI Overview +4

Eugene H. Merrill, a respected Old Testament scholar, critiques the identification of Tall el-Hammam as Sodom, arguing the proposed destruction date (around 1600 BCE) conflicts with the biblical timeline for the Patriarchs (circa 2100-1700 BCE). While acknowledging potential archaeological links to the Dead Sea region, Merrill emphasizes the biblical chronology, suggesting Sodom and Gomorrah were likely near the southern Dead Sea, challenging theories placing them at Tall el-Hammam and questioning if cities like it were truly "found".

Merrill's Stance on Sodom & Gomorrah:

- **Chronological Disagreement:** Merrill contests the Tall el-Hammam theory due to timing issues, aligning biblical events (like the Patriarchs' era) differently than archaeological proponents suggest for the city's destruction.
- **Biblical Location:** He leans towards the traditional view that Sodom, Gomorrah, and other cities of the plain (like Admah, Zeboiim, Zoar) were located in the southern Dead Sea area, near the Lisaan Peninsula.
- **Biblical Narrative:** He sees the Genesis account as containing kernels of historical truth, though interpreted through faith, rather than purely myth, and supports the idea of a real catastrophic event.

Context of the Debate (Tall el-Hammam):

- **The Theory:** Some archaeologists propose Tall el-Hammam in Jordan as Sodom, citing evidence of a massive explosion (like a cosmic impact or volcanic event) destroying the city around 1600 BCE, potentially linking to the biblical "fire and brimstone".
- **Merrill's Counter:** He finds this inconsistent with established biblical chronologies, which place Abraham and the Patriarchs earlier.
- **Scholarly Debate:** The location of Sodom and Gomorrah remains a significant debate, with some scholars arguing for different sites or questioning if the cities were ever real locations, while others find evidence supporting the Tall el-Hammam theory.

In essence, Merrill champions a traditional, biblically-focused chronology, disagreeing with newer archaeological interpretations that place Sodom at Tall el-Hammam and shift its destruction date.

Arguments Against Locating Sodom at Tall el-Hammam
Dec 9, 2024 — Johnson says September 11, 2023 at 11:50 am.
Biblical Archaeology Society



SODOM AND GOMORRAH AND PLATES TECTONIC ...
Jun 14, 2018 — However Professor Eugene H. Merrill (Merril, 2012)...
Redalyc.org



Dive deeper in AI Mode

Texts, Talls, and Old Testament Chronology: Tall Hammam as a Case Study

Eugene H. Merrill

Old Testament scholarship across the spectrum of theological and ideological persuasion is committed to the notion that a realistic picture of ancient Israel's life and times is best recovered by careful attention to both the biblical narrative and to archaeological data when both are subjected to proper methodological analysis and interpretation. The conservative will, of course, tend to give more attention to the text than to archaeology as a base of authority whereas the critical (liberal) scholar will allot primacy of place to archaeology. At the extremes of both respective positions are (1) those who are persuaded that archaeology is a tool of the devil that has no constructive role to play and (2) those who view the Bible as a collection of mere myth, fable, and legend, with little or no value to the serious historian.

Steven Collins is a committed Evangelical scholar with impressive experience in Near Eastern archaeology, especially at Kh. Al-Maqatir (Ai?) and Tall Hammam (Sodom?).[1] The former is in the so-called West Bank some 10 miles north of Jerusalem and a mile east of Ramallah. The latter is in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, just across the Jordan River from Jericho and four miles from the northeast curve of the Dead Sea. Since 2006 Professor Collins has been excavating Hammam, the site he prefers over Bab ed-DraU/Numeira as the proper location of ancient Sodom. His arguments as to the location of the "cities of the plain" (Heb U*r? h^KK]KK"r[2]; Gen 13:12) and Lot's choice of land as "all the Plain of the Jordan" (q"l K]KK^r h^Y^rD@n; Gen 13:11) seem attractive enough, and the enormous size of the urban area so far uncovered at Hammam seems to fit other biblical descriptions of a city commensurate with the archaeological coordinates (Gen 14:2; 18:22-33; 19:4; Ezek 16:48, 55).[3]

However, both archaeological and biblical chronological data rule out Hammam as a candidate for patriarchal Sodom. After a great deal of analysis Collins has concluded, based on stratigraphy, pottery assemblages, destruction layers, and architectural features, that the evidence points to the late MB2 period (ca. 1600 BC) for the cataclysmic overthrow of the site, thus necessitating a date for the Abraham-Lot narrative at the same time. But it is precisely at this

---

[1] For his reports and other publications on Hammam, see Collins in Biblical Research Bulletin VII 1 (2007); VII 3 (2007); VII 4 (2007); VII 7 (2007); Bible and Spade 15 2 (2007); Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan 53 (2010): 385-414.

[2] The Hebrew term is usually glossed "disk" or something disk-shaped such as a loaf of bread (Exod 29:23; 1 Sam 2:36), a metal shaped in the form of a disk (2 Sam 12:30; 2 Kgs 5:22; Est 3:9), or, indeed, "the wide southern part of the Ghor (1 Kgs 7:46; Neh 12:38; thus Ludwig Kochler and Walter Baumgartner, ed. *The Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Vol. One. Leiden: Brill, 2001, p. 473). A glance at a map of the lower Jordan Valley just north of the Dead Sea does indeed reveal a half-moon shaped and flat region about 10x10 square miles in extent. See R. L. W. Cleave. *The Holy Land Satellite Atlas.* Vol. 1. Nicosia, Cyprus: Rohr Productions, 1999, Map 1 LT-B, p. 35.

[3] For a recent restatement of the traditional view that locates Sodom at the southeast curve of the Dead Sea and therefore the corollary rejection of Hammam as such, see Clyde E. Billington, "Tall el-Hammam Is not Sodom," Artifax 27/2 (2012): 12-14.

point that Hammam must, on biblical chronological grounds, be precluded from being a candidate as one of the cities of that narrative. The following considerations with subsequent supporting documentation decisively undermine the possibility of the Collins hypothesis:

1. The chronological system of the Hebrew Masoretic text places the era of the Patriarchs between ca. 2100-1700 B. C.[4]
2. All subsequent biblical historical accounts no longer jibe with each other or fit the periods to which a 1600 date assigns them.
3. Besides the dismantling of the biblical chronological schemes and the rendering of their data as incorrect and/or meaningless, other numerical features such as the life spans of the patriarchs must also be discarded or radically reinterpreted.
4. Most serious of all—to the conservative scholar at least--is the methodological fallacy of testing and assessing biblical information in light of presumed archaeological primacy and the necessary shift of the ground of authority from text to tell.

The Chronology of the Old Testament and Its Basis[5]

In the modern period, attempts to determine the dates of Old Testament events commenced notably with Archbishop James Ussher of the Anglican Church of Ireland (1581-1656). By methodically adding up the years attributed to various biblical persons and events, all the while making due allowance for concurrences and discordances, he concluded that the exodus took place in 1492 B. C., Abraham flourished at the beginning of the second millennium (1997-1822), the Flood ca. 2350 B. C., and creation at 4004 B. C.[6] The early Enlightenment of the same period generated a great deal of skepticism about such matters as the historical and chronological reliability of the Old Testament, and subsequent developments in the fields of the natural sciences added to this skepticism by positing the beginnings of the earth millions of years earlier, the non-existence of a universal flood, and, in biblical critical scholarship, the denial of the historical reality of Old Testament persons and events such as Noah, Abraham, and even Moses.

---

[4] For detailed discussion of this scheme, see Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests. A History of Old Testament Israel.* 2nd ed. Grand Rapids:Baker, 2008, pp. 83-96.

[5] *Inter alia,* see Eugene H. Merrill, "Fixed Dates in Patriarchal Chronology," BSac 137 (1980):141-151; "The Late Bronze/Early Iron Age Transition and the Emergence of Israel," BSac 152 (1995): 145-162; "Chronology," *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch.* Ed. T. Desmond Alexander & David W. Baker. Downers Grove, IL: 2003, pp. 113-122; "Archaeology and Biblical History: Its Uses and Abuses," *Giving the Sense: Understanding and Using Old Testament Historical Texts.* Ed. David M. Howard Jr. and Michael A. Grisanti. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003, pp. 74-96.

[6] See conveniently Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology.* Rev. ed. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998, pp. 403-405. It should be noted that Ussher was no dilettante in such matters; in fact, he was a brilliant classicist at home in Greek, Latin, and other languages. See Charles Richard Elrington, *The Whole Works of the Most Rev. James Ussher, D. D.* Vol. 1. Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1847, pp. 266-267.

With this worldview in place, even some conservative scientists and theologians adopted the skeptical mind-set and methods of the age in both secular and biblical studies.[7]

Currently, critical scholarship ranges from the moderate stance of the so-called "Albright school" that is willing to entertain a highly nuanced notion of historical patriarchs to a radical minimalism that denies any substantial historical reliability to the Old Testament pre-exilic narratives. On the other hand, inscriptions from Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Levant have provided significant chronological data to which the Old Testament can be compared. These, with the internal dating schemes of the Bible itself, have enabled more modern scholars—especially evangelicals--to (re)construct a near consensus template against which biblical history at least as far back as Abraham can be dated with near precision. Given astronomically derived dates from various sources, especially those that refer to biblical persons,[8] careful application of these to the Hebrew texts yields the following important set of data: (1) Abraham was born in 2166 B. C.; (2) the descent of Jacob into Egypt was 1876; (3) the exodus occurred in 1446; (4) the United Monarchy began ca. 1050; (5) the division of the kingdom between Israel and Judah took place in 931; (5) Israel fell to the Assyrians in 722; (6) Judah went into Babylonian exile and the temple was destroyed in 586; (7) and the exiles returned to Judah in 538 and thereafter.[9]

At the same time, archaeological evidence has convinced many evangelicals that the exodus occurred not in Dynasty 18 of Egypt but in the mid- to late 13th century (ca. 1250) of the so-called Ramesside 19th Dynasty. For this view there exist two subsets: (1) a 215 year sojourn preceded by a 215 year span back to the making of the Abrahamic covenant (1680) and (2) a 430 year sojourn preceded by the age of Jacob when he descended to Egypt (130) plus the years back to the Abrahamic covenant when Abraham was 85 years old (1885 B. C.). Position (1) thus dates the destruction of Sodom at 1665 and position (2) at 1871. However, position (1) rests upon two untenable supports: a 215 year sojourn and a late exodus date and position (2), though more acceptable, is itself flawed by the late exodus date. If the generally superior MT text is taken at face value, the destruction of Sodom took place in 2067, the sojourn was 430 years, and the exodus was in 1446 (see preceding paragraph),.

To return to Steve Collins's hypothesis based on the archaeological data, his proposed date of the destruction of the city of Sodom ca. 1600 is still some 65 years too late for proposal (1) and 355 years too late for proposal (2). The date in the best manuscripts and the most sound hermeneutic demands the overthrow of Sodom at 2067 B. C., completely removing Tall Hammam from consideration as the location of Sodom.

---

[7] As conservative as he was in general, the notable theologian A. H. Strong (1836-1921) readily adopted biological evolution as the best way to account for both biblical and scientific evidence. *Systematic Theology.* Philadelphia: Judson, 1907, pp. 392-393. For an excellent overview of the pernicious effect of evolution on Christian thought even before Darwin, see Terry Mortenson, *The Great Turning Point.* Green Forest, AR (Master Books, 2004), pp. 19-54.

[8] Most important are the Assyrian eponymn lists of years and the royal inscriptions that both inform them and are informed by them. Conveniently, see Alan Millard, "Assyrian King Lists," *The Context of Scripture.* Vol. 1. Ed. W. W. Hallo. Leiden: Brill, 1997, pp. 463-466.

[9] Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, pp. 41-48, 74-80, 166-170, 337.

Conclusion

Though the Collins construal is attractive in certain respects, it is bound up in its own cocoon by postulating the following criteria that must be met if it is to stand:

- The late MB date of Sodom's destruction, driven by archaeological considerations, must be the iron-clad standard again which the biblical chronology is ascertained.
- This date demands a birth date of Abraham about 1699; since he was 175 when he died, that occurred in 1524, 76 years after the destruction of Sodom.
- Isaac's lifespan is 1599-1419 and Jacob's 1539-1392!
- Even a 215 year Egyptian sojourn must cover the years 1415-1200, requiring the exodus to be in 1200 and the conquest, 40 years later, in 1160-1150.
- The various judges and the reign of Saul must be compressed between 1150 and 1010, the established date of the commencement of David's reign.
- The only way out of the conundrum if Hammam is Sodom is to (1) disregard the biblical figures for the ages of the patriarchs; (2) jettison or greatly reduce the 215-year sojourn; and (3) minimize the length of the ministries of the judges and the reign of Saul nearly to the vanishing point. The following chart is a possible scenario illustrative of the drastic measures required to fit the narrative of Sodom between 1600 and 1010 B. C. If this is not the correct one, there must be one like it.

1. Abraham was **75**[10] at the 1600 date of Sodom's destruction; therefore, he was born in 1675.
2. Isaac was born in **Abraham's 50th** year—1625.
3. Jacob was born in **Isaac's 30th year**—1595.
4. Jacob moved his family to Egypt in his **60th** year—1535.
5. The sojourn lasted for 215 years—1535-1320.
6. The exodus took place in 1320.
7. The Sinai wanderings took **20** years—1320-1300.
8. The conquest took 10 years--1300-1290.
9. The administration of the judges lasted for 250 years—1290-1040.
10. Samuel's tenure was 10 years in length—1040-1030.
11. Saul reigned for **20** years—1030-1010.
12. David ascended to the throne in 1010.

A hypothetical scheme like this could provide the necessary correlation but for one bothersome fact: These numbers are arbitrarily chosen *in order to achieve the desired harmonization.* That is,

[10] Embolded refers to data that are flatly contradicted by explicit biblical numbers.

text has had to be distorted in order to allow tall to triumph.[11] The price is simply too high to pay!

[11] Applying the biblical chronology in a strict and literal sense yields the following picture:

1. Abraham's lifespan was 2166-1991
2. Abraham was 99 when Sodom was destroyed in **2067**
3. Isaac's lifespan was 2066-1886
4. Jacob's lifespan was 2006-1859
5. Jacob's descent to Egypt was in 1876 when he was 130 years old
6. The sojourn was for 430 years—1876-1446
7. The exodus occurred in 1446
8. Sinai wandering took 40 years—1446-1406
9. Conquest took ca. seven years—1406-1400
10. The judges era was at least 300 years-1400-1100
11. Samuel ministered for ca. 55 years—1080-1025
12. Saul reigned for 40 years—1051-1011
13. David ascended to the throne in 1011

See Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests,* pp. 31, 40, 146-151, 192-194.

TALL El-HAMMAM IS NOT SODOM

By Clyde E. Billington, Ph.D.

INTRODUCTION

A line in an old Stuart Hamlin song says: "I overlooked an orchid while searching for a rose." It's relevance to the search for Sodom will be disclosed below

This past November my friend Steve Collins gave a presentation on Tall el-Hammam at the annual meeting of the Near East Archaeological Society [NEAS] in San Francisco. Steve has repeatedly claimed in his NEAS presentations for several years that Tall el-Hammam, a site he is excavating in Jordan, is the biblical city of Sodom. I have just as consistently argued that Tall el-Hammam is not Sodom.

Before beginning my criticism of Steve's position on the location of Sodom, let me express my appreciation for his work in archaeology. He is one of the most dynamic archaeologists that I have ever met and his energy level would wear out the Energizer Bunny. I also consider Steve Collins a personal friend.

THE LOCATION OF TALL EL-HAMMAM

Tall el-Hammam is located about five miles northeast of the site where the Jordan River empties into the Dead Sea, beside an ancient road. This east-west road led from the north-south King's Highway across a ford of the Jordan River to Jericho. This is the ford of the Jordan that Joshua and the Israelites used. Tall el-Hammam's location is key to its proper identification.

I believe that Sodom and Gomorrah were located at the southern end of the Dead Sea and not the northern end. Steve argues that a southern Sodom cannot be seen from Bethel--where Genesis 13 reports that Abraham and Lot decided to split into two groups. Tall el-Hamman *can* be seen from Bethel.

However, Genesis 13:10 does not state that Abraham and Lot saw Sodom from Bethel but rather it says that they saw "all the valley of the Jordan." Genesis 13:12 then states: "Lot settled in the **cities of the valley (Hebrew: kikkar)**, and moved his tents as far as Sodom." It should be noted that Lot first pitched his tents near cities other than Sodom and then moved to Sodom. The phrase "as far as Sodom" suggests that Sodom was not located close to the "cities of the "kikkar" at the northern end of the Dead Sea.

Lot's movements from city to city along the Jordan River and the Dead Sea with his tents and flocks fit well with what is known from ancient sources. There was a symbiotic relationship between ancient farmers and sheepherders. After grain crops were harvested, farmers allowed sheepherders to graze their animals on the *stubble left in* the fields. This benefitted the farmers in two ways, first by helping to clear the fields for replanting and second by providing natural fertilizer for next year's grain crops.

Sheepherders would move their flocks from one farmer's field to another, and this is exactly what the Bible says Lot was doing. Lot was grazing his animals on farmers' fields from the Jordan Valley in the north to the city of Sodom in the south. Genesis 13:18 relates that Abraham himself moved south from Bethel to the oaks of Mamre near Hebron. Both Lot and Abraham seem to have moved their flocks south from Bethel; Lot went to Sodom and Abraham went to the oaks of Mamre.

Later, when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot had stopped traveling with his flocks and living in tents. Genesis 19:2-11 relates that Lot was living in a house in Sodom. Lot had become wealthy enough to give up the hard life of a nomadic shepherd. In contrast, Genesis 18:1-2 relates that Abraham continued to dwell in a tent near his flocks at Mamre.

THE LOCATION OF SODOM

First among my reasons to believe that Sodom was located at the southern end of the Dead Sea is Genesis 14:3, which states that Sodom and Gomorrah were located **"in the valley (Hebrew: "emeq") of Siddim, that is the Salt Sea."** Genesis places Sodom in the "valley of Siddim" and not in the "valley of the Jordan." Note the phrase: "that is the Salt Sea." The biblical connection of Sodom with the Dead Sea does not fit well with Tall el-Hammam, which is located five miles northeast of the Dead Sea.

Second, Genesis 14:10 states that the "valley of Siddim" was full of tar (Hebrew: "chemer") pits. There are no tar pits at Tall el-Hammam. On the other hand, globs of tar have in past centuries frequently risen to the surface at the southern end of the Dead Sea. Ancient sources mention these globs of tar and state that they were collected by the locals and sold; some into Egypt where the tar was at times smeared on wrapped mummies to seal and protect them. About 40 years ago, modern Israeli oil drillers reported finding a layer of oil sand at the southern end of the Dead Sea. Sodom's tar was unquestionably petroleum based. This can be seen in Exodus 2:3 which has the mother of baby Moses waterproofing his basket with "tar (Heb. "chemar" – probably imported from the Dead Sea) and pitch" before placing it in the Nile River.

Third, the American archaeologists Rast and Schaub several decades ago excavated villages near the southern end of the Dead Sea. While Steve Collins rejects this evidence, these villages were all destroyed by a "fiery conflagration" at the same time. The largest of these villages was Bab edh Dhra, which was only about 10 acres. I do not believe that any of these villages were Sodom or Gomorrah, but they were almost certainly ancillary villages that belonged to Sodom, Gomorrah, and also to the other three cities mentioned in the Genesis account. It is true that Rast and Schaub dated these villages to ca. 2350-2300 BC, and it is also true that Abraham and Lot date closer to ca. 2100 BC, but this dating discrepancy can be easily explained, i.e. not all Early Bronze Age cities fell at the same time in Canaan as is generally assumed.

Fourth, Rast and Schaub found two massive cemeteries — later a third was also discovered — near the southern end of the Dead Sea. They estimated that over a million people had been buried in these cemeteries over a period of about 1,000 years. These are the largest ancient cemeteries ever discovered in the Middle East. The cemeteries clearly indicate that at one time there were large cities located nearby. This fits well with the Genesis story which indicates that a large allied army from southern Mesopotamia attacked Sodom and Gomorrah just prior to their destruction. Incidentally, biological materials found in these tombs provide strong proof that the area at the south end of the Dead Sea was once lush and well-watered.

And fifth, tradition has for centuries placed Sodom and Gomorrah somewhere at the southern end of the Dead Sea. Zoar—a city allied with Sodom—is located at the southern end of the Dead Sea. Zoar was the city to which Lot fled at the time of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. The famous cave of Lot has also been traditionally located at the southern end of the Dead Sea. Tradition can be wrong, but it should only be ignored when there is irrefutable evidence to the contrary.

THE HEBREW WORD KIKKAR

Steve Collins frequently cites the Hebrew word "kikkar" in the phrase "valley (kikkar) of the Jordan." It is true that Sodom and Gomorrah are said in Genesis 19 to be on a "kikkar" which some English translations render as "plain" and others as "valley." Steve assumes that this kikkar of Sodom and Gomorrah is the same as the kikkar of the Jordan. However, kikkar is also used for other locations; for example note the "kikkar of Jerusalem" which is mentioned in Neh. 12:28.

Genesis 19:28 states that, at the time of their destruction, Abraham: "looked down towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the valley /kikkar." Abraham was living near Hebron when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, and the shortest route from Hebron to the Dead Sea comes out on the Dead Sea near Ein Gedi. From this location Abraham could probably see the general areas of both the southern and northern ends of the Dead Sea, but his best view would have been the general area of Bab edh Dhra on the Lisan Peninsula, a village with proven evidence of a massive fiery destruction.

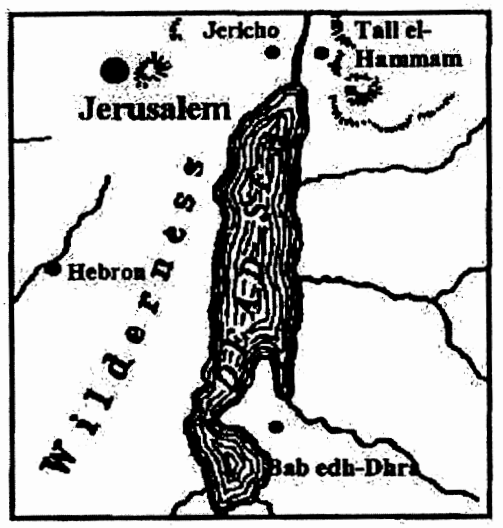
TALL EL-HAMMAM IS NOT SODOM

I believe that Steve Collins's own excavations at Tall el Hammam are disproving his theory that it is the site of ancient Sodom. While he has found "ash and destruction layers," he has not found evidence that a massive fiery conflagration destroyed the entire site of Tall el-Hammam and its surrounding villages at the same time. His evidence indicates that military conquest ended the Middle Bronze Age city of Tall el-Hammam.

Steve has himself reported finding sling stones and other evidence of a military conquest. He has suggested that this military conquest is evidence of the attack on Sodom and Gomorrah that was made by the coalition of four kings from southern Mesopotamia which is mentioned in Genesis 14. But, if Tall el-Hammam is Sodom, there should be a thick sulfuric/ brimstone burn layer over the entire site, and this burn layer should be on top of the evidence of military conquest.

Steve Collins has also found pottery at Tall el-Hammam which he himself dated in his 2011 NEAS presentation ca. 1650 BC and which he also said matches MB2 pottery found in the destroyed city of Jericho IV. Bryant Wood has proven with pottery, Egyptian scarabs, and carbon 14 that the destruction of Jericho IV dates to ca. 1400 BC. Steve has apparently misdated the military destruction layer at Tall el-Hammam by 250 years.

Not only does Steve's date of 1650 BC for the destruction of Middle Bronze Age Tall el-Hammam not match the archaeological evidence at Jericho IV— which unquestionably dates to ca. 1400 BC— but it also forces him to re-date Abraham and Lot to 1650 BC. To be blunt, 1650 BC is a biblically impossible date for Abraham and Lot. If Steve is correct and if Tall el-Hammam is Sodom, then the chronologies given in the Old Testament would have to be not just revised, but totally trashed.



WHAT WAS THE ANCIENT NAME OF TALL EL-HAMMAM?

Tall el-Hammam was clearly once a very large and important city. And, as was noted above, Tall el-Hammam is located along the ancient road that the Israelites traveled while moving west from the King's Highway to the "plains of Moab." Numbers 22:1 places the "plains of Moab" east of the Jordan River "opposite" the city of Jericho. Tall el-Hamman is also located "opposite" the city of Jericho.

Since the Israelites passed right by Tall el-Hammam, it is a site that should be mentioned in the Old Testament. Moses kept good records of the travels of the Israelites during the Exodus. Why does he not mention Sodom, if Tall el-Hammam was Sodom?

I believe that the archaeological and biblical evidence strongly indicates that Tall el-Hammam is the ancient Bronze Age city of Heshbon, the capital city of the Amorite King Sihon who was defeated by none other than Moses himself. In searching for the rose of Sodom, Steve Collins has overlooked the orchid of Old Testament Heshbon. While not as famous as Sodom, in many ways, Old Testament Heshbon is probably even more significant for Biblical Archaeology than is Sodom.

Admittedly there is a problem in my identification of Tall el-Hammam with Heshbon. Almost any map of the Old Testament world places Heshbon at the site where the road eastward from Jericho connects with the King's Highway; about 12 miles directly to the east of Tall el-Hammam. For clarity's sake, I will refer to the Heshbon at the intersection with the King's Highway as "eastern Heshbon" and Tall el-Hammon in the Jordan Valley as "western Heshbon. I believe that there were two Heshbons.

As archaeologist Efrain Velazquez II pointed out in his 2011 presentation at NEAS, the famous Seventh Day Adventist archaeologist Siegfried Horn excavated extensively at eastern Heshbon for years, but did not find any archaeological strata dating earlier than the Iron Age. There is no doubt that eastern Heshbon was called Heshbon/Esbus in the Persian, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, and Muslim Periods, but it cannot be the Heshbon mentioned in the Old Testament since it clearly is not old enough. Seventh Day Adventist archaeologists are now

looking at other sites near eastern Heshbon in hopes of finding Sihon's Heshbon.

I believe that Tall el-Hammam—western Heshbon—was the original city of Heshbon that was captured by Moses, and that eastern Heshbon was built in the Iron Age and named after it. As nearly all archaeologists know, it was not unusual for the names of cities to move from site to site in the ancient world. This is even true for the modern world. Note that there are cities named after the original city of Rochester in England to be found in New York, Michigan, Minnesota, and Oregon.

It is even possible that the families of the two and a half tribes who remained east of the Jordan River stayed in fortified Heshbon/Tall el-Hammam for protection while most of their men went on to fight in Canaan as they had promised Moses. However, the ancient Israelites, who were animal herders, had no long-term need for a large, heavily fortified city like Heshbon/Tall el-Hammam and in time abandoned it. Steve Collins has found only minimal Iron Age evidence from the Israelite period at Tall Hammam.

Nearly everything that Steve Collins and his archaeological team have found at Tall el-Hammam fits perfectly with biblical Heshbon. The Israelites under Moses and Joshua would have had to pass within meters of Tall el-Hammam and through its territory in order to move west from the King's Highway to the plains of Moab. The plains of Moab are located on the eastern side of the Jordan River "opposite Jericho" (Num. 31:12), and were almost certainly once controlled by the nearby city of Tall el-Hammam.

Second, the Israelites could not have camped on the plains of Moab unless Tall el-Hammam had either consented or been neutralized militarily. Numbers 21:23-24 indicates that the Amorite King Sihon foolishly led his army out of his fortified capital Heshbon to attack the Israelites on open ground at Jahaz. Sihon's defeat at Jahaz allowed the Israelites to easily take the weakly-defended western Heshbon and other Amorite cities belonging to it. Numbers 21:30 has the Israelites stating in a proverb: *"But we have cast them down, Heshbon is ruined as far as Dibon, Then we have laid waste even to Hophah, Which reaches to Medeba"* [ASV]. The people of Jericho appear to have learned from Sihon's mistake since they decided to use their army to defend its walls rather than to risk a confrontation with the Israelites on open ground. But God foiled their plans by causing the walls of Jericho to fall down before Joshua.

Third, according to Steve Collins himself, the terminal Middle Bronze Age 2 pottery which his team has found at Tall el-Hammam matches pottery at Jericho IV. This indicates that Tall el-Hammam fell at the same time as Jericho IV. If Jericho IV fell to Joshua—then Tall el-Hammam must be the city of Heshbon that fell to Moses.

And fourth, Mount Nebo, from which Moses saw the Promised Land, is located less than two miles southeast of Tall el-Hammam. To reach Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab, Moses would have journeyed right past Tall el-Hammam. Moses' journey to Mount Nebo gives proof that the Israelites had gained control over the entire area north of the Dead Sea and east of the Jordan River. Steve Collins will probably argue that, since Tall el-Hammam was Sodom, it was in a state of destruction when Moses conquered the entire area of the "Kikkar of the Jordan." But I believe that identifying Tall el-Hammam with Sihon's capital city of Heshbon best fits both the biblical and archaeological evidence.

CONCLUSION

Which of us is correct about Tall eh-Hammam? I think that Steve himself already has the answer to this question in his possession. Steve has reported in his NEAS presentations that he has found a number of Egyptian scarabs.

The backs of ancient scarabs were carved in the form of a sacred dung beetle, while their stomachs were often inscribed with the names of Egyptian pharaohs. The names of these pharaohs can be easily identified and very accurately dated by Egyptologists. Steve has stated that he has not yet had an Egyptologist date these scarabs. He should do so immediately.

Let me make a prediction. Steve will find that some of his Egyptian scarabs from Tall el-Hammam date to the 18th Dynasty in the New Kingdom Period and more specifically to the 15th century BC. If the scarabs date to the 15th century BC, then Tall el-Hammam cannot be Sodom.

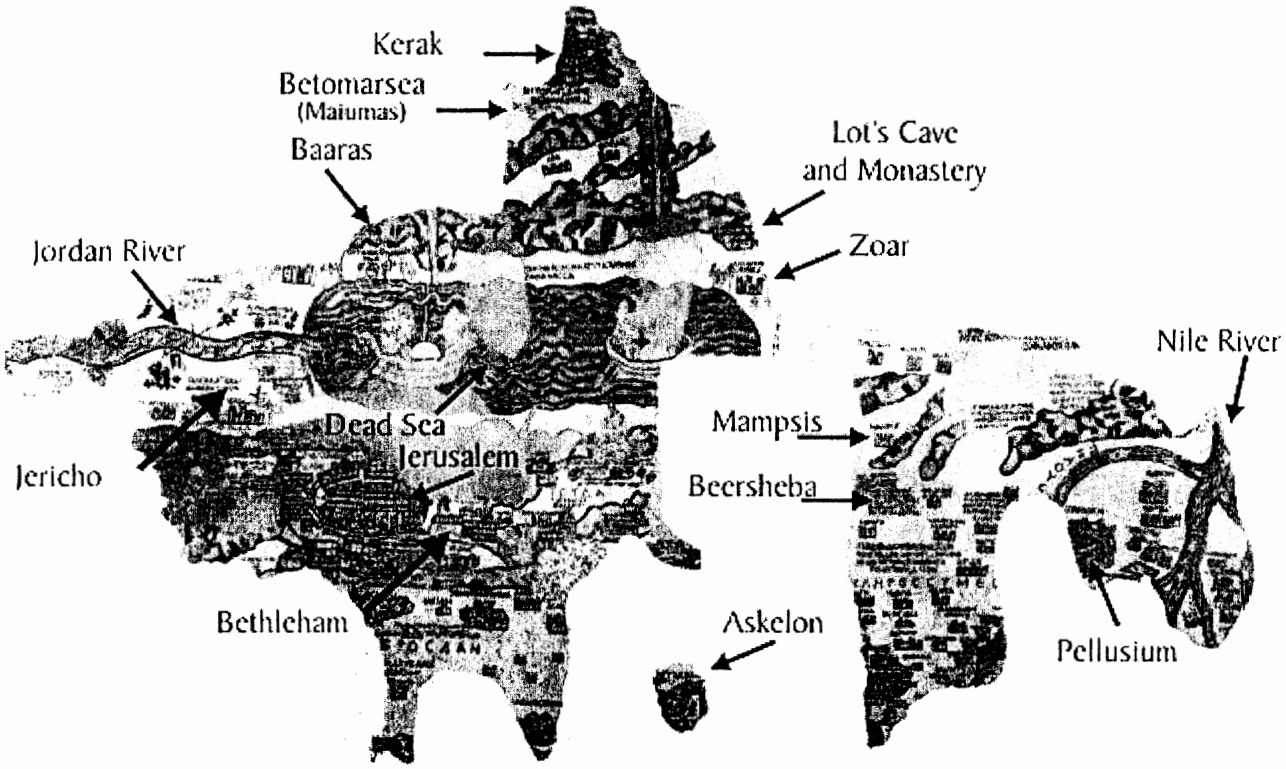
Heshbon is at least as important an archaeological site as Sodom, and probably even more significant. I consider Tall el-Hammam to be one of the most significant excavations—if not the most significant—in Biblical Archaeology that is now taking place in the Middle East; it is even more significant than Hazor and Gezer. Only Mazar's excavations at the City of David in Jerusalem can rival it.

Since Sihon was an Amorite and since the Amorites under Hammurabi once ruled Babylon, Sihon and the Amorites at Heshbon probably kept records in the Akkadian language on clay tablets. It is likely that Sihon's palace and his royal diplomatic archive are located in the immediate area of the main gate. If the royal archive of Heshbon can be found, it will be one of the greatest discoveries ever made in Biblical Archaeology.

The Madaba Map

‹ Prev • History • Next ›

The Madaba Map was found in 1884 in an old Byzantine church, now named The Church of the Map. The local Christians had decided to build the present Greek Orthodox Church of St. George, which is now located beside the ancient church. The map is dated to the sixth century, during the time of Emperor Justinian (527 - 565). It is the oldest known map of Palestine and is the source of some fascinating historical data. It has survived, despite damage over the years by fire and the collapse of the original church. The church faces east, so the map places the viewer in the Mediterranean Sea looking east at the Holy Land. In the center of the map is the Dead Sea with the Jordan River running into it on the left. On the right is the Nile River.



undefined

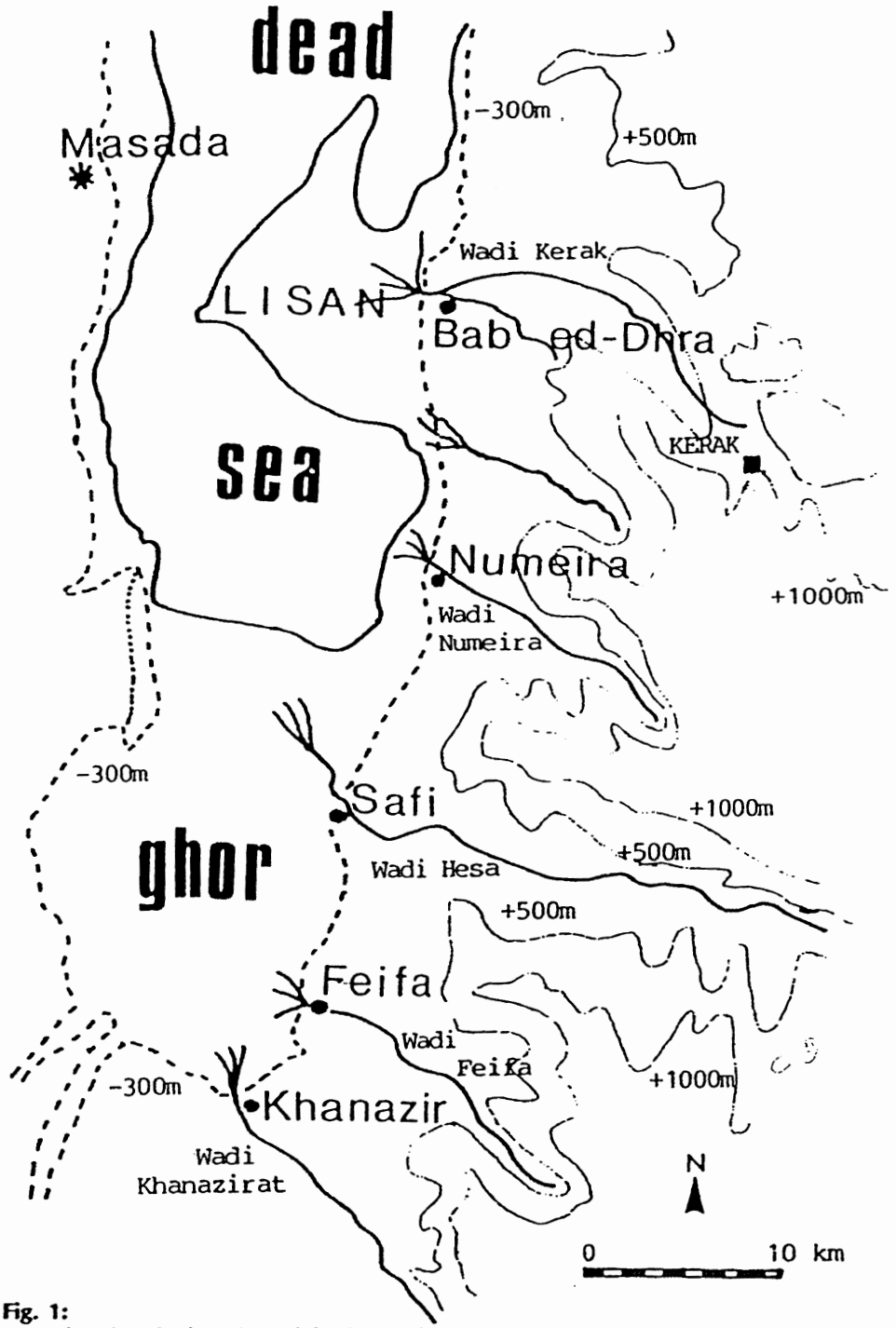


Fig. 1:
Map showing the location of the five Early Bronze Age towns sited on the eastern edge of the Ghor (Dead Sea plain), which may be Sodom and the other cities of the plain of the Bible.

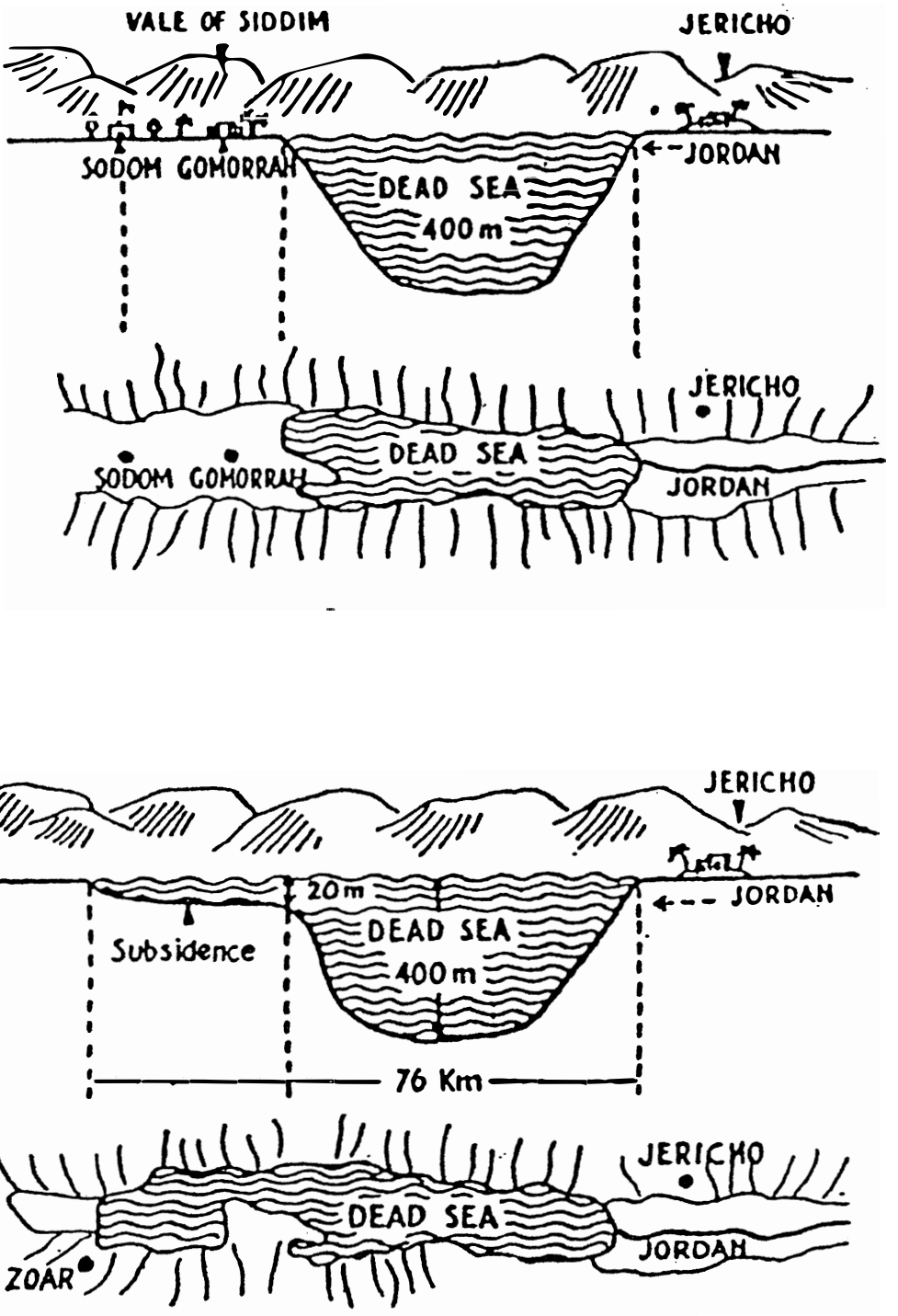
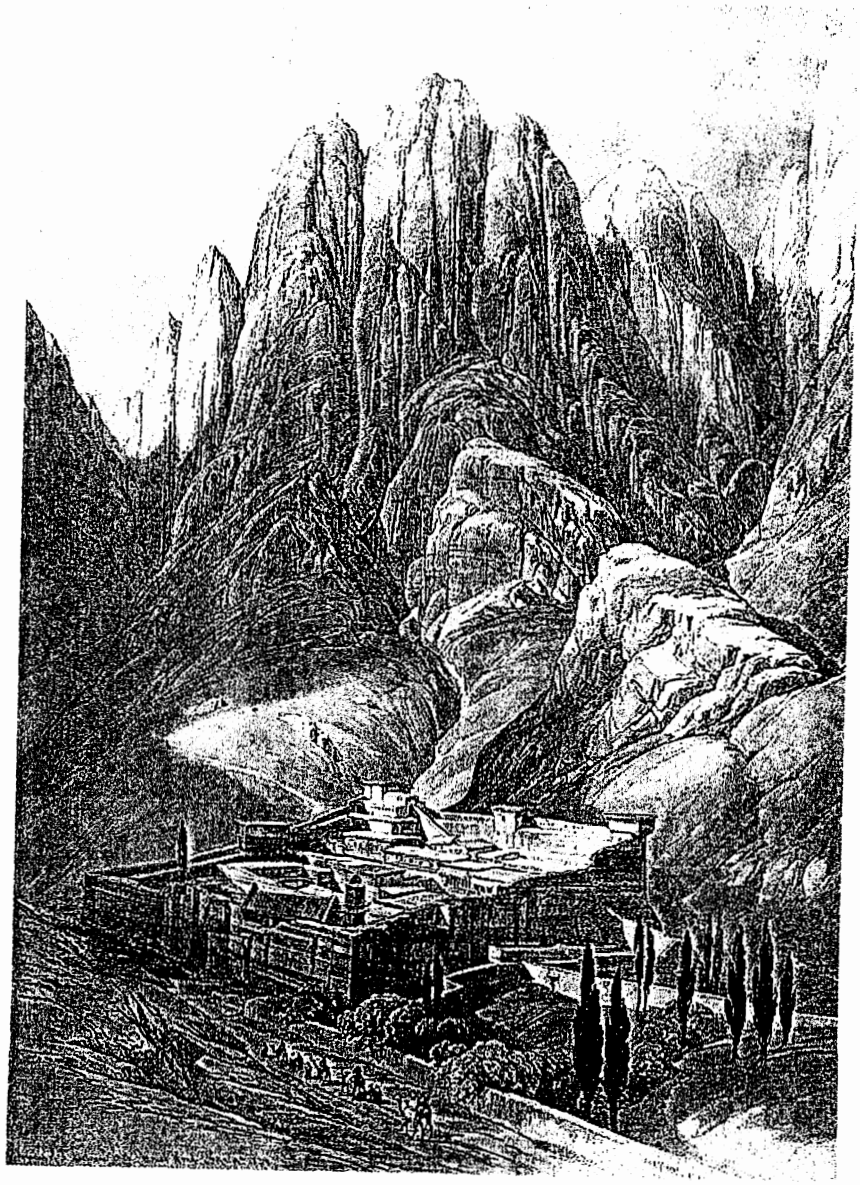


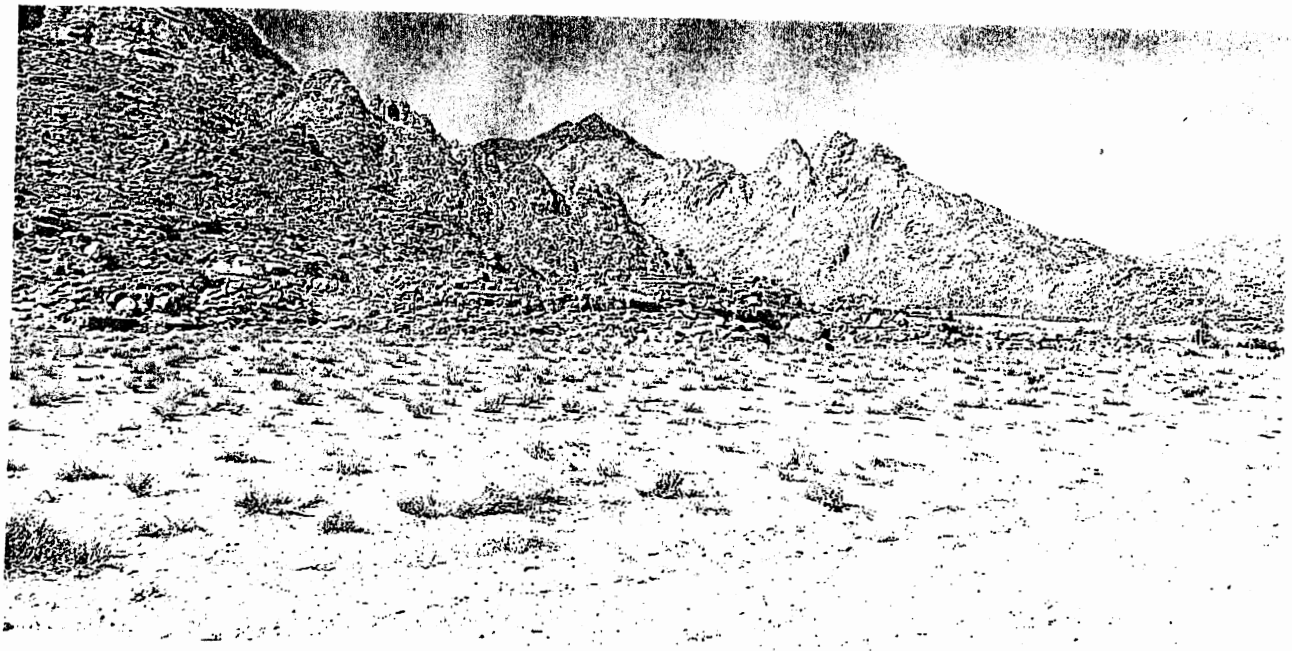
Fig. 12. The Dead Sea (a) in 2000 B.C. before the end of Sodom and Gomorrah, (b) in 1900 B.C. after the disaster.

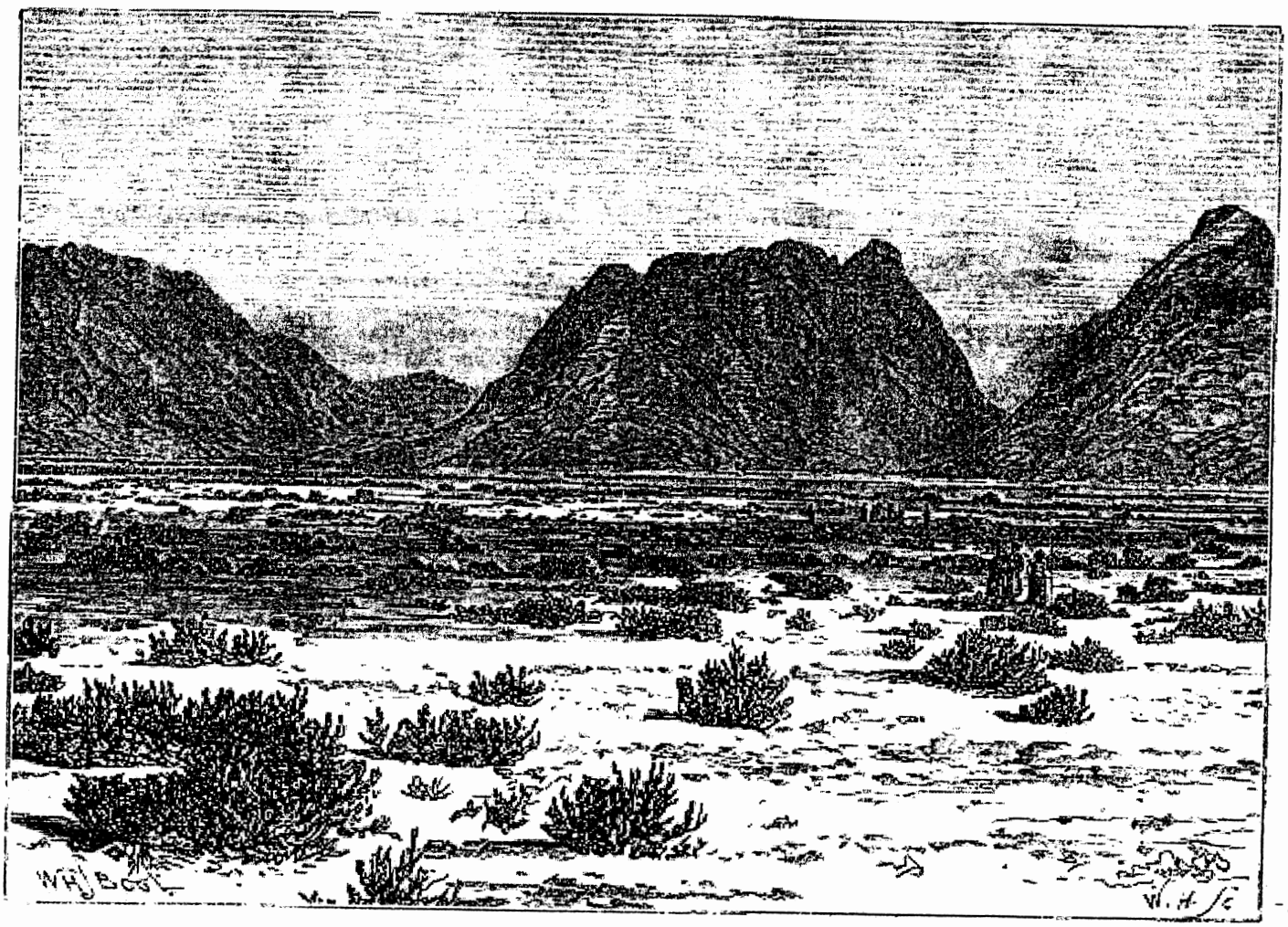
WHERE IS THE REAL MT. SINAI?



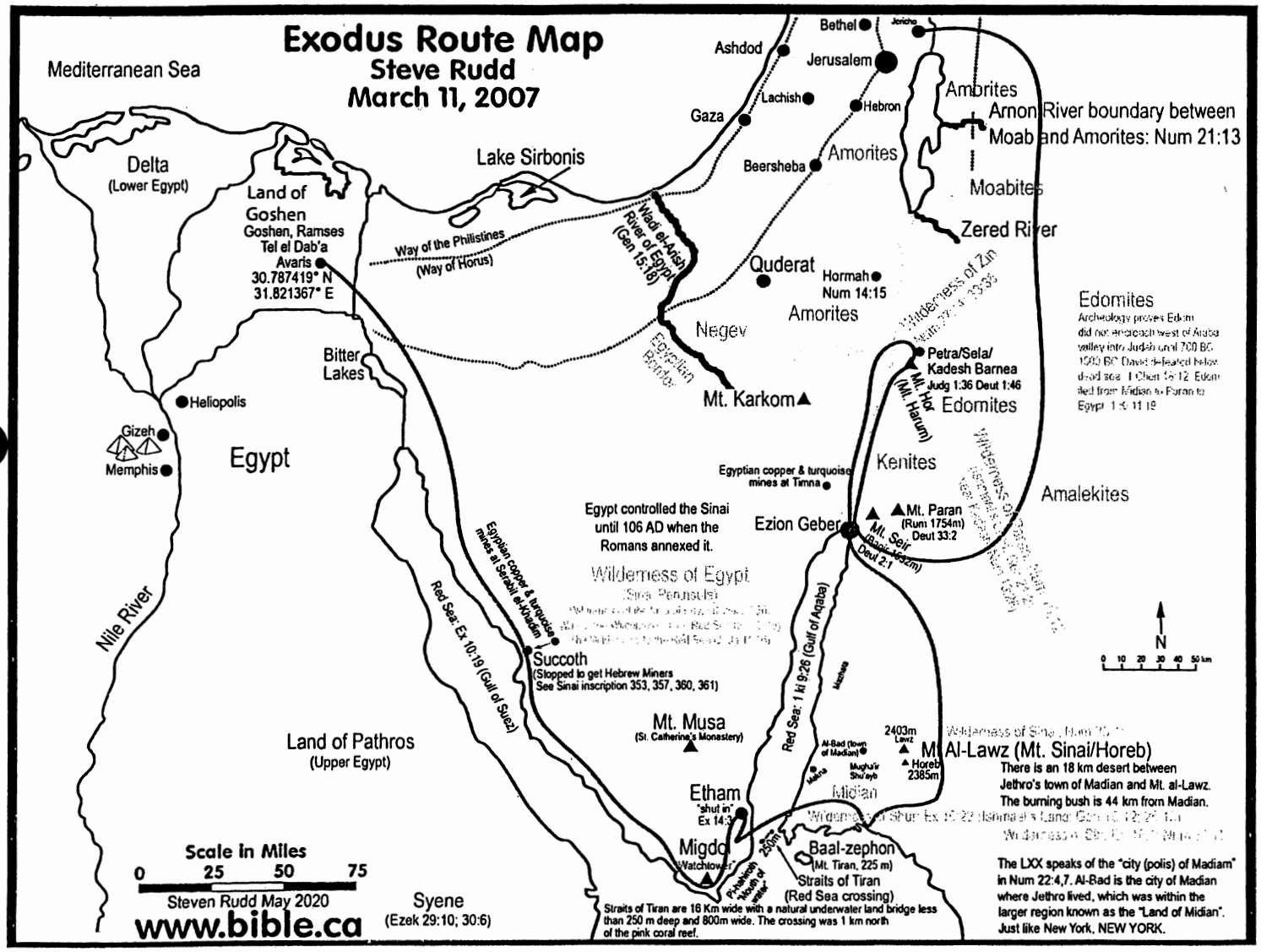
Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

Jabal al-Lawz/Jabal Maqla in Saudi Arabia



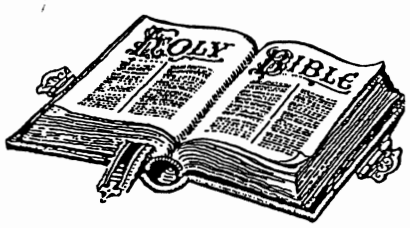


THE RAS SUFSAFEH (MOUNT SINAI).


Exodus Route Map
Steve Rudd
March 11, 2007
Mediterranean Sea
Delta
(Lower Egypt)
Land of Goshen
Goshen, Ramses
Tel el Dab'a
Avaris
30.787419° N
31.821367° E
Lake Sirbonis
Way of the Philistines
(Way of Horus)
Wadi el-Arish
River of Egypt
(Gen 15:18)
Bitter Lakes
Heliopolis
Gizeh
Memphis
Egypt
Nile River
Land of Pathros
(Upper Egypt)
Syene
(Ezek 29:10; 30:6)
Egyptian Border
Negev
Mt. Karkom
Ashdod
Bethel
Jericho
Jerusalem
Lachish
Gaza
Hebron
Beersheba
Amorites
Ambrites
Arnon River boundary between Moab and Amorites: Num 21:13
Moabites
Zered River
Quderat
Hormah
Num 14:15
Wilderness of Zin
Edomites
Archeology proves Edom did not encroach west of Araba valley into Judah until 700 BC. 1500 BC David defeated fellow dead sea. 1 Chron 18:12 Edom fled from Midian to Paran to Egypt 1 Ki 11:18
Petra/Sela/
Kadesh Barnea
Judg 1:36 Deut 1:46
Mt. Hor
(Mt. Harum)
Edomites
Kenites
Amalekites
Egyptian copper & turquoise mines at Timna
Egypt controlled the Sinai until 106 AD when the Romans annexed it.
Ezion Geber
Mt. Paran
(Rum 1754m)
Deut 33:2
Mt. Seir
(Batir 1452m)
Deut 2:1
Wilderness of Egypt
Sinai Peninsula
Egyptian copper & turquoise mines at Serabit el-Khadim
Succoth
(Stopped to get Hebrew Miners
See Sinai inscription 353, 357, 360, 361)
Red Sea: Ex 10:19 (Gulf of Suez)
Red Sea: 1 ki 9:26 (Gulf of Aqaba)
Mt. Musa
(St. Catherine's Monastery)
Al-Bad (town of Madian)
Mugha'ir Shu'eyb
2403m
Lawz
Horeb
2385m
Mt Al-Lawz (Mt. Sinai/Horeb)
There is an 18 km desert between Jethro's town of Madian and Mt. al-Lawz. The burning bush is 44 km from Madian.
Midian
Etham
"shut in"
Ex 14:2
Migdol
(Watchtower)
Pi-hahiroth
Mouth of valley
250m
Baal-zephon
(Mt. Tiran, 225 m)
Straits of Tiran
(Red Sea crossing)
Straits of Tiran are 16 Km wide with a natural underwater land bridge less than 250 m deep and 800m wide. The crossing was 1 km north of the pink coral reef.
The LXX speaks of the "city (polis) of Madiam" in Num 22:4,7. Al-Bad is the city of Madian where Jethro lived, which was within the larger region known as the "Land of Midian". Just like New York, NEW YORK.
Scale in Miles
0 25 50 75
Steven Rudd May 2020
www.bible.ca
N
0 10 20 30 40 50 km

The Exodus Route Restored!

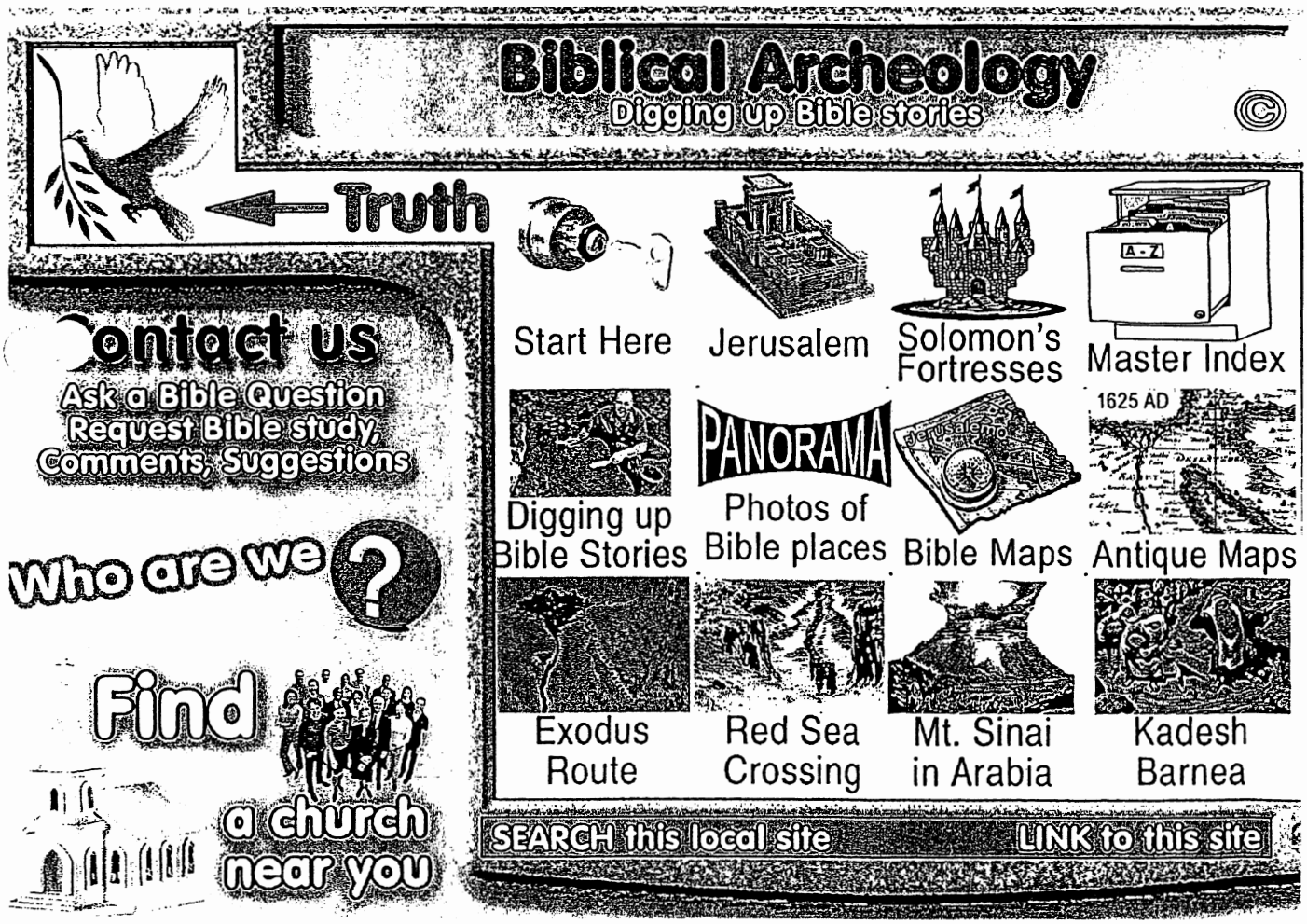
Proving the exodus route from the Bible: An Analysis of scriptural proof.



- The Scriptures as a whole teach, along with geographic analysis, that the Hebrews crossed the Red Sea on the Gulf of Aqaba, specifically at the Straits of Tiran.
- The Scriptures teach that Mount Sinai is somewhere in north Saudi Arabia. (History leads us to suggest Mt. Lawz as the most likely place.)
- The Scriptures teach that Kadesh Barnea is Transjordan, somewhere south of the Dead Sea in modern Jordan. (History and Archaeology leads us to suggest at Petra, or just north of Petra at Beidha.)

A TYPICAL HIGH QUALITY BUT ERRONEOUS APPROACH.

MK



Authors note: The exodus route we propose was conceived in 2005 AD, but it is actually a restoration of the ancient vie held by first century Christians.

Step #1: We began with the Bible as our only guide and blueprint for locating places connected with the exodus. We completely ignored everything EXCEPT the bible: We ignored: maps, history, commentaries and the opinions archeologists. From this study, we concluded the Scriptures taught that Israel crossed the Red Sea somewhere o the Gulf of Aqaba, forcing Mt. Sinai in Saudi Arabia. (Paul plainly tells us Mt. Sinai is in Arabia: Gal 4:25) We we also able to prove from scripture that Kadesh Barnea must be Transjordan, somewhere south of the Dead Sea in

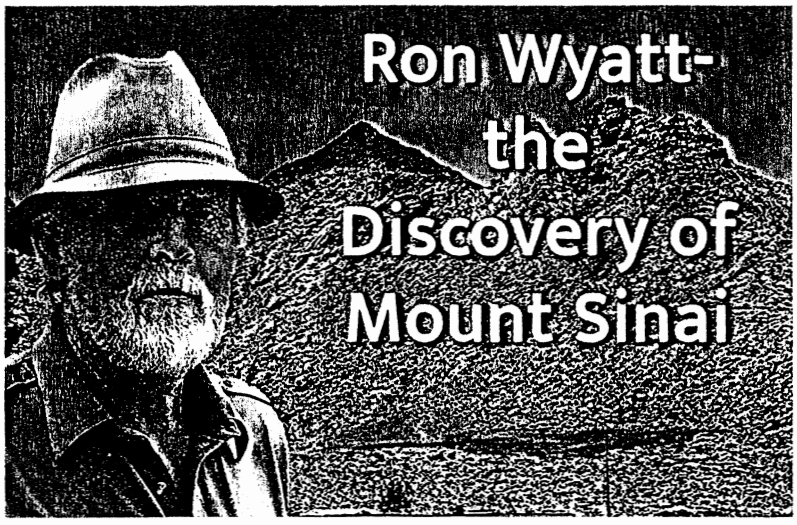
Ron Wyatt

m Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Ronald Eldon Wyatt (2 Jun 1933 – August 4, 1999) was an adventurer and former nurse anesthetist noted for advocating the Durupınar site as the site of Noah's Ark, among other Bible-related pseudoarchaeology. His claims were dismissed by scientists, historians, biblical scholars, and by leaders in his own Seventh-day Adventist Church, but his work continued to have a following among some fundamentalists and evangelical Christians.

Contents

- 1 Biography
- 2 Claimed discoveries
- 3 Reception
- 4 Death
- 5 See also
- 6 References
- 7 External links



Biography

Wyatt was working as a nurse-anesthetist in a hospital in Madison, Tennessee,[1] when in 1960, at the age of 27, he saw a picture in *Life Magazine* of the Durupınar site, a boat-like shape on a mountain near Mount Ararat. The resulting widespread speculation in evangelical Christian circles that this might be Noah's Ark started Wyatt on his career as an amateur archaeologist. From 1977 until his death in 1999 he made over one hundred trips to the Middle East, his interests widening to take in a wide variety of references from the Old and New Testaments.

Claimed discoveries

By the time of his death on August 4, 1999, his claimed discoveries included:

- Noah's Ark (the Durupınar site, located approximately 18 miles (29 km) south of Mount Ararat)[2]
- Anchor stones (or drogue stones) used by Noah on the Ark[3]
- The post-flood house, grave markers and tombs of Noah and his wife[4]
- The location of Sodom and Gomorrah and the other Cities of the Plain: Zoar, Zeboim and Admah[5]
- Sulfur/brimstone balls from the ashen remains of Sodom and Gomorrah.[6]
- The area of Djoser's pyramid complex believed to be the remains of Joseph's grain distribution bins used during the 7 year famine.[7]

  The Tower of Babel site (in southern Turkey)[8]
- How the Egyptians may have built the pyramids.[9]
- The site of the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea (located in the Gulf of Aqaba)[10]

- Chariot wheels and other relics of the army of Pharaoh at the bottom of the Red Sea
- The site of the biblical Mt. Sinai (in Saudi Arabia at Jabal al Lawz)[11]
  A chamber at the end of a maze of tunnels under Jerusalem containing artifacts from Solomon's Temple (including the Ark of the Covenant).[12]
- The site of the Crucifixion of Jesus
- Christ's blood, dripped onto the Mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant beneath the Crucifixion site.
- Burial pots off the coast of Ashkelon[13]

Reception

While Wyatt won a devoted following from some fundamentalist Christians, he was not considered credible by professional archaeologists and biblical scholars. The Garden Tomb Association of Jerusalem state in a letter they issue to visitors on request:

> The Council of the Garden Tomb Association (London) totally refute the claim of Mr Wyatt to have discovered the original Ark of the Covenant or any other biblical artifacts within the boundaries of the area known as the Garden Tomb Jerusalem. Though Mr Wyatt was allowed to dig within this privately owned garden on a number of occasions (the last occasion being the summer of 1991) staff members of the Association observed his progress and entered his excavated shaft. As far as we are aware nothing was ever discovered to support his claims nor have we seen any evidence of biblical artifacts or temple treasures.

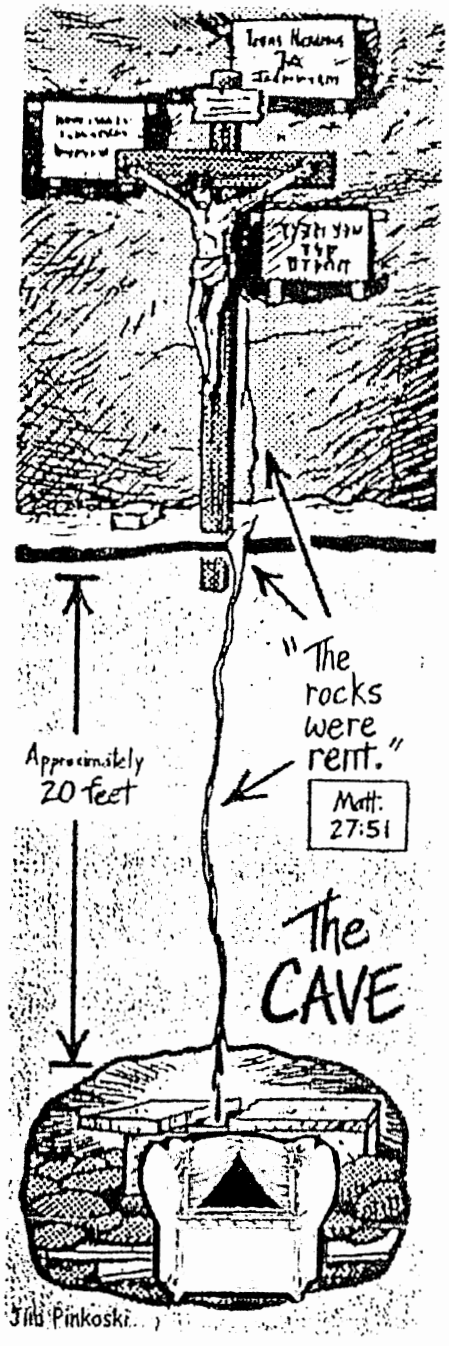
Archaeologist Joe Zias of Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) has stated that "Ron Wyatt is neither an archaeologist nor has he ever carried out a legally licensed excavation in Israel or Jerusalem. In order to excavate one must have at least a BA in archaeology which he does not possess despite his claims to the contrary. ... [His claims] fall into the category of trash which one finds in tabloids such as the National Enquirer, Sun etc."[14]

Wyatt's official organization *Wyatt Archaeological Research* (WAR), claims that the IAA have always been aware of the excavations and issued "verbal permits" for most of them and official permits to all WAR excavations since 2002. Nevertheless, the only evidence of WAR involvement in a legitimate excavation sanctioned by the IAA relates to WAR part-funding of a 2005 dig.[15]

Wyatt's fellow evangelicals have also been critical: Answers in Genesis called Wyatt's claims "fraudulent",[16] and one Seventh-day Adventist professor of archaeology sums up Wyatt's Noah's Ark and anchor stones claims in these words: "While the Durupinar site is about the right length for Noah's ark, [it is] ... too wide to be Noah's ark. Wyatt has claimed that the "boat-shapedness" of this formation can only be explained by its being Noah's ark, but both Shea and Morris have offered other plausible explanations. Likewise, Wyatt has argued that the standing stones he has found are anchors, while Terian is aware of similar stones outside the Durupinar site area that were pagan cultic stones later converted by Christians for Christian purposes."[17]

Wyatt died on August 4, 1999, aged 66, in Baptist Central Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, after having suffered from a type of cancer. His interment was in Columbia's Polk Memorial Park Cemetery.[18]

DRAWING OF RON WYATT'S FRAUDULENT CLAIM OF DISCOVERING CHRIST'S BLOOD ON THE MERCY SEAT OF THE ARK OF THE COVENANT BELOW CALVARY



Biblical archaeologists have gathered archaeologist data with painstaking effort and scholarship. Their work validates the accuracy of the Bible. Yet mostly within a single decade, Ron Wyatt sought out and claimed the most amazing Biblical sites and relics. The sensational discoveries claimed by Wyatt number nearly 100 and include such things as the Ark of the Covenant, anchor stones from Noah's Ark, a book of the law written by Moses, and the original Ten Commandments in stone. Also Christ's literal living blood, fences from Noah's farm, the Golden Censer, Goliath's sword, the graves of Korah and friends, the Table of Showbread, and the wheels of Pharaoh's chariots (Standish, pages 7-10). These are only the beginning. It is unfortunate for those who love the Bible that all of these incredible claims are almost certainly fraudulent. A great criticism leveled at Mr. Wyatt has been that his 'evidence' has generally been in the form of either photographs or nonconclusive specimens, which may or may not have come from the source he claims. His 'findings' have not been given independent confirmation by other researchers with specialized training in the fields of archaeology and related sciences, which Mr. Wyatt (a nurse anesthetist by profession) did not have (he died in 1999). This lack of specific education by itself would not invalidate his findings if they could be supported by others, but they cannot. In this book, the Standish brothers examine the Wyatt claims in-depth, going beyond his videotaped claims. These findings can serve as a benchmark upon which Ron Wyatt's 'discoveries' can be more carefully evaluated. In 58 easily-read chapters the Standishs meticulously, painstakingly examine in detail all of Wyatt's claims.

Bibliography

Beitzel, B.J. 1985. *The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands*. Chicago: Moody.

Conder, C.R. 1883. "The Exodus." *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* 1883: 79-90.

Davies, G.I. 1979. "The Significance of Deuteronomy 1.2 for the Location of Mount Horeb." *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 111: 87-101.

Wilson, J.A. 1969. "Egyptian Historical Texts." Pp. 227-64 in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd ed., ed. J.B. Pritchard. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Investigating Origins

- True and False Science >> Feb 4 2020
- Rapid Microevolution and Fitness Cost >> Jun 6 2011
- Hopeful Monsters? >> May 11 2011
- Texas Flood Rapidly Creates Canyon >> Apr 7 2011
- Hydrothermal Vents and the Origin of Life >> Feb 23 2011
- Is Malaria Evolving? >> Jun 15 2010
- Dating the Permian-Triassic Extinction >> Apr 12 2010
- Creating Life from RNA >> Feb 8 2010

Ministry Updates

- ABR Ministry Update - Summer 2025 >> Jun 2 2025
- ABR Ministry Update - Spring 2025 >> Mar 11 2025
- Merry Christmas from ABR 2024 >> Dec 2 2024
- Summer 2024 Ministry Update >> Jun 7 2024

is in Saudi Arabia. Not Egypt!" (Cornuke and Halbrook 2000: 17). The Bible does not say Saudi Arabia, it only says Arabia.

One can easily argue that the Apostle Paul used the First Century AD Roman concept of Arabia in this passage. In the first century AD, based on the prior use by Herodotus, Pliny and Strabo, Arabia extended from the Persian Gulf to the Nile Delta, thus including the Sinai Peninsula in Arabia. Paul would be perfectly correct in placing Mt. Sinai in the Sinai Peninsula because the Sinai Peninsula was part of Arabia of his day.

I also interacted in this section with Prof. Cross and Mike Heiser's suggestion (made at the NEAS meeting in 1998) that Mt. Sinai was outside the Sinai Peninsula based on three passages from the Bible, Deut. 33:2; Judges 5:4; and Habakkuk 3:3 (Franz 2000: 107). Cross (1998) and Heiser suggest that Seir, Mt. Paran and Teman are located in present day Jordan or even Saudi Arabia. In my article, I suggested that Teman was at or near Kuntillet 'Ajrud, Mt. Paran is situated in the area of Kadesh Barnea (Num. 13:26) and Seir (Biblical Edom) included the area of the Central Negev Highlands, the area to the west of the Aravah.

When my article came out, I realized that I had not adequately documented the thesis that Edom is also on the west side of the Aravah. My assertion initially came 20 years ago from a friend and fellow student at the Institute of Holy Land Studies in Jerusalem, Bruce Crew. This assertion was part of his MA thesis. At my request, Bruce wrote a follow-up article for *Bible and Spade* on why Edom was also west of the Aravah. He produced an excellent article demonstrating the case, which will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Bible and Spade*. In the course of his writing, I was able to supply him with some articles to help update his material. I was surprised at the number of archaeologists that had come to this same position based on the Biblical text as well as the topography and archaeological considerations. Perhaps some day Biblical scholars might catch up with the archaeological world!

The Archaeological and Geographical Evidence

There are at least eight pieces of archaeological or geographical evidence that the proponents of Jebel al-Lawz use to support their idea.

A land bridge that goes across the Strait of Tiran from the southern tip of Sinai to Saudi Arabia, or the other view has a land bridge that crosses the Gulf of Akaba / Eilat from Nuweiba.

- A set of bitter wells that they identify as Marah.
- Twelve springs of al-Bad' that they identify as Elim.
- The caves of Moses and Jethro at al-Bad'.
- An altar for the golden calf with petroglyphs of bovine.
- The altar of Moses and the twelve pillars.
- The blackened rock on top of Jebel al-Lawz.
- The "split rock of Horeb".

I examined the archaeological evidence in my article in *Bible and Spade* and found that this evidence did not line up with the Biblical record (Franz 2000:107-111). One Saudi archaeologist was very helpful in explaining what the archaeological sites actually were. I stated in my article that Biblical

- Coins of the Ancient World
- Khirbet el-Maqatir Research Articles
- Temple Mount research
- Mt Ebal Curse Tablet - Defixio

OUTREACH

Staff Presentations & Events
Exhibits

- Joshua, Judges & Jesus
- The World of Jesus

NEAS / ETS Reports
Shiloh Dig

This paper was originally presented at the ETS/NEAS meeting on Thursday, November 15, 2001. It has been slightly edited for Web presentation.

The last ten years have witnessed a proliferation of books, videos, websites, and television programs that have proposed a new site for Mt. Sinai—Jebel al-Lawz in Saudi Arabia. These sources also told about underwater searches for Pharaoh's chariots and weapons from the Egyptian army. This paper examines three aspects of the identification of Mt. Sinai in Saudi Arabia. First, the paper questions the credibility of that position's claims. Second, the paper disputes the false assumptions by the proponents of Jebel al-Lawz. Third, the paper examines the archaeological evidence.

This paper discusses the first two aspects briefly because they have already been dealt with in the Fall 2000 issue of *Bible and Spade* (Franz 2000: 101–13). This paper discusses the third aspect, the archaeological evidence, in more detail. The questions dealt with include the following:

1. Are the archaeological remains that were observed by the proponents of Jebel al-Lawz credible?
2. Do the remains match the biblical text?

The final section of this paper deals with the location of the Red Sea crossing. Was it in the Gulf of Akaba/Eilat or the Gulf of Suez?

I believe that this paper, along with the *Bible and Spade* article, will conclusively demonstrate that there is no credible historical, geographical, archaeological, or biblical evidence to support the thesis that Mt. Sinai is at Jebel al-Lawz in Saudi Arabia.

The Proponents of Jebel al-Lawz as Mt. Sinai

Ron Wyatt first proposed the idea that Mt. Sinai was at Jebel al-Lawz. Whatever one may think of Ron Wyatt's "discoveries," he should be given full credit for this discovery. However, I would like to call your attention to a recent book examining the claims of Ron Wyatt. It is

entitled *Holy Relics or Revelation*, written by two SDA researchers, Russell and Colin Standish (Hartland Publications). This book is a careful, meticulous, in-depth study of Ron Wyatt's claims. These researchers "speak the truth in love" but state that Ron Wyatt has not been truthful in his claims.

While I was writing the first article, some proponents of Jebel al-Lawz not with Ron Wyatt requested that I not mention him. Their stated concern to me was that my mentioning of him would "dignify him" and that they consider him a "con man." They feared that mentioning them in the same paragraph as Wyatt would result in "guilt by association"! I pointed out to them that, when publishing research results, one must begin with a discussion of the history of research and include a review of the literature on the subject. Ron Wyatt is the key player in this discovery. Both sets of proponents of this view used the same archaeological evidence to prove their points. The only differences between the views are their proposed routes from Egypt to the Red Sea and the placing of the Red Sea crossing.

Ron Wyatt went to Jebel al-Lawz in Saudi Arabia with his two sons in 1984. They were arrested for entering Saudi Arabia illegally and were expelled after 78 days. Eleven months later, Wyatt returned with David Fasold and his "molecular frequency generator" to look for the "gold of the Exodus." Again they were expelled and made to promise that they would not return to Saudi Arabia or talk or write about their findings.

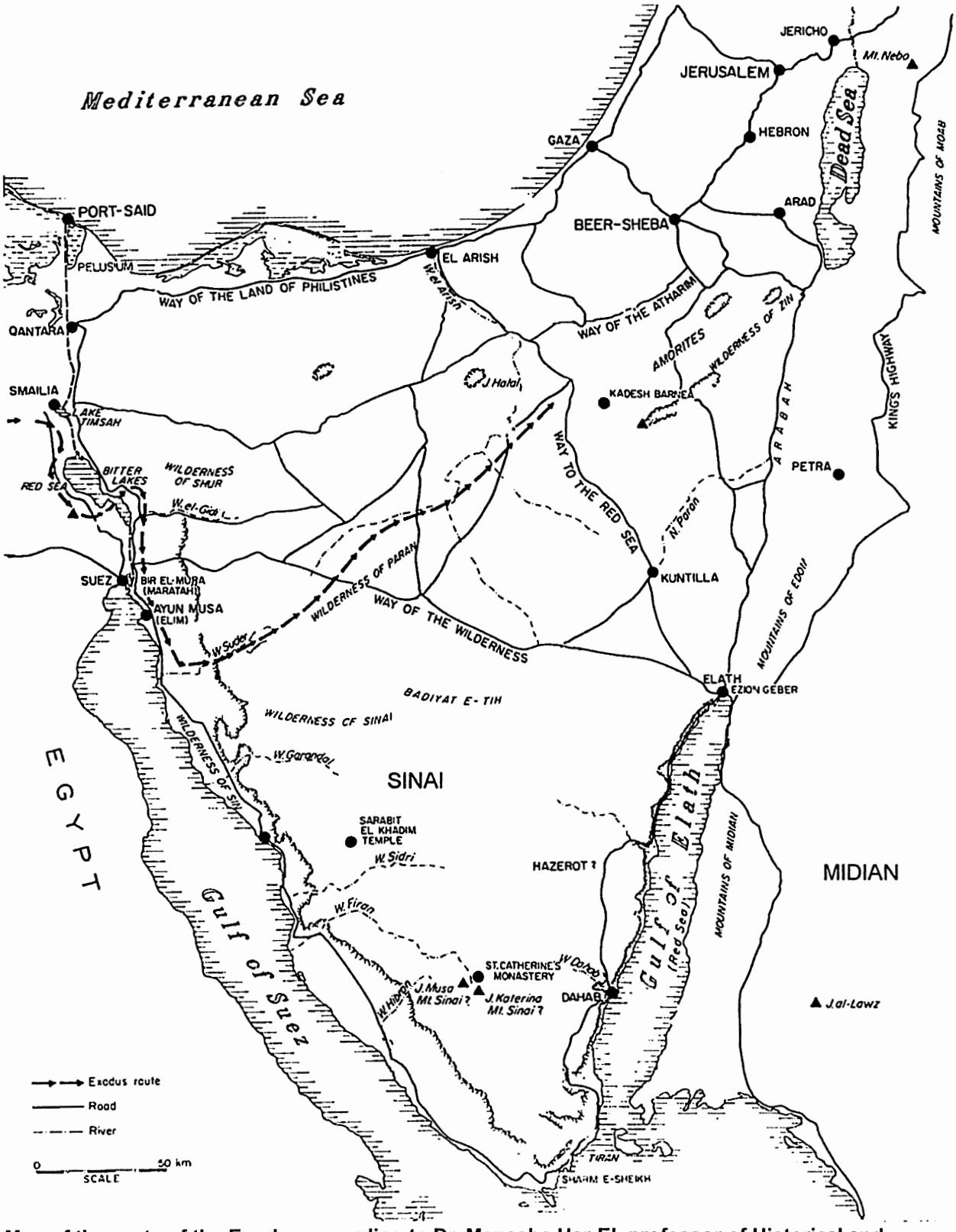
Fasold told Jim Irwin, the Apollo 15 astronaut, of their discoveries. Irwin, in turn, made contact with Bob Cornuke and Larry Williams, who eventually went to Saudi Arabia at least twice in order to ascertain whether Mt. Sinai is at Jebel al-Lawz. Both returned home and wrote books about their adventures. Others have since gone and taken video footage of the sites, footage that is now in videos and television programs. The most recent one is a video entitled *The Exodus Revealed*, by Lennart Moller. He also has a book entitled *The Exodus Case*. He basically uses Ron Wyatt's material and follows his ideas.

Problems with the Jebel al-Lawz Location View

The biggest problem with the identification of Jebel al-Lawz as Mt. Sinai is that it does not meet the biblical criteria for the site. In my *Bible and Spade* article I point out three questionable assumptions made by the proponents of Jebel al-Lawz.

The first questionable assumption that the proponents make is that the Sinai Peninsula was considered part of the "Land of Egypt" (Franz 2000: 103–105). The Bible says that when the Israelites left Succoth they were "out of Egypt" (Ex 13:8–20). The Land of Goshen was the eastern limit of Egypt. Apparently, the line of fortresses on the eastern frontier canal was the border between Egypt and Sinai (Hoffmeier 1997: 164–75).

Nadav Na'aman, a professor of Bible geography at Tel Aviv University, made an important point in an article on the "Brook of Egypt." He states,



Map of the route of the Exodus according to Dr. Menashe Har-El, professor of Historical and Biblical Geography, Tel Aviv University.

Individuals traveling in the Sinai on camelback average about 20 miles per day, or a little less (Davies 1979: 95-96). Donkey and camel caravans can average between 16 and 23 miles per day (Davies 1979: 96; cf. Beitzel 1985: 91), depending upon the terrain. Early in the 15th century BC, the Egyptian army under the leadership of Tuthmosis III averaged a commendable 15 miles

per day in traversing the relatively easy coastal route from the eastern border of Egypt to Gaza (Wilson 1969: 235, n. 16). Once they left Gaza, however, and began to negotiate the rugged terrain of central Canaan, their rate decreased to 7 miles per day (Wilson 1969: 235, n. 18).

We have another record of a long journey made by a large number of people in Biblical times. This was the trip made from Babylon to Jerusalem by Ezra and a group of Jews returning from Exile. They left Babylon on the 12th day of the first month (Ezr 8:31) and arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month (Ezr 7:9). The total elapsed time for the expedition was thus 121 days less 11, or 110 days. Allowing 15 days for Sabbath rest gives 95 travel days. The total distance covered was ca. 900 miles (*NIV Study Bible*, note on Ezra 7:7-9), resulting in an average of 9.5 miles per day. Ezra and his company were following a well-traveled route without flocks and herds and thus were able to achieve a respectable rate of travel.

A large group of pastoralists moving with their possessions and animals can cover no more than 6 miles in a day, and usually less (Conder 1883: 79; cf. Beitzel 1985: 91). The limiting factor is the animals. When the Israelites left Egypt, they had 'large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds' (Ex 13:38). Adequate sources of water had to be sought for them along the way and time had to be taken to allow the flocks and herds to graze as they traveled.

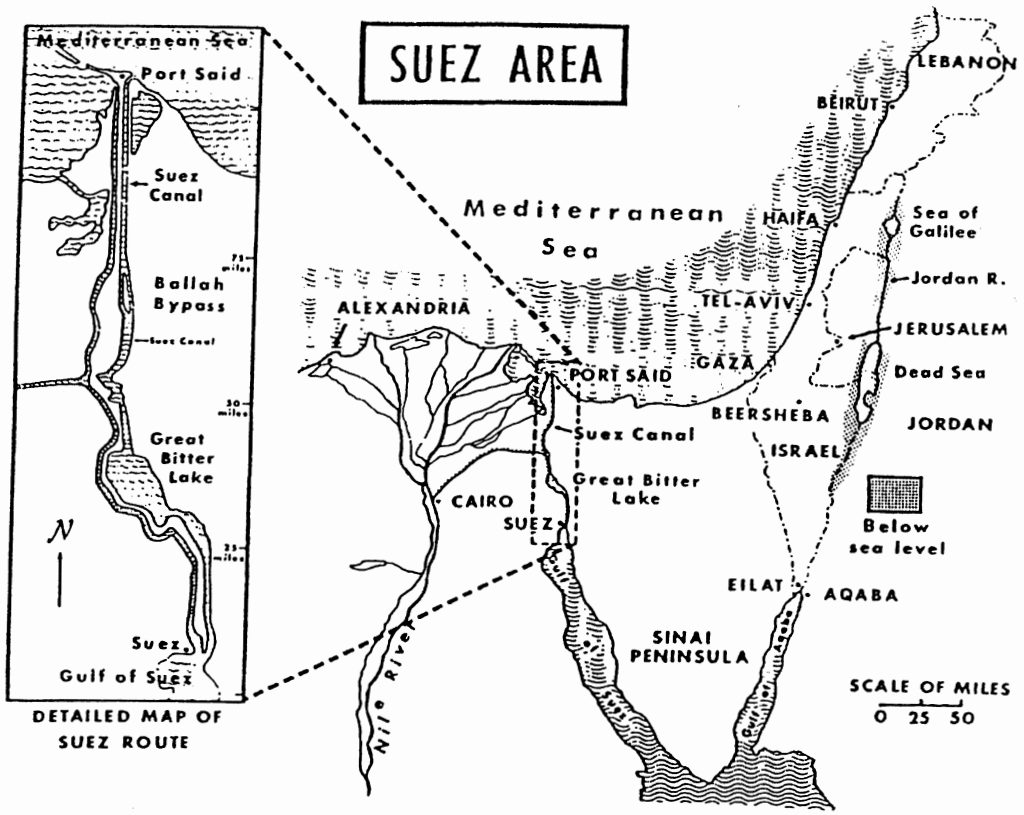
A crucial Biblical text for locating Mt. Sinai is Deuteronomy 1:2. Here it states that it took 11 days for the Israelites to travel from Horeb (Mt. Sinai) to Kadesh Barnea in the northern Sinai. This limits the location of Mt. Sinai to 60 or so miles from Kadesh Barnea. The straight-line distance from Jebel al-Lawz to Kadesh Barnea is approximately 150 miles. Allowing for diversions to find water, twists and turns, and ups and downs, the walking distance would be much greater. This is much too far for the Israelites to travel in 11 days.

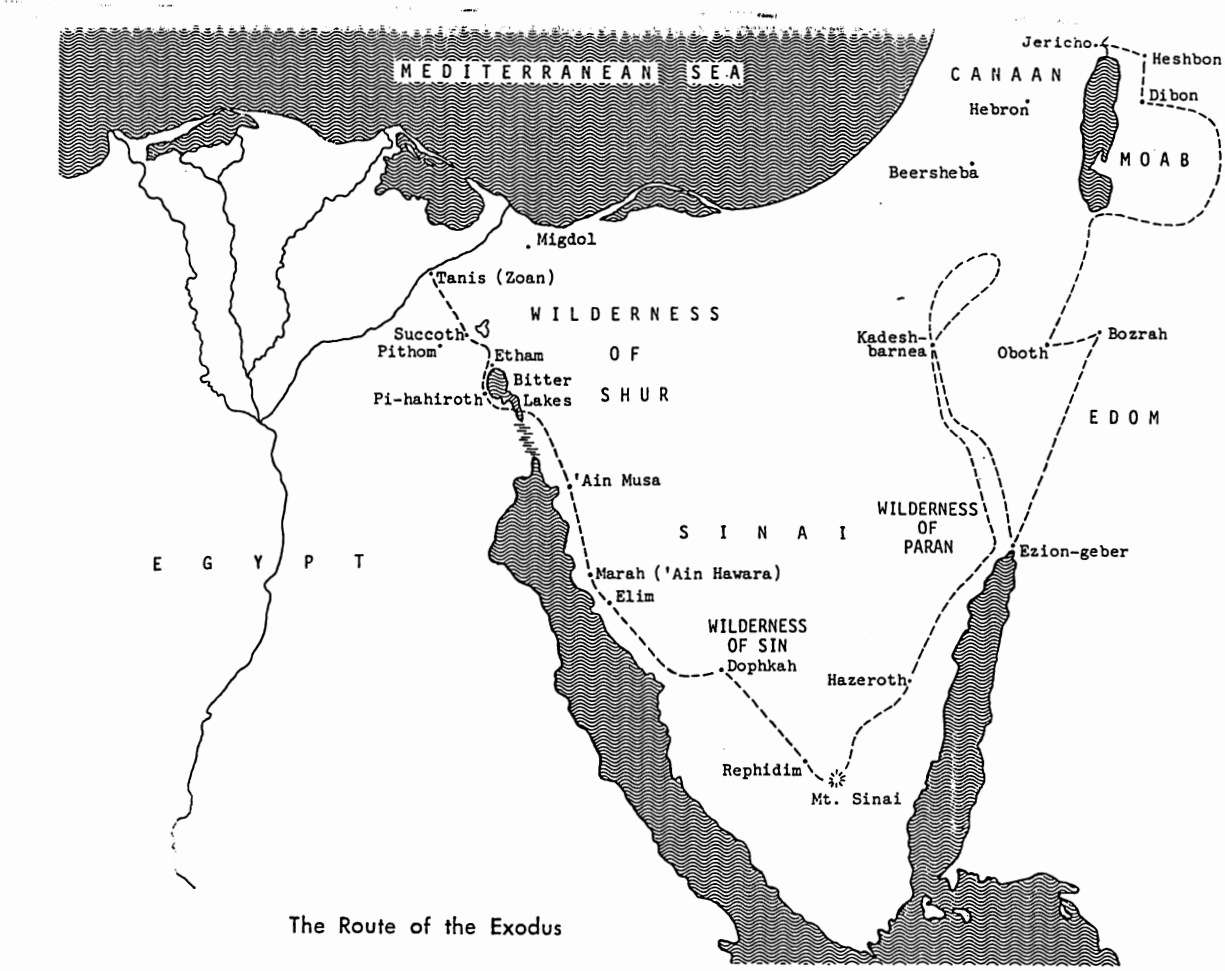
Even more devastating to the Saudi Arabia theory is the *yam suph* (Reed Sea) crossing. According to the Bible it occurred at the beginning of the journey shortly after the Israelites set out from Ramesses (Ex 12:37; 13:20-14:2; Nm 33:5-8). The Saudi Arabia theory places the *yam suph* crossing near the end of the journey at the Strait of Tiran at the southern end of the Gulf of Aqaba, some 350 map miles from Ramesses. There is no way the Israelites could have reached the Strait of Tiran within a few weeks after having left Egypt.

The traditional site of Jebel Musa cannot be Mt. Sinai either. The distance from Jebel Musa to Kadesh Barnea is about 160 map miles, again much too far for the Israelites to trek in 11 days.

Utilizing the travel time of the Israelites as an estimate of the distance traveled, the location of Mt. Sinai should be sought in the northern area of the Sinai Peninsula, roughly 60 miles from Kadesh Barnea.

Recommended Resource for Further Study





The Route of the Exodus

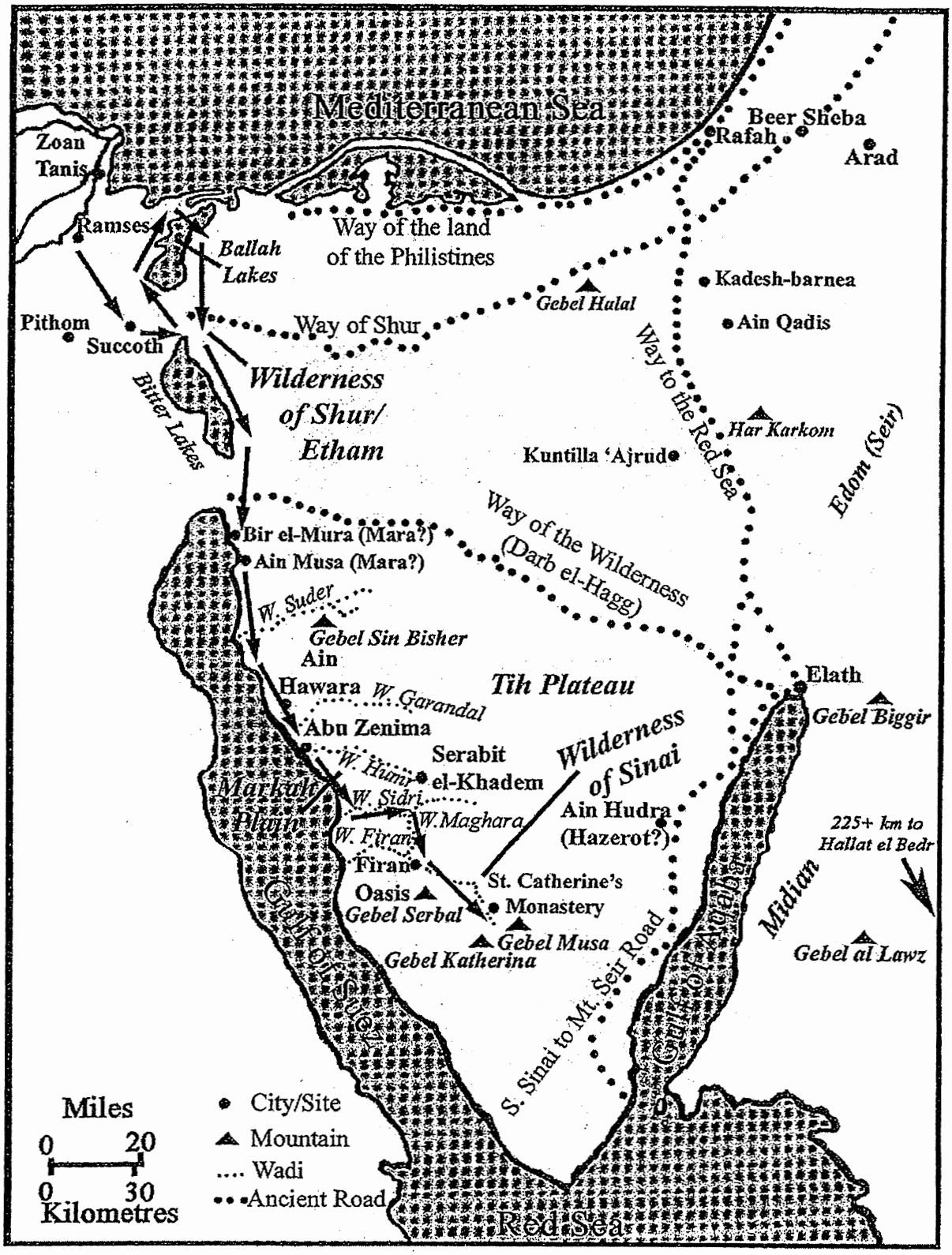
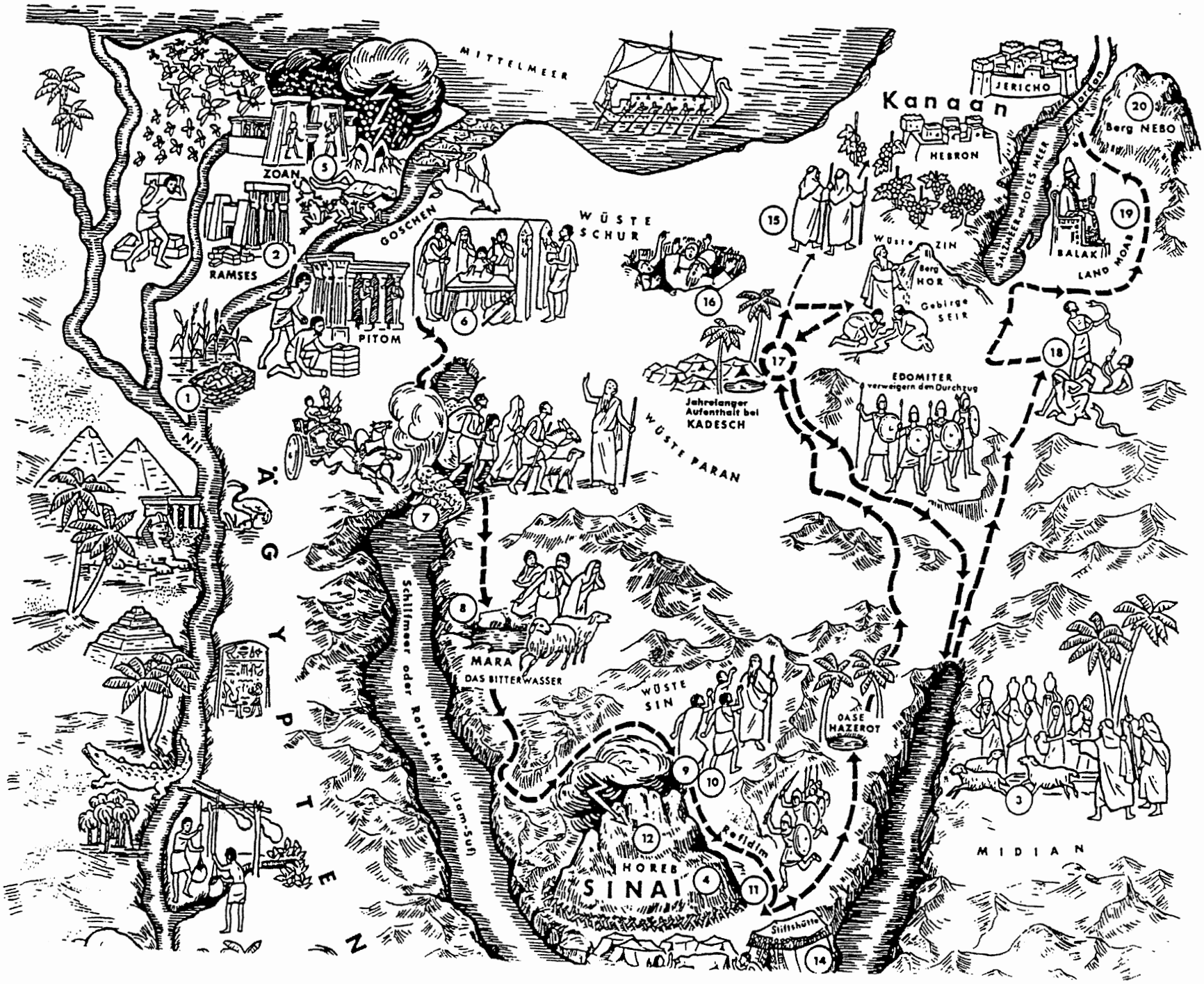
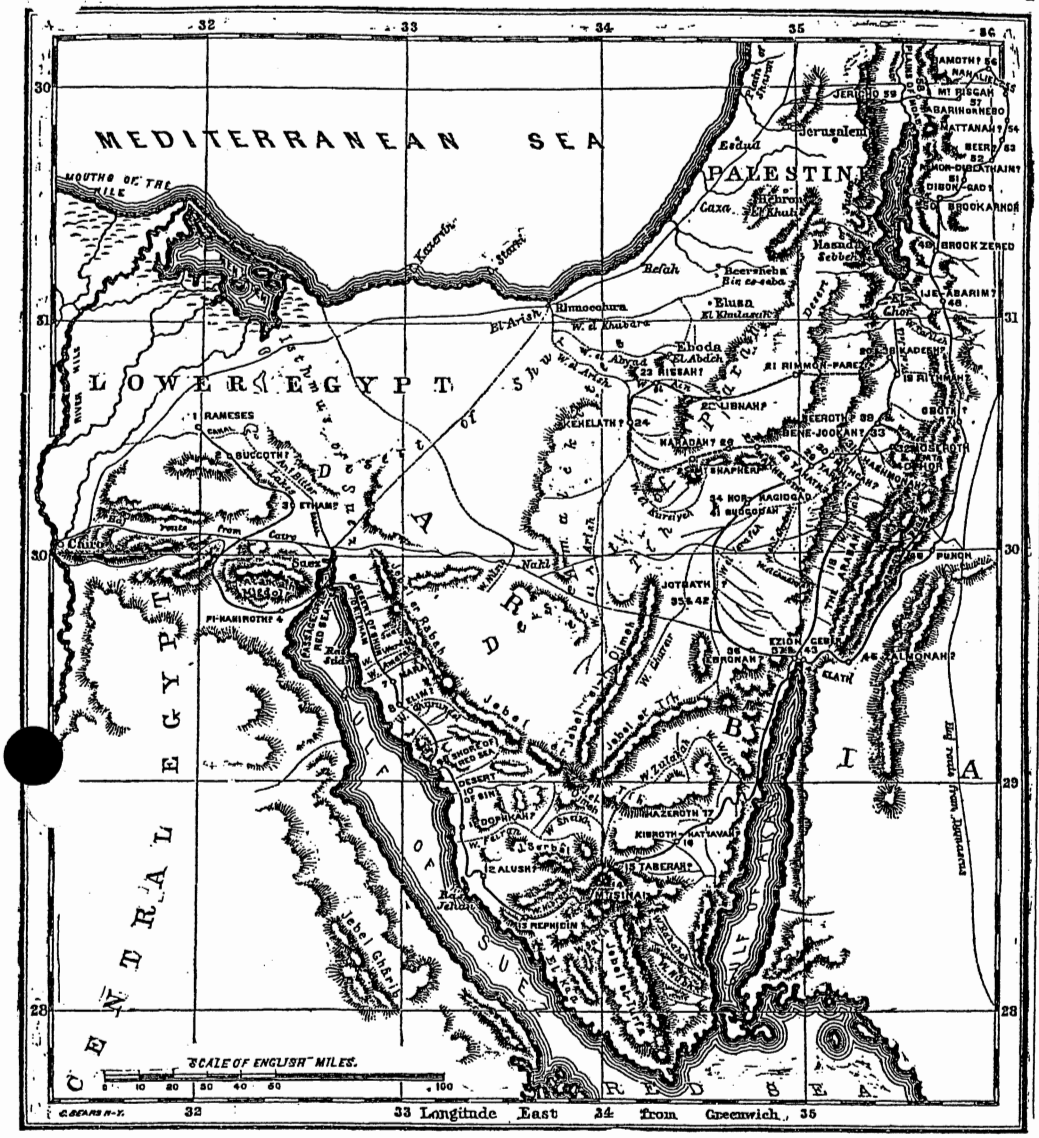


Figure 1. Map of Sinai (created by Jessica T. Hoffmeier)

Ancient Israel in Sinai, by James K. Hoffmeier, Oxford Press, 2005

Exodus Maps by K. A. Kitchen *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Gran Rapids, 2003


MITTELMEER
Kanaan
JERICHO
Jordan
20
Berg NEBO
HEBRON
SALZMEER od. TOTES MEER
19
BALAK
LAND MOAB
ZOAN
5
GOSCHEN
WÜSTE SCHUR
15
Wüste ZIN
Berg HOR
Gebirge SEIR
RAMSES
2
PITOM
6
16
17
18
EDOMITER
verweigern den Durchzug
Jahrelanger Aufenthalt bei KADESCH
1
Nil
WÜSTE PARAN
ÄGYPTEN
7
Schilfmeer oder Rotes Meer (Jam-Suf)
8
MARA
DAS BITTERWASSER
WÜSTE SIN
OASE HAZEROT
9
10
3
MIDIAN
12
HOREB
SINAI
4
11
Refidim
Stiftshütte
14



Map of the Arabian Peninsula, exhibiting the Route of the Israelites. (The dotted parts are uncertain. The numbers show the order and direction of the journeys.)

CYCLOPÆDIA

OF

BIBLICAL,

THEOLOGICAL, AND ECCLESIASTICAL

LITERATURE.

PREPARED BY

THE REV. JOHN M'CLINTOCK, D.D.,

AND

JAMES STRONG, S.T.D.

VOL. III.—E, F, G.

NEW YORK:

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,

FRANKLIN SQUARE

1868

would serve as landmarks to determine the route. As it is, we do not altogether despair of finding some clew to the subject. [See below.] It may be of service to subjoin the following table of the places through which the Israelites passed (not all of them exactly *stations*) from the time of their leaving Egypt to their arrival in Canaan, which we take (with some alterations) from Dr. Robinson's paper in the *Biblical Repos.* for 1832, p. 794–797.

(1.) *From Egypt to Sinai.*

	(EXODUS xii–xix.)	(NUMBERS xxxiii.)
[1.]	From Rameses (xii, 37).	From Rameses (ver. 5).
[2.]	Succoth (xii, 37).	Succoth (ver. 5).
[3.]	Etham (xiii, 20).	Etham (ver. 6).
[4.]	Pi-hahiroth (xiv, 2).	Pi-hahiroth (ver. 7).
[5.]	Passage through the Red Sea (xiv, 22).	Passage through the Red Sea (ver. 8).
[6.]	Three days' march into the desert of Shur (xv, 22).	Three days' march in the desert of Etham (ver. 8).
[7.]	Marah (xv, 23).	Marah (ver. 8).
[8.]	Elim (xv, 27).	Elim (ver. 9).
[9.]		Encampment by the Red Sea (ver. 10).
[10.]	Desert of Sin (xvi, 1).	Desert of Sin (ver. 11).
[11.]		Dophkah (ver. 12).
[12.]		Alush (ver. 13).
[13.]	Rephidim (xvii, 1).	Rephidim (ver. 14).
[14.]	Desert of Sinai (xix, 1).	Desert of Sinai (ver. 15).

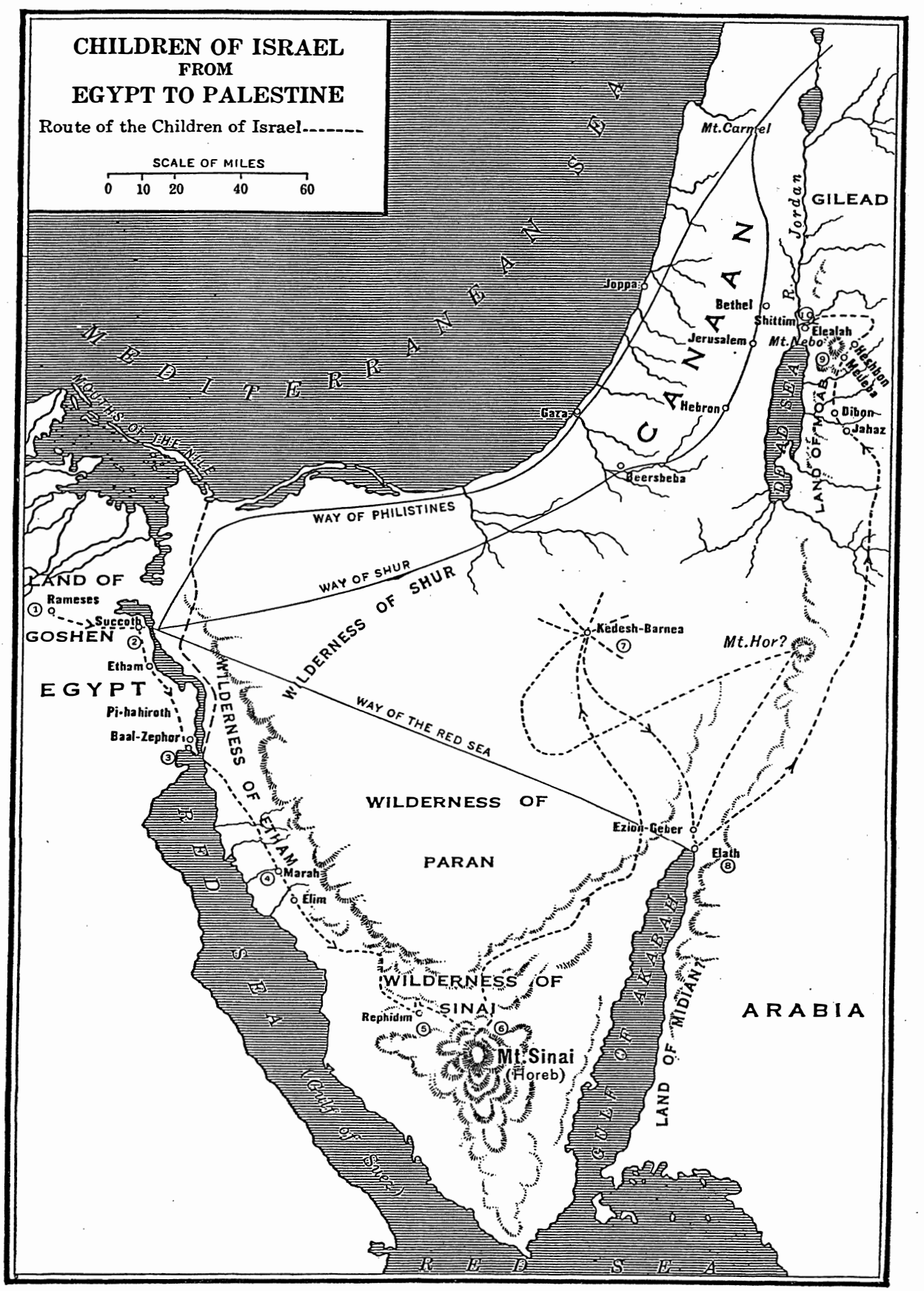
(2.) *From Sinai to Kadesh the second time.*

	(NUMBERS x–xx).	(NUMBERS xxxiii.
	From the desert of Sinai (x, 12).	From the desert of Sinai (ver. 16).
[15.]	Taberah (xi, 3; [Deut. ix, 22]).	
[16.]	Kibroth-hattaavah (xi, 34), in the edge of the desert of Paran (x, 12).	Kibroth-hattaavah (ver. 16).
[17.]	Hazeroth (xi, 35).	Hazeroth (ver. 17).
[18.]	The desert of 'Arabah, by the way of Mount Seir [Deut. i, 1, 2].	Dreadful desert by the way of the mount of the Amorites [Deut. i, 19].
[19.]		Rithmah (ver. 18).
[20.]	Kadesh, in the desert of Paran (xii, 16; xiii, 26); [Deut. i, 2, 19]. [Hence they turn back and wander for 38 years (Numb. xiv, 25 sq.) through the desert (Deut. ii, 1)].	
[21.]		Rimmon-parez (ver. 19).
[22.]		Libnah (ver. 20).
[23.]		Rissah (ver. 21).
[24.]		Kehelathah (ver. 22).
[25.]		Mount Shapher (ver. 23).
[26.]		Haradah (ver. 24).
[27.]		Makheloth (ver. 25).
[28.]		Tahath (ver. 26).
[29.]		Tarah (ver. 27).
[30.]		Mithcah (ver. 28).
[31.]		Hashmonah (ver. 29).
[32.]		Moseroth (ver. 30).
[33.]		Bene-jaakan (ver. 31).
[34.]		Hor-hagidgad (ver. 32).
[35.]		Jotbathah (ver. 33).
[36.]		Ebronah (ver. 34).
[37.]		Ezion-geber (ver. 35), by the way of the Red Sea [Deut. ii, 1].
[38.]	Return to Kadesh, in the desert of Zin (Numb. xx, 1), by the way of Mt. Seir (Deut. ii, 1).	Kadesh, in the desert of Zin (ver. 36).

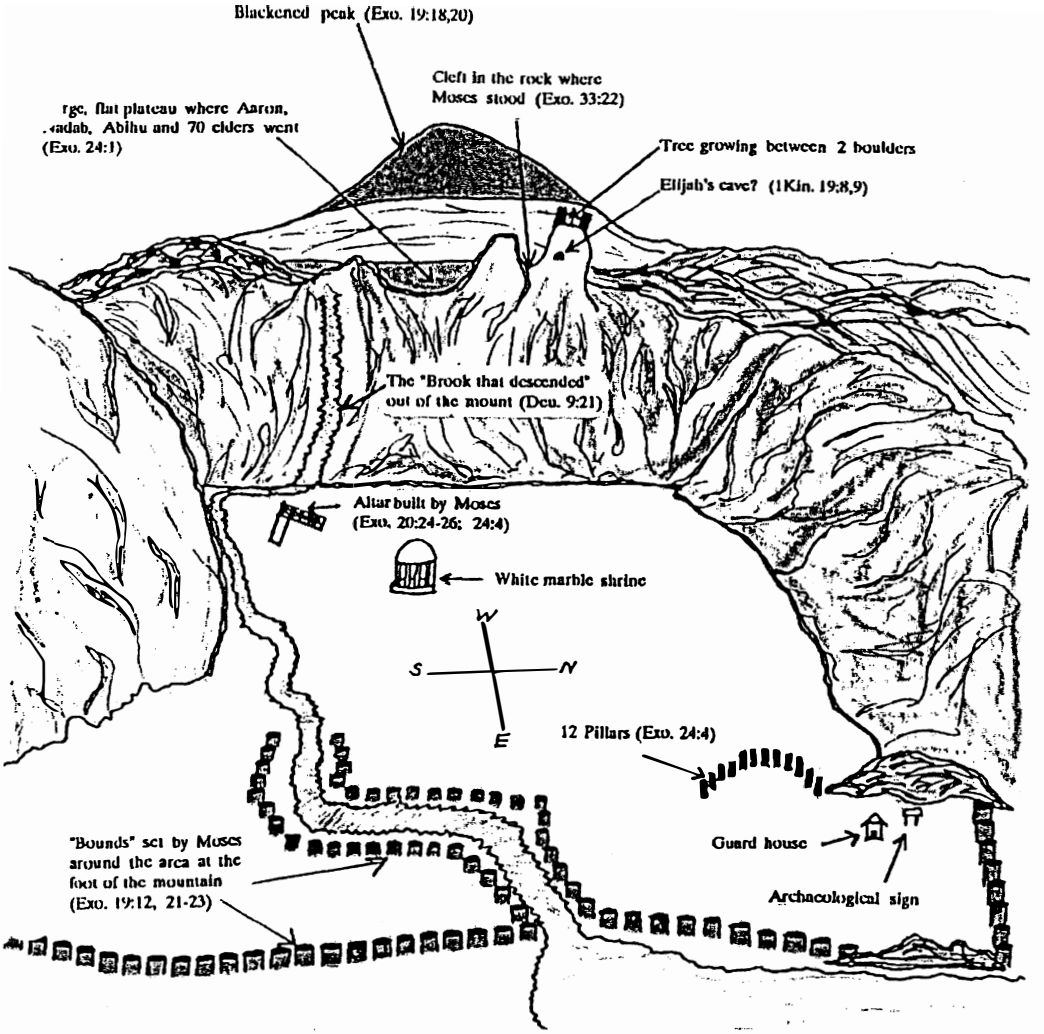
(3.) *From Kadesh to the Jordan.*

	(NUMB. xx, xxi; DEUT. i, ii, x).	(NUMBERS xxxiii.)
	From Kadesh (Numb. xx, 22).	From Kadesh (ver. 37).
[39.]	Beeroth Bene-jaakan (Deut. x, 6).	
[40.]	Mount Hor (Numb. xx, 22), or Mosera (Deut. x, 6), where Aaron died.	Mount Hor (ver. 37).
[41.]	Gudgodah (Deut. x, 7).	
[42.]	Jotbath (Deut. x, 7).	
[43.]	Way of the Red Sea (Numb. xxi, 4), by Ezion-geber (Deut. ii, 8).	
[44.]	Elath (Deut. ii, 8).	
[45.]		Zalmonah (ver. 41).
[46.]		Punon (ver. 42).
[47.]	Oboth (Numb. xxi, 10).	Oboth (ver. 43).
[48.]	Ije-abarim (Numb. xxi, 11).	Ije-abarim, or Iim (ver. 44, 45).
[49.]	The brook Zered (Numb. xxi, 12; Deut. ii, 13, 14).	
[50.]	The brook Arnon (Num. xxi, 13; Deut. ii, 24).	
[51.]		Dibon-gad (ver. 45).
[52.]		Almon-diblathaim (ver. 46).
[53.]	Beer (well), in the desert (Numb. xxi, 16, 18).	
[54.]	Mattanah (xxi, 18).	
[55.]	Nahaliel (xxi, 19).	
[56.]	Bamoth (xxi, 19).	
[57.]	Pisgah, put for the range of Abarim, of which Pisgah was part (xxi, 20).	Mountains of Abarim, near Nebo (ver. 47).
[58.]	By the way of Bashan to the plains of Moab by Jordan, near Jericho (Numb. xxi, 33; xxii, i).	Plains of Moab by Jordan, near Jericho (ver. 48).

The points indicated in the above route as far as Kadesh have already been identified with consi precision. It remains to consider how far the are capable of identification. For this purpose we have a few coincidences with modern or well-known

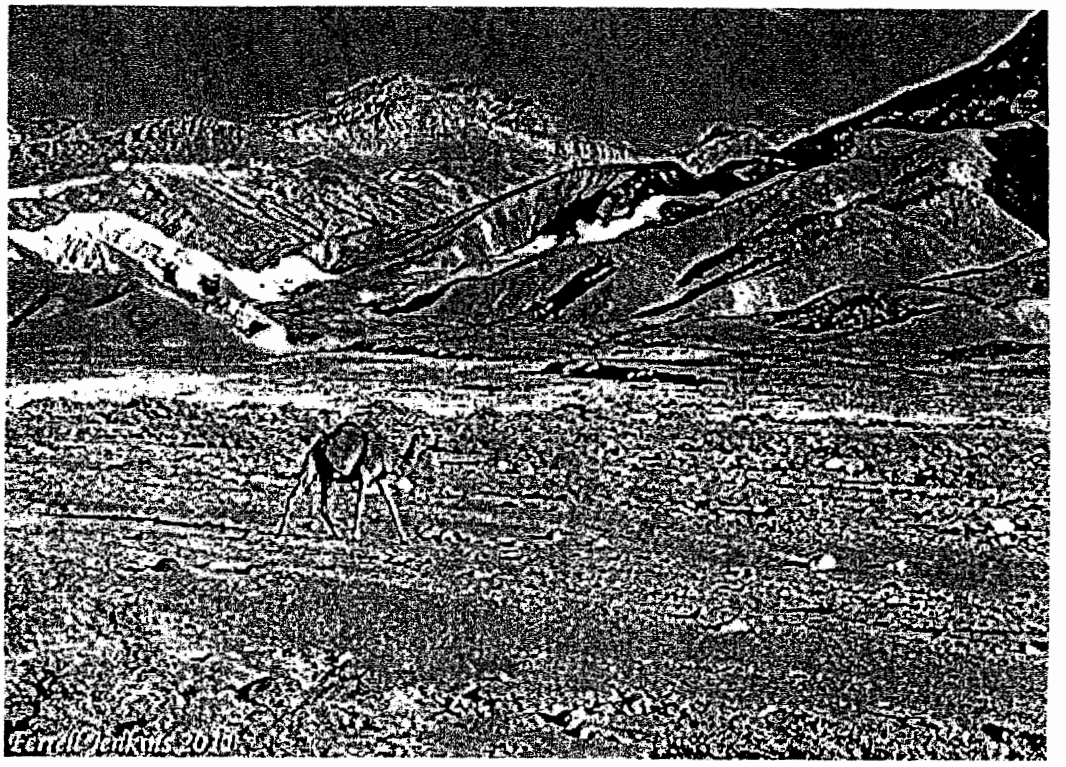


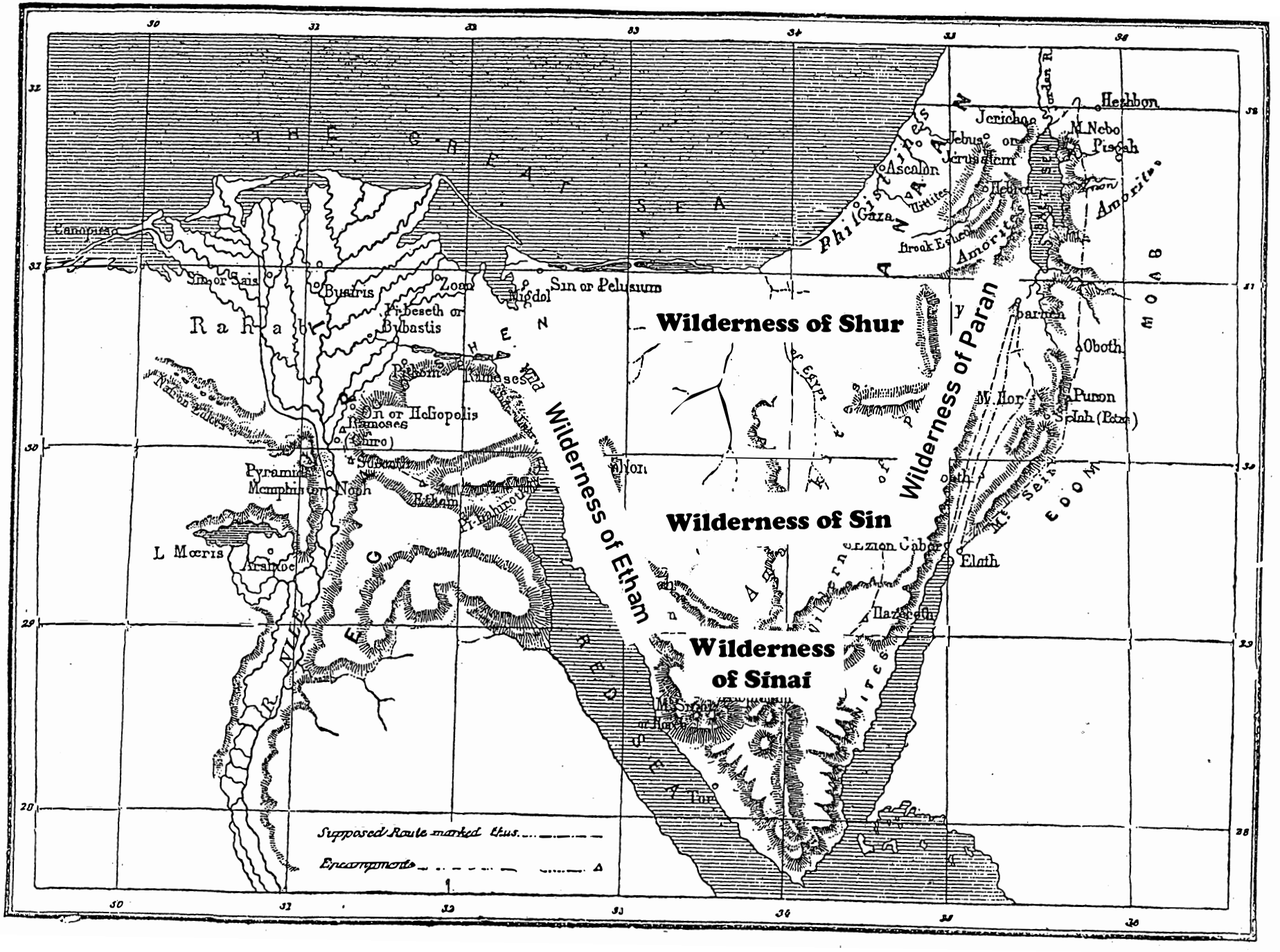
ISRAEL'S WANDERINGS IN THE WILDERNESS



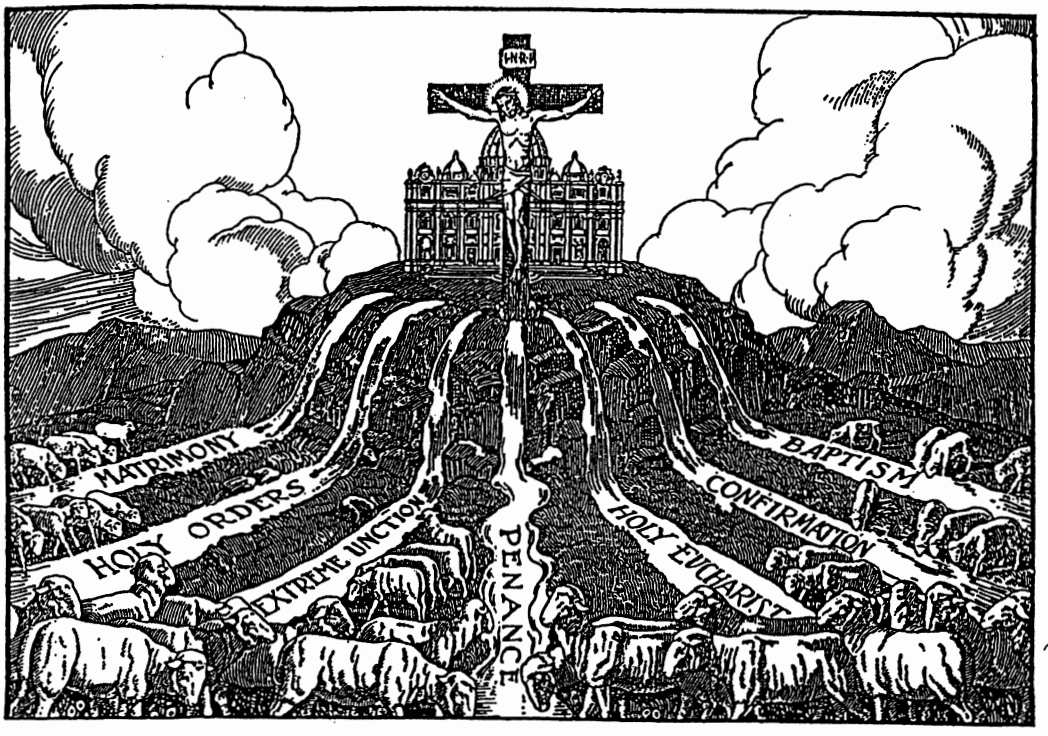
MT. SINAI
Jebel el Lawz
Diagram (not drawn to scale)

Straight ahead to Golden calf altar (Exo. 32:19)




Wilderness of Shur
Wilderness of Paran
Wilderness of Etham
Wilderness of Sin
Wilderness of Sinai
THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA
RED SEA
Supposed Route marked thus
Encampments
Heshbon
Jericho
Mt Nebo
Pisgah
Jebus or Jerusalem
Ascalon
Hebron
Gaza
Amorites
Canopus
Sin or Sais
Busiris
Zoan
Migdol
Sin or Pelusium
Tahpanhes
Rephidim
Oboth
Pithom
Rameses
On or Heliopolis
Memphis or Noph
Pharaoh's Palace
Mt Hor
Punon
Zalmonah
Elath
Ezion Gaber
Mt Seir
EDOM
MOAB
Mt Sinai or Horeb
Tor

SHOULD WE WORSHIP WITH CATHOLICS?



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

HOLDING HANDS WITH THE POPE

The Current Evangelical Ecumenical Craze



Ernest D. Pickering, Th.D.

HOLDING HANDS WITH THE POPE
The Current Evangelical Ecumenical Craze

Ernest D. Pickering, Th.D.

Have Bible-believers been in error for centuries in refusing to recognize the Roman Catholic Church as a part of the true Church of Christ? Did the martyrs of old die in vain as they protested the false teachings of the "mother of harlots," and were burned at the stake for their efforts? Were Hugh Latimer, John Knox, and Martin Luther simpletons who failed to recognize the marvelous benefits of ecumenism and who, instead, boldly attacked the multiplied errors of Rome?

Strange things are happening today in Christendom. Many odd "winds of doctrine" are blowing about, threatening to sweep God's people away from their time-honored principles and God-revealed truths.

BUILDING BRIDGES TO ROME

One observer has called it "the most significant event in almost 500 years of church history."[1] It was the signing of a declaration entitled, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium." Involving, as it did, both evangelical and Roman Catholic leaders, it was truly a monumental statement. Signed March 29, 1994, in New York, it was an ecumenical document of supreme importance since it represented a combined effort by leading spokesmen to "bury the hatchet," ignore important theological differences which have existed for centuries, and work together as "teammates" instead of antagonists.

Who were the signers? One of the chief architects of the document was Richard John Neuhaus, a prominent author and former Lutheran theologian. His conversion to the Roman Catholic Church about four years ago made headlines in the evangelical press. In explaining his defection, Neuhaus stated that "the purpose of proclaiming justification through faith which seemed in the sixteenth century to necessitate a division, no longer warrants division."[2]

In addition to Neuhaus, other evangelical luminaries signed the document. Among them were:

Bill Bright of Campus Crusade
Mark Noll of Wheaton University
Charles Colson, President of Prison Fellowship
John White, President of Geneva College and former president of the National Association of Evangelicals

J. I. Packer, noted British author
Jesse Miranda, leader in the Assemblies of God
Pat Robertson, television preacher and evangelical political leader
Richard Land, Southern Baptist official
Larry Lewis, Southern Baptist official
Archbishop William Murphy of Boston
Archbishop Francis Stafford of Denver
Cardinal John O'Connor of New York

What did it say? The document attempts to broaden the definition of the word "Christian" to include as many as possible, notably Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox adherents, and Protestants outside the evangelical camp. It is mainly concerned, however, with relationships between Roman Catholics and evangelicals. It laments the division between them and proposes a moratorium on Catholic/evangelical conflict.

In defending the position that Roman Catholics are true believers along with evangelicals, it is argued that both camps accept the Apostles' Creed. How the acceptance of the Apostles' Creed would make one a Christian is not explained. The intellectual acceptance of any creed, no matter how correct, will not save one soul.

The document warns against "sheep stealing." It declares, "It is neither theologically legitimate nor a prudent use of resources for one Christian community to proselytize among active adherents of another Christian community." In other words, we are no longer to make concerted and earnest efforts to win our unsaved Roman Catholic neighbors to Christ. They are already Christians so why bother? The impact of such a notion upon evangelism and world-wide missions is readily apparent.

Acceptance and fellowship between evangelicals and Roman Catholics is also justified on the basis that both believe in salvation by grace. For the Catholic, however, salvation by grace refers to that divine grace which is mediated through the Roman Catholic sacraments administered by a duly-ordained priest of Rome. The evangelical (or biblical) concept of grace is that it is unmerited favor which is received by faith alone. There is a vast difference between the two concepts.

THE SLIPPERY SLOPE OF COMPROMISE

How in the world did respected evangelical leaders come to such conclusions as described above? What has happened, or is happening, in Christ's Church today that could possibly account for such obvious departure from time-honored positions?

The lengthened shadow of a man. Much of the current theological confusion with regard to the Roman Catholic Church can be laid at the feet

of one man--Billy Graham. Almost a living idol to large numbers of evangelicals, Graham more than any other single person is responsible for leading the evangelical community into a more cozy relationship with the Church of Rome. Many years ago he began to play up to the Catholic hierarchy. He received an honorary degree from Belmont Abbey, a Roman Catholic institution. He has sought the cooperation of the Roman Catholic leaders in metropolitan areas where he has held campaigns. He has sent the converts of his meetings back to Roman Catholic churches. He has publicly honored and praised Roman Catholic leaders. He has failed to warn of the terrible and unbiblical doctrines of Rome. Since Billy Graham sees no problem in having spiritual fellowship with the Roman Catholic Church, and since his influence is very great among evangelicals, is it any wonder that others have followed his lead?

The erosion of strong doctrinal commitment. In his notable work, No Place for Truth, David Wells wonders in the subtitle, "Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?" He gives abundant evidence of a fact that has been observed by many for years--doctrine is no longer of prime importance to many evangelicals. Emphasis has shifted in recent years to "shared experience" as a common ground for fellowship rather than common doctrinal convictions. "Everybody that loves Jesus" should get together without regard to doctrinal distinctions. Evangelicalism as a whole has been stricken with a bad case of the "warm fuzzies." "If a Roman Catholic loves Jesus, then I should embrace him as a brother in Christ." This is the common view of many.

The charismatic factor. It is interesting that, in reporting the signing of the ecumenical document, the "National and International Religion Report" commented: "What brought the two communities together to this point, some signers said, are the experiences of worshipping together in the charismatic movement . . . ."[3] This is but another evidence of the impetus toward ecumenism which has been generated by the modern charismatic movement. Charismatics find common ground in their shared experience and see no doctrinal impediment to full cooperation with one another. Charismatics seem to be able to span the widest theological gulfs with no problem whatsoever.

Common political causes. In recent years Roman Catholics and evangelicals have made common cause in the political arena, uniting their forces in struggles over the abortion issue, homosexuality, etc. These joint efforts have brought together leaders from both sides who had never worked together previously. Personal friendships have been formed, and, as a result, serious doctrinal differences have begun to be down-played. Since there is agreement on some social issues, and since these issues are so important in the life of America today, many leaders on both sides are willing to minimize doctrinal conflicts on the plea that we need to cooperate in "saving America."

Has the Roman Catholic Church changed? Are Bible-believing Christians now free to join hands with Rome? Should we lay aside our "bigotry" in favor of a more magnanimous attitude?

In 1962, the 21st ecumenical council of the Roman Catholic Church was convened by Pope John XXIII. It was one of the most momentous religious gatherings of the century. An aggiornamento (a refurbishing) of the Roman Catholic Church was projected. The Church was to be adjusted to the changing conditions of the times. Many structural, procedural, and liturgical changes were made in order to improve the image of the church in the eyes of the world, and to make it seem more tolerant and open. Ever since this historic gathering was held, many evangelicals have had the perception that the Roman Catholic Church has changed sufficiently so as to render it an acceptable religious fellowship, no longer to be exposed as unbiblical but rather to be recognized as a legitimate church.

This perception, however, is fatally flawed. The Vatican Council II changed no fundamental doctrine of the Catholic Church. The changes made were cosmetic not substantive. Many years ago, James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore and a greatly-honored Roman Catholic leader, said that "the Catholic Church cannot be reformed . . . . The Church is not susceptible of being reformed in her doctrine (emphasis mine). The Church is the work of an Incarnate God. Like all God's works, it is, therefore, incapable of reform."[4] It should be emphasized that Cardinal Gibbons was speaking of a change in doctrine, not a change in practice or worship. Were the Roman Catholic Church to say that it had erred in any doctrine, such an admission would effectively undermine its entire theological structure. Roman Catholic theology is built upon the foundational concept of papal infallibility and the absolute and binding authority of the "teaching church."

Stray remarks by priests, cardinals, or other leaders of Rome do not constitute Rome's official position. Much has been made of the fact that the numerous charismatics now found within the Roman Catholic Church are "more like evangelicals," and have some views that may not be compatible with historic Romanism. This may be true, but individual communicants within the Catholic Church do not determine the doctrinal basis of the Church. Roman Catholicism does not accept, as do Protestants, the right of individual biblical interpretation. Authoritative teaching comes through the Church and is incorporated in the collective body of Roman Catholic dogma that has collected over the centuries.

The infallibility of the Church. Romish doctrine affirms that the Roman Catholic Church has been divinely constituted as the final authoritative interpreter of Scripture, and as the sole propounder of Christian doctrine. One Catholic source puts it this way: Infallibility is "exemption or immunity

from liability to error of failure; (in particular) in theological usage, the supernatural prerogative by which the Church of Christ [Roman Catholic Church] is, by a special divine assistance, preserved from liability to error in her faith and morals."[5]

Final teaching authority rests in the Pope when he is speaking ex cathedra (from the chair of Peter as the official Teacher of the Church). "The pope takes the place of Jesus Christ on earth . . . . By divine right the pope has supreme and full power in faith and morals over each and every pastor and his flock. He is the true Vicar of Christ, the head of the entire church, the father and teacher of all Christians. He is the infallible ruler, the founder of dogmas, the author of and the judge of councils, the universal ruler of truth, the arbiter of the world, the supreme judge of heaven and earth, the judge of all, being judged by no one, God himself on earth."[6]

Baptism. Since baptism is viewed by most alleged Christian communions as the "door into the church," many evangelicals have trumpeted the fact that Rome apparently relaxed somewhat her views of the Church at Vatican Council II, allowing for the fact that non-Catholics might be members of the Church. However, one must remember that in the minds of Catholics this true Church subsists within the Church of Rome. The statement of the Trent Catechism, an official declaration of the Roman position, still stands: "Infants, unless regenerated unto God through the grace of baptism, whether their parents be Christians or infidel, are born to eternal misery and perdition."[7] Attempting to deal with the horror of such a doctrine, Catholic theologians invented the "Limbus Infantum," a residence where infants who die without baptism exist excluded from heaven but without conscious pain.

The Catholic Church still maintains, as it always has, baptismal regeneration. Baptism is "the door or entrance to the spiritual life, through which we become members of Christ . . . . baptism is the source of spiritual rebirth."[8] How can fundamental believers in good conscience recognize and cooperate with a church that believes people become Christians through baptism?

The Mass. Central to Catholic worship is the celebration of the Mass. Some non-Catholics mistakenly view the Mass as similar to the communion observance. It is not. "The Holy Mass is the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ really present on the altar under the appearance of bread and wine, and offered to God for the living and the dead."[9] The Mass is not merely a memorial of Christ's death.

> "The Mass is a truly propiatory sacrifice [by which] the Lord is appeased [and] . . . pardons, wrongdoing and sins . . . . Finally, the Mass is the divinely ordained means of applying the merits of Calvary. Christ won for the world all the graces it needs for salvation and sanctification. But these blessings are conferred

> gradually and continually . . . mainly through the Mass . . . . The priest is indispensable since he alone by his powers can change the elements of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. . . . The more often the sacrifice [of the Mass] is offered the more benefit is conferred . . . ."[10]

Such teaching of course is a deliberate denial of the biblical doctrine of the finished work of Christ. Christ was "once [once for all] offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. 9:28). "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12). To view persons who believe this as "Christian brethren" is to deny the very heart of the biblical gospel.

Penance. A chief cornerstone of Roman Catholic theology is the doctrine of penance. "Penance is the sacrament by which sins committed after baptism are forgiven through the absolution of the priest."[11] Baptism, according to Catholic teaching, brings forgiveness of sins committed prior to the reception of that sacrament. However, for sins committed after that time there must be confession, contrition, and the satisfactory completion of any good works that are required to be performed. A Roman Catholic communicant, therefore, is constantly in bondage to the priest who alone can help him get rid of his sins.

Salvation. A Roman Catholic who follows the teachings of his church can never hope to have a certain knowledge of salvation. The Council of Trent placed a curse upon those who claim to have eternal salvation. " If anyone shall say that he who is once justified cannot lose grace . . . let him be accursed."[12] Catholics deny salvation by grace through faith alone. This was one of the principal issues at stake in the Protestant Reformation. Both faith and works are necessary for salvation. "Good works are, therefore, the reason for which God gives the reward of eternal life."[13]

Some may think that more recent Roman Catholicism has rejected some of these ideas concerning salvation. They have not. Witness this contemporary statement by Catholic teachers:

> "Christ's death earned 'satisfactions and merits' which have been deposited into a 'Treasury' to which have been added the prayers and good works of the Blessed Virgin Mary [and] the prayers and good works of all the saints . . . . From the most ancient times in the Church good works were also offered to God for the salvation of sinners . . . . Indeed [by] the prayers and good works of holy people . . . the penitent was . . . redeemed . . . . Following in Christ's steps, those who believe in him have always . . . carried their crosses to make expiation for their own sins and the sins of others. They were convinced that they could help their brothers to obtain salvation from God . . ."[14]

Obviously such doctrine is completely contrary to the New Testament. This fact, however, does not trouble the traditional Roman Catholic. The statement to follow, from an official Catholic source, shows why:

> " When someone asks where the Catholic finds the substance of his belief, the answer is: from the living teaching authority . . . . This authority consists of the Pope and the bishops of the time, whose duty it is to promote the knowledge of revealed truth. The Catholic is thus freed from the necessity of personal investigation into doctrinal questions, and can live in a quiet certainty that the doctrine of the Church is the doctrine of Christ Himself."[15]

The Roman Catholic is not disturbed if a given doctrine cannot be found in Scripture. If it has been declared a bona fide doctrine by the magisterium, the teaching body of the Church, it can be accepted as authentic. While, particularly in America, this has been challenged on a practical level by many Catholics, it nevertheless remains the firm teaching of Rome. Again it must be kept in mind that the position of the Roman Catholic Church is not defined by popular opinion, or even clerical opinion, but by the specific directive of the bishops and the Pope.

IS CONTINUED SEPARATION FROM ROMAN CATHOLICISM A SIN?

In the official statement, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together," the following statement is found: "We together, evangelicals and Catholics, confess our sins against the unity that Christ intends for all his disciples." Upon reading this statement one must ask: is it a sin to remain separated from spiritual fellowship with the Catholic Church? Should we who are practicing such separation repent of our bias and embrace the Catholic Church as a true Church? This is what evangelical ecumenicists are bidding us do.

Through the centuries no group has stood stronger against cooperation with Roman Catholicism than Baptists. With what amazement then do we read the following account:

> "Frank Ruff took his usual back-street shortcuts as he drove into the heart of the massive complex many call the 'Baptist Vatican.' 'Good morning, Father Frank,' called out security guard Richard Bennett, himself a Catholic, as Ruff entered the Southern Baptist Convention's executive offices. The priest's black clerical suit and Roman collar still stand out in a Southern Baptist crowd. But no one does a double-take as Ruff goes about his work as the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' representative in the halls of Southern Baptist power. The big news, these days, is that cooperation between some leaders of America's 59 million Roman Catholics and 15 million Southern Baptists is becoming old news."[16]

Norman Geisler, well-known Christian apologist, was interviewed concerning his views on Catholic-evangelical cooperation. He concludes that "the differences are not as great as generally perceived and they are not as crucial. In my opinion, they don't involve heresy on either side of the fence."[17] He was asked the question, "Is there a growing awareness among our fellow evangelicals of the theological common ground between themselves and Catholics?" His answer: "I would have to admit that more Evangelicals see the need to cooperate socially and ethically. That's good because it's forced evangelicals to reevaluate their relationship to Roman Catholics. But I see also a growing awareness of this doctrinal understanding. I had a conversation with a couple of noted evangelicals at the last Evangelical Theological Society meeting and they were in total agreement with what I am saying here."[18]

This is a frightening statement indeed! Not only does one of the leading evangelical theologians feel we should be accepting of Roman Catholicism, but he has many "buddies" who share his feelings. This bodes no good for thousands of young students as well as evangelical church members who will come under their influence. The perception will soon be widespread that we no longer need to oppose the heresies of Rome because they are not really "heresies."

JUST LEARN TO SAY "NO"

There are clear biblical principles that are being blatantly ignored by those who are promoting more rapport with Roman Catholicism .

Those teaching false doctrine should not be accepted but rather repudiated. Paul faced major theological deviations among the churches of Galatia. He faced the deviators in no uncertain terms. Their teaching was to be shunned. They were "accursed" (Gal. 1:8). When the apostle Peter gave in to their erroneous accommodations, Paul "withstood him to the face because he was to be blamed" (Gal. 2:11). He did not view the Judaizers nor their "evangelical" accomplices as having "fresh insights" or "exercising their rights as believer priests." He viewed their teaching as deadly and dangerous and took great pains to expose it.

Let us face the facts. Key doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church are pure heresy. They are not supported by the Word of God. What should be the reaction, therefore, of those who would be true to the Lord? "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10-11). Notice that God views the teaching of false doctrine as an "evil deed." That teaching may come from suave even sincere and pleasing religious instructors. Some Roman Catholic leaders are "nice" people and talk about Christ and His work. We must not be led astray, however, from the main point. The main point is this: are they

teaching doctrines found in the New Testament? If they are not, we must reject them.

Those who rely on false ways of salvation are not to be viewed as "brothers and sisters in Christ." The major emphasis of Paul in writing to the Galatians was this: If anyone corrupts the pure gospel of Christ, adding to it any kind of works, that person is to be repudiated. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed"(Gal. 1:8-9). What were the Galatian Judaizers doing? They were saying that salvation by faith alone is not possible. Good works are meritorious and are necessary to earn salvation. As we have already seen, this is the exact teaching of Rome. They have not changed since the days when Martin Luther and other Reformers protested their corruption of the gospel. They have learned how to talk in ways that can seem convincing to gullible evangelicals, but they have not changed one iota their fundamental teaching in this area. Martin Luther went to Rome, while still a Catholic monk, and ascended the so-called "Pilate's stairs," the scala sancta, uttering pater nosters (our Fathers) and praying for souls in purgatory. He hoped by these good deeds to help deliver suffering souls from that place of torment. Where did he receive such notions? From the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church! They are still teaching these things today.

Can persons who are depending upon good works (theirs or others) for assistance in attaining heaven be viewed scripturally as members of the Body of Christ, as truly born-again people? But, says someone, is it not possible that some Catholics are saved? No doubt this may be true, but some things need to be noted:

1. The number of such would be very few in comparison to the total number of Catholics.

2. A truly born-again person, taught by the Spirit, would be unable to remain in the bosom of such an apostate organization for long.

3. The presence of such within the Roman Church does not in any way suggest that the official teachings of that church are acceptable. Born-again people are found within the membership of rank liberal Protestant churches, but this does not condone the apostasy of the system to which they belong. They should get out and so should believers who are still affiliated with Romanism. It is woefully sad that such leaders as Billy Graham have told inquiring Catholics that they should not leave their church, but remain in it and seek to reform it.

The bottom line is this. If a person is not trusting in Christ's finished work alone for his or her salvation, then that person is not a Christian. We are saved, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy" (Tit. 3:5). Christ's sacrifice is complete and cannot be perpetuated or duplicated. "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12). The fact that he "sat down" underscores the completed nature of his work. Old Testament priests never sat down during the performance of their duties. This was because they always had something else to do. Christ has no more to do. He has done it all. To seek to add to what he has done by human good works is an insult to Him and a denial of scriptural teaching regarding His work.

The rescue of our society from its moral catastrophe is not a sufficient reason for disobeying clear teachings of the Word of God. "America is morally bankrupt. Those of us who believe in the Judeo-Christian heritage of morality must stand together. We cannot be divided by non-essential doctrinal differences. "This is the plea of many evangelicals today. It is also being heralded by some Roman Catholic leaders. This was the substance of the argument of a Catholic lawyer, William Bentley Ball, when he authored an article published in Christianity Today entitled, "Why Can't We Work Together?" The summary of the article says: "A noted Catholic lawyer urges Catholics and evangelicals to become partners in the battle against rampant secularism."[19] In this same article, Ball says he is often asked by fundamentalist clients whether he has accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. His answer reveals the terrible ignorance of the average Roman Catholic regarding the matter of the new birth. Ball replies: "The name of my parish, indeed, is Sacred Heart of Jesus--a reverent phrase loaded with the tenderest meaning. We . . . believe that we receive the actual body and blood of Jesus when we receive communion."[20] Here is a man--an educated, leading Roman Catholic layman--who believes he has accepted Christ as Savior because he receives the Holy Sacrament on a regular basis! Could there be a more eloquent testimony as to the reason why Catholics need to be evangelized--the very thing contemporary evangelical leaders are telling us we ought not to do! May God have mercy on His Church in these days of awful confusion!

Does the goal of rescuing America from the depths of moral bankruptcy into which it has fallen justify evangelicals in ignoring the blatant errors of Romanism, pronouncing orthodox and practicing Roman Catholics as true believers, and engaging with them in corporate worship? Should we minimize vast and vital theological differences in order to try to achieve a better standard of morality in our society? Many feel we should. This concept is reflected in the views of Norman Geisler, mentioned earlier, who is a noted evangelical theologian, having taught at both Dallas Seminary and Liberty University. His assessment of the relationship between evangelicals and Romanists is summed up in the title given to an interview which he had

on the subject: "If we don't hang together, we're going to hang separately"[21]

It is clear from Scripture that the primary task of the Church is not to reform society but to perpetuate and propagate the "faith once delivered to the saints." In good conscience we cannot abandon, compromise, or change the truths of God's Word on the plea that we are working with others toward rectifying society's ills. We are glad for those Roman Catholics who stand for the sanctity of life and oppose abortion. However, we cannot, because they hold such a position, overlook the monstrous errors of the Roman Church and brand its adherents as true believers. The genuine, Christ-honoring pastor is to be "holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Tit. 1:9). Several important elements are found in this verse:

1. Sound doctrine is important and must be taught.

2. There are those who will oppose sound doctrine.

3. Sound doctrine must be strongly maintained and those systems that are contrary to it must be opposed.

Roman Catholics do not teach sound doctrine. They must be opposed, therefore, and their erroneous doctrines exposed.

To confirm Roman Catholicism as a valid expression of the Christian faith is to doom multitudes of Catholics to eternal hell. As we have already seen, Catholic doctrine does not set forth salvation by grace through faith alone. It adds works to faith as a necessary requisite of salvation. Jesuit theologian, Avery Dulles, tries to dance around issues carefully to as not to offend his mostly evangelical readers in an interview conducted by Christianity Today. Even he, however, admits there are great differences between what evangelicals believe about salvation and what Roman Catholics believe. Dulles notes, in speaking of "justification" that "after you are justified you can be more justified still" [a confusion of justification and sanctification]. He also states that "we can merit salvation provided that we persevere in grace. . . we do not boast that we've already been saved in the sense that we cannot be lost . . . so we hope we will be saved . . . it is not an absolute assurance."[22] What a sad testimony is this, coming as it does from a leading theological mind of the Roman Church! We can only "hope we will be saved." Yet leading evangelical voices are telling us that there is no heresy involved in Roman Catholicism.

What do Roman Catholics need? They need to hear of the wonderful salvation Christ has offered through His finished work. They need to hear that it is possible to have complete assurance of salvation by resting in the promises of God's Word. They need to know that salvation is not through

the so-called "Holy Sacraments" but through faith alone apart from priestly intervention. If evangelicals begin viewing Roman Catholics as people who are already saved, they will cease to give them the gospel and thus condemn them to everlasting hell. This is a very serious implication of the "new theology" being propounded by evangelical leaders today.

The impact of this new position upon foreign missionary effort will be staggering. Many of our fundamental missionaries labor in predominantly Catholic countries where the majority of the converts through the years have come from the Roman Catholic Church. Will we now cease our efforts to evangelize these people? What will we tell the people who have already left Roman Catholicism, many at great sacrifice? Will we tell them that we were mistaken and that the Church in which they were born and raised is really a New Testament church after all? What confusion such an admission would bring! Have we wasted centuries of time and multiplied millions of dollars of the Lord's money in an effort to get people saved who are already saved?

The evangelical ecumenism represented in this movement of conciliation will be a menace to those local churches and institutions that are trying to be true to God's Word. Because of the eminence of many of the propagators of the current "evangelical ecumenism," many Christians will be influenced by what they say. Their line of reasoning has already begun to be popularized through the Christian media. Young students in colleges and seminaries will be infected by this notion. Pastors and other leaders who are seeking to "hold the line" for biblical truth will placed under increasing pressure. They will be viewed as "troublemakers," and will be accused of an overly militant and loveless spirit. Furthermore, Roman Catholics who hear about this new approach (and they will definitely hear as their leaders trumpet the news abroad) will be increasingly resistant to the gospel and hostile to those who witness to them since they say, "We are not lost. We are part of the Body of Christ. Your own leaders say so. We do not need to be evangelized."

Cleverly-worded statements of what Catholics believe are already being made by their leaders with the intent to impress evangelicals and cause them to embrace the idea that Catholics really are not that different from true Bible-believers. Such a statement appeared in a Catholic periodical and was entitled, "Biblical Fundamentalism: How Should Catholics Respond?" Ten questions commonly asked by fundamentalists were addressed by Raymond Brown, a priest. The answers were worded in such away that those not thoroughly familiar with Catholic teaching would think favorably of them.[23] Such articles no doubt will continue to appear, written by representatives on both sides. Continuing and growing confusion will be the result.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned earlier, we must recognize that there are various elements

within the Roman Catholic Church. There are:

1. Liberals

   These would be persons such as Hans Kung who has authored books critical of Roman Catholic teaching but who himself is not fundamental in his doctrines, but shares the viewpoints of liberal Protestants.

2. Traditionalists

   These are the persons holding to the traditional doctrines of the Catholic Church.

3. Charismatics

   Many Catholics have come under the influence of the contemporary charismatic movement and are practicing their views within the pale of Roman Catholicism. However, as one writer has noted, they have "varying degrees of concern about bringing their new-found faith into harmony with the church's teaching."[24]

4. Cultural Roman Catholics

   They were born into the Church and have an emotional tie (and often an ethnic one too) to the Catholic Church though their involvement is more cultural than theological.

The official position of the Catholic Church, however, is not mandated by such groups nor by individuals within these groups. The official position of the Catholic Church is enunciated by its official teachers. It is this collective authority of the Church's official teachers that becomes "Catholic doctrine." The Roman Catholic Church "regards itself as the instrument of the Paraclete-Spirit promised by Christ, which would take what he had given and guide Christians along the way of truth in subsequent times (John 16:13)."[25] In other words, the Catholic Church, embodied in its hierarchy, is the appointed "Teacher" for all Christians.

Are Roman Catholics truly "evangelicals?" One's answer to that question depends upon the importance one places upon New Testament doctrine. We are afraid David Wells was right when he wrote, "I see a faith which is being seriously eroded by assorted alliances with late 20th century culture. The upshot is that evangelicalism is now largely defined in terms of its experience rather than its truth. Since evangelical experience often sounds similar to Catholic experience, should theological differences be taken seriously or pressed unduly?"[26] To many evangelicals, the answer to this

question is "no." Such a spokesman as Kenneth Kantzer, noted author and former editor of Christianity Today, said we should "rejoice with the new-found evangelicals in the Roman Catholic Church" and that we should not "attack what we deem to be holdovers from Roman Catholic doctrine."[27] As long as visible evangelical leaders such as this promulgate the idea that we should not challenge and refute the multitudinous errors within Catholicism, we will continue to see an erosion in the doctrinal position of evangelicalism as a whole, and a rapid development of ecumenism.

We are reminded of the consternation of the apostle Paul when hearing of the intrusion of the legalizers into the churches of Galatia. The "false brethren" [those persons claiming to be "evangelicals" but who were not]. These people "came in privily [secretly, unobtrusively] to spy our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage" (Gal. 2:4). What was Paul's response to these persons, some of them illustrious, who sought to rob the gospel of its power? Paul said: "To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you" (Gal. 2:5). He said that even though some of them "seemed to be somewhat" [that is, seemed to be important], Paul said he would regard no one's person, but rather defend the faith against all comers. We must do the same today. Our command from King Jesus is still valid: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:13).

END NOTES

1. David Hunt. "The Gospel Betrayed," The Berean Call, May 1994.
2. "Neuhaus Leaves Lutheran Church for Catholicism," Christianity Today, October 8, 1990, p. 60.
3. National and International Religion Report, April 4, 1994, p. 1.
4. James Cardinal Gibbons. The Faith of Our Fathers, p. 73.
5. P. J. Toner. "Infallibility," The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1910 edition, VII, 790.
6. New York Catechism.
7. Trent Catechism.
8. N. G. M. Van Doornick, S. Jelsma, and A. Van de Lisdonk. A Handbook of the Catholic Faith, edited by John Greenwood.
9. Catechism of Christian Doctrine, "What Is The Holy Mass?"
10. Pocket Catholic Dictionary, pp. 248-49.
11. Baltimore Catechism, p. 300.
12. Council of Trent, Canon 23.
13. Van Doornick, et.al., op. cit., p. 217.
14. Vatican II, Flannery's Edition, I, 64-66.
15. Van Doornick, et. al., op. cit., p. 137.
16. Press release by Baptist Press, March 4, 1994.
17. "If We Don't Hang Together, We're Going to Hang Separately," Interview with Norman Geisler, The Southern Cross, January 13, 1994.
18. Loc. cit.
19. William Bentley Ball, "Why Can't We Work Together?" Christianity Today, July 16, 1990, p. 22.
20. Loc. cit.
21. Op. cit., Interview with Norman Geisler.
22. "America's Catholics: What They Believe," Christianity Today, November 7, 1986, p. 27.
23. Raymond Brown, "Biblical Fundamentalism: How Should Catholics Respond?" St. Anthony Messenger, June 1950.
24. Kenneth Kantzer, editorial, "Church On The Move," Christianity Today, November 7, 1986, p. 17.
25. Raymond Brown, op. cit.
26. David Wells, "To Dialogue or Not To Dialogue," Action, March-April, 1987, p. 8.
27. Kenneth Kantzer, op. cit.

2b. The church ordinances:

1c. Definitions:

1d. Ordinance:
a rite prescribed by Christ for His church.

2d. Sacrament:
a visible means of conveying invisible grace.



The sacraments derive their efficacy from Christ, by Whose merits we possess them. They do not derive any merit from the person administering them. Therefore the sacraments give grace of themselves, even when the priest or person administering them is unworthy, as long as the recipient has the proper dispositions. Good medicine is good regardless of the druggist or physician.

3A. Salvation Without the Gospel:

1b. The Roman Catholic position:

An alarming development has taken place in recent decades both among Roman Catholics and so-called evangelicals.

It appears that the Catholic church believes that people can be saved without the gospel. John MacArthur, in his recent book *Hard to Believe* (2003) notes that the *Los Angeles Times* quoted Pope John Paul II saying, "All who live a just life will be saved, even if they do not believe in Jesus Christ and the Roman Catholic Church." The pope continued, "The Gospel teaches us that those who live in accordance with the Beatitudes, poor in spirit, the poor in heart, those who bear lovingly the sufferings of life will enter God's kingdom" (December 9, 2000).

John MacArthur espouses Lordship salvation even in his recent book, *Hard to Believe*: "Salvation is giving up your life and embracing His," p. 178; The gospel involves the understanding that Jesus Christ is Lord and that "He *needs* to be Lord" p. 187).

He is correct, however, in tracing the trends of Roman Catholicism:



PAPAL INSIGNIA

The pope is taking an inclusive view of salvation. Many people reject the biblical teaching that salvation comes only in response to faith in Jesus Christ. They insist that the heathen are saved if they just lie good lives—if they're poor in spirit, pure in heart, and do what's right. As long as they are sincere, what they believe doesn't really matter.

This has been in the fabric of Roman Catholicism for centuries. That is why Catholic apologist Peter Kreeft, who wrote the book *Ecumenical Jihad*, can say that there are Buddhists, Hindus, Confucianists, Muslims, atheists, and orthodox Jews in heaven: sincerity and goodness are the ticket to God's kingdom, not believing in the Christ of the gospel. Through innate goodness, they naturally reason themselves into a knowledge of God, please Him, and earn their salvation, whether they ever set eyes on a Bible in their lives or not. The pope, in his comment, simply affirmed what many Catholic theologians have long believed (*Hard to Believe*, 189-190).

2b. Billy Graham:

Regrettably, men like Billy Graham now also subscribes to the Roman Catholic doctrine of salvation apart from the gospel or Jesus Christ. Robert Kofahl has documented in the *Foundation* magazine, May-June 1997, pages 22-25, the strange position to which Dr. Graham prescribes. In an interview in answer to a question by Robert Schuller on his broadcast to the question, "Tell me, what do you think is the future of Christianity?" Dr. Graham says:

> Well, Christianity and being a true believer—you know, I think there's the Body of Christ. This comes from all the Christian groups around the world, outside the Christian groups. I think everybody that loves Christ, or knows Christ, whether they're conscious of it or not, they're members of the Body of Christ. And I don't think that we're going to see a great sweepingrevival, that will turn the whole world to Christ at any time. I think James answered that, the Apostle James in the first council in Jerusalem, when he said that God's purpose for this age is to call out a people for His name. And that's what God is doing today. He's calling people out of the world for His name, whether they come from the Muslim world, or the Buddhist world, or the Christian world or the non-believing world, they are members of the Body of Christ because they've been called by God. They may not even know the name of Jesus but they know in their hearts that they need something that they don't have, and they turn to the only light that they have, and I think that they are saved, and that they're going to be with us in heaven.
>
> (See a transcript of the television interview at the end of this outline. This author is in possession of this video, which may be ordered from Crystal Cathedral for a $10 donation.)

Kofahl correctly deplores the turn toward Rome in recent years.

> The doctrine that Dr. Graham expressed to Dr. Schuller is exactly what the Pope and the Ecumenical Institute in Rome have been teaching for years. This is the idea that any pagan, practicing idolatrous worship, having no slightest knowledge of the Bible, the gospel of grace, or the Person and name

and redeeming work of Jesus Christ—if he is a "good person" and if he is sincere in whatever he may believe—is automatically "redeemed" by the blood of Christ.

3b. Other evangelicals:

1c. John R. W. Stott:

John R. W. Stott is agnostic regarding the eternal fate of those who have never heard the gospel. He is against universalism but sees an implication in the "surprise" of the sheep and goats (Matt 25) that one is accepted or rejected by God based on good works (cited by Rdland McCune, *Promise Unfulfilled*, 2004, 282).

2c. Leon Morris:

Morris also is agnostic about the fate of the heathens: "We do not know what the fate of those who have not heard the gospel will be" ("The Dreadful Harvest," *Christianity Today*, May 27, 1991, 37).

3c. Charles Stanley:

In 2001, the noted Southern Baptist radio preacher, Charles Stanley, declared that God would not send to hell those who have never heard the gospel. "Would God send somebody to hell because they did not receive Jesus, whom they have never heard about, never had the privilege of knowing about? And my answer is: No, He would not" ("Reconciling God's Love with His Justice," In Touch Ministries, July 31, 2001).

It is best to insist with careful students of the Bible that Jesus Christ is the only way and without Him there is no salvation. Stanley Ellisen addresses the lostness of the pagans in biblical fashion. He covers the subject with four main points:

1. Salvation is exclusively in God through Jesus Christ.
2. Christ is the world's only Savior.
3. Christ is a world-wide Savior.
4. God gives further light to those who respond positively to His revelation in nature.

"God has given all men the light of creation, providence, and conscience, each of which testifies to the existence, power, and glory of God. To those who acknowledge and seek Him, He sends the light of the gospel." (Stanley E. Ellisen, "Are Pagans Really Lost?" *Conservative Baptist*, Spring 1983, 6-9).

Billy Graham Believes Catholic Doctrine of Salvation Without Bible, Gospel, or Name of Christ

By Robert E. Kofahl, Ph.D

Television interview of Billy Graham by Robert Schuller. Part I, an approximately 7-minute-long broadcast in Southern California on Saturday, May 31, 1997. The following is an exact transcript of an excerpt close to the end of this broadcast.*

Schuller: Tell me, what do you think is the future of Christianity?

Graham: Well, Christianity and being a true believer—you know, I think there's the Body of Christ. This comes from all the Christian groups around the world, outside the Christian groups. I think everybody that loves Christ, or knows Christ, whether they're conscious of it or not, they're members of the Body of Christ. And I don't think that we're going to see a great sweeping revival, that will turn the whole world to Christ at any time. I think James answered that, the Apostle James in the first council in Jerusalem, when he said that God's purpose for this age is to call out a people for His name. And that's what God is doing today, He's calling people out of the world for His name, whether they come from the Muslim world, or the Buddhist world, or the Christian world or the non-believing world, they are members of the Body of Christ because they've been called by God. They may not even know the name of Jesus but they know in their hearts that they need something that they don't have, and they turn to the only light that they have, and I think that they are saved, and that they're going to be with us in heaven.

Schuller: What, what I hear you saying that it's possible for Jesus Christ to come into human hearts and soul and life, even if they've been born in darkness and have never had exposure to the Bible. Is that a correct interpretation of what you're saying?

Graham: Yes, it is, because I believe that. I've met people in various parts of the world in tribal situations, that they have never seen a Bible or heard about a Bible, and never heard of Jesus, but they've believed in their hearts that there was a God, and they've tried to live a life that was quite apart from the surrounding community in which they lived.

Schuller: [R. S. trips over his tongue for a moment, his face beaming, then says] I'm so thrilled to hear you say this. There's a wideness in God's mercy.

Graham: There is. There definitely is.

Television Interview of Dr. Graham by Dr. Schuller continued: Part II was broadcast on Sunday, June 8. The following is an accurate transcription of a segment.*

Schuller: You knew....Fulton Sheen. You knew these men. Your comments on both of these men [Fulton Sheen and Norman V. Peale].

Graham: The primary way of communicating is to live the life, let people see that you're living what you proclaim.... [comments on his friendship and conversations with Fulton Sheen] I lost a very dear friend, and since that time, the whole relationship between me and my work, and you and your work, and the Roman Catholic Church has changed. They open their arms to welcome us and we have the support of the Catholic Church almost everywhere we go. And I think that we must come to the place where we keep our eyes on Jesus Christ, not on what denomination or what church or what group we belong to.

Some Historical Background for Understanding Billy Graham's Shocking Profession of Roman Catholic Style Universalism in 1997:

Billy Graham's first great city-wide evangelistic campaign was held in Los Angeles in 1949. At that time he made a public promise that he would never have any theological modernists (theological liberals) on his platform. Dr. Graham's first evangelistic campaign in England was held in the summer of 1954. On that tour he was accompanied by Dr. John Sutherland Bonnell, the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in New York City. Dr. Bonnell was also the president of the Ministerial Association of New York City, which was dominated by modernist ministers and churches. On Dr. Graham's British tour Bonnell was working to persuade him to hold a campaign in New York in 1956 under the auspices of the liberal Ministerial Association. During that time a group of Bible-believing pastors and laymen sent Dr. Graham in England a telegram asking him to hold an

evangelistic series in New York City sponsored by "a committee of twice-born men."

On his return to the States, Dr. Graham announced that he would come to New York in 1956 sponsored by the Ministerial Association of New York City. The committee of Bible-believing men sent a delegation to Dr. Graham begging him not to confuse the line between the gospel of grace and the false gospel of the modernist churches represented in the Ministerial Association. Graham turned a deaf ear to them, and came to New York with the requirement that all churches should be invited to participate in the campaign. In that campaign, the Billy Graham Association trained counselors sent from all sorts of churches, including the Roman Catholic Church. The policy was established of directing each inquirer during the campaign to his or her home church. Some Protestants were sent to modernist churches. Roman Catholics were directed back to the priest of the Roman church nearest to their home address. This policy of cooperation with the Roman Church continues to this day.

Dr. Graham has received honors from Roman Catholic circles, including an honorary degree from a Catholic college. In his last campaign in the British Isles, two leading prelates in the Roman Catholic Church in England sent out pastoral letters encouraging Catholics to attend the Graham meetings. One of these prelates explained to his parishioners that "Billy Graham knows our limits." That is, the Roman Church can count on him not to touch on any theological doctrines that contradict official Romanist teachings. Thus Dr. Graham will not explain that a sinner trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins and eternal life must give up any trust he might have in any other object of faith; that he or she must trust in the Person, Jesus Christ, and Him alone, not trusting in Mary or saints, rejecting any trust in the sinner's good works or religious observances, relying totally on His perfect work of redemption, a substitutionary atonement on the cross, taking the sinner's place under the judgment of God and receiving in His body the total punishment for sin that the sinner deserves, and through repentance and faith receive the perfect righteousness of Christ, imputed by God to the believer, that makes the sinner forever acceptable to a holy God, and immediately a possessor of the gift of eternal life that cannot be forfeited or lost, kept by the power of God throughout all eternity. If Billy Graham were to preach this biblical and complete doctrine of salvation, he would at once lose the support of the Roman Catholic leaders. Multitudes of Roman Catholics would be warned and frightened from attending Billy Graham meetings.

The doctrine that Dr. Graham expressed to Dr. Shuller is exactly what the Pope and the Ecumenical Institute in Rome have been teaching for years. This is the idea that any pagan, practicing idolatrous worship, having no slightest knowledge of the Bible, the gospel of grace, or the Person and name and redeeming work of Jesus Christ—if he is a "good person" and if he is sincere in whatever he may believe—is automatically "redeemed by the blood of Christ." This false doctrine of salvation was clearly and explicitly asserted and defended in debate about four years ago on radio stations KABC and KBRT by Father Vivian Benlima, then Director of the Office for Ecumenical and Interdenominational Affairs of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, who just returned from a year's study at the Ecumenical Institute. It is the official teaching of the Roman Church.

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association was the primary force for the founding of the Lausanne World Evangelism Conferences back in the 1980s. Especially in recent years these conferences have called on all churches, including the modernist ecumenical churches of the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church to cooperate with the evangelical churches in evangelizing the world for Christ. At Amsterdam '86, billed as a "school for evangelists" and sponsored by the Billy Gragam Evangelistic Association, Graham revealed his ecumenical, inclusivist approach to worldwide evangelism. In the final press conference, Dr. Graham was asked by Dennis Costella, a news correspondent for *Foundation* magazine, how he could justify this melding together of such a disparate crowd of theologically disunited religious groups. Dr. Graham responded, "Evangelism is about the only word we can unite on. ... Our methods would be different and there would be debates over even the message sometimes. but there is no debate over the fact that we need to evangelize. ... I think there is an ecumenicity here that cannot [be gotten] under any other umbrella." Therefore. he averred, all the churches must be willing to disagree even on the question of what the Christian message to the world is.

More recently, in the spring of 1994, a group of both evangelical and Roman Catholic leaders signed a document called "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" (ECT). This document asserts that there is one Church (including both Protestant and Roman churches), that, therefore, they must work together in evangelizing the world for Christ, and agree that there will be no sheep-stealing, that is. proselytizing of members of one church to depart and join another church. ECT dismayed multitudes of Christians and elicited vigorous criticism from many Christian circles.

There can be little question that Dr. Billy Graham during almost forty years laid the major foundation for ECT. Where will the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association go in the future? Will the leadership that succeeds the founder continue down the same perilous path of compromising and diluting biblical truth until we arrive at total syncretism and universalism? May God forbid and warn His people!

* *Robert E. Kofahl, Ph.D. and the Rev. Harold L. Webb certify the accuracy of the transcripts from Parts I and II, respectively, of the televised interview of Dr. Billy Graham by Dr. Robert Shuller.*

The Guardian view on 'pagan idols' in the Vatican: church culture wars should concern us all

Editorial

A row over Amazonian 'Mother Earth' statues, displayed during a prayer service in the pope's gardens, is a depressing sign of the times

Thu 31 Oct 2019 14.28 EDT



The Pachamama (Mother Earth) statues in the Vatican gardens. Photograph: Giulio Origlia/Getty Images

The roots of the word "catholic" go back to the Greek adjective *καθολικός*, which roughly translates as "universal". When we are told a person has catholic tastes, we understand them to have broad interests which are not ringfenced by prejudices or secular

In October 2019, a "Pachamama" celebration took place in the Vatican as part of the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon region, involving traditional indigenous rituals and the use of wooden statues representing "Pachamama," an Andean "Mother Earth" goddess. The event, which included a tree-planting ceremony and a ritual dance, sparked controversy among some Catholics who considered the act idolatrous. Pope Francis later apologized when the statues were stolen from a church and thrown into the Tiber River.

Harvard University

https://francisclooney.hsites.harvard.edu › blog › pope-a...

The Pope, the Amazon, and Pachamama

Feb 24, 2020 — On October 4, **Pope Francis attended an act of idolatrous worship of the pagan goddess Pachamama**. He allowed this worship to take place in the Vatican Gardens.

1A. The Addition of Good Works:

1b. False concepts:

1c. Roman Catholicism: Good works are necessary for salvation which may be lost and restored through penance. Very telling is the official publication of the Roman church below, which clearly shows the difference between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. The writer states that Luther, in addition to his many other errors, "taught that faith *without* good works would secure man's salvation, contrary to the Catholic doctrine, which teaches that men are saved by faith *with* good works." (italics in the original)

BIBLE HISTORY

FOR THE USE OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES.

BY

RIGHT REV. RICHARD GILMOUR, D.D.,

Bishop of Cleveland.



A LETTER FROM

His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII.

TRANSLATION.

We have received with thanks the copy of The Bible History, together with the expression of devotion, which Brother Publishers, have sent us through the Bishop of Basil, and we give our Apostolic Benediction to them and to their labors, that they may always tend to the good of Religion.

Leo P. P. XIII.

LUTHER AND THE REFORMATION



Protestant Reformation. In 1520 his doctrines were condemned by the Pope and he himself excommunicated.

4. In 1522 Luther translated the Bible into German, and with it proclaimed the doctrine of "an open Bible and free interpretation" as a fundamental doctrine. He also denied the supremacy of the Pope, the authority of the Church, the celibacy of the clergy, the efficacy of the sacraments, the doctrine of purgatory, and the teachings of the Church on justification and original sin.

5. He forbade his followers to honor the Saints or to obey the commandments of the Church, rejecting all the sacraments except Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He also taught that faith *without* good works would secure man's salvation, contrary to the Catholic doctrine, which teaches that men are saved by faith *with* good works.

THE FORMULA OF FAITH

EPHESIANS 2

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:
9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.
10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

8 τῇ γὰρ χάριτί ἐστε σεσωσμένοι
– For by grace ye are *having been* saved
διὰ πίστεως· καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν,
through faith; and this not of you,
θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον· 9 οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων, ἵνα μή
of [is] the gift; not of works, lest
God
τις καυχήσηται. 10 αὐτοῦ γάρ ἐσμεν
anyone should boast. For of him we are
ποίημα, κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ
a product, created in Christ Jesus
ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς, οἷς προητοίμασεν
unto works good, which [1]previously prepared
ὁ θεὸς ἵνα ἐν αὐτοῖς περιπατήσωμεν.
– [1]God in order that in them we might walk.

correct view: Grace + Faith = Salvation + Works

corrupt view: Grace + Faith + Works = Salvation

MK

Way of Life Literature
Publisher of Bible Study Materials

Is the Roman Catholic Church Changing?

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH STILL HOLDS TO THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

The Council of Trent was a Catholic council held from 1545 to 1563 in an attempt to destroy the progress of the Protestant Reformation. This council denied every Reformation doctrine, including Scripture alone and grace alone. Trent hurled 125 anathemas (eternal damnation) against Bible-believing Christians, including these:

FOURTH SESSION: DECREE CONCERNING THE CANONICAL SCRIPTURES: "If anyone does not accept as sacred and canonical the aforesaid books in their entirety and with all their parts [the 66 books of the Bible plus 12 apócryphal books, being two of Paralipomenon, two of Esdras, Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Sophonias, two of Macabees], as they have been accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate Edition, and knowingly and deliberately rejects the aforesaid traditions, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA."

SIXTH SESSION, CANONS CONCERNING JUSTIFICATION: "If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this confidence alone that justifies us, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons Concerning Justification, Canon 12).

SIXTH SESSION, CANONS CONCERNING JUSTIFICATION: "If anyone says that the justice received is not preserved and also not increased before God through good works, but that those works are merely the fruits and signs of justification obtained, but not the cause of its increase, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons Concerning Justification, Canon 24).

SIXTH SESSION, CANONS CONCERNING JUSTIFICATION: "If anyone says that the Catholic doctrine of justification as set forth by the holy council in the present decree, derogates in some respect from the glory of God or the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, and does not rather illustrate the truth of our faith and no less the glory of God and of Christ Jesus, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons Concerning Justification, Canon 33).

SEVENTH SESSION, CANONS ON BAPTISM: "If anyone says that in the Roman Church, which is the mother and mistress of all churches, there is not the true doctrine concerning the sacrament of baptism, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on Baptism, Canon 3).

SEVENTH SESSION, CANONS ON BAPTISM: "If anyone says that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on Baptism, Canon 5).

SEVENTH SESSION, CANONS ON BAPTISM: "If anyone says that children, because they have not the act of believing, are not after having received baptism to be numbered among the faithful, and that for this reason are to be rebaptized when they have reached the years of discretion; or that it is better that the baptism of such be omitted than that, while not believing by their own act, they should be baptized in the faith of the Church alone, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA" (Canons on Baptism, Canon 13).

HAVE LUTHERANS DEPARTED FROM LUTHER?



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

Theology in Germany

What Has Gone Wrong in the Land of the Reformation?

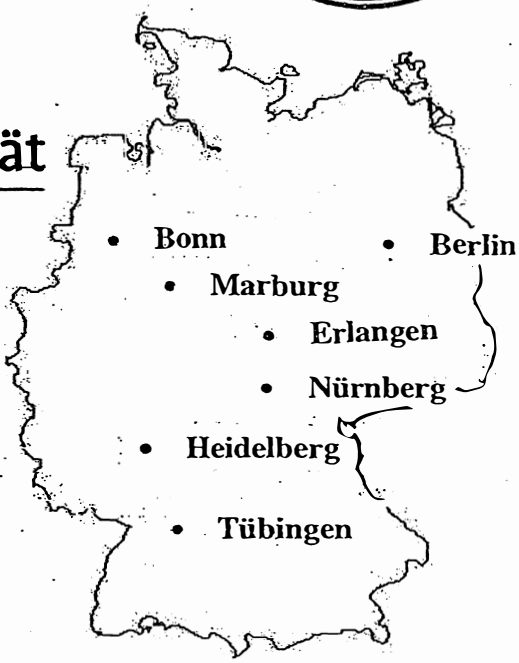
A Wake-Up Call for America

Friedrich-Alexander-Universität
Erlangen-Nürnberg

Philipps Universität Marburg

RUPRECHT-KARLS-
UNIVERSITÄT
HEIDELBERG

EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN



Theology in Germany

by Manfred E. Kober, Dallas, Texas

OUTLINE:

1. The Schools:
   a. Diverse Theology.
   b. Disparaged Scholars.
   c. Disillusioned Students.
2. The Scholars:
   a. Practical Unbelief.
   b. Profound Teaching.
   c. Pious Appearance.
3. The Students:
   a. Scholarly Interest.
   b. Scriptural Ignorance.
   c. Soteriological Indifference.
4. The Studies:
   a. Unsound Doctrines.
   b. Unwarranted Methods.
   c. Unpromising Future.

It cannot be doubted that German theology is setting the pace for the rest of the world. The maxim is true, which is frequently heard, that America is twenty years behind Germany, as far as the field of theology is concerned. This therefore being the case, it is only right for Americans to examine the theological climate of Germany today and be thus informed as to the changes and trends which will become evident before long in their own country too. The following reflections are written by one who recently studied in Germany. The purpose of this article is primarily to record personal impressions and to give specific examples of contemporary belief, rather than to make a doctrinal analysis of German theology, for this alone would necessitate the writing of a little volume to do justice to the subject. For clarity's sake I will discuss German theology under four headings: the schools, the scholars or professors, the students, and the studies.

THE REFORMATION REVIEW

OFFICIAL ORGAN
of
THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Editor:
J. C. MARIS

Contributors and Correspondents

W. R. McEWEN, DAVID HEDEGARD, CARL McINTIRE, W. KREMER,
B. J. OOSTERHOFF, L. PRAAMSMA, WILLIAM R. LE ROY, TIMOTHY TOW SIANG HUI,
JOHN WILMOT

VOLUME XVI | APRIL 1969 | NUMBER 3

CONTENTS

Page

The Work of the Holy Spirit as Essential to New Birth and Sanctification, by S. M. Houghton, M.A. 129
The Christian and War, by J. H. Jones 137
Theology in Germany, by Manfred E. Kober 147
The New Ecumenical New Testament in Spanish omits the Word "Blood" 26 Times, by Rev. H. Ricker 158

Regional Reports:

Great Britain 165
India 171

Regional News:

Guatemala 179
U.S.A. 180

Book Reviews:

After Its Kind, by Byron C. Nelson 183
A Creed for Christian Skeptic, by Mary Mc Dermott Shideler 183
Israel and The Bible, by William Hendriksen 186
The Restoration of Israel, by Erroll Hulse 187
Messiah's Kingdom Coming on the Earth, by James Payne 187
The Pattern of New Testament Truth, by George Eldon Ladd 188
The Reality of Faith, by H. M. Kuitert 189
The Inescapable Calling, by R. Kenneth Strachan 190
By Oath Consigned, by Meredith G. Kline 191
Tinder in Tabasco, by Charles Bennett 192

The Schools

There are a number of well-known universities in Germany where Protestant theology is being taught. Among them are the universities of Heidelberg, Göttingen, Marburg, Tübingen, Erlangen, Bonn, Mainz, and Münster. I studied at Erlangen.

Diverse Theology

If there is anything typical of the schools of theology at these universities, it is the diverse theology. A person who expects to find Neo-Orthodoxy in Germany will surely be disappointed. A neat theological system of that nature just doesn't exist there. One of the students confirmed my observation when I asked him recently how he would characterize German theology. He unhesitatingly uttered, "It's a mess!" There are as many different types of theology here as there are theologians. Decades ago men like Barth, Brunner, and Bultmann nearly eclipsed all other theological directions and made many converts to their ideas, but their students, now professors themselves, have long since departed from their masters' methods. The theological spectrum is so variegated that one would have to study each theologian individually to understand German theology. Like the scholastics, each has his own little system, and perhaps the last verse in the book of Judges would describe the situation in Germany best of all: "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

Disparaged Scholars

Also characteristic of Germany is the disparaging of other scholars who don't agree with one's views. The passion with which one professor belittles another is astounding. They seem to be following the old German principle, "Und willst du nicht mein Bruder sein, so schlag ich dir den Schädel ein"? (And if you do not wish to be my brother, I shall knock in your skull.) Teaching only a maximum of six hours per week, the prime task of the professors is to do research and to write books. These books are usually written against a treatise by some other professor. Then a third professor joins the dialogue with another volume to denounce both books as inanity and illogic. And so it goes on . . . each professor thinks that he alone has the truth. It is therefore little wonder that a crusade especially against conservative theologians is being carried on with the greatest vehemence. The university of Erlangen is known to be the most "conservative"

in Germany, because certain professors still hold to at least some historical details about the Bible. For example, the N. T. professor Stauffer insists that much of the gospel of John is historically accurate – notwithstanding current theological consensus. This causes him to be ridiculed everywhere. Whenever his name is mentioned in a lecture at some other university, like Heidelberg, for example, everyone howls. But this is nothing compared to the scorn that is heaped upon the true conservative theologians of a century or so ago. (There just are not any true conservative professors in Germany today, in the American sense of the word.) Their high esteem for the Bible, their efforts in the defense of the truth, these are touched upon in such a way that there is created a contempt for them among the students. Paul Althaus, considered by many as Germany's most "conservative" theologian, by-passed Theodor Zahn, who fought here in Erlangen so valiantly against the tide of liberalism and radicalism in the last century, with the words, "He was an extremely learned man but his greatest mistake was that he tried to defend the authenticity and infallibility of the Bible."

Notwithstanding the teaching at most other universities, many professors here still hold that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was a historical fact and event, and therefore Erlangen is often ridiculed as being unscholarly and unprogressive.

Disillusioned Students

It is impossible to speak of German theology without mentioning the widespread disillusionment among the students. They are looking for something to believe, something objective and absolute. Their perplexity and discontent are understandable. Professors contradict each other in almost every area of theology. Whom then should the students believe? Which innovation are they to follow? In addition to this, studies are anything but conductive to a firm personal faith. It is really a saddening experience to see how theologians delight in the destruction of their students' faith. No wonder many students finally refuse to become pastors of the Staatskirche (Lutheran State Church), for which most theological students are preparing, once they have completed their studies. Typical is the comment which two graduates made: "We have now finished our studies at the university, but we have nothing which we can believe or preach. How can the church expect us to be preachers?!" Even my roommate, a brilliant student, decided that he would not enter the ministry –

after diligently studying theology for three years. To my question why he, who seemed so convinced of the value and rectitude of German theology, would suddenly turn his back on it, he gave a very illuminating answer: "If I want to have a personal faith which I should preach to the people, I can have nothing to do with this theological science. On the other hand, if I want to be a conscientious theologian and be true to theology's logical consequences, I must reject the possibility of a personal faith in the facts of the Bible." This disjunction between theology and a biblically oriented faith is discernible everywhere. In the words of one professor: "We must be honest and admit that we have two types of theology: a practical theology, which is that which we must preach, and a scientific theology, which is that which we really believe."

Scholars

Let us now look more closely at these men who are presently professors of theology.

Practical Unbelief

The unifying factor among professors today is an appalling unbelief relative to the contents of the Bible, though their other teachings and ideas might be as disparate as can be. Before coming to Germany, I surely thought that the great Bible teacher Dr. Charles Woodbridge was exaggerating when he stated that as far as he knew, there was not a single university professor in Germany today who believed in the inerrancy of the Bible. Now I am convinced that he was absolutely right. I would even venture to go one step further and say that it seems an utter impossibility for anyone subscribing to the inerrancy and infallibility of the Scriptures to be ever able to become a professor at a German university. Such a primitive and naive concept of the Bible is unscholarly and unscientific, meriting only the greatest condemnation, we are told. It is said to be an utter impossibility and sign of abysmal ignorance to maintain that we can have a Bible-based system of theology, a true biblicism, in the light of 20th-century knowledge.

Profound Teaching

The great erudition of German scholars is universally recognized. Some of these men have mastered as many as eight or ten languages. Their knowledge in every area of theology is astounding to say the

least. In writing books they are very prolific. Despite these commendable factors, and upon their own admission, there is coupled with their teaching and writing an innate ambiguity. It is a standard joke that a book is of little value unless one has to read a sentence three times to understand its meaning. Clarity is tantamount to naivete. The lectures are often equally as unintelligible. To a student who is used to an easily-followed, clear outline in class, this vagueness and lack of clarity are a source of constant despair. A prime example of this ambiguity was a recent lecture held by a visiting professor from Mainz. Two hundred students listened over one hour to a lecture on a certain form of philosophical hermeneutics by Professor Pannenberg. Nobody knew what he tried to say; in fact, the whole discourse was so unintelligible, that a professor rose immediately subsequent to the peroratory and rebuked the lecturer for his excessive and unwarranted vagueness. This is no uncommon occurence, by far. A logical outcome of such teaching is, of course, an equally ambiguous type of speech and expression on the part of the students – tomorrow's pastors. Is it therefore any wonder that people no longer attend church (whereas churches were filled to capacity during the 17th century, when people "naively" believed the Bible)? One of the professors assured me that a typical Lutheran church in Germany has 3000 members; 300 members attend church; 30 come to the mid-week service; and there are 3 persons with whom the pastor can pray!

Pious Appearance

It is impossible to tell whether or not these teachers are born-again Christians. There is much talk about faith and justification through grace, and yet, there is a deadness and a coldness in the lectures, sermons, and church life as a whole. One receives the unmistakable impression that something is missing. It may just be that the whole amalgamated theological system contains enough truth which the Holy Spirit would use to bring men to salvation, but it is difficult to see how men who deny or ignore the fundamentals of our Christian faith, such as the inerrancy of the Scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, and the historicity of His resurrection, can really be loving Christ. Notwithstanding the erroneous and unbiblical teaching of the professors, their traditional and characteristic erudition is displayed with a personal piety and a Christian decorum which merits and obtains the respect of all. Among the theology students, the professors are practically honored more than God Himself, and

it is considered a real boon when a professor at times condescends to converse with a student. Of course, not all professors display such outward virtues of piety and gentility, but the exception merely confirms the rule. Therefore the common idea is unwarranted that all teachers of doctrinal error are naturally unlikable in appearance and obnoxious in demeanor. Satan himself employs only angels of light.

The Students

Scholarly Interest

German students evidence a tremendous thirst for knowledge. It is customary that students study at as many different universities as possible. They are a modern counterpart of the ancient Athenians who always ran to hear something new. When, for example, a visiting lecturer comes, the lecture hall will be crowded, no matter how insignificant and unimportant the subject matter of his lecture might be. Students will flock to hear a lecture on the derivation of some words in Hindu mythology with the same interest and participation as a discourse on *analogia entis* (the analogy of being) and the related critique of the basis of the dogmatic methodology. At most universities the lecture halls are filled to capacity and if a student hopes to get a seat, he will have to let a friend reserve a seat for him from the previous hour. Most Germans are studying for learning's sake and one must admire their zeal and dedication. Almost all theology students – and this includes women also – possess an amazing knowledge of at least Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

Scriptural Ignorance

Despite these admirable qualities listed above, the typical German student has a profound ignorance relative to the contents of the Bible. Being taught that it is unscientific and improper to use the Bible as a proof text, the students primarily learn the theories about and criticisms on the Bible, but little of what it contains. This is why some student borrowed my Bible before a lecture on 1 Corinthians 15 one day, so that he could see what its subject matter was. And this is why my fellow students, instead of citing the Bible, run to get their theology books, when I ask them about their personal beliefs. They can recite with astounding accuracy what this or that theologian has said about a given subject. They know how many redactors supposedly worked on a given book; where Babylonian myths or Greek thought can be traced in the Scriptures; or where the early

Church is said to have mutilated the text of the Scriptures and injected its own ideas; but it is impossible to ascertain what the students really believe. Few of them have any personal convictions.

Soteriological Indifference

In the light of the foregone observations it seems only natural that the current German theologies quench any evangelical zeal. The first reason for this appears to be the vagueness of the teachings on the matter of salvation and a misplaced emphasis in theology, lacking any real authority. And secondly, the Lutheran Church firmly adheres, at least in practice, to the doctrine of infant salvation. At "baptism" faith is given to the child and he or she becomes a disciple of Christ. This error is being taught in most churches.

An oft-repeated phrase heard in lecture halls from the mouth of professors, as they refer to some current teaching, is, "Sagt das ja nicht eueren Leuten!" ("Don't ever tell that to your people!"). For instance, we were recently exhorted not to tell our people at a funeral that it is a great fallacy to believe in the immortality of the soul. Professors and students alike are well aware of the fact that a multitude of church members would rise up in protest if they were exposed to certain teachings of this *neology* (one can hardly call it theology, for theology is the teaching about God). The ancient, sound church creeds and confessions of faith have their place in the church as they had in years gone by. But, as someone has well observed, "creeds and stated policies are but verbal opiates to tranquilize the unsuspecting into continued support of institutions that are antagonistic to biblical Christianity."

A third reason for this indifference relative to the Lord's command to preach the message of salvation to every creature is the tragic fact that a simple Bible Christianity has been replaced a long time ago by an involved theological science. Listening to professors and preachers, one cannot help but receive the impression that it is impossible for a person to have even the vaguest understanding of what the gospel is all about, unless he is a great scholar who has mastered four of five languages, is familiar with the "gains" of biblical criticism, and knows all the current theories about the Bible. While theologians are wrestling with the latest hypotheses and ideas about the proper understanding of the Bible, thousands are perishing because no one has ever told them the simple words, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

What are the problems and questions with which German theology concerns itself today? Can there be seen a uniform concept or idea which underlies the theological science and the tremendous amount of research and studying going on?

Unsound Doctrines

It is unwarranted to engage in any universal condemnations, but one certainly has the right to ask what German theology has in common with historic evangelical Christianity, and whether or not there is any evidence that it is moving in that direction. It cannot be denied that every theological system stands or falls upon its concept of the the Bible. It is legitimate to say that German theology is antagonistic to the biblical doctrine of verbal, plenary inspiration. The fact of the matter is that the term "Verbalinspiration" is like a red flag to German theologians and they seem unable to heap sufficient scorn and ridicule upon those who adhere to this blessed teaching.

Dr. Edward J. Young, in his most penetrating book on the biblical testimony to its own inerrancy and infallibility, *Thy Word Is Truth*, rightly observes that a false concept of the Bible is really rooted in a false form of theism or view of God. What kind of a God is this who cannot even reveal Himself to men in words free of error and human modification? Certainly not the almighty and holy God of Truth whom the Bible reveals. And if God has passed on even a few words void of any error – all would admit that He has – why could He not have done it with all of the Scripture? And in the Scriptures we find unmistakable evidence that He has. Therefore the fact being true that in German theology the foundation – the view of the Bible – is faulty, it would hardly follow that the superstructure could be built properly. Consequently, since theologians expect and attempt to find flaws and errors in God's Word of Truth because their whole system is built upon an errant Bible, there remains not even the remotest possibility that they shall ever return to the biblical and historic Christian view of an inerrant, pure Word of God. This false view of the Bible brings with itself, of necessity, a shift in authority. The Bible is no longer our rule of faith and practice, for we must first determine, through diligent scholarship, what is the true text of the Bible. Reason exalts itself above revelation. The Bible can no longer be accepted as it stands.

Unwarranted Methods

Men like Bultmann have attempted to remove the so-called myths from the Bible. This process of *Entmythologisierung* (demythologizing) has been carried out to the nth degree by Bultmann's students, so that hardly anything stands before the pen-knife of the critics. Many theologians now completely deny the personality of God and make Him to be some kind of an inter-personal relationship between men.

Besides the term "de-mythologizing", one often hears the term "kerygma" (preaching) mentioned. We should direct our efforts, we are told, to find out the most central teachings in the sermons of the apostles and the early Church, to determine what we really must believe. Everything else, the Old Testament, and most of the New Testament doctrines are merely secondary, unimportant. They may or may not be believed. Along these lines, Dr. Frör, one of the professors here, told us recently that if anyone had difficulties with miracles, he need merely ignore the miraculous elements and go to something more appealing. The core of the kerygma, to which we ought to adhere here at Erlangen, is the death and resurrection of Christ. The inspiration of the Scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, His deity and His return are no longer believed. The problem is, that few people agree what the absolute minimum for our faith really is. At other universities the resurrection of Christ is likewise denied. Thus for these theologians, of the fundamentals of the Christian faith, only Christ's death remains. But this is not the substitutionary, expiatory death of Christ, for their Christ is not the Christ of the Bible. He is the Christ of their imagination and "scholarship." Refusing to believe the biblical account of the origin of Jesus of Nazareth, they are left to their own devices to account for this miraculous person. One day Professor Stauffer, who has devoted his entire life to the study of the person of Christ, stood in front of his class, while discussing John 1, and exclaimed almost with despair: "The writer of the gospel of John evidently doesn't know where Christ came from; I have no idea where Christ came from; and you, ladies and gentlemen, probably don't know either." This then is the result of a life-time searching for the truth while rejecting the Word of Truth: plain, unadulterated agnosticism. Incidentally, this same professor has developed a very elaborate system of five steps as to how one can determine the true words of Jesus Christ. This, he says, is necessary, because the gospel writers obviously attributed many words to Christ which in reality they made up. Thus, for example, it can

be said with certainty that only those words are from Christ which are original, that is, which were not and could not have been spoken by someone before Him. Furthermore, the true words of Christ were always a *scandalon*, a reproach or an offense to someone. It is rather ironic that the professor down the hall has developed a system of three steps to ascertain the words of Christ; but his prerequisites are virtually the opposite of those taught by Stauffer. Pity the poor student who wants to know what Christ really spoke! – These then are some of the methods employed by German theologians as they study the Scriptures.

Unpromising Future

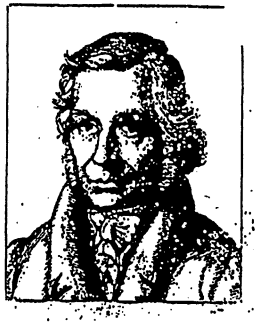
The forced methodology in the study of God's Word cannot but have a devastating effect on the students and ultimately on the churches and on the country as a whole. The spiritual atmosphere at such institutions of learning, where men supposedly are trained to be servants of God, may be briefly illustrated by relating what occured at a certain meeting. The professor of practical theology, Dr. Frör, was asked by an evangelical group within the student body to speak to them, and anyone else who wished to attend, on the topic: Hat die Bibel wirklich recht? (Is the Bible indeed inerrant?) Hundreds of students crowded into the lecture hall as the professor started his tirade against the authority and inerrancy of the Scriptures. The first twelve chapters of Genesis were dismissed as myths, which nevertheless have a deep and lasting lesson for us. He never pointed out just what that lesson was. Next he dealt with the subject of prophecy in the most ambiguous terms and finally dismissed prophecy as an impossibility – for how could man foretell future events? Thus he went on for over an hour, concluding his lecture by assuring us that despite all, we still could trust the Bible! There was a time for questions and I expected at least some of the more conservative students from evangelical churches to rise up in protest. But for thirty minutes this and that point were discussed and yet, not a single student disagreed with what the professor had said. Indeed, the students obviously agreed with him. Finally I ventured to ask why prophecy should be an impossibility in the light of 2. Peter 1:20-21 and 2. Tim. 3 : 16, which passages clearly indicate the divine origin of prophecy and the divine enablement of the writers. Why should it be impossible for the Holy Spirit to reveal events which happened in pre-historic time (such as the creation) or events yet many years in the future?

Without answering my question, the professor asked whether or not I really believed that God had formed Eve out of a part of Adam. When I answered this question with a convinced "yes", these "evangelical" students held their breath in disbelief, while Dr. Frör, with a sneer on his face, exclaimed, "we better stop our discussion right here, sir, because we might destroy your faith." Thus fares the German theology. The students have been conditioned to accept every form of unbelief.

The future indeed looks dark for Germany. Unbelief is rampant and the blame for this rests primarily with those who train the ministers – the university professors. For what else but agnosticism and unbelief can one expect, when even at this university, with Germany's most "conservative" theological faculty, there is a professor of dogmatics who questions the personality of Satan and has no idea what books really should be in the Bible; there is an Old Testament professor who doubts that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ever existed; there is a New Testament professor who has no idea where Jesus Christ came from; there is a professor of church history whose pet peeve is the fable of the empty tomb; there is a professor of hermeneutics who denies the possibility of prophecy, and there is a pastor responsible for the thousands of students whose only answer to a girl enquiring about salvation was that he is not so sure there is a life after death after all.

Unfortunately, this then is what studying theology in Germany is like. One is compelled here to cry out with Goethe the imploring words which he directed to a friend: "Give me the benefit of your convictions, if you have any; but keep your doubts to yourself, for I have enough of my own." May God have mercy on Germany and bring about another reformation, if it be His will! The time for it is ripe. And may God grant that all of us might "give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." (Heb. 2 : 1).

THE DILEMMA OF CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY

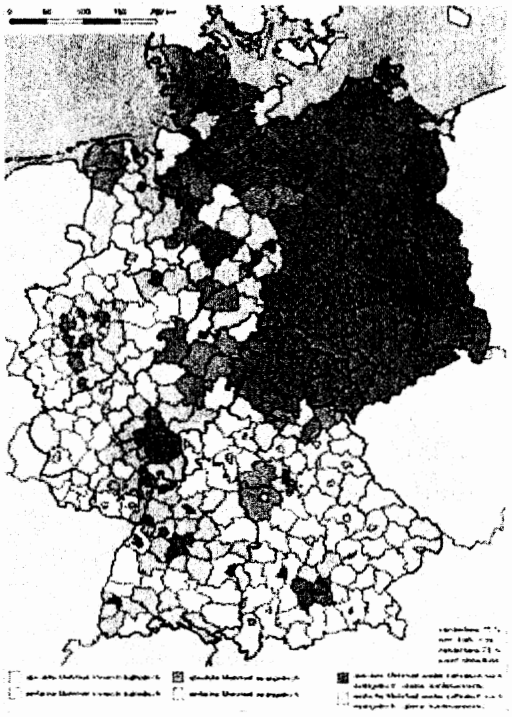
LIBERALISM – 1850	NEO-ORTHODOXY – 1919		NEO-EVANGELICALISM – 1956	FUNDAMENTALISM – 1909
Friedrich Schleiermacher	Karl Barth		Billy Graham	Robert T. Ketcham
				
DENIES THE MIRACULOUS	DELETES CERTAIN DOCTRINES	**BIBLE**	DEEMPHASIZES MAJOR DOCTRINES	DEFENDS THE FUNDAMENTALS
DESTROYS ORTHODOXY	DISMISSES FUNDAMENTALISM AS BIBLIOLATRY	**CHURCH**	DISASSOCIATES ITSELF FROM FUNDAMENTALISM	DEMANDS SEPARATION FROM DOCTRINAL DEVIATION
DISBELIEVES IN THE DEITY OF CHRIST	DETRACTS FROM CHRIST'S DEITY BY VAGUENESS	**CHRIST**	DIALOGUES WITH EVERYONE	DELIGHTS IN THE THEANTHROPIC SAVIOR
DEVELOPED THE SOCIAL GOSPEL	DEPENDS ON A LEAP IN THE DARK	**SALVATION**	DISSEMINATES THE CULTURAL MANDALE	DECLARES THE OLD-FASHIONED GOSPEL

WIKIPEDIA
25 years of the free encyclopedia

Irreligion in Germany

Irreligion is prevalent in Germany. In a time of near-universal adoption of Christianity, Germany was an intellectual centre for European freethought and humanist thinking, whose ideas spread across Europe and the world in the Age of Enlightenment. Later, religious tradition in Germany was weakened by the twin onslaughts of Nazi rule during World War II and that of the Socialist Unity Party in East Germany during the Cold War. In common with most other European societies, a period of secularisation also continued in the decades that followed. While today Christianity remains prevalent in the west of Germany, in the east relatively few Germans identify with any religion whatsoever.

As of 2023, approximately 46% of Germans are irreligious,[1] with a much higher concentration of irreligious citizens in the former East Germany. Eastern Germany, which was under communist rule, is one of the least religious regions in the world.



Majority religion according to the 2022 census
Protestant
Catholic
Unaffiliated
Dark: absolute majority (>50%)
Light: relative majority (<50%)

History

One early irreligious German philosopher was Ludwig Feuerbach, who developed a theory of anthropological materialism in his book *The Essence of Christianity*. Feuerbach's work influenced contemporaries Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in their writings against religion.[2] The Freethought movement gained support in Germany during the 19th century. The secular coming of age ceremony Jugendweihe was developed in the 1850s, and Ludwig Büchner founded the German Freethinkers League in 1881.[3]

After its unification in 1871, the German Empire sought to resist attempts by the Catholic Church to impose its authority over the empire's sovereignty. During the Kulturkampf, Germany passed several laws that limited the power of religious authorities over the state.[4][5]

The Weimar Republic guaranteed freedom of religion when its constitution came into effect in 1919. After the Nazi Party took control of the country in 1933, constitutional protection was ignored in Nazi Germany.

After World War II, Germany was divided into West Germany and East Germany. While West Germany allowed for religious protection, East Germany enacted a system of state atheism and persecuted Christian groups for the first several years of its existence, resulting in East Germa-

SPIEGEL International

Chief Among Non-Believers

Only the Old Embrace God in Former East Germany

Belief in God varies greatly between different countries, but the percentage of believers in the former East Germany is lower than anywhere else, "anchoring the secular pole" internationally, according to a new report by an American research organization. But even in this unpious region, the rate of believers increases with age.

19.04.2012, 16.20 Uhr



Many living in the formerly communist Eastern German states say they are non-believers. Foto: Ingo Wagner/ dpa

Dieser Beitrag stammt aus dem SPIEGEL-Archiv. Warum ist das wichtig?

The after effects of the communist regime in East Germany are still being felt in the former nation's houses of worship more than 20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. A new study released by an American research organization found that just 13 percent of people in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) say they have always believed in God.

PASSPORT

Are East Germans the world's most godless people?

It was Leipzig-born Friedrich Nietzche who wrote that "God is dead" in the 1880s. As far as his fellow East Germans are concerned, he may have been on to something. A recent study by University of Chicago sociologist Tom Smith looks at survey data on belief in God in 30 countries between 1991 and 2008. ...

East Germany: Most Godless Place on Earth

Matthias Kamann & Gernot Facius Die Welt May 15, 2012

BERLIN -- Bad news for all those whoâ??d hoped Christianity might make a comeback now that the Cold War-era German Democratic Republic (DDR) is becoming an ever more distant memory. Atheism, according to a new study, is very much alive and well in the eastern part of Germany.

The statistics are most striking among those under 28 years old: more than 71% of eastern Germans in this age group say they have never believed in the existence of God. Thatâ??s nearly as many as in the 38-47 group, of which 72.6% are non-believers.

The Most Godless Region of the World: Atheism in East Germany (https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1045&context=younghistorians)

Abstract

With a population of 52.1% presently identifying as atheists, East Germany ranks as the most atheistic region of the world. This anomaly can be explained through the economic lenses of supply-side theory and demand-side theory when analyzing the changes instated by the Communist Party during the life of the German Democratic Republic, from 1945 to 1989. Through a process of secularization and religious oppression, the Communist Party lessened the supply of religious goods in East Germany. On the other hand, it also minimized religious demand by providing secular alternatives to traditional religious practices, and institutionalizing anti-religious sentiment. These actions combined have caused the number of citizens subscribing to religious institutions to decrease steadily over the past century.

Notes

With a population of 52.1% presently identifying as atheists, East Germany ranks as the most atheistic region of the world. This anomaly can be explained through the economic lenses of supply-side theory and demand-side theory when analyzing the changes instated by the Communist Party during the life of the German Democratic Republic, from 1945 to 1989. Through a process of secularization and religious oppression, the Communist Party lessened the supply of religious goods in East Germany. On the other hand, it also minimized religious demand by providing secular alternatives to traditional religious practices, and institutionalizing anti-religious sentiment. These actions combined have caused the number of citizens subscribing to religious institutions to decrease steadily over the past century.



Religionsgespräch zwischen Luther und Zwingli. (Nach Prof. Noacks Gemälde.)

The Unbiblical Teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

I spent many years as a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America until I led my congregation out for a more Biblical branch of Lutheranism. "Liberal" is no longer the word for the ELCA, it has become radical. Here is what I mean:

The ELCA pays for abortion for any reason in the denomination's healthcare plan which is funded by offering dollars. That's right, "your offering dollars at work" can go to kill unborn children.

The ELCA ordains practicing homosexuals and now also transgender pastors.

Two summers ago, 31,000 ELCA teenagers attended the ELCA's youth gathering. Popular ELCA pastor Nadia Bolz-Webber led the students to say after her "I renounce the lie that queerness is anything other than beauty". At the youth gathering an 11-year-old boy who thinks he is a girl was put on stage to promote transgenderism.

This past summer the ELCA in convention passed an interfaith resolution stating that we do not know what God thinks of non-Christian religions. A delegate got to the microphone to offer an amendment, saying that we do know because John 14:6 says that Jesus is the only way of salvation. His amendment was voted down by 97 percent.

A Chicago newspaper asked ELCA head bishop Elizabeth Eaton if Hell exists. Her response: "It may, but I think it is empty."

Recently the Christian Post reported on the ELCA promoting a prayer to "Mother God." If you go to herchurch.org,, you will find an ELCA congregation in California which worships "Our Mother who is within us..." The church's pastor led the women on a retreat in which she gave each a lump of clay to fashion their own Asheroth goddess statue so they could worship the "forbidden divine feminine." My alma mater, the ELCA's Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, held a commemoration service for the Transgender Day of Remembrance in which the transgender preacher led the students in the Lord's Prayer, saying "Our Mother in heaven."

I am on a Facebook page that includes pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, some of whom believe it is sexist to pray exclusively to God as Father. I responded that Jesus taught us to pray "Our Father" and we are in no position to correct Him. A music minister at an ELCA church in Virginia didn't like my comment and responded: "The Lord's Prayer is a pattern for prayer. Do you still say it in Arabic? Hebrew? Then shut up. I'll call God Father, Mother, Sister, Brother, anything I want. Doesn't change my salvation."

Notice what is going on in this comment. Lutherans believe we are saved by grace alone and not by our good works–which is gloriously true **(Ephesians 2:8-9)**. But some Lutherans practice "grace abuse" and say "Because I'm saved by grace, I can live like the devil and do whatever I want". Or, as the Apostle Paul put it: "Shall we continue in sin that grace might increase? May it never be!" **(Romans 6:1)**. Yes, we are saved by grace alone, but grace never is alone, it always changes our lives. Good works do not save us, but they are the evidence that we have been saved by Christ.

So, no, we are not free to worship God as "Mother, Sister, Brother, anything I want". The grace of Christ moves us to want to obey God, not to treat Him with contempt and remold Him into "anything I want."

Sadly, the ELCA has become the denomination of "anything I want." Martin Luther believed that "the Bible alone" is the highest authority for the Church and he would grieve if he could see what the ELCA has become. In fact, some of us think ELCA really stands for "Everything Luther Cautioned Against."

← Previous Post Next Post →

This website is copyright with all rights reserved by the board of The Pastors Study. All material on this website can be used for free for the purposes of spreading the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Baptism

God's Greatest Gift



Lutheran Christians Believe:

Baptism is the way God adopts us into the family. We become the sons and daughters of God.
Baptism is entirely a gift. We do nothing to deserve it.
Baptism is our new birth and when God saves us.
Baptism is when we receive the Holy Spirit.



Baptisms
Christmas Eve
7:00 p.m. Service

Infants: because it's a gift of family from God.

Adults: because it's the way we become a part of Christ's church.

Call Church Office at 243-7691 to inquire about your baptism.

St. Johns Lutheran Church

Sixth Avenue and Keo Way, Des Moines, Iowa 50309

2 d. The Roman Catholic Church traditionally has taught that baptism saves by washing away all original sin. The popular manual on religion, My Catholic Faith , takes the standard approach:

127. The Sacrament of Baptism

WHAT IS BAPTISM?—Baptism is the sacrament that gives our souls the new life of sanctifying grace by which we become children of God and heirs of heaven.

Baptism is the very ***first*** sacrament we may receive. Unless we are baptized, we are forbidden to receive any other sacraments. Baptism has the three essentials of a sacrament: (a) it was instituted by Christ; (b) it is a sensible sign; and (c) it confers grace.

1. The sacrament of Baptism was ***instituted*** by Christ at His own Baptism, and commanded at His Ascension.

He said to the Apostles: "Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, ***baptizing*** them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). The Apostles obeyed His command on the very day of Pentecost. In answer to the question of the multitudes, "What shall we do?" after Peter's first sermon, Peter said, "Repent, and ***be baptized*** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:38). About 3000 persons were baptized.

2. Christ instituted Baptism as the sacrament of ***spiritual rebirth,*** making the baptized members of God's family. Baptism infuses grace into their souls, making them supernaturally like to God.

As children of God they are given the right to enter heaven, and to gain merit by their good work. "Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

3. The ***sacramental grace*** of Baptism is a regenerative grace that helps those baptized to live well the supernatural life they have begun as children of God.

This sacramental grace entitles them to actual graces needed to live a Christian life.

St. Peter said: "Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins: and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

WHAT SINS DOES BAPTISM TAKE AWAY?

Baptism takes away original sin, and also actual sins and all the punishment due to them, if the person baptized be guilty of any actual sins and truly sorry for them.

1. Baptism is the only sacrament that can ***remit original sin.*** It cleanses us from all sin, original and actual, and remits all punishment due.

If an adult receives baptism with the proper dispositions, that is, with faith and contrition, his actual sins are taken away with original sin, as well as all temporal punishment due to his actual sins. Thus if an adult dies immediately after baptism, he goes ***straight to heaven,*** whatever the sins he may have committed. "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

2. When Baptism takes away original sin, it gives our souls the new life of ***sanctifying grace.*** Thus by Baptism we are born again.

(pp. 268, 269)

1A. The Addition of Good Works:

1b. False concepts:

1c. Roman Catholicism: Good works are necessary for salvation which may be lost and restored through penance. Very telling is the official publication of the Roman church below, which clearly shows the difference between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. The writer states that Luther, in addition to his many other errors, "taught that faith *without* good works would secure man's salvation, contrary to the Catholic doctrine, which teaches that men are saved by faith *with* good works." (italics in the original)

BIBLE HISTORY

FOR THE USE OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES.

BY

RIGHT REV. RICHARD GILMOUR, D.D.,

Bishop of Cleveland.



A LETTER FROM

His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII.

TRANSLATION.

We have received with thanks the copy of The Bible History, together with the expression of devotion, which Benziger Brothers, Publishers, have sent us through the Bishop of Basil, and we give our Apostolic Benediction to them and to their labors, that these may always tend to the good of Religion.

Leo P. P. XIII.

LUTHER AND THE REFORMATION



Protestant Reformation. In 1520 his doctrines were condemned by the Pope and he himself excommunicated.

4. In 1522 Luther translated the Bible into German, and with it proclaimed the doctrine of "an open Bible and free interpretation" as a fundamental doctrine. He also denied the supremacy of the Pope, the authority of the Church, the celibacy of the clergy, the efficacy of the sacraments, the doctrine of purgatory, and the teachings of the Church on justification and original sin.

5. He forbade his followers to honor the Saints or to obey the commandments of the Church, rejecting all the sacraments except Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He also taught that faith *without* good works would secure man's salvation, contrary to the Catholic doctrine, which teaches that men are saved by faith *with* good works.

THE FORMULA OF FAITH

EPHESIANS 2

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:
9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.
10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

8 τῇ γὰρ χάριτί ἐστε σεσωσμένοι
– For by grace ye are *having been* saved
διὰ πίστεως· καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν,
through faith; and this not of you,
θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον· 9 οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων, ἵνα μή
of [is] the gift; not of works, lest
God
τις καυχήσηται. 10 αὐτοῦ γάρ ἐσμεν
anyone should boast. For of him we are
ποίημα, κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ
a product, created in Christ Jesus
ἐπὶ ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς, οἷς προητοίμασεν
unto works good, which ¹previously prepared
ὁ θεὸς ἵνα ἐν αὐτοῖς περιπατήσωμεν.
– ¹God in order that in them we might walk.

correct view: Grace + Faith = Salvation + Works

corrupt view: Grace + Faith + Works = Salvation

MK

THE DANGEROUS DELUSIONS
of
COVENANT THEOLOGY



Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669)



Hermann Witsius (1636-1708)



John Gerstner (1914-1996)



R C Sproul (1939-2017)



The Dangerous Delusions of Covenant Theology

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.



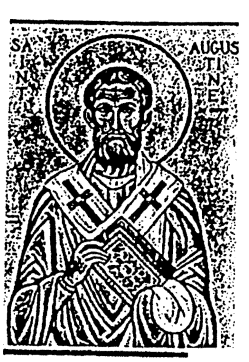
Covenant Theology grew out of the Reformation and as system was developed by second generation reformers, such as Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575) who followed Huldreich Zwingli (1484-1531), the Reformer of Zürich, Switzerland. As a theological system, Covenant Theology (CT) views the history of God's dealings with mankind under the framework of two or three overarching theological covenants, not specifically mentioned in Scripture, the covenant of works, the covenant of grace and the covenant of redemption. God initially made covenant of works with Adam, promising eternal life for obedience and death for disobedience. Adam failed miserably, dooming the entire human race, but God intervened, entering into a covenant of grace through which the problem of sin and death would be overcome. Those subscribing to a covenant of redemption teach that in eternity past God the Father made a covenant with the Son as Head and Redeemer of the elect, voluntarily taking their place as the substitutionary sacrifice.

In contrast, dispensationalists view God's dealing with mankind in terms of several clearly distinguishable economies or dispensations. The term *dispensation* (Greek, *oikonomia* = economy, stewardship, dispensation) is used repeatedly in the New Testament (Eph. 1:10; 3:2, Col. 1:20), exactly the way dispensationalists use the term. As Charles C. Ryrie notes, "Dispensationalism views the world as a household run by God. In His household-world God is dispensing or administering its affairs according to His own will and in various stages of revelation in the passage of time" (*Dispensationalism* [1995], 29). They subscribe to the covenants mentioned in the Bible. There are at least eight: the Edenic covenant (Gen. 1:28-30; 2:15-17), the Adamic covenant (Gen. 3:14-19), the Noahic covenant (Gen. 8:20-9:17), the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:1-3), the Mosaic covenant (Ex. 20-23), the Davidic covenant (2. Sam. 7:4-17), the Palestinian covenant (Deut. 30:12-10) and the New covenant (Jer. 31-37).

Covenant theologians espouse many important biblical doctrines, such as biblical inerrancy, the total depravity of man, the sovereignty of God and eternal security, but on the contemporary scene, their profuse publications, especially in the area of prophecy, challenge the literal, dispensational understanding of end-time events.

1. Covenant Theology (CT) tries to rob believers of the foremost hope Christ left to the Church (Tit. 2:13), the any-moment return for His Bride, to deliver believers from the wrath to come (Rom 5:9; 1. Thess. 1:10; 5:9). Many of their theologians teach that Christ has actually returned already in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70 or the believer must endure the time of the tribulation. The belief in the imminent return of the Savior for the saints is ridiculed as a false doctrine of recent origin.

2. CT is influenced by ecclesiastical tradition rather than being based on sound biblical exegesis. CT with its Reformation roots follows St. Augustine (d. 430) who denied a literal Millennium, therefore any Scriptures relating to the earthly rule of Christ are summarily rejected by CT.



3. CT substitutes a theological system for a biblical theology. The opinions of Augustine and the Reformers, who failed to separate from the Roman Catholic amillennial position, count more than the declaration of the Apostles. The reformers followed the end-time view of the Roman Catholic Church. While they saw clearly the issue of salvation by faith alone, they failed to reform the spiritualizing of biblical prophecy. What Calvin (1509-1564), the Swiss Reformer, and Cocceius (1603-1669), founder of CT, espoused concerning the future is heeded more than what Christ taught.



4. CT engages in a system of interpretation that began in pagan Greece, where the philosophers allegorized Greek immoral religious tales to make them acceptable to the cultural mind. The Greek poet Homer wrote fantastic tales of the gods cavorting on Mt. Olympus. The philosophers allegorized "many lines in Homer which seemed to them unworthy, undignified, morally reprehensible, and even positively blasphemous" (Frederic W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, 1886, 136). The Greek gods, by blatant spiritualizing, suddenly became symbols of vices and virtues.



5. CT introduces, like Roman Catholicism and St. Augustine before, an illegitimate set of interpretive principles that distorts the plain sense of Scripture. This is primarily so in the area of prophecy. With their "dual hermeneutic" (*hermeneutics* =" the science and art of biblical interpretation") their theologians interpret fulfilled prophecy literally but spiritualize unfulfilled prophecy. CT would defend the literal fulfillment of Zech. 9:9 that Christ entered Jerusalem on a donkey but completely spiritualize the prediction of Zech. 14:4 that He would return physically to the Mount of Olives. Starting with the presupposition that there cannot be a millennium, any passage that remotely refers to a literal future reign of Christ on earth is reinterpreted.

6. CT refuses to see any fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant (e.g. Gen. 12:1-3; 15:18) in a future nation of Israel. The Reformed Knox Theological Seminary in Florida, published "An Open Letter to Evangelicals and Other Interested Parties: The People of God, the Land of Israel, and the Impartiality of the Gospel" in which the authors assert that "the entitlement of any one ethnic or religious group to . . . the 'Holy Land' cannot be supported by Scripture. In fact, the land promises specific to Israel . . . were fulfilled under Joshua" (IX). Why the blindness to clear land promises to Israel? Why the denial of specific, literal prophecies that Israel would possess the land "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Gen. 15:18). The "land of Canaan [would be Israel's] for an everlasting possession" (Gen. 17:8). Sadly, to date, over 300 theologians and pastors added their signature to the open letter which constitutes a clear denial of God's future program for His people.



7. CT has fostered a movement that is inimical to biblical truth and polemical in its publications. The biblical dispensational position, clearly espoused in the "Thief in the Night" films series and the "Left Behind" volumes, is constantly under attack by such books as Gary DeMar's *Last Day Madness* and *End-Time Delusions*. It is virtually impossible to find a similar no-holds-barred dispensational attack on the CT position. Theologian R. C. Sproul, in his foreword to the latter volume, says that "in my years of study and ministry I have yet to discover a single text of sacred Scripture that teaches a pretribulation Rapture." The notion is "pure fiction" (ix). One wonders whether his version of the N.T. contains verses such as 1. Thess. 4:17 and Rev. 3:10!

8. CT denies a literal rule of Christ on the throne of David, contradicting the angelic promise to Mary (Luke 1:32-33) and detracting from the future exaltation of Christ. That someday the Savior will graciously rule the world from Jerusalem - a frequent prophetic prediction (Is. 2:1-4; Mic. 4:1-3) - is strongly rejected by CT.

9. CT undermines any hope for a world yearning for righteousness and peace. For them human history ends in tragedy and ruin rather than triumph and redemption. The prophets clearly speak of a future time when Jerusalem will be the world's capital. Christ will judge righteously the whole world from the holy city. The nations will gather there for worship. All wars will cease. Redeemed Israel will bask in the light of their Messiah (Is. 2:4; Mic.4:2; Hab. 2:14). CT might believe in a return of Christ after the tribulation but sees that event as the end of human history.

10. CT leaves the saving work of Christ incomplete as it fails to see the redemption of nature from the curse of sin (Is. 11:6-8; Rom. 8:21-23). God predicts the future deliverance of this planet from the curse occasioned by the Adamic transgression (Rom. 5:12). CT does not allow any time for the glorious transformation of our planet to occur. All of creation groans for deliverance and that will surely come. A denial of clear literal prophecies will not deter their ultimate fulfillment.

11. CT distorts and denies not simply isolated passages but major portions of the prophetic Word, such as Ezekiel 40-48, Zechariah 14 and Revelation 4-22. Many in the CT camp, insist most of the predictions in the Revelation were fulfilled in the events surrounding the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70! Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, they insist that John penned the Revelation in the mid 60's and predicts that God would divorce national Israel for rejecting the Messiah, would judge her and replace her permanently with the universal church.

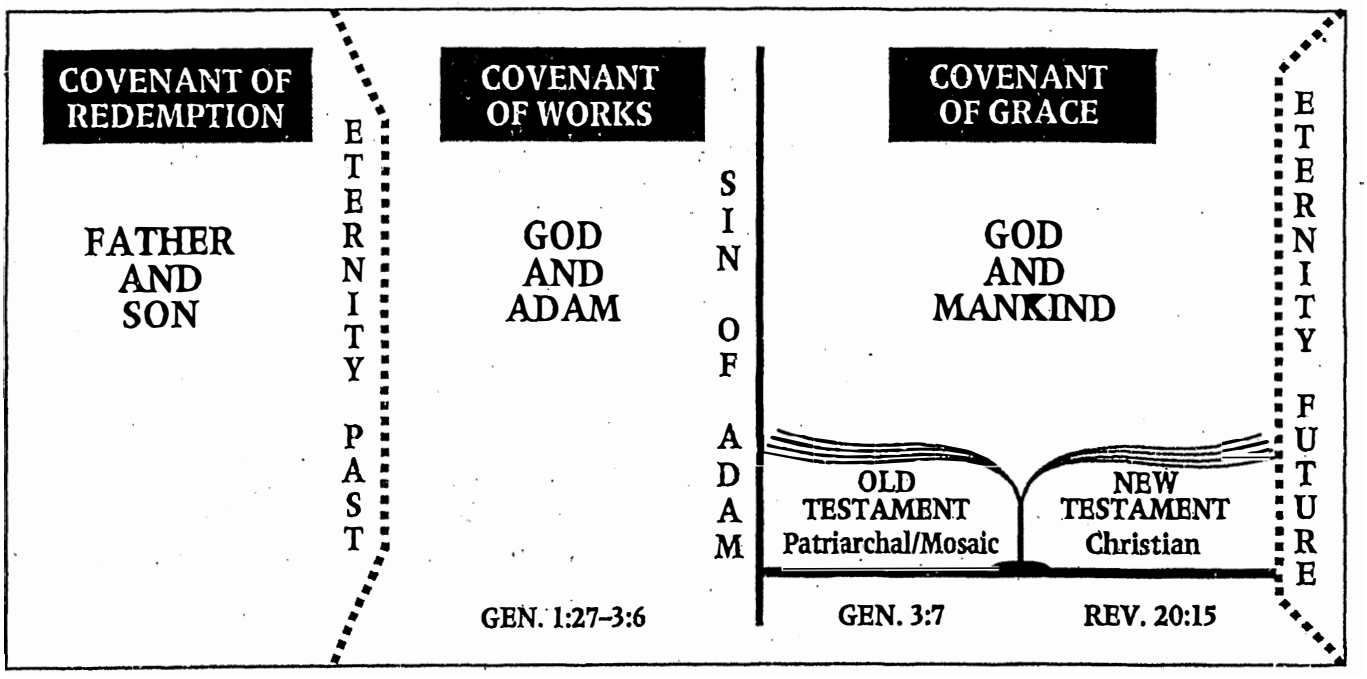
12. CT expands its energy and finances against fellow-Christians rather than rightly dividing the Word of truth (2. Tim. 2:15). Failure to do that, says the Apostle Paul, brings shame to those who fail to make biblical distinctions. Israel is not the Church. Law is not Grace. The throne of David will never be found in heaven.

13. CT makes the Holy Spirit a liar who expressly revealed **6 times in Revelation 20** that Christ's reign would last **1000 years**. With exegetical sleight of hand, CT tries to explain the number away. CT insists despite clear grammatical rules that the number 1000 is symbolic. In fact, when in the Greek (or Hebrew) language the word day or year is preceded by a numerical adjective, the reference is to a literal time period. What is true for the days of Genesis 1 is equally true for the years of Christ's reign. The earthly kingdom so clearly revealed and promised to believers (Lk. 12:32; 1. Cor. 6:2; Rev. 3:21) cannot be so cavalierly dismissed.

14. Theologians in the CT camp are unable to agree among themselves on a clear outline of future events. Some see the tribulation period in the past (Gary DeMar, R.C. Sproul), some in the present (Billy Graham) and still others future (Bill Bright). They are agreed on what they do not believe, but are unable to come to an agreement on what they do hold about the future. Departure from literal interpretation is detrimental to an understanding of the divine design for the future. The literal fulfillment of Bible prophecy is a striking demonstration to the world of the power and wisdom of God. The fact is that God does have a future

plan, "Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Is. 46:11). Furthermore, to know that the blood-bought believer has such a prominent place in God's plan for the future gives the individual an ardent desire to live for Christ, a hope that he will perhaps soon be summoned by Christ and an anticipation of the future eons of basking in the presence of Christ.

THE THEOLOGICAL COVENANTS



END TIMES FICTION

A BIBLICAL CONSIDERATION OF THE *LEFT BEHIND* THEOLOGY

GARY DEMAR

THOMAS NELSON PUBLISHERS®
Nashville
A Division of Thomas Nelson, Inc.
www.ThomasNelson.com



Ironsides's argument rests first on pure speculation regarding the identity of the restrainer, then upon the bizarre and gratuitous leap of the need to remove all Christians from the world to remove the restraint. This is imaginative exegesis at its worst. Not one word of the text explicitly teaches a pretribulation Rapture.

Fast forward to the decade of the seventies. I had finished college, seminary, and my graduate work and was now teaching theology. I was invited by a friend in Pittsburgh to meet privately with Kathryn Kuhlman, the faith healer. During my visit with her in her offices, she showed me a large vault that contained hundreds of audio tapes carefully preserved with proper air conditioning and the like. She explained that the purpose of these vaulted tapes was to have witnessing materials for the benefit of those left behind after the Rapture and during the tribulation.

Fast forward to the present. In my years of study and ministry I have yet to discover a single text of sacred Scripture that teaches a pretribulation Rapture. In my opinion the notion, which is quite recent in church history, is pure fiction.

The Left Behind series is clearly fiction. But it involves the literary genre of fiction to teach a theological viewpoint that the authors do not believe is fiction. I do not think one can account for the phenomenal sales (over 40 million copies) of this series by the strength of the fictional story line. I believe these books are devoured by people who regard the theological premises upon which they are based as true and valid. I find that a sad and tragic matter, for if I am correct, millions of earnest Christians are being taught manifestly flawed doctrine.

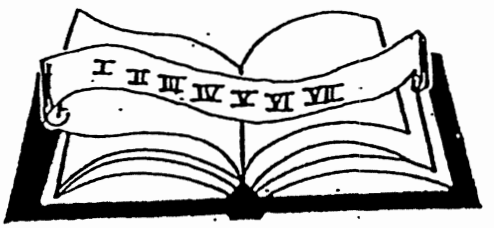
I am delighted that Gary DeMar has taken the time and made the effort to do a painstaking analysis of the theological premises of the Left Behind series. I think he clearly demonstrates that the theological premises upon which the series is built is a house of cards. DeMar, with surgical and exegetical precision, dismantles the house of cards.

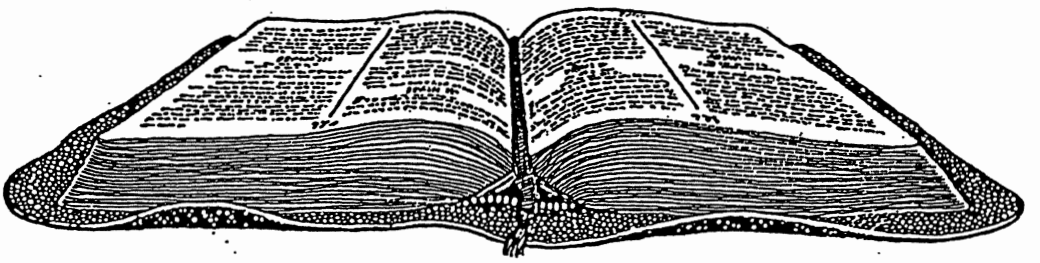
He shows the inconsistencies of LaHaye's hermeneutics in which literal interpretation is ignored when the plain meaning of the text does not support his thesis. DeMar also reveals the ignoring of the time-frame references of Scripture, which would destroy LaHaye's thesis altogether if compared to his principle of literal interpretation.

I wish that every person who has read the Left Behind series would read *End Times Fiction*. I, for one, am deeply grateful for this volume and pray that it will bring a sobering approach to biblical interpretation that is so needed in our times.

R. C. SPROUL
Orlando

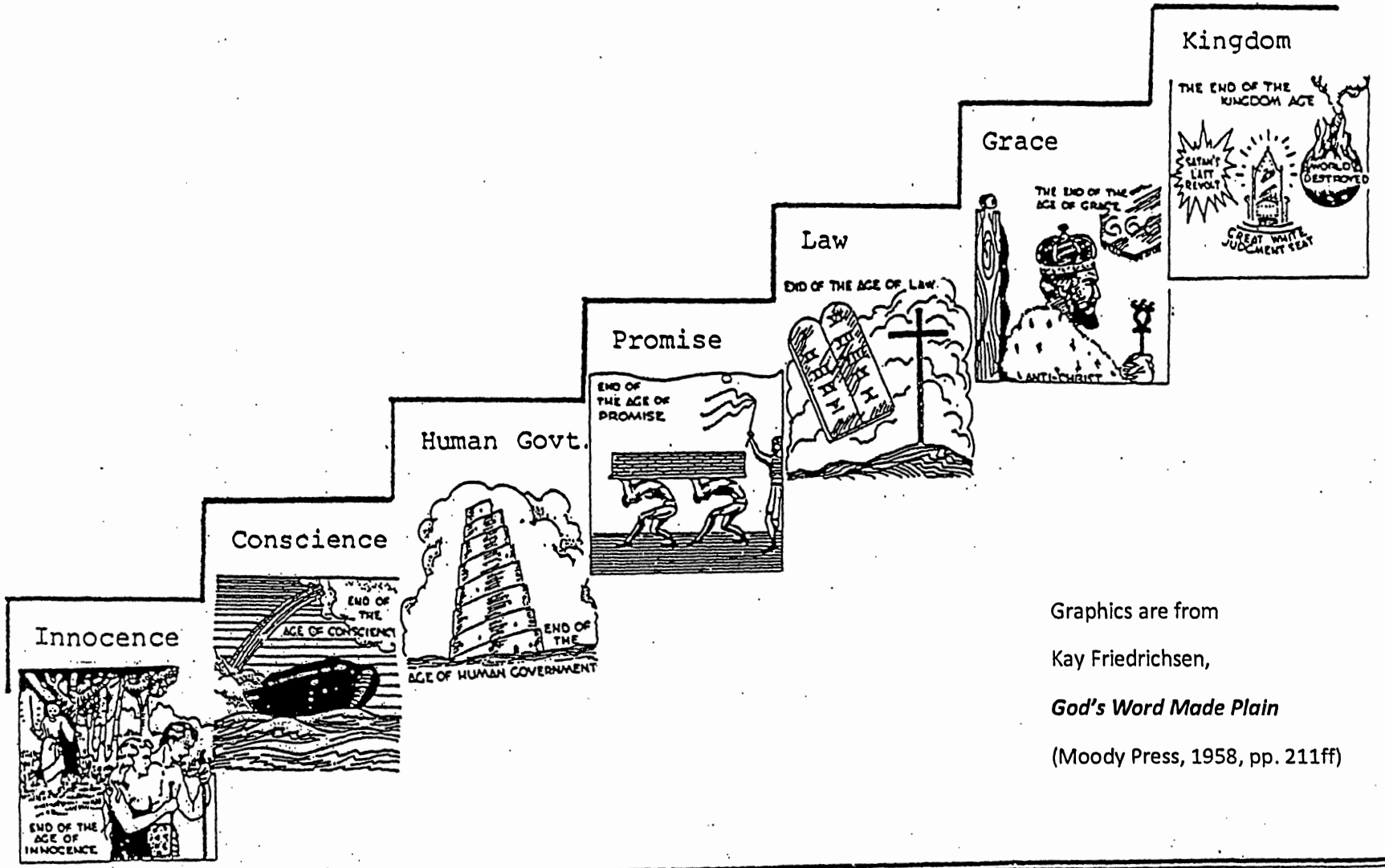
SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT FOR DISPENSATIONALISM





Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

THE DISPENSATIONS



Graphics are from

Kay Friedrichsen,

God's Word Made Plain

(Moody Press, 1958, pp. 211ff)

GOD'S GLORIOUS PLAN FOR THE AGES

1A. THE DEFINITION OF DISPENSATIONALISM

1b. The definition of "dispensation":

It would be difficult to improve on Ryrie's definition, "A dispensation is a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose" (Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, 29).

2b. The etymology of the word:

1c. *Dispensatio*, the Latin term

"To weigh or dispense"

2c. *Oikonomia*, the Greek term

Oikos = house; *Nomos* = law

The Greek term, *oikonomia*, thus means "the managing of a household"

3b. The usage of Scripture:

1c. The general usage:

1d. The usage of the word dispensation:

The various forms of the word *dispensation* are used in the New Testament twenty times. The verb *oikonomeo* is used once in Luke 16:2 where it is translated "to be a steward." The noun *oikonomos* is used ten times (Luke 12:42; 16:1, 3 8; Rom. 16:23; I Cor. 4:1, 2; Gal. 4:2; Titus 1:7; I Pet. 4:10), and in all instances it is translated "steward" except "chamberlain" in Romans 16:23. The noun *oikonomia* is used nine times (Luke 16:2, 3, 4). In these instances it is translated variously ("stewardship," "dispensation," "edifying"). The Authorized Version of Ephesians 3:9 has "fellowship" (*koinonia*) whereas the American Standard Version has "dispensation" (Ryrie, 25).

2d. The Lucan passage Luke 16:1ff
And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a **steward**; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.
2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy **stewardship**; for thou mayest be no longer **steward**.

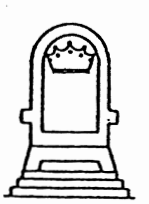
[3] Then the **steward** said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the **stewardship**: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

3d. The inference from the usage:

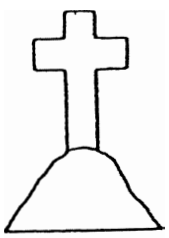
1e. A stewardship involves two parties.
2e. A stewardship involves an obligation of one party to the other.
3e. A stewardship involves accountability.

2c. The specific usage of the word dispensation:

Interestingly, the Bible uses the term dispensation exactly as we would use it in reference to three distinct dispensations.

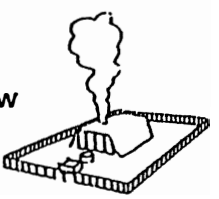


1d. Ephesians 1:10—**"Dispensation of the fullness of time"**
That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:



2d. Ephesians 3:2—**"Dispensation of the grace of God"**
If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

3d. Colossians 1:25-26—"I am . . . a minister, according to the dispensation of God"
Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;
[26] Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:



Paul implies a prior dispensation, i.e., **the dispensation of law**

2A. THE DISTINCTIVES OF A DISPENSATION:

1b. The characteristics of a dispensation:

1c. Primary characteristics:

1d. God's change in governmental relationship:
God initiates a new stewardship on earth.

2d. A new responsibility for man:
Man receives new obligations as a steward.

3d. God's revelation to that end:
Before God can expect man to function under his new responsibility, added revelation is necessary.

2c. Secondary characteristics:

1d. Divine test:
Each dispensation is a test to see whether man under whatever circumstances can please God.



2d. Human failure:
Invariably man falls short of God's expectations.

3d. Eventual judgment:
Each dispensation concludes with a divine judgment.

4d. Divine Grace:
God's justice is tempered by His love and despite miserable human failure and inevitable judgment, God manifests His grace.

2b. The *sine qua non* of a dispensationalist:

1c. Negatively: A dispensationalist is not one who

1d. Uses the word "dispensation."
2d. Subscribes to a certain number of dispensations.
3d. Believes in a premillennial return of Christ.

2c. Positively: A dispensationalist is one who

1d. Consistently distinguishes Israel and the Church.

A dispensationalist sees two eternal purposes of God, expressed in His dealings with Israel and the Church. Israel is always Israel; the Church is the Church, not spiritual Israel.

2d. Uses literal hermeneutics:

Dispensationalism practices consistent literal interpretation of the Bible.

3d. Sees the underlying purpose of God as His glory.

God's overall purpose in the universe is to manifest His glory through salvation and other means. (This is Ryrie's *sine qua non*, opposed by the "progressive dispensationalists.")

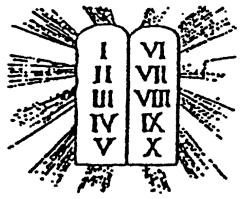
3b. The number of dispensations:

1c. The importance of the number:

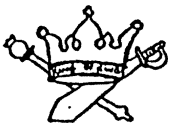
The number and names of dispensations are of relatively minor importance. It is possible to have between 3 to 8 dispensations. Covenant theologians only see the Old and the New dispensation.

2c. The inference from Scripture:

1d. The New Testament refers to three dispensations:



1e. The millennium: Eph. 1:10



2e. Grace: Eph. 3:2



3e. Law: Col. 1:25-26

These three dispensations, Law, Grace and Kingdom are the subject of extensive Scripture.

2d. The Old Testament implies five dispensations:

1e. A dispensation before the fall: Man's life under innocence.

2e. A dispensation after the fall: Man's life under conscience, offering sacrifices.

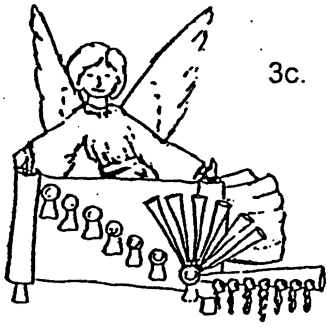
3e. A dispensation after the Flood:

In Gen. 9 four new features are found for man's stewardship:

1f. The fear of man upon animals, v. 2.
2f. The eating of meat, v. 3.
3f. Capital punishment, v. 6
4f. A promise of never causing another flood, vv. 8-17.

4e. A dispensation beginning with Abraham, involving a covenant of promise.

5e. A dispensation commencing at Mt. Sinai with the giving of the Mosaic Law.



3c. The inconclusiveness of some periods:

1d. Should the tribulation be a separate dispensation?

The tribulation is probably not a separate dispensation, but the climactic judgment concluding grace. The 70 weeks of Daniel began about 1,000 years after the law was given and are completed during the tribulation, but are not necessarily the same as the dispensation of the Law.

2d. Should the eternal state be a separate dispensation?

It seems that when temporal history ends, so do God's stewardship arrangements with men.

3A. THE BENEFITS OF DISPENSATIONALISM:

1b. It answers the need for biblical distinction:

Everyone faces problems in practicing some kind of consistent interpretation. Every expositor needs to account for the differences between the Old Testament economy and this dispensation in areas such as:

1. The inheritance of the land.
2. The keeping of the Passover and Sabbath.
3. Animal sacrifices.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer said that one is a dispensationalist, whether he realizes it or not, if one does not claim or practice the above.

2b. It answers the need for a philosophy of history:

1c. Dispensationalism recognizes progressive revelation.

2c. Dispensationalism provides a unifying factor to history. Whatever God does is for His glory, that is, it serves a doxological purpose.

3c. Dispensationalism provides for a goal of human history, the millennium.

3b. It provides a consistent procedure in hermeneutics:

1c. The two Great Commissions: Matthew 10; Matthew 28

In Matthew 10, Christ demands the disciples <u>not</u> to preach to the Gentiles or Samaritans. In Matthew 28, He commands the same disciples to go and disciple all nations. Only a dispensational distinction will help solved the apparent discrepancy.

2c. The Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 5-7

Certain commandments in this passage cannot possibly be practiced literally in the Church Age, such as turning the other cheek and giving to anyone who asks of us. Seeing that part of the Sermon on the Mount applies to the Kingdom Age relieves apparent hermeneutical tensions.



4A. THE DETAILING OF THE DISPENSATIONS:

1b. The listing of the dispensations:

1c.	***Innocence:***	Creation to Fall
2c.	***Conscience:***	Fall to Flood
3c.	***Human Government:***	Flood to the call of Abraham
4c.	***Promise:***	Call of Abraham to Mount Sinai
5c.	***Law:***	Mount Sinai to the Cross
6c.	***Grace:***	Pentecost to Rapture
7c.	***Kingdom:***	Second Advent to Great White Throne

2b. The features of each dispensation:

1c. The beginning:
2c. Related Scriptures:
3c. The state of man:
4c. Human responsibility:
5c. Human failure:
6c. Divine judgment:
7c. Divine grace:
8c. Divine covenant:

3b. Concluding general observations:

1c. Innocence has devoted only 37 verses to it.

2c. Law and grace have the most Scripture relating to them.

3c. It is best to see seven dispensations.

4c. Our GARBC fellowship is the largest dispensational group in the USA.

XVIII. Israel

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people, that she is now dispersed because of her disobedience and rejection of Christ, and that she will be regathered in the Holy Land and, after the completion of the Church, will be saved as a nation at the second advent of Christ. (Gen. 13:14-17; Rom. 11:1-32; Ezek. 37.

XIX. Rapture and Subsequent Events

We believe in the premillennial return of Christ, an event which can occur at any moment, and that at that moment the dead in Christ shall be raised in glorified bodies, and the living in Christ shall be given glorified bodies without tasting death, and all shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the seven years of the Tribulation. 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:42-44, 51-54; Phil. 3:20, 21; Rev. 3:10.

We believe that the Tribulation, which follows the Rapture of the Church, will be culminated by the revelation of Christ in power and great glory to sit upon the throne of David and to establish the millennial kingdom. Dan. 9:25-27; Matt. 24:29-31; Luke 1:30-33; Isa. 9:6, 7; 11:1-9; Acts 2:29, 30; Rev. 20:1-4, 6.

(General Association of Regular Baptist Churches 1988 Church Directory, p. 16, pages 13-16 "Articles of Faith")

This writer recalls Dr. John F. Walvoord repeatedly observing in his classes that when he went held meetings in churches and his ministry was in a Regular Baptist church, he could always be sure he was among dispensational friends. He observed that the GARBC is the only fellowship of churches where the churches are consistently dispensational.

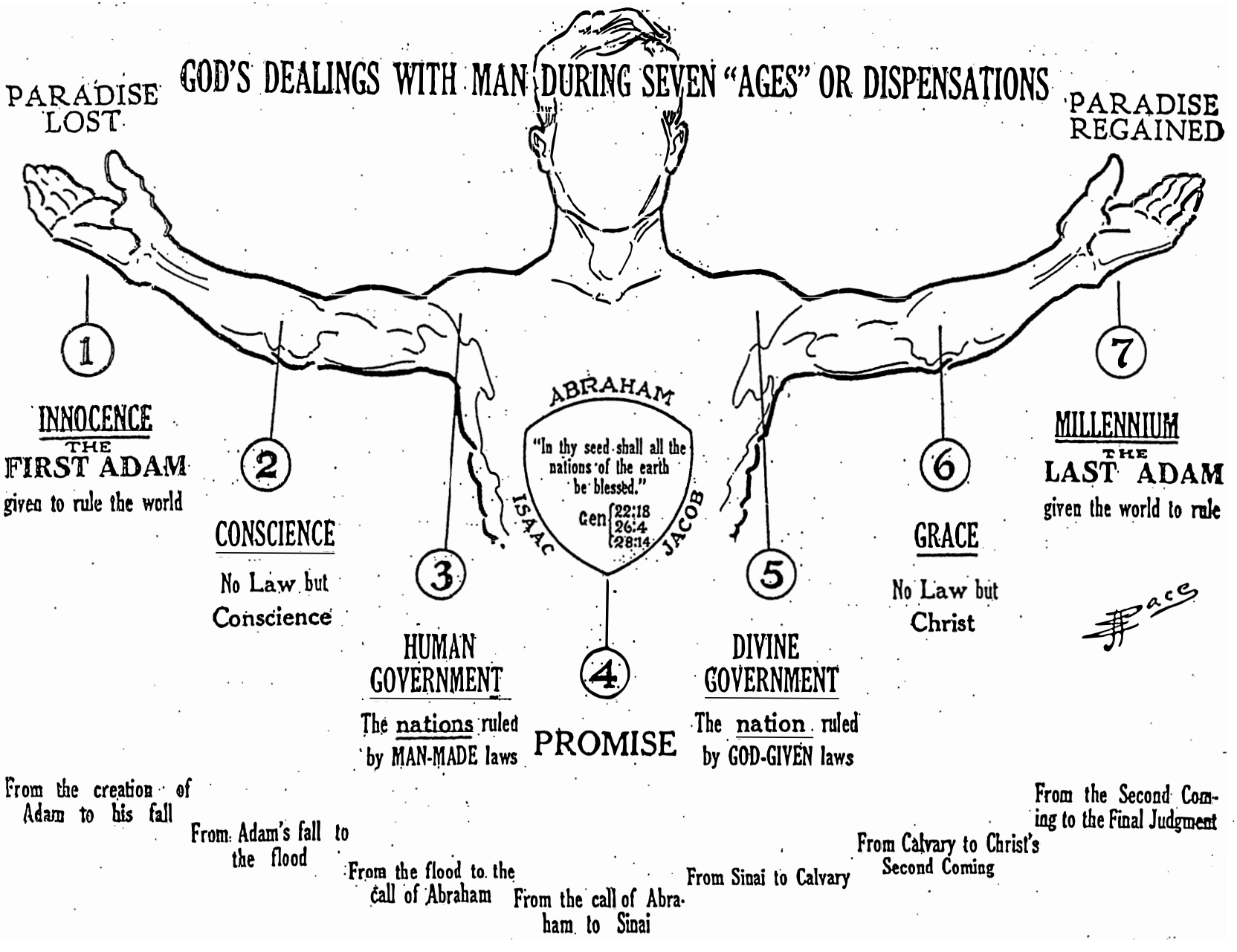
FBBC's statement of faith:

Dispensations

We believe that the dispensations are not ways of salvation, which has always been by grace through faith, but are stewardships by which God administers His purpose on earth through humanity under varying responsibilities; that changes in dispensational dealings depend upon changed situations in which humanity is found in relation to God due to human failures and God's judgments; that, though several dispensations cover the entirety of human history, only three of these are the subject of extended revelation in Scripture; that these three (Mosaic Law, Grace, and millennial Kingdom) are distinct and are not to be intermingled or confused.

http://www.faith.edu/about-faith/position-statements/doctrinal-statement 2015

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH MAN DURING SEVEN "AGES" OR DISPENSATIONS



PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH, 740 – 680 B.C.

PREDICTION

Is. 7:14
Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.



FULFILLMENT

Mt. 1:22-23
Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Is. 61:1
The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; and the opening of the prison to [them that are] bound;



Lk. 4:18, 21
The Spirit of the Lord [is] upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,... And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Is. 2:3
And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.



Is. 11:6
The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.



Many of Isaiah's hundreds of prophecies have been fulfilled, and that, literally.

It is reasonable to suppose that the unfulfilled prophecies will also see an exact, literal fulfillment.

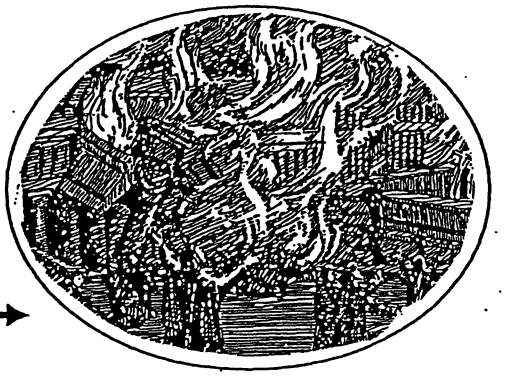
JEREMIAH'S FULFILLED AND UNFULFILLED PROPHECIES

PREDICTION **FULFILLMENT**

JER. 50:13

Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.

DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON



DAN. 5:30-31

In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

JER. 29: 10

For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

RETURN OF ISRAEL TO THE LAND



EZRA 1:1

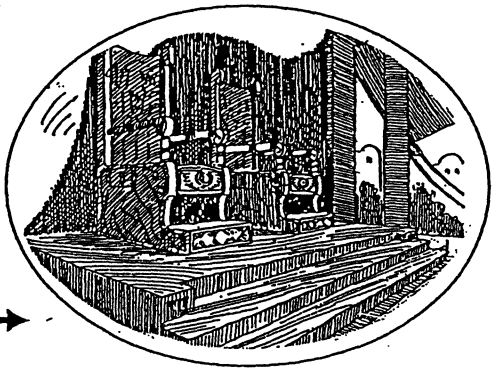
Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing...

(2:1)

JER. 33:21

Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers.

CHRIST IS ON THE THRONE



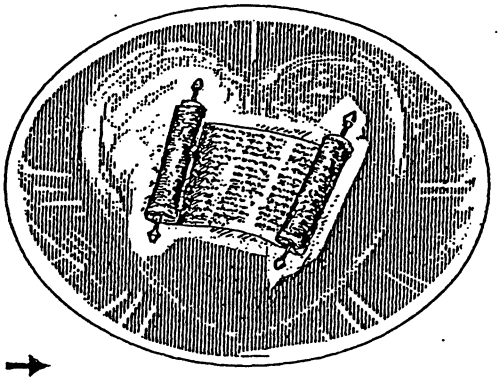
REV. 3:21

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

JER. 31:33

But this shall be the covenant that I will make . . . I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

GOD'S LAW IN THE HEART

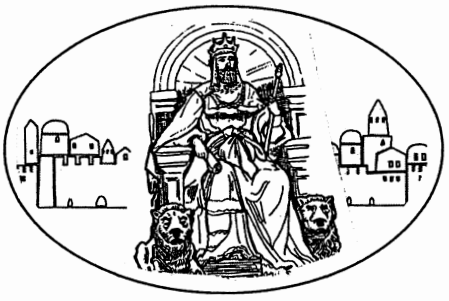


HEB. 8:10

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

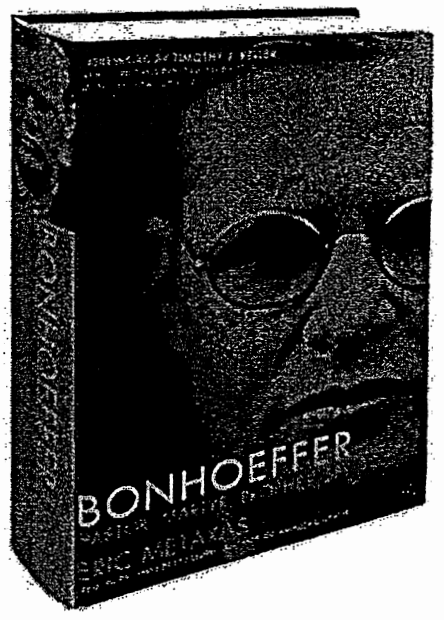
MICAH'S FULFILLED AND UNFULFILLED PROPHECIES

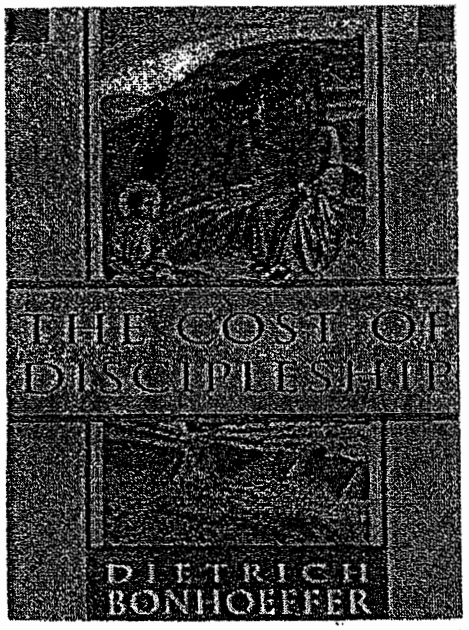
PREDICTION		FULFILLMENT
Micah 4:10 Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail: for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt go even to Babylon; there shalt thou be delivered; there the Lord shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies. **The Babylonian Captivity**		**Jeremiah 39:9** Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon the remnant of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to him, with the rest of the people that remained.
Micah 5:2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. **The Birthplace of Christ**		**Matt. 2:4-5** And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. [5] And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written ~~by the~~ prophet (Luke 2:4)
Micah 4:2 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. **The Presence of the Lord**		**Matt. 14:28** And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
Micah 4:3 ...and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. **The Cessation of Warfare**		**Psalm 2:8-9** Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. [9] Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

All fulfilled prophecies were fulfilled literally. The believer has every right to expect unfulfilled prophecies be fulfilled literally. It is hermeneutically illegitimate to spiritualize unfulfilled prophecies, as Reformed theologians are doing.



Dietrich Bonhoeffer







Dietrich Bonhoeffer

On Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Six Questions for Eric Metaxas

By Scott Horton

BROWSINGS
The Harper's blog

Share
Single Page
Print Page

Eric Metaxas, whose best-selling biography of William Wilberforce, Amazing Grace, *provided the framework for an important motion picture, is now out with a thick review of the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German pastor and theologian who played a key role in one of the attempts to kill Adolf Hitler. I put six questions to Metaxas about* Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy:

1. You dedicate your book, in German no less, to your grandfather. Tell us the significance of that dedication, and how in the course of your own life you were drawn to Dietrich Bonhoeffer.



What happened is unclear, but the results were obvious. For one thing, he now became a regular churchgoer for the first time in his life and took Communion as often as possible... Two years earlier, in New York, he hadn't been interested in going to church. He loved working with the children in Harlem, and he loved going to concerts and movies and museums, and he loved traveling, and he loved the philosophical and academic give-and-take of theological *ideas*–but here was something new.
—From *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*
Reprinted by permission of Thomas Nelson – © 2010 Eric Metaxas

3. John Baillie and Reinhold Niebuhr wrote that Bonhoeffer, during his time in New York, was tenaciously non-political. You give us a Bonhoeffer who seems to have taken sides in the controversy that then raged between "modernists" and "fundamentalists," siding with the latter, who admired in particular the fundamentalist churches of Harlem, and who was appalled and moved by the sufferings of American blacks. Is there any contradiction between these two portraits?

Not at all. As Whitman says in *Leaves of Grass*, "I am large. I contain multitudes." The truth is inevitably large and forces a wider perspective on things. Bonhoeffer was not a liberal or a conservative, but a Christian. He was zealous for God's perspective on things, and God's perspective is inevitably wider than the standard parochial political points of view. It sometimes forces us toward a liberal view and sometimes toward a conservative view. ← UNFORTUNATELY, HE WAS

But because Bonhoeffer has been so consistently portrayed as a theological liberal–which he was not–it's important for us to see the other side, and I hope I've shown that in my book. He is clearly horrified at the way so many at Union Theological Seminary had cavalierly dispensed with the fundamentals of the Christian faith and had created an ersatz religion in their own progressive image. He was impressed with and moved by their earnest desire to help the poor, for example, but he wondered on what basis they called any of this "Christianity." He found their theology shallow to the point of being almost evaporated entirely. But he was equally alive to the dangers on the other side, the dangers of fundamentalism and pietism. He's complicated, but in the best sense. He's an equal opportunity theological critic.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (German: [ˈdi:tʁɪç ˈbo:nhœfɐ]; 4 February 1906 – 9 April 1945) was a German Lutheran pastor, theologian, anti-Nazi dissident, and key founding member of the Confessing Church. His writings on Christianity's role in the secular world have become widely influential, and his book *The Cost of Discipleship* became a modern classic.[1]

Apart from his theological writings, Bonhoeffer was known for his staunch resistance to the Nazi dictatorship, including vocal opposition to Hitler's euthanasia program and genocidal persecution of the Jews.[2] He was arrested in April 1943 by the Gestapo and imprisoned at Tegel prison for one and a half years. Later he was transferred to a Nazi concentration camp. After being allegedly associated with the plot to assassinate Adolf Hitler, he was briefly tried, along with other accused plotters, including former members of the *Abwehr* (the German Military Intelligence Office), and then executed by hanging on 9 April 1945 as the Nazi regime collapsed, just two weeks before Allied forces liberated the camp and three weeks before Hitler's suicide.



Dietrich Bonhoeffer



Bonhoeffer in 1939

Born	4 February 1906 Breslau, Silesia Province, Prussia, German Empire
Died	9 April 1945 (aged 39) Flossenbürg concentration camp, Nazi Germany 49.734958°N 12.35577°E
Education	Staatsexamen (Tübingen), Doctor of Theology (Berlin), Privatdozent (Berlin)
Church	Evangelical Church of the old-Prussian Union Confessing Church
Writings	Author of several books and articles (see below)
Congregations served	Zion's Church congregation, Berlin German-speaking congregations of St. Paul's and Sydenham, London

BEWARE OF DIETRICH BONHOEFFER (Friday Church News Notes, August 19, 2011, www.wayoflife.org fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143) - Like C.S. Lewis, Dietrich Bonhoeffer is a patron hero of New Evangelicalism and the Emerging Church. You will find the writings of both of these heretics in Southern Baptist bookstores. New Evangelicals pretend to hold to unity in the "essentials," but in reality they are willing to overlook even the "essential" doctrines of the faith for the sake of a broad-based unity. They pretend to care deeply about the "core cardinal doctrines of the faith," but they do not plainly condemn and decisively separate from those who deny those doctrines, and this is the exact destiny of those fundamentalists today who are flirting with the "essentials" only approach to separation. Like other Neo-Orthodox theologians, Bonhoeffer's writings are obtuse and often contradictory. He did not speak with the clear voice of truth. For this reason, he can sometimes be cited on both sides of theological issues, but any man who speaks with such lack of clarity on the fundamental issues of the faith should be avoided as a dangerous spiritual guide. The following list of some of Bonhoeffer's heresies is from Don Jasmin's *Fundamentalist Digest*: **1. He denied the verbal-plenary inspiration of Scripture,** believing that the Bible is only a "witness" to the Word of God and becomes the Word of God only when it "speaks" to an individual; otherwise, it was simply the word of man (*Testimony to Freedom,* pp. 9, 104; *Sanctorum Communio,* p. 161). **2. He denied the biblical God,** believing that the concept of God as a "supreme Being, absolute in power and goodness," is a "spurious conception of transcendence," and that "God as a working hypothesis in morals, politics, and science ... should be dropped, or as far as possible eliminated" (*Letters and Papers from Prison,* S.C.M. Press edition, Great Britain: Fontana Books, 1953, pp. 122, 164, 360). **3. He questioned the Virgin Birth** (*Witness to Jesus Christ,* p. 115). **4. He denied the deity of Christ**, advocating that "Jesus Christ Today" is not a real person and being, but a "corporate presence" (*Testimony to Freedom,* pp. 75-76; *Christ the Center,* p. 58). **5. He denied the sinlessness of Christ's human nature** and further questioned the sinlessness of His earthly behavior (*Christ the Center,* pp. 108-109). **6. He denied the physical resurrection of Christ,** believing that the bodily resurrection is in "the realm of ambiguity," and that it was one of the "mythological" elements of Christianity that "must be interpreted in such a way as not to make religion a pre-condition of faith." He also believed that such things as miracles and the ascension of Christ are "mythological conceptions" (*Christ the Center,* p. 112; *Letters and Papers from Prison,* S.C.M. Press edition, Great Britain: Fontana Books, 1953, pp. 93-94, 110). **7. He believed that Christ is <u>not</u> the only way to God** (*Testimony to Freedom,* pp. 55-56). **8. He was an evolutionist** (*No Rusty Swords,* p. 143) and believed that the book of Genesis is scientifically naive and full of myths (*Creation and Fall: A Theological Interpretation of Genesis 1-3*). **9. He adhered to neo-orthodox theology and terminology concerning salvation** (*Testimony to Freedom,* p. 130), was a sacramentalist (*Life Together,* p. 122; *The Way to Freedom,* pp. 115, 153), believed in regenerational infant baptism (*Letters and Papers from Prison,* Macmillan, pp. 142-143) as well as adult baptismal regeneration (*The Way to Freedom,* p. 151), equated church membership with salvation (*The Way to Freedom,* p. 93), and denied a personal/individualistic salvation (*Letters and Papers from Prison,* Macmillan, p. 156). Dr. G. Archer Weniger declared, "If there is wholesome food in a garbage can, then one can find some good things in Bonhoeffer, but if it be dangerous to expect to find nourishment in a garbage can, then Bonhoeffer must be totally rejected and repudiated as blasphemy. It is worse than garbage" (*FBF Information Bulletin,* May 1977, p. 12).

Published on *California State University Stanislaus* (https://www.csustan.edu)

Metaxas's Counterfeit Bonhoeffer: An Evangelical Critique

Review of Eric Metaxas, Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy: A Righteous Gentile Vs. the Third Reich (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010)

by Richard Weikart [1], **California State University, Stanislaus**

Eric Metaxas's Bonhoeffer biography has won many accolades from evangelicals, not only because Metaxas is an excellent writer, but also because he serves up a Bonhoeffer suited to the evangelical taste. Many evangelicals admire Bonhoeffer and consider him a fellow evangelical. Metaxas's book confirms this image. In an interview with Christianity Today Metaxas even made the astonishing statement that Bonhoeffer was as orthodox theologically as the apostle Paul.

As orthodox as Paul? Metaxas does not seem to know that in his Christology lectures in 1933 Bonhoeffer claimed, "The biblical witness is uncertain with regard to the virgin birth." Bonhoeffer also rejected the notion of the verbal inspiration of scripture, and in a footnote to Cost of Discipleship he warned against viewing statements about Christ's resurrection as ontological statements (i.e., statements about something that happened in real space and time). Bonhoeffer also rejected the entire enterprise of apologetics, which he thought was misguided. [1]

How did Metaxas get it so wrong? Part of the problem, perhaps, is that Metaxas simply got in over his head. Bonhoeffer was a sophisticated thinker immersed in early twentieth-century German philosophy and theology. Even though I have a Ph.D. in modern European intellectual history and have read Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Barth, Bultmann, and many other philosophers and theologians who shaped Bonhoeffer's thought, I do not find Bonhoeffer's writings an easy read. For one thing, Bonhoeffer (like his mentor Barth) admitted that Kierkegaard was one of the most powerful influences on his theology, which means that Bonhoeffer was committed to an irrationalist, existentialist worldview that is quite different from the mindset of American evangelicals. Though most evangelicals probably do not know it, most Bonhoeffer scholars dismissively reject the idea that Bonhoeffer's theology is compatible with American evangelical theology.

I trust that Metaxas is my brother in Christ, but unfortunately he simply does not have sufficient grounding in history, theology, and philosophy to properly interpret Bonhoeffer. This is not just my opinion. Victoria Barnett, the editor of the English-language edition of Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works, wrote a scathing review of Metaxas's biography. In her opinion, Metaxas "has a very shaky grasp of the political, theological, and ecumenical history of the period." She then calls Metaxas's portrayal of Bonhoeffer's theology "a terrible simplification and at

times misrepresentation." [2] Clifford Green, another bona fide Bonhoeffer scholar who has edited part of Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works and has written extensively about Bonhoeffer, has also criticized Metaxas heavily, claiming that Metaxas's biography should be entitled, "Bonhoeffer Hijacked." [3]

Let's start with the historical problems. Metaxas read enough about Bonhoeffer's life to get many facts right about the events of Bonhoeffer's life. This is the strongest part of the biography. Even here, however, there are some major problems. For instance, Metaxas mistakenly claims, "From the beginning of his time until the end, Bonhoeffer maintained the daily discipline of scriptural meditation and prayer he had been practicing for more than a decade. . . . Once he got his Bible back he read it for hours each day." (p. 438) This portrait will certainly make Bonhoeffer popular among serious evangelicals, but unfortunately this image is false. In 1944 Bonhoeffer wrote to his friend Eberhard Bethge, "Once again I'm having weeks when I don't read the Bible much." Bonhoeffer had told Bethge the same thing twice before in 1941 and 1942. [4]

Metaxas also does not have a solid grasp on Bonhoeffer's historical context. It is hard to give much credence to someone writing about German history who thinks that Bonn is in Switzerland or that Hitler was democratically elected into office or that Germany was not yet a police state in August 1934. Metaxas also claims that the Barmen Declaration, which was the doctrinal statement of the Confessing Church, rejected anti-Semitism. In reality, the Barmen Declaration does not mention anti-Semitism at all, and many scholars have criticized it for this.

Metaxas also seems to have little understanding of German theology. His bibliography contains no works on German theology, except for works specifically about Bonhoeffer, and even many important works on Bonhoeffer's theology are missing from his reading list. Metaxas correctly acknowledges that Karl Barth was the most important influence on Bonhoeffer's theology. However, he never explains anything about Barth's theology, except that Barth opposed liberal theology. Metaxas does not seem to understand that Barth's rejection of liberal theology did not cause him to embrace biblical inerrancy.

Events dominate this biography, and Metaxas only devotes a few pages to discussing Bonhoeffer's writings. Indeed it is hard to tell how much he has even read of Bonhoeffer's corpus. For example, in 1932-33 Bonhoeffer taught theology at the University of Berlin; two of his courses were published: Creation and Fall and Christ the Center. Though Metaxas lists both in his bibliography, he does not discuss them nor cite them. Both of these works contain ideas that would cause most evangelicals to cringe (or worse). Even Bonhoeffer's Ethics receive only cursory treatment, and Metaxas does not fathom Bonhoeffer's support for situation ethics therein.

Metaxas, then, has presented us with a sanitized Bonhoeffer fit for evangelical audiences. Evangelicals can continue to believe comfortingly that Bonhoeffer is one of them, and that his heroic stance against Hitler was the product of evangelical-style theology. This view is naive, but many wish it to be so. They might prefer Metaxas's counterfeit Bonhoeffer to the real, much more complex, German theologian who continued to believe in the validity of higher biblical criticism, who praised Rudolf Bultmann when he called for demythologizing the New Testament, and who in his prison writings called for us to live "as if there were no

God." In 1944, toward the end of his life, Bonhoeffer admitted that he was a theologian who "still carries within himself the heritage of liberal theology." [5]

Notes

1. For an evangelical critique of Bonhoeffer's theology, see Richard Weikart, The Myth of Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Is His Theology Evangelical? (International Scholars Publications, 1997), or Richard Weikart, "Scripture and Myth in Dietrich Bonhoeffer," [2] Fides et Historia 25 (1993): 12-25; also, I am currently writing another book that will probably be entitled, "Why Evangelicals Do Not Understand Bonhoeffer."

2. Victoria Barnett, review of Metaxas, Bonhoeffer, in Association of Contemporary Church Historians Newsletter 16, 3 (September 2010), at http://journal.ambrose.edu/ojs/index.php/acchquarterly/article/view/46/92 [3], accessed September 2010.

3. Clifford Green, "Hijacking Bonhoeffer," Christian Century (Oct. 5, 2010), at www.christiancentury.org/reviews/2010-09/hijacking-bonhoeffer [4], accessed Jan. 13, 2011.

4. Bonhoeffer to Bethge, March 19, 1944, in Widerstand und Ergebung: Briefe und Aufzeichnungen aus der Haft (Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1954), 163 (also in Letters and Papers from Prison, trans. Reginald Fuller et al. [NY: Macmillan, 1971], 234); Bonhoeffer to Bethge, January 31, 1941, and June 25, 1942, in Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Gesammelte Schriften, ed. Eberhard Bethge, 5 vols. (Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1958ff.), 5:397, 420. 5. Bonhoeffer to Bethge, 3 August 1944, in Widerstand und Ergebung, 257 (Letters and Papers from Prison, 378).

California State University, Stanislaus

Proud member of the 23-campus California State University

One University Circle
Turlock, California 95382

Maps & Directions
Contact Us

Resources

- Career Opportunities
- Directions & Parking
- Campus Map
- Campus Tours
- Title IX
- Campus Security Report



WHO WAS DIETRICH BONHOEFFER AND WHAT DID

HE BELIEVE OR NOT BELIEVE?

Dr. Don Jasmin

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a German pastor, theological professor and lecturer, preacher, radio broadcaster, prolific writer in theology, poetry and prose. His theological career basically spanned the 1930's and early 1940's, during the rise, rule and downfall of Adolf Hitler.

Bonhoeffer became a strong opponent of Hitler's "Nazi Socialism" movement and a spy for the underground resistance movement. Shortly before Hitler's own demise, he was executed by Hitler's henchmen after having spent considerable time imprisoned for his resistance to the Nazi movement.

Bonhoeffer's theology and thought however, are satanic poison! Instead of having a drama extolling him, the theology department of GRBC & S should have a conference exposing him! [1991-Ed] A prolific writer during his brief career, over 14 books and documents are attributed to his pen. He was, however, a rank apostate (with basic neo-orthodox views), who denied or questioned nearly every major doctrine of the historic Christian faith.

In preparing this analysis of Bonhoeffer's blasphemous theological "denials", this writer read every page of 10 of his books, scanned three others written by his hand, and several other sources concerning his life and theological views. [A laborious task!]

If one reads much of Bonhoeffer, he will quickly discover that Bonhoeffer uses religious language and terminology that is familiar to-similar to-and often sounds like that which Bible believing Christians use.

While some of Bonhoeffer's terminology may sound much like that of the Bible-believer, one must remember that he used a different religious dictionary! While the "script" may sometimes appear to be "evangelical" (classic use of the term!), the "substance" is "existential." Avoiding Bonhoeffer's religious "doubletalk" the writer will concentrate on his statements that reveal his blatant apostasy.

BONHOEFFER ON CHRIST

1. Bonhoeffer believed that it was impossible to know the objective truth about the real essence of Christ's being-nature.

"From now on, it will no longer be permissible to state anything about the substance of Jesus Christ. Speculation about the natures is at an end." Christ the Center, p. 101

"Such sentences as make statements about Jesus Christ with unequivocal directness are designated as false in theological content." Christ the Center, p. 100

2. Bonhoeffer questioned the Virgin Birth, and in reality denied it.

"The question 'how'? For example, underlies the hypothesis of the Virgin Birth. Both historically and dogmatically, it can be questioned. The biblical witness is ambiguous. The doctrine of the Virgin Birth is meant to express the incarnation of God, not only the fact of the incarnation. But does it not fail at the decisive point of the incarnation, namely that in it Jesus has not become man just like us." The Cost of Discipleship, p. 215

3. Bonhoeffer denied the deity of Christ; he advocated that "Jesus Christ Today" is not a real person and being, but a "corporate presence." Christ today" is three things: (a) the "encountered Christ" of neo-orthodoxy [not to be equated with the historical Christ of the Bible-or the Bible itself]; (b) the sacraments: Christ is not just present in the sacraments, he exists as the sacraments; (c) the church & the church in its preaching. Some samples:

Christ equals the "community of the church", "Christ acting as community"; "Christ is the corporate person of the Christian community;" "The community is a corporate person whose name is also Christ";

Testimony to Freedom, pp. 75 & 76

"Christ as the Logos of God...is the Word in the form of a living address to men." Christ the Center, P. 58

4. Bonhoeffer denied the sinlessness of Christ's human nature and further questioned the sinlessness of His earthly behavior.

"In his flesh was the law which is contrary to God's will. He was not the perfect good....but all depends upon the fact that it was he who assumed the flesh with its tendency to sin and self will." Christ the Center, p. 108

"The sinlessness of Jesus fails if it is based upon the observable acts of Jesus. His acts take place in the homoioma sarkos. They are not sinless, but ambiguous. One can and should see both good and failure in them." "We should not therefore deduce the sinlessness of Jesus out of his deeds." Christ the Center, p. 109

In his critique of Bonhoeffer entitled "Devotion, Doctrine and Duty in Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *(Biblio Theca Sacra, Oct.-Dec. 91, pp. 399-409) Dr. Bruce Demarest states that since Bonhoeffer believed that Christ was the church and all persons are reconciled to God and in the church and thus identical with Christ, this amounts to pantheism!

BONHOEFFER ON THE CHURCH

"Secularity" is the key term. In Bonhoeffer's views, the church equals the world and is to be equated with it. In "secularity", the church loses its identity but finds its real meaning. It is little wonder that the earliest proponents of the "Death of God" theology pointed to Bonhoeffer as its real "father" and "founder."

"The secularity of the church follows from the incarnation of Christ. The church, like Christ, has become world...it is entirely world."

"While the church is in the world and is even a bit of the world, it cannot hope to represent itself as a visible communion of saints. Secularity means renunciation of the ideal of purity." "The church has been in the process of becoming world, not some 'pure' entity, since its origin. Not even primitive Christianity was 'pure.' Otherwise, one confuses church with a religious community"....renunciation of its claims to 'purity' leads the church back to its solidarity with the sinful world... Only this kind of church is free, the church that confesses it secularity." Testimony to Freedom, p. 92 A sermon "the Nature of the Church"-summer 1932

*Not an endorsement of the critiquer's seminary (Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary) or of the seminary which produces the Biblio-Theca Sacra (Dallas theological Seminary). Sources quoted only to validate material.

CHRISTIANITY NOT EXCLUSIVE

The Cost of Discipleship

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

than the Christ of St Paul. The Christ who is present is the Christ of the whole scripture. He is the incarnate, crucified, risen and glorified Christ, and he meets us in his word. The difference between the terminology of the Synoptists and the witness of St Paul does not involve any break in the unity of the scriptural testimony.[1]

Where the Synoptic Gospels speak of Christ calling men and their following him, St Paul speaks of *Baptism.*

Baptism is not an offer made by man to God, but an offer



Dietrich Bonhoeffer (from here)

1. The direct testimony of the scriptures is frequently confounded with ontological propositions. This error is the essence of fanaticism in all its forms. For example, if we take the statement that Christ is risen and present as an ontological proposition, it inevitably dissolves the unity of the scriptures, for it leads us to speak of a mode of Christ's presence which is different e.g. from that of the synoptic Jesus. The truth that Jesus Christ is risen and present to us is then taken as an independent statement with an ontological significance which can be applied critically to other ontological statements, and it is thus exalted into a theological principle. This procedure is analogous to the fanatical doctrine of perfectionism, which arises from a similar ontological misunderstanding of the scriptural utterances on the subject of sanctification. In this instance the assertion that he who is in God does not sin is made a starting-point for further speculation. But this is to tear it from its scriptural context and raise it to the status of an independent truth which can be experienced. The proclamation of the scriptural testimony is of quite a different character. The assertion that Christ is risen and present is, when taken strictly as a testimony given in the scriptures, true only as a word of the scriptures. This word is the object of our faith. There is no other conceivable way of approach to this truth except through this word. But this word testifies to the presence of both the Synoptic and the Pauline Christ. Our nearness to the one or to the other is defined solely by the Word, i.e., by the scriptural testimony. Of course this is not to deny the obvious fact that the Pauline testimony and that of the Synoptists differ in respect both of their object and their terminology, but both have to be interpreted in the light of the scriptures as a whole.

This conclusion is not merely a piece of *a priori* knowledge based on a rigid doctrine of the canon of scripture. The legitimacy of our view must be put to the test in every instance. Thus in the ensuing argument, our purpose is to show how St Paul takes up the Synoptic notion of following Christ and subjects it to further development.

Eric Metaxas' book, ***Bonhoeffer – Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*** supposedly (as advertised) "presents a profoundly orthodox Christian theologian." How could the biographer have missed Bonhoeffer's denial of a literal, physical resurrection of Christ? He calls the resurrection account not an ontological proposition, meaning, it never actually happened. To take it literally, as every Christian does, is the "essence of fanaticism." Bonhoeffer also denied the virgin birth of Christ and the inerrancy of the Scriptures. One must applaud his patriotism but theologically he was a liberal neo-orthodox theologian. He advocated a "religionless Christianity" and said that we should live as if God did not exist.

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

Creation and Fall

A THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION
OF GENESIS 1-3

there was morning, a second day. And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

Here we have before us the ancient world picture in all its scientific *naïveté*. While it would not be advisable to be too mocking and self-assured, in view of the rapid changes in our own knowledge of nature, undoubtedly in this passage the biblical author stands exposed with all the limitations caused by the age in which he lived. The heavens and the seas were not formed in the way he says: we would not escape a very bad conscience if we committed ourselves to any such statement. The idea of verbal inspiration will not do. The writer of the first chapter of Genesis is behaving in a very human way. Considering all this there is apparently very little to say about this section. And yet something completely new occurs on this next day of creation. The world of the fixed, the firm, the unchangeable, the unliving comes into being.

It is characteristic that those works of creation which are most distant and strange to us in their fixedness, immutability and repose, were created in the beginning. Unaffected by human life the fixed world stands before God, unchangeable and undisturbed. An eternal law binds it. This law is nothing but the command of the Word of God itself.

Here everything takes place in a very earthly way. The language is extremely childlike, and shocking for those who want to "understand," to know anything. How can we speak of God in the way that we speak of a man shaping his vessel out of earth and clay? The anthropomorphisms become more intolerable: God forming and shaping the clay, and man shaped like a vessel out of a clod of earth. This can surely not produce any knowledge about the origin of man! To be sure, as a narrative this story is just as irrelevant or meaningful as any other myth of creation. And yet in its capacity as the Word of God it is the source of knowledge concerning the origin of man. And now we shall see that what is narrated here fits in exactly with the previous narration and forms a unity with it.

Yahweh shapes man with his own hands. This expresses two things. First, the bodily nearness of the Creator to the creature, that it is really he who makes me—man—with his own hands; his concern, his thought for me, his design for me, his nearness to me. And secondly there is his authority, the absolute superiority in which he shapes and creates me, in which I am his creature; the fatherliness in which he creates me and in which I worship him. That is God himself, to whom the whole Bible testifies.

life, but it afflicts him from outside, he must continually run against it, it always stands in his way. The German fairy tale of the Sleeping Beauty differs from the story told here by the fact that because of the cutting, flaming sword of the cherubim, no living human being makes his way across. The tree of life is guarded by the power of death, it remains untouchable, divinely unapproachable. But Adam's life before the gate is a continuous attack upon the realm from which he is excluded. It is a flight and a search upon the cursed ground to find what he has lost, and then a repeated, desperate rage against the power with the flaming sword. That this sword of the guard cuts, that it is sharp—this the biblical writer says, not without reason; Adam knows this, he feels it himself time and again: but the gate remains shut.



Dietrich Bonhoeffer (from here)

The Real Dietrich Bonhoeffer -- a summary

Was Bonhoeffer an evangelical or a heretic?

Eric Mataxa's Book: ***Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy***Paul.

The Issue: Metaxas claims that Bonhoeffer was as orthodox as the Apostle

Bonhoeffer scholars are horrified at Mataxas' distortions and deletions.



Metaxas ****misrepresentations:**

****misunderstanding:**

****mistakes:**

Bonhoeffer's Theology:

Bible:

God:

Christ:

Man:

Sin:

Salvation

Church

Last Thingss

1 Thess. 5:21 "Prove all things. . ."

HOW OLD IS THE EARTH?

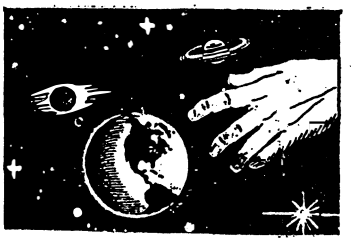
Reconsidering the Creation Account of Genesis 1:1-3

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.



Der vierte Schöpfungstag.

RECONSIDERING THE CREATION ACCOUNT OF GENESIS 1:1-3



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

1A. The Concise Issue:

Merrill F. Unger, formerly Chair of the Department of Semitics and Old Testament at Dallas Theological Seminary, states the basic issue very succinctly:

> The majestic opening verse of Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heavens and earth," apparently does not refer to the original sinless and perfect earth brought into existence in dim antiquity. That original sphere, says Isaiah, was created "not a waste" but "formed to be inhabited" (Isa. 45:18). The laying of its cornerstone was celebrated by the sinless song of "the morning stars" and the joyous shouts of "all the sons of God" (angels), perhaps millions of years ago (*Bibliotheca Sacra,* Jan. 1958, 27).

2A. The Common Assumptions:

The Genesis account apparently opens at a time far removed from the original creation. Commentators usually make two assumptions concerning Genesis 1:1-3, neither of which is required by the original language.

1b. The phrase "in the beginning" refers absolutely to the beginning of the material universe encompassing "the heavens and the earth."

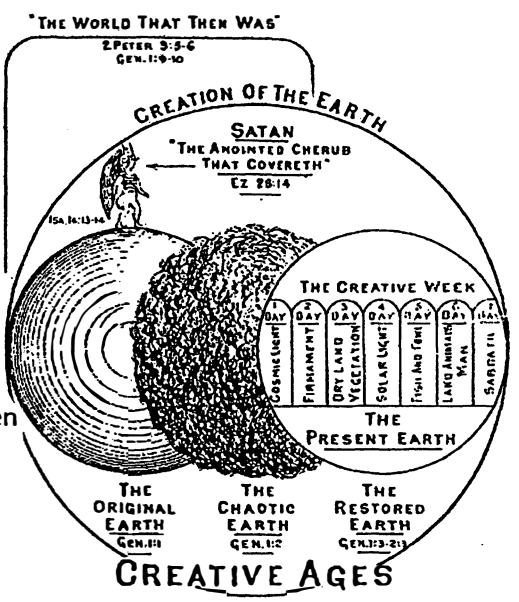
2b. The Hebrew word *bara'* (create) in Genesis 1:1 means "not formed from any pre-existing materials; formed out of nothing" (*creatio ex nihilo*).

These common assumptions lead to conclusions which run counter to simple and natural grammatical interpretations of Gen1:1-3 and involve major difficulties of reconciliation with other biblical statements.

3A. The Gap View:

Some Bible scholars see a long gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, allowing for the rebellion of Satan and his angels and their subsequent judgment, bringing about the chaotic conditions in the universe and on earth. In this view the original earth could be millions of years old but the present earth of rather recent origin.

Clarence Larkin subscribed to this position. His diagram on the right serves to illustrate the view. Unfortunately, the Hebrew grammar (as distinct from the reading of Gen. 1:1-3 in the KJV) does not permit one to insert a long time gap between the first two verses. As will be discussed below, if anything, the gap between the original creation, fall of Satan and the recreation should most likely be placed before Genesis 1:1.



308 Second Street S. E. Bondurant, IA 50035-1041 Phone: (515) 707-0071 E-mail: MKober316@gmail.com

4A. The Non-Original Creation View:

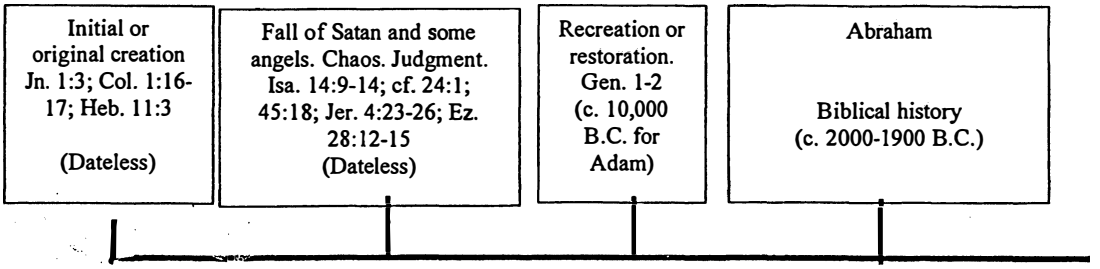
1b. The rationality of the view:

1c. Original creation occurred before 1:1 altogether.

2c. Sometime between original creation and the literal days, angels were created and Satan as their head. Satan fell. Judgment came upon the original creation as described in Genesis 1:2.



3c. There is no break between Genesis 1:1-2. The issue can be diagrammed thusly:



2b. The reasons for this view:

1c. The basic rule of hermeneutics:

All Scripture must be interpreted in the light of the context. One should ask himself the question: What is God doing here?

Genesis 1 and 2 deal with God's concern in preparing the earth for human habitation or **making the world habitable for man**. As such, the idea of **restoration** is very fitting.

2c. The major grammatical difficulty:



Unger has well stated:

If Genesis 1:1 refers to the original creation of the universe out of nothing, Genesis 1:2 must either be construed to be the original chaotic state in which the earth was created or to be the result of a subsequent judgment (the Gap Theory). But the first interpretation is contradicted by both Scripture and theology. Why should a perfect Creator create an original imperfect and chaotic earth, the fact of which is expressly denied by revealed truth recorded in Isaiah 45:18. (Unger, *Bib. Sac.*, Jan. 1958, 28).

3c. The translation of v. 1:

A careful grammatical rendering of Genesis 1:1-2 results in a clear understanding that the verses form a unit. As Unger, a superb Hebrew grammarian, remarks:

> These two pivotal verses must not be separated. They form an introduction to the activity of the seven days (1:3-2:3), because they tell us the condition of the earth *when* God began to remake or refashion it. It *"was"* (not "became") wasteness and emptiness, with darkness upon the surface of the waters, showing that God had not utterly forsaken and forgotten the earth, ruined by the sin of former angelic inhabitants (cf. Gen 6:1-6; Isa 14:13-14; Ezk 28:12-15). When sin entered the universe, God gave the first intimation that He would deal with it in mercy as well as in judgment (*Unger's Bible Handbook*, 38).

2c. **View 2**: The original earth in a spectacular universe was created in remote, dateless past. The present earth is relatively young.



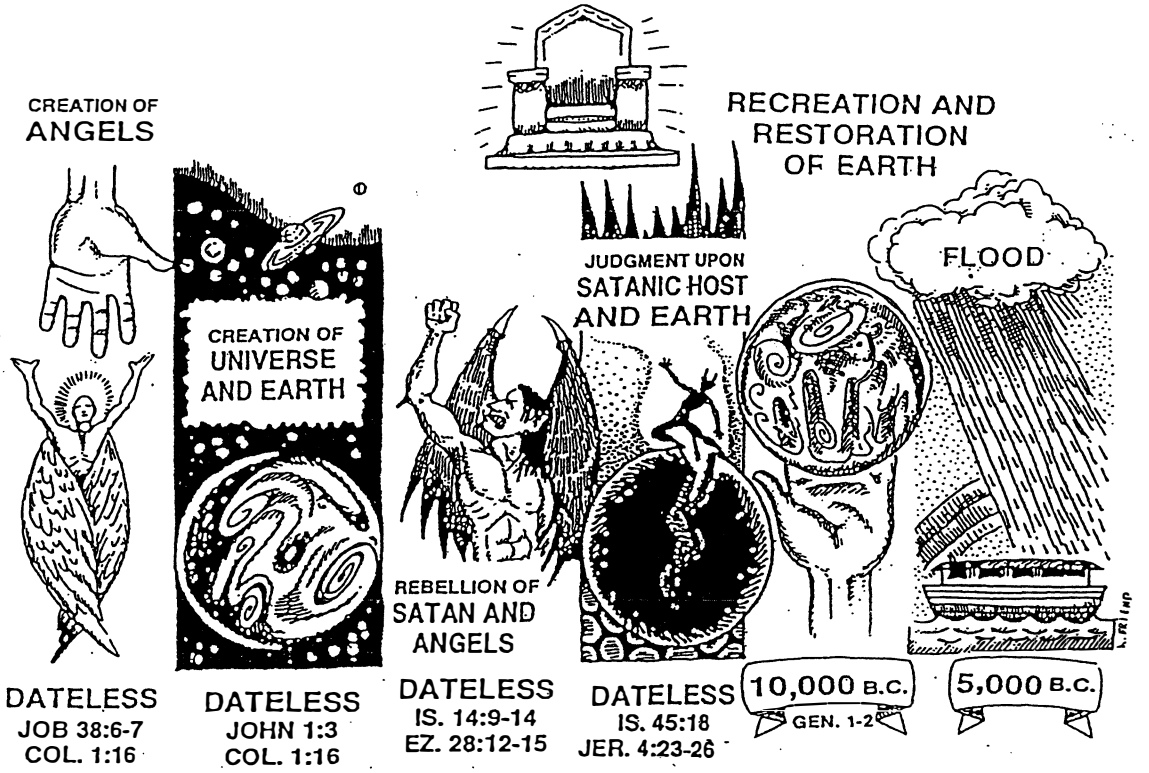
The angels, who were created some time before the universe, rejoiced over God's consummate creation. God Himself related to Job the angelic anthems and accolades at the creation of the pristine earth: ***"Job, where were you 'when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?'"*** (Job 38:7)

1d. Satan subsequently rebelled against God and took one-third of the angels with him (Rev.12:4).

2d. The angelic rebellion and ensuing divine judgment affected the entire universe and left the stellar and planetary world in a state of desolation and chaos. The universe seems to give evidence of a divine judgment because of the angelic apostasy.

3d. The book of Genesis opens with a description of the earth as being without form and void, a condition attributed elsewhere to divine judgment (Is. 45:18). The grammar of Gen. 1:1-3 certainly allows for a recreation of earth rather than the depiction of an original creation.

GOD'S CREATION AND RECREATION



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.



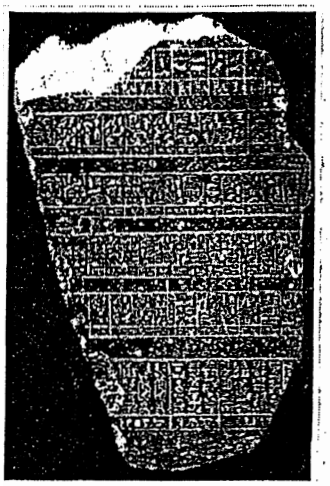
5A. Two Concluding Questions:

1b. Should the view of a recent earth be made a test of orthodoxy? Such a position is strongly urged by various creation groups, including Ken Ham's fine organization, **Answers in Genesis**. Is it right to ignore a totally biblical position which is faithful to the verbally inspired creation account and consist with proven scientific facts? One looks in vain in the writings of young earth advocates for any reference to the possibility that the universe may be very old, but that the present earth, as argued above, is relatively young.



2b. Do the recent earth advocates carry their view too far when they subscribe to a very recent date of creation? For example, Ken Ham follows Bishop Ussher in dating creation to 4004 B.C. and the Noahic Flood to 2348 B.C. See the diagrams below. It is quite impossible to calculate precisely the date of creation. In the 18th century the German Scholar Desvignolles, in his *Chronology of Sacred History*, says he has collected upwards of 200 calculations of the chronology between creation and the birth of Christ. The longest time is 6984 years, the shortest 3483 years.

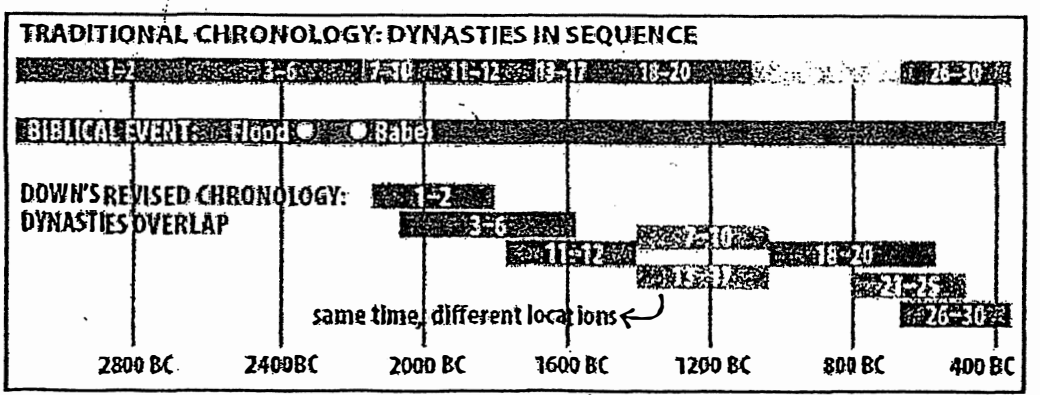
One must really manipulate the dates of Mesopotamian civilization and of the Egyptian dynasties whose origin is normally given for around 3000 B.C. It is not possible to telescope the dynasties by suggesting overlap and thus reducing their duration by 1000 years. This procrustean procedure, adjusting evidence to support one's theory, is greatly deplored by the other recent creationists such as the Associates of Biblical Research in their periodical, *Bible and Spade*.



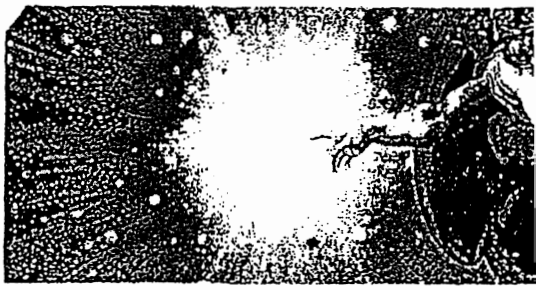
The discovery of the Palermo Stone enables Egyptologists to trace fairly accurately Egyptian dynasties back to about 3000 B.C. This would be a considerable time after the Flood, which possibly occurred around 5000 B.C.

Ken Ham's efforts to reduce the beginning of the Egyptian dynasties by 1000 years.

https://cdn-assets.answersingenesis.org/img/articles/nab2/traditio



DATE	EVENT	SCRIPTURE	AGE OF EARTH
4004 BC	Creation	Gen. 1:1-31	0
3874 BC	Seth born when Adam was 130	Gen. 5:3	130 yrs.
3769 BC	Enos born when Seth was 105	Gen. 5:6	235 yrs.
3679 BC	Cainan born when Enos was 90	Gen. 5:9	325 yrs.
3609 BC	Mahalaleel born when Cainan was 70	Gen. 5:12	395 yrs.
3544 BC	Jared born when Mahalaleel was 65	Gen. 5:15	460 yrs.
3382 BC	Enoch born when Jared was 162	Gen. 5:18	622 yrs.
3317 BC	Methuselah born when Enoch was 65	Gen. 5:21	687 yrs.
3130 BC	Lamech born when Methuselah was 187	Gen. 5:25	874 yrs.
2948 BC	Noah born when Lamech was 182	Gen. 5:28	1,056 yrs.
2446 BC	Shem born when Noah was 502	Gen. 11:10	1,558 yrs.
2348 BC	Flood when Noah was 600	Gen. 7:6	1,656 yrs.
2346 BC	Arphaxad born when Shem was 100	Gen. 11:10	1,658 yrs.
2311 BC	Salah born when Arphad was 35	Gen. 11:12	1,693 yrs.
2281 BC	Eber born when Salah was 30	Gen. 11:14	1,723 yrs.
2246 BC	Peleg born when Eber was 34	Gen. 11:16	1,758 yrs.
2217 BC	Reu born when Peleg was 30	Gen. 11:18	1,787 yrs.
2185 BC	Serug born when Reu was 32	Gen. 11:20	1,819 yrs.
2155 BC	Nahor born when Serug was 30	Gen. 11:22	1,849 yrs.
2126 BC	Terah born when Nahor was 29	Gen. 11:24	1,878 yrs.
1996 BC	Abraham born when Terah was 130	Gen. 11:32; 12:4	2,008 yrs.
1921 BC	Abraham enters Canaan at 75	Gen. 12:4	2,083 yrs.



Ken Ham's abbreviated chronology

Standard View of Egyptian Dynasties

Predynastic Period c.3500-3100 BCE

Early Dynastic Period c.3100-2686 BCE

'Scorpion'
Narmer

1st Dynasty c.3100-2890 BCE

Menes (Hor-Aha)
Djer
Wadj (Djet)
Den
Anendjib
Semerkhet
Qa'a

2nd Dynasty c.2890-2686 BCE

Hotepsekhemwy
Raneb
Nynetjer
Seth-Peribsen
Khasekhemwy

Old Kingdom c.2686-2181 BCE

3rd Dynasty c.2686-2613 BCE

Sanakhte (Nebka) (c.2688-2668)
Djoser (Netjerikhet) (c.2668-2649)
Sekhemkhet (Djoser Teti) (c.2649-2641)
Khaba (c.2641-2637)
Huni (c.2637-2613)

Sample Chronological Calculations of Birth Date - BC

	"Ussher" Method		"Patriarchal-Age" Method	
	Masoretic	Septuagint	Masoretic	Septuagint
Adam	4004	5490	10842	12028
Seth	3874	5260	10712	11798
Enos	3769	5055	10607	11593
Cainan	3679	4865	9702	10688
Mahalaleel	3609	4695	8792	9778
Jared	3544	4530	7897	8883
Enoch	3382	4388	6935	7921
Methuselah	3317	4203	6570	7556
Lamech	3130	4016	5601	6597
Noah	2984	3828	5419	6399
Flood	2348	3228	4819	5799
Shem	2446	3326	4917	5897
Aphaxad	2346	3226	4317	5297
Cainan		3019		4762
Salah	2311	2961	3879	4302
Eber	2281	2831	3446	3842
Peleg	2247	2697	2982	3438
Reu	2217	2567	2743	3099
Serug	2185	2435	2504	2760
Nahor	2155	2305	2274	2430
Terah	2126	2126	2126	2126
Abram	1996	1996	1996	2096



The World: Born in 4004 BC?

Ussher and the Date of Creation

by Larry Pierce on April 28, 2006; last featured October 23, 2007

The age of the earth is one of the most contentious issues in the creation/evolution debate. In today's culture, the thought of creation occurring about 6,000 years ago is frequently mocked by non-Christians—and also by many Christians.

The age of the earth as described by James Ussher

THE AGE OF THE EARTH IS ONE OF THE MOST CONTENTIOUS ISSUES IN THE CREATION/EVOLUTION DEBATE.

Even James Ussher (1581-1656), the famous and respected Archbishop of Ireland in the seventeenth century, is today greatly ridiculed for declaring that the world was created in 4004 BC.

However, this date was widely accepted until people began to believe in ideas such as billions of years of Earth history. In other words, they started trusting in the latest secular findings based on fallible dating methods, instead of the only absolutely reliable method—consulting the history book provided by the Eyewitness account (the infallible Word of God).

Ussher also argued that Day 1 of creation was October 23. On the surface, this does seem a bit extreme to suggest such a specific date—but when one studies what Ussher did, one quickly realizes he was a brilliant scholar who had very good reasons for his conclusions concerning the date of creation.

Studying Ussher's line of thinking as he arrived at his conclusion—creation on October 23, 4004 BC—provides food for thought to this very day.

The Bible—The Basis for Ussher's Work

One of Ussher's many projects was to write a complete history of the world in Latin, covering every major event from the time of creation to AD 70. He published this 1,600-page volume in 1650. An English translation entitled *The Annals of the World* was first published in 1658, two years after his death. (The complete work is fascinating. It has recently been

Arguments for the Non-Original Creation View

1. The contextual reason:

The brief creation account sets the stage for the main theme: God is making the earth habitable for man. There is more revelation on Gog and Magog (Ez. 38-39) than on the creation account of the universe in Genesis 1-2, which merely gives he background for man's origin and subsequent demise.

2. The grammatical reason:

The first main verb of the passage is "said" in verse 3, preceded by three circumstantial clauses, dependent on verse 3. The earth **was**, not **became**, waste and empty when God fashioned it. **It is remarkable that creationists who pay such careful attention to Hebrew grammar to support the literal days of Genesis (and rightly so) fail in most instances to heed the grammar of the earlier verses in Genesis 1.**

3. The esthetic reason:

At the time of creation, everything was good (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25) very good (31) and pleasant to the eye (2:9). The formless and void condition suggests a restoration of the earth, rather than an original creation.

4. The hermeneutical reason:

Applying the law of cross reference, Isaiah 45:18 clearly states that the earth was not created without form and void (tohu wabohu). The question must be asked, How did it get that way?

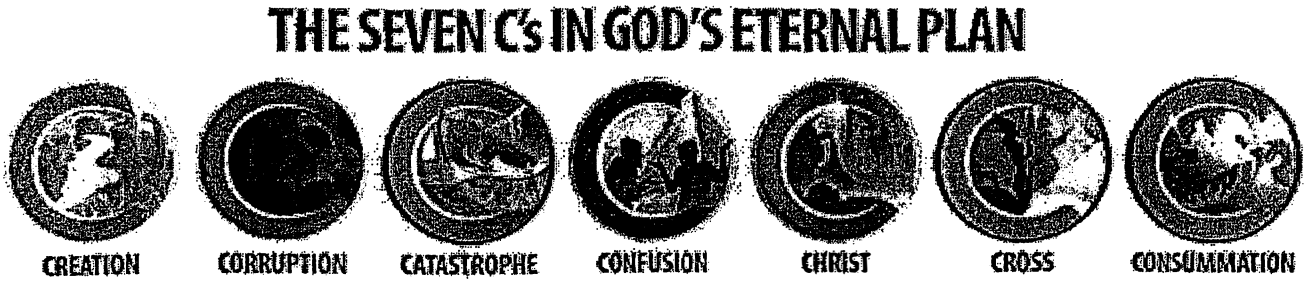
5. The angelic reason:

The angels were created prior to the original creation and sang for joy because of the perfect, harmonious creation of the universe. That creation would hardly have included a formless, empty, dark void, testifying of some awful catastrophe.

6. The moral reason:

The formless and empty condition of the world might well be explained by the judgment that came upon the universe because of Satan's sin. After all, God said to Satan, "Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God" (Ez. 28:13). The earth and the universe await redemption (Rom. 8:20-22). What the planets are today, the earth was then. One day the universe will be redeemed and restored to its perfect, pristine condition.

https://answersingenesis.org/bible-history/seven-cs-of-history/



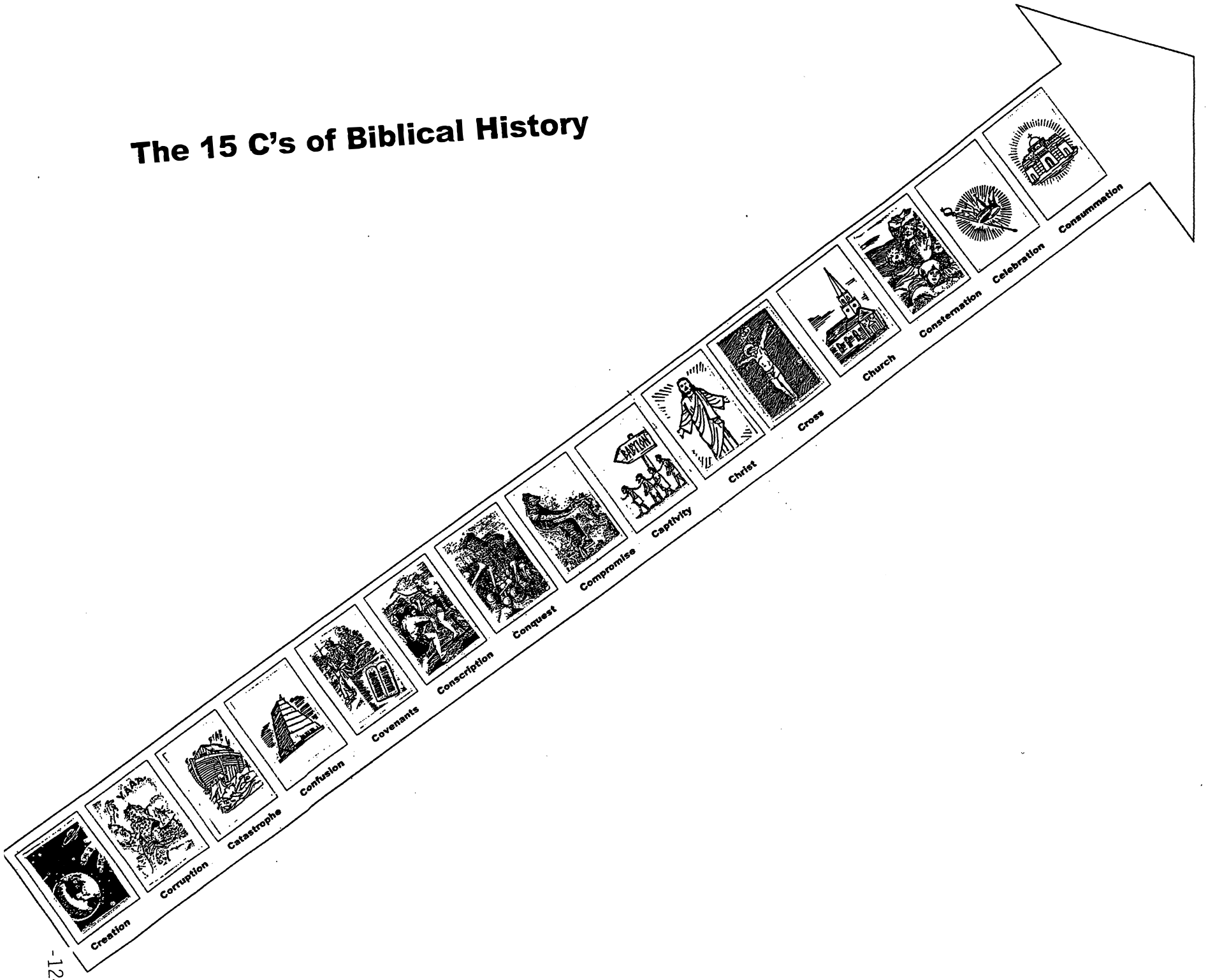
Ken Ham and his Answers in Genesis ministry are to be commended for their valiant defense of a literal creation in 24-hour days and a world-wide flood. Everyone who has seen the full-scale replica of Noah's Ark is amazed. While opting for a literal interpretation for the seven days of the beginning of human history in Genesis 1, one could wish that Ham would be consistent and interpret literally the thousand years at the end of human history in Revelation 20. The rule of grammar is the same in Hebrew and Greek: when the word day or year is preceded by a numerical adjective, be it first day or a thousand years (used 6 times in Revelation 20), the reference would be to that literal time span.

In the diagram of the Seven C's of History, any reference to the millennial reign of Christ is missing. The Kingdom age will see a fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant with Israel. It is strange indeed that the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis and the Mosaic covenant in Exodus are ignored on the diagram, as is the Church Age with its unique revelation that believers engage in evangelizing the world, something that Answers in Genesis takes very seriously.

Inexplicably, the Seven C's chart skips biblical history between the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11 and the incarnation of Christ in Matthew 1, thus ignoring virtually the entire history of the Old Testament. To put it differently, Ham's first four C's (Creation, Corruption, Catastrophe, Confusion) cover the first 10 pages of my Ryrie Study Bible. For the next 865 pages there is nothing! Then comes the fifth C on Ham's diagram (Christ) with Matthew 1. To make up for some of the omissions, I thought it helpful to suggest several more C's of biblical history.

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.
MKober316@gmail.com

The 15 C's of Biblical History



Visual Arts › Graphic Art

Palermo Stone

Egyptian archaeology

Britannica Editors History



Palermo Stone The front side of the Palermo Stone, which preserves the fragmentary regnal annals of the Egyp..(more)

Palermo Stone, one of the basic sources of information about the chronology and cultural history of ancient Egypt during the first five dynasties (c. 2900–c. 2306 BCE). Named for the Sicilian city where it has been preserved since 1877, the black basalt stone is one of six existing fragments from a single stela that probably originally stood in an Egyptian temple or other important building. It is inscribed on both sides with horizontal lines of hieroglyphic text, the top row listing the names of predynastic rulers. The following rows, each headed by the name of a different king, are divided into compartments, each compartment signifying one year. Within the compartments the hieroglyphs always list one or more memorable events of that year. Thus, the original monument was apparently a year-by-year record of all the kings from the 1st through the 5th dynasty (c. 2900–c. 2306 BCE), although the last name preserved on the stone is that of Neferirkare (*see* Ancient Egypt: The 5th dynasty), the third of the nine kings of the 5th dynasty.

Hsu, Shih-Wei

The Palermo Stone: the Earliest Royal Inscription from Ancient Egypt*

Abstract

The Palermo Stone of black basalt, which probably stood in Heliopolis, is housed today in the Museum of Palermo, while smaller fragments of it are kept in museums in Cairo and London. This fragment can be regarded as the earliest Egyptian royal inscription, because its faces preserve the earliest royal annals.

Its royal annals were comprised by the royal names from the Early Dynasty to the Fifth Dynasty and the principal events of that particular year. In addition, it provides us with significant information about the Old Kingdom, such as historical circumstances, the nature of these reigns and some king's ritual activities. These are great values to us knowing about the royal deeds of the Old Kingdom.



Fig. 1. Palermo Stone *recto*-side (H. Schäfer (1902), Taf. I.)

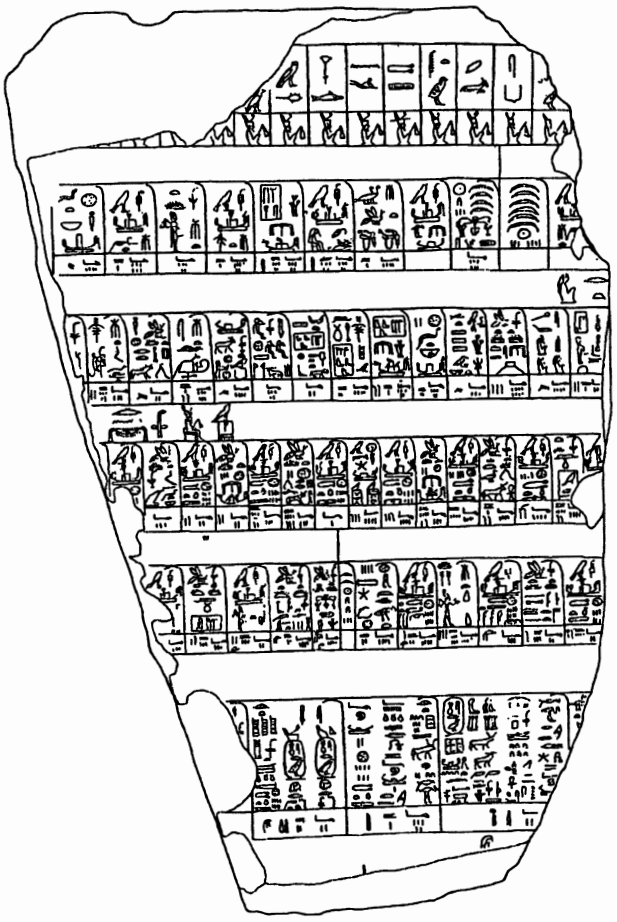


Fig. 3. Palermo Stone *recto*-side (T. A. H. Wilkinson (2000), Figure 1)

4. Summary

Although the Palermo Stone and its associated fragments remain incomplete, it is arguably the most valuable extant information about the Old Kingdom in Ancient Egypt. This claim is based, first and foremost, on the fact that the PS presents registers of the predynastic kings as well as of the pre-Old Kingdom monarchs of Lower Egypt. Second, this exemplar of the "Royal Annals" provides us with a rich source of information about the kings of Egypt from the First to the Fifth Dynasties. The annals record the names attributed to each of these years, the specific events that occurred during them and the height attained by the Nile floodwaters. Thus, it is an invaluable record for all Egyptologists in their attempts at reconstructing the chronology of Ancient Egypt. Third, this particular exemplar of the "Royal Annals" might be better classified as a royal inscription in that it constitutes the earliest royal inscription to provide details of the history of the Old Kingdom. Thus, on the PS we find references to all the most significant events that occurred in the reigns of the kings. All in all, the stone represents an extremely valuable source of information about early kingship since each of these events tells us much about the king's role and responsibilities at that time. For example:

O.T. CHRONOLOGY AND ARCHEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

ADAM



NOAH



ABRAHAM



MOSES



DAVID





Birth of Jesus

1,500 BC

10,000 BC | 5,000 BC | 4,000 BC | 3,000 BC | 2,000 BC | 1,000 BC

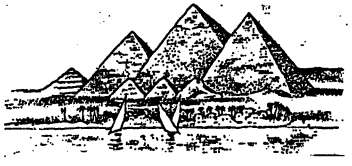
The Garden of Eden



The Ark

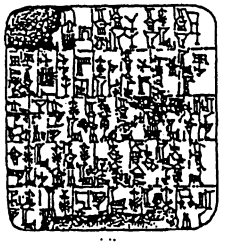


Beginning of Egyptian Dynasties



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

Kingdom of Ebla 2400 – 2250 BC



Lot in Sodom 1900 BC



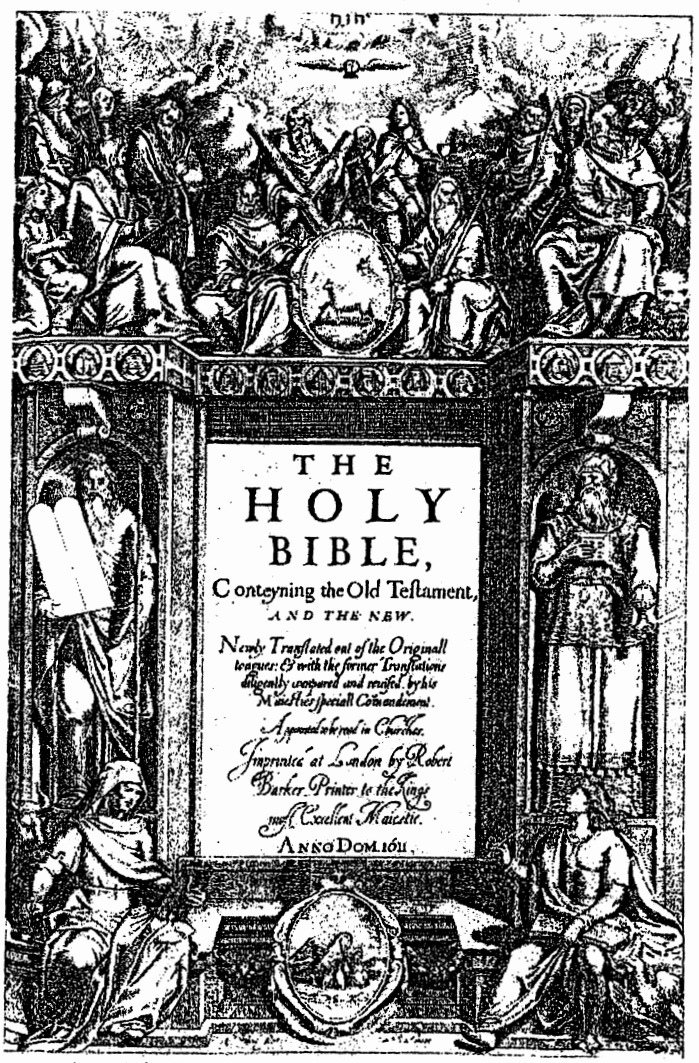
Exodus 1445 BC



Dead Sea Scrolls 125 BC



IS THE KJV INSPIRED AND THUS INERRANT?



https://markblord.wordpress.com/400-years-of-the-king-james-bible/

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

CHAP. XIII.

1 The parable of the Sower, and the seed: 18 the exposition of it. 24 The parable of the tares, 31 of the mustard seed, 33 of the leuen, 44 of the hidden treasure, 45 of the pearle, 47 of the drawnet cast into the Sea, 53 And how Christ is contemned of his own countrymen.

THe same day went Jesus out of the house, *and sate by the sea side.

*Mark. 4. 1.

2 And great multitudes were gathered together vnto him, so that hee went into a ship, and sate, and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 And hee spake many things vnto them in parables, saying, *Behold, a sower went forth to sow.

*Luke 8. 5.

4 And when he sowed, some seedes fell by the wayes side, and the foules came, and deuoured them vp.

5 Some fell vpon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung vp, because they had no deepenesse of earth.

6 And when the Sunne was vp, they were scorched: and because they had not root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns: and the thornes sprung vp, & choked them.

8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred folde, some sixtie folde, some thirty folde.

9 Who hath eares to heare, let him heare.

10 And the disciples came, and sayd vnto him, Why speakest thou vnto them in parables?

11 He answered, and said vnto them, Because it is giuen vnto you to know the mysteries of the kingdome of heauen, but to them it is not giuen.

*Chap. 25. 29.

12 *For Whosoeuer hath, to him shall be giuen, and he shall haue more abundance: but whosoeuer hath not, from him shall be taken away, euen that hee hath.

13 Therefore speake I to them in parables: because they seeing, see not: and hearing, they heare not, neither doe they vnderstand.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecie of Esaias, which saith, *By hearing ye shall heare, and shall not vnderstand: and seeing yee shall see, and shall not perceiue.

*Esa. 6. 9. marke 4. 12. luke 8. 10. ioh. 12. 40. act. 28. 26. rom. 11. 8.

15 For this peoples heart is waxed grosse, and their eares are dull of hearing, and their eyes they haue closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and heare with their eares, and should vnderstand with their heart, and should be conuerted, and I should heale them.

16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your eares, for they heare.

17 For verely I say vnto you, *that many Prophets, and righteous men haue desired to see those things which yee see, and haue not seene them: and to heare those things which ye heare, and haue not heard them.

*Luke 10. 24.

18 ¶ Heare ye therefore the parable of the sower.

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdome, and vnderstandeth it not, then commeth the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sowen in his heart: this is hee which receiued seede by the way side.

20 But he that receiued the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, & anon with ioy receiueth it:

21 Yet hath hee not root in himselfe, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

22 He also that receiued seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world, and the deceitfulnesse of riches choke the word, and he becommeth vnfruitfull.

23 But he that receiued seed into the good ground, is hee that heareth the word, and vnderstandeth it, which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixtie, some thirty.

24 ¶ Another parable put he forth vnto them, saying: The kingdome of heauen is likened vnto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

25 But while men slept, his enemy came & sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung vp, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the seruants of the householder came, and said vnto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seede in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28 He said vnto them, An enemy hath done this. The seruants said vnto him, Wilt thou then that we goe and gather them vp?

www.bible.ca

29 But he said, Nay: lest while yee

https://www.bible.ca/kjv-1611-version-margin-notes-matthew-13-1-29.jpg

GOD
THEOLOGY AND OTHER GOOD STUFF

The King James Only Controversy



What is it?

The KJVO controversy is about whether Christians should consider **only** the King James Version of the Bible to be reliable and trustworthy. While there are a variety of views within the KJVO movement, the basic idea is simple: no other Bible will do.

The King James Only movement is largely built on the claim that modern Bibles are doctrinally corrupt... that they have strayed from responsible and accurate translation of the Greek texts. There are a variety of other claims in the movement. Here are a few:

- The KJV is the **only true word of God.**
- The KJV is the only English translation that can be trusted.
- The KJV contains no errors.

- The KJV was supernaturally translated by God.
- The KJV is more perfect than the manuscripts from which it was translated.
- The KJV contains no errors or problems with translation.
- To understand God's Word, everyone on earth should learn English...so they can read the KJV.
- Any deviation from the KJV is wrong, and may create doctrinal errors.
- Translators (and possibly readers) of modern Bibles have a sinister ulterior motive.
- Modern Bibles are a perversion of God's Word.
- Modern Bibles like the NASB and NIV are part of a satanic conspiracy to lead the world astray.
- People who use other Bibles are not Christians.

The Inconsistency

The King James Bible was created by, and created for, Anglicans. In my decades of conversation with these KJVO folks, I'll bet that not one of them would ever consider becoming Anglican... yet they promote the Anglican Bible as if the Anglican Church produced the purest, most accurate, most inspired translation in history.

That's pretty inconsistent.

Which KJV?

There are a number of different versions of the King James Version. Most KJVO advocates do not use the version finished in 1611, but the Blayney version from 1769. Between the two are revisions from 1613, 1629, 1638, and 1762. After many years of discussing this issue, no KJVO person has suggested to me that one is better than the other. This is a serious problem for their point of view, as each differs from the others.

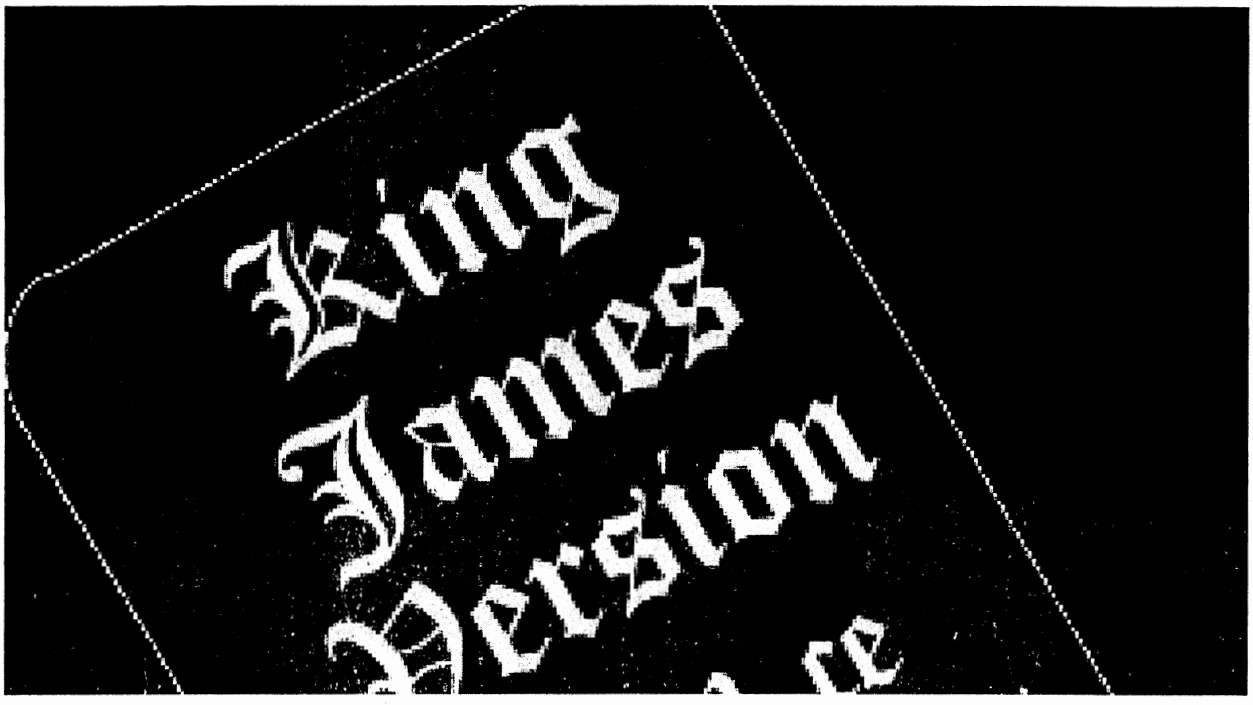
Errors in the KJV

Most KJVO advocates claim that the KJV is better than all other Bibles because it alone is without error. This is absurd, and demonstrably false. The errors in the KJV are too numerous to list here, but it only takes **one error** to prove them wrong. I've made note

BLOGS: TREVIN WAX

The King James Only Controversy

TREVIN WAX | AUGUST 7, 2007



Occasionally, someone will ask me what I think about the King James Only controversy raging in some of the fundamentalist circles of independent Baptist life. Having grown up around many KJV-Onlyers, I can only express sadness that the conservative independent Baptists continue to separate from each other over unimportant matters.

The fundamentalist movement is cocooning itself into a safe web of tradition that will eventually squeeze the very life out of it. It used to be that independent Baptists separated themselves from other Christians over important doctrines, such as the virgin birth of Christ or the inspiration of the Scriptures. Today, the independents are separating, even among themselves, over issues such as Bible translations, music style, and dress.

Rising to the forefront of the fundamentalist squabbles is the King James Only controversy. Some groups are claiming that *this* is the hill on which to die, the main issue by which to tell a fundamentalist from a liberal.

So what is it anyway? The King James Only controversy is essentially a conspiracy theory that claims that all modern translations of Scripture are based on tainted manuscripts and that their translators are driven by a liberal Protestant or Roman Catholic (or even one-world government) agenda. This theory manifests itself in various forms, some of which are more extreme than others.

KJV Only Arguments

1. The King James Version is based on the "Majority Text" over against the modern versions that are based on the corrupt "Alexandrian Texts."

Response: Most of the Byzantine texts used by the King James translators come from the 11th and 12th centuries. We have since discovered many older and more reliable manuscripts, which are closer to the original writings of the Bible authors. By comparing the earlier manuscripts to the later ones, we can see how the flourishes and additions of scribes can corrupt a text over time, leading us to believe that many of the "Alexandrian manuscripts" are closer to the originals and the majority of Byzantine texts altered. If the controversy were truly a textual issue, one wonders why the Greek scholars in the KJV camp have not come up with a modern English translation based on the texts they deem "inspired." The textual issue is actually a smokescreen which hides the true reason for rejecting modern versions: any update of the KJV is considered tampering with God's Word.

2. The modern translations attack the deity of Christ by removing references to his lordship.

Response: The Byzantine texts have the additional "Lord" and "Christ" added to the name of Jesus in many places where the older, more reliable texts do not. These are most surely the results of ambitious scribes, seeking to show reverence to the Savior or simply making mistakes in copying manuscripts. There are many examples where the deity of Christ is made clearer in modern translations than in the KJV. (Jude 4, Phil. 2:6-7, Acts 16:7, 1 Peter 3:14-15, John 14:14)

3. Heretics, occultists and homosexuals were on the translation committees of modern versions.

Response: This is an all-out attack on the character of faithful believers who have sought to use their linguistic skills in offering an accurate translation of the Scriptures. The biblical linguist B.F. Westcott is consistently attacked, due to negligence in confusing him with the spiritualist W.W. Westcott. If there is anyone whose salvation should be questioned due to their "fruit," it would be some of the extremist KJV Only advocates, whose polemic, vicious rhetoric is not becoming of a believer in Christ.

4. The modern translations delete verses from the Bible.

Response: Based on the older and more reliable manuscripts, the modern translations have simply sought to reflect what was contained in the original manuscripts. It is just as serious to add to Scripture, as it is to take away from Scripture. The starting-point for KJV Only advocates is that the KJV is the standard to which all other translations must bow, which is also the position they seek to prove. Thus, they employ circular reasoning that will not allow them to see any other position as possibly correct.

5. The 1611 Authorized Version is the preserved Word of God in English.

Response: No one today reads from the 1611 version, which also included the Apocrypha. The 1769 revision is the most common version of the King James translation, and this one includes thousands of differences compared to the original.

6. The modern translations promote a "works-salvation."

Response: Virtually all of today's cults (excepting the Jehovah's Witnesses) prefer the King James version over the rest, including the Mormons, who also preach a "works-salvation." Of course, this does not negate the worth of the King James version, but we could use this argument if we were to employ the same tactics of the KJV Only crowd. Compare Revelation 22:14: Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. (KJV) Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. (ESV) If we were to use the KJV Only logic, we could assume on the basis of this verse that the King James translators were conspiring to take us back to the chains of Catholicism, while the ESV translators are translating faithfully God's Word. Of course, this would be a ridiculous assumption, but it is the kind of reasoning that KJV Only advocates employ. Even John R. Rice, the founder of the (now KJV-Only) Sword of the Lord admitted in Our God-Breathed Book – The Bible *that the KJV renders Revelation 22:14 incorrectly and that the ASV is more accurate here.*

7. The newer versions include footnotes which offer different renderings of certain words or verses. These footnotes confuse the reader and undermine the doctrine of inspiration.

Response: The 1611 King James Version also included thousands of footnotes which offered different readings for different verses. We should be grateful for today's translators, who in the spirit of the King James tradition, have been intellectually honest when rendering exceptionally difficult verses about the limits to their knowledge.

Conclusion

Like with anyone who expounds a conspiracy theory, it is usually fruitless to try to reason with the KJV Only crowd. One should seek to prod these brothers and sisters to a correct understanding with love and patience, realizing that most efforts will be spurned and may turn out in vain.

written by Trevin Wax © 2007 Kingdom People blog

REFUTING THE KING-JAMES-ONLY POSITION

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

It is rather easy to refute the King-James-Only view that the KJV is a superb, if not inerrant, translation. Three examples will suffice to indicate that the KJV is less than perfect.

EXAMPLE #1: Matt. 12:40

For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the **whale's** belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. KJV

The word "whale" is a mistranslation of the Greek word "fish." All modern translations have made that correction.

EXAMPLE #2: Psalm 19:1-3

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.
[2] Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.
[3] There is no speech nor language, **where** their voice is not heard.

The word "where" in verse three should be deleted. The original Hebrew reads the following, "There is no speech nor language. Their voice is not heard." Nature does not have an audible language; therefore, its witness is silent rather than spoken.

EXAMPLE #3: Hebrews 10:23

Let us hold fast the profession of our **faith** without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

The word "faith" in the Greek is ***pistis.*** However, there is not a single Greek manuscript that has the word ***pistis*** in Hebrews 10:23. Rather, the word is ***elpis,*** meaning "hope." Thus, the correct translation should be, "Let us hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)." It is unknown why the King James translators decided to use a completely different word in this passage, but there is no doubt what the original reading should be. If one confronts a KJV-Only individual, this verse alone with the substitution of the word "faith" for the word "hope" should be a cogent argument that the KJV, however good and pleasant the translation, is not inerrant

Still, many of us prefer to use the KJV because it is based on the better MSS, is overall very accurate and is the most beautiful exemplar of the English language.

Like a River Glorious:
The Finest Literary Masterpiece in the English Language

By David Nettleton

Baptist Bulletin – October, 1976

THE ROARING Fork, they call it. I sat on its bank one June day as my wife and I ate our picnic lunch. We were only ten feet from the lively river which flowed, rippled and seemed to laugh its way through the quiet town of Glenwood Springs, CO, our favorite vacation resort. Our minds were far away from home and work, except for thought of Mother who needs to hear from her favorite son often. As a means of cheering her mind in old age, I made a tape recording after we ate. I described our nine-hundred-mile drive to the mountains and added personal greetings of love. There was music in the background, the music of the river as it moved swiftly between and over the many large rocks in the riverbed. An explanation was in order, but I went even further and took the recorder right down to the river and recorded the noise of the rushing waters so she might imagine herself beside its beauty.

Some days are most memorable. We were alone, enjoying the privacy of nature as we consumed our picnic goodies. There were steep slopes in the background, an old bridge several hundred yards downstream, and the river-the Roaring Fork. It was music to us,

> "gleaming and steaming and streaming and beaming,
> and rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,
> and flapping and rapping and clapping and slapping,
> and curling and whirling and purling and twirling,
> and thumping and slumping and lumping and jumping,
> and dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;
> and so never ending, but always descending,
> all at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar,"

even as the cataract of Ladore, described by Robert Southey.

I recorded its sound for Mother. I captured some of its beauty with my camera, and the camera and recorder of my mind took it in and tucked it away in a convenient niche for future reference.

We quote the Chinese proverb. "A picture is worth a thousand words," but while the familiar proverb may be somewhat true, I deny its universal application. Words are better—they are best. No picture could capture the entire breadth of that river, nor could any photograph show its length or depth. It had all three dimensions with sound and color and motion added. A river flows. It speaks. It can stir the emotions bringing fear, or it can calm the mind bringing peace. It seems eternal as it flows on and on strangely bending, never ending, always descending—*a river glorious*.

Three hundred and sixty-five years ago a pure river was formed out of the mountainous minds of the greatest literary artists who ever lived. That glorious river was the Authorized Version of the Bible, the greatest and finest literary masterpiece ever produced in the English language or any language. It has evident beauty and force. It sings like a melody and gently skips like a poem. It soars like an eagle and strikes like a serpent.

It has beauty because it embodies the message of the glory of God. It has force because it conveys a gospel which "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Both beauty and power flow forth from the blessed Book because of the truth it contains—but beauty and force in

motion and in color spring forth because of the vocabulary and style which are woven into every page. Such beauty and force capture the attention, stir the imagination, provoke the reason and assist the memory. This masterpiece convicts the soul because it is a sharpened sword. It charms and even entertains the mind because it is better than a picture—it is a picture with nouns for subjects, adjectives for color, verbs for motion and adverbs for pace and variety.

Let us classify what we have suggested. ***Consider the careful choice of words.*** F. F. Bruce writes of the translators' "deliberate employment of a variety of English synonyms to represent the same terms in the original text." From one and the same Greek word in Romans 5:2, 3 and 11, they wrote "we *rejoice* in hope of the glory of God," "we *glory* in tribulations" and "we also joy in God." If they went too far in their love of variation, the translators of the Revised Version ran to the opposite extreme in monotony.

Our present subject is not so much a study of distinguishing among ancient Greek and Hebrew manuscripts in an attempt to determine which are the most reliable; it is rather a matter of the *quality* of the resultant English version.

Dr. David Otis Fuller aptly writes: "The English language in 1611 was in the very best condition to receive into its bosom the Old and New Testaments. Each word was broad, simple and generic. That is to say, words were capable of containing in themselves not only their central thoughts, but also all their different shades of meaning which were attached to that central thought."

Dr. William Lyon Phelps, professor of English Literature in Yale University, wrote: "Priests, atheists, skeptics, devotees, agnostics and evangelists are generally agreed that the Authorized Version of the English Bible is the best example of English literature that the world has ever seen, ... Everyone who has a thorough knowledge of the Bible may truly be called educated; and no other learning or culture, no matter how extensive or elegant, can, among Europeans and Americans, form a proper substitute. Western civilization is founded upon the Bible ... I thoroughly believe in a university education for both men and women; but I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without the Bible....

"The Elizabethan period-a term loosely applied to the years between 1558 and I 642-is generally regarded as the most important era in English literature. Shakespeare and his mighty contemporaries brought the drama to the highest point in the world's history; lyrical poetry found supreme expression; Spenser's Faerie Queene was an unique performance; Bacon's Essays have never been surpassed. But the crowning achievement of those spacious days was the Authorized Translation of the Bible, which appeared in 1611. Three centuries of English literature followed; but, although they have been crowded with poets and novelists and essayists, and although the teaching of the English language and literature now gives employment to many earnest men and women, the art of English composition reached its climax in the pages of the Bible ....

"Now, as the English-speaking people have the best Bible in the world, and as it is the most beautiful monument erected with the English alphabet, we ought to make the most of it, for it is an incomparably rich inheritance, free to all who can read. This means that we ought invariably in the church and on public occasions to use the Authorized Version; all others are inferior."

Dr. Phelps wrote those words in 1921, twenty years after the American Revised Version of 1901 appeared. Since that time a flood of translations, versions and paraphrases have come forth. Some claim greater accuracy. Others are clever. All are more modern. Some seem prejudiced in favor of the doctrinal slant of the translators. The virtues of some must not be denied. We have been helped and enlightened through some of these works and we are grateful. Many believe the overall accuracy of the Authorized Version must not be downgraded, but that is not my emphasis. I return to the closing quotation of Dr.

Phelps—"all others are inferior." Certainly, from a literary viewpoint this is true.

The translators of the Authorized Version were reared in a different age. It was an age when men rose to the Mt. Everest of the English language. They were bathed in the beauty of it. They learned it, taught it, used it. It was a part of them. We, on the other hand, live in a slang age, and ofttimes our language could justly be called a "slanguage."

He was a mistaken man who said, "Take care of the sense and the sounds will take care of themselves." Were we not given ears as well as brains? A look at God's handiwork will prove that God is an artist. See it in the sunsets, in the ice and snow-covered trees, in the star-studded velvet blackness of the night. Every bird and flower are testimonies, too, of His artistic touch. He Who is the author of true beauty made us in His image with the same appreciations. The Authorized Version appeals to the ear as well as the mind.

Consider cadence, rhythm, prose and poetry. What a linguistic structure! Words are the building blocks, but the phrases, sentences and paragraphs are the structures they produce. It was said of the Authorized Version, "A well of purest English undefiled." It was published in an era when our language was still young, vigorous and flexible. Oh, the King James Bible is expressive. It is characterized by majestic rhythm and splendid cadences that are unmatched—a literary masterpiece indeed. Little wonder it is that this beautiful version is quoted by such a variety of people.

Hear the poetry of Psalm 19, the Psalm which exalts God's two great books—the book of nature and the book of Scripture. Note the beauty of the parallelisms and the clarity of speech:

"The heavens declare the glory of God;
and the firmament sheweth his handywork.
Day unto day uttereth speech, and
night unto night sheweth knowledge.
There is no speech nor language,
where their voice is not heard."

Then in six direct, artistic parallelisms the law of God is praised and described. The artistry of the language does Justice to the truth contained therein:

"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul:
The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.
The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart:
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever:
The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether."

It seems a shame to terminate it there. *It flows like a river glorious*, and cries for continuance. And what shall we say of Psalm 1, Psalm 23, Psalm 100 and Psalm 103? They are perfectly phrased. The language is fitting. The sounds are beautiful. The motion is touching.

Who but a small minority bother to think of dactyls, anapests and cretic feet? Those translators did. Structure was their trade and their love.

So rhythmic are some expressions in the Bible that a music conductor could wave his baton in a regular musical pattern as he reads:

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain,
my speech shall distil as the dew."

Rightly is this passage called the song of Moses, and rightly is it translated and structured.

Read the beatitudes. Nay, just commence and they will read themselves through your lips. Blessings are declared for the poor in spirit, the mourners and the meek. The hungry soul is filled and the meek inherit the earth. Blessings await the merciful, the peacemakers and the persecuted—and methinks blessings attend the translators who did their work well and thus provided blessings for our hearts, minds and ears.

Now think about ***the dramatic moving style of the Authorized Version***. It has been noticed that the excellent choice of words gives force and the masterful structure lends beauty. The motion of the river is provided by the dramatic moving style. This is given by the message itself. The literary style matches it, allowing the message to express itself. Lesser language would have muddied the waters or restricted the flow of thought.

The Bible is a living, moving book. Who can read the story of the prophet Elijah without feeling the strong emotion of the story? Mendelssohn felt compelled to put it to majestic music in his great oratorio, and he had the very phrasing necessary for proper expression. Having sung in that great stirring drama, I can still hear the accusation of Ahab and the counter of Elijah; the prayer of Baal and the dignity of the prayer of the true prophet. Tears drop from the eyes of a true believer, zealous for his God, when the victorious declaration is sung, "The Lord is God. The Lord is God. 0 Israel."

Throughout the Bible men's sorrows and joys are pictured. Lonely Abraham submits to the offering of his beloved son and the reader is kept in suspense until the substitutionary ram is found just before the sword falls. An enslaved people roam the desert for forty years. Wars are fought; kings rise and fall. Living men and women move across the stage and allow us to share their sorrows and joys, their failures and faith. The Savior enters quietly and humbly, rises to great fame and acceptance, only to be denied, betrayed and crucified. In victory He rises, and scene after scene provides us with many infallible proofs of His presence and power. His followers suffer on His behalf while converts are made throughout their world. The grand finale with all of its dimensions, color, sound and motion is sketched in the closing book. The One despised and rejected becomes King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

The story is true; it is beautiful. My soul cries out and its needs are met.

Surely it was the providence of God that brought forth an infallible book in inspiring, beautiful, forceful, majestic language—the Authorized Version of the Bible. In fairness we must acknowledge the honest, helpful contributions of other versions. But the majesty of the King James Version must never be lost. Let it flow and leap. Let its music sound forth with every turn and ripple. Let its beauty captivate our minds and hearts as it flows *like a river glorious!*

Why Should We Prefer the Textus Receptus?



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

A TIMELY RE-EVALUATION OF THE TEXTUS RECEPTUS

1A. THE PROBLEM OF THE TEXT

1b. The Modern Fad:

The average well-taught believer has often heard the King James Version (henceforth KJV) corrected on the basis of "better manuscripts" or "older authorities." He has been told from the pulpit and in print that the Greek text used by the translators of 1611 is inferior to that used for more recent translations. The science of textual criticism has supposedly led us to a more accurate knowledge of the original text of the Bible.

This explains, in part, the current avalanche of new versions, each one aiming to replace the KJV. A new version is said to belong into the pulpit the same way a partridge belongs in a pear tree. The KJV, we are told, needs to be replaced.

2b. The Textual Families:

1c. The number of manuscripts:

A very large number of Greek manuscripts (henceforth MSS) of the New Testament survive today. A recent list by Kurt Aland, a German scholar whose job it is to assign official numbers to Greek manuscripts as they are found, lists these figures: papyrus MSS, 81; majuscules (mss written in capital letters), 267; minuscules (mss written in smaller script), 2764. While many of these MSS are merely fragmentary, they nevertheless supply a massive accumulation of evidence for textual criticism. In addition, there are 2143 lectionaries, making for a total of 5255 MSS, as of 1967, according to Aland. The striking fact is that a large majority of this huge mass of MSS--somewhere between 80-90%--contains a Greek text which in most respects closely resembles the kind of text which was the basis for the KJV. This may come as a surprise to the ordinary believer who has gained the impression that the Authorized Version is supported chiefly by inferior manuscripts.

2c. The nature of the texts:

Since the 18th century the New Testament documents have been divided into families according to the type of text which they contain and the errors of transmission. There are three of these families, namely, the TRADITIONAL (Byzantine) family, the WESTERN family, and the ALEXANDRIAN family.

1d. The Traditional or Byzantine family:

The Traditional or Byzantine family (also the Majority Text, better known today as the Textus Receptus, i.e. the text commonly received as authoritative) includes all those New Testament documents which contain the traditional Byzantine text, including A (in the Gospels) and W (in Matthew and the last two-thirds of Luke). The Peshitta Syriac version and the Gothic version also belong to this family, along with the New Testament quotations from Chyrsostom and the other Fathers of Antioch and Asia Minor.

2A. THE PRESUPPOSITIONS OF TEXTUAL CRITICS

1b. The Background in Rationalism:

In a most recent study ("Rationalism and Contemporary New Testament Textual Criticism," Bibliotheca Sacra, January 1971), Professor Zane Hodges, from whom much of this material is taken, shows that Westcott and Hort's text was constructed on rationalistic foundations. They are unwilling to subscribe to the inerrancy of the original Scriptures. They assert that:

> "Little is gained by speculating as to the precise point at which such corruptions came in. They may be due to the original writer [italics added], or to his amanuensis if he wrote from dictation, or they may be due to one of the earliest transcribers."

Their rationalistic premise is further seen in a more blatant assertion:

> "For ourselves we dare not introduce into textual criticism considerations which could not reasonably be applied to other ancient texts, supposing them to have documentary attestation of equal amount, variety, and antiquity."

Evolutionary thought permeates their system. Westcott writes:

> "No one now, I suppose, holds that the first three chapters of Genesis, for example, give a literal history--I could never understand how anyone reading them with open eyes could think they did."

Hort writes:

> "I am inclined to think that no such state as "Eden" (I mean the popular notion) ever existed, and that Adam's fall in no degree differed from the fall of each of his descendants, as Coleridge justly argues."

It is just one short step from a belief in evolution in nature to a belief in evolution of the biblical documents. Westcott and Hort apparently took this step.

2b. The Belief in Recension:

Westcott and Hort who reject the Byzantine text in favor of the Alexandrian text explain the Majority Text on the basis of a recension. The reason why up to 90% of all Greek texts have a common reading is due to a revision which took place at Antioch in two stages between 250 and 350 A.D. Some scholarly Christians, with the presbyter Lucian (d. 312) as original leader, deliberately created an official text by combining the Western, Alexandrian, and Neutral (B-Aleph) texts. The purpose was to construct a text on which all could agree.

Today, the whole question of the derivation of "texttypes" through definite, historical recensions is open to debate. Indeed, E. C. Colwell, one of the leading contemporary critics, affirms dogmatically that the so-called "Syrian" recension (as Hort would have conceived it) never took place. Instead he insists that all texttypes are the result of "process" rather than definitive editorial activity. History is silent concerning such an official recension.

2A. THE PRESUPPOSITIONS OF TEXTUAL CRITICS

3b. The Break with the Received Text:

Westcott and Hort rejected the Textus Receptus (TR) because of the discovery of older, supposedly better texts. The arguments against the TR usually follow this line:

1c. The oldest MSS do not support the Majority Text:

The three oldest complete (or nearly complete) uncial MSS are B (Codex Vaticanus); Aleph (Codex Sinaiticus); and A (Codex Alexandrinus).

1d. Be was written about the middle of the fourth century. It is the property of the Vatican Library in Rome. It has been in the Vatican since at least 1475, for in that year a catalog of the library was made and B is mentioned.

2d. Aleph was discovered by Tischendorf (1841-72) in 1859 on his third visit to the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mt. Sinai. It is believed to have been written in the second half of the fourth century and is currently in the British Museum which purchased it from Russia in 1933.

3d. Codex A was given to the King of England in 1627 by Cyril Lucar, patriarch of Constantinople and is now likewise in the British Museum. Scholars date it from the first half of the fifth century.

But the oldest MSS do not necessarily contain the best text. J. W. Burgon (1813-1888), Dean of Chichester, and a staunch defender of the TR, demonstrates that Aleph and B are very inferior documents. Their antiquity is a point against them, not something in their favor. It shows that the Church rejected them and did not read them. Otherwise they would have been worn out through use. Furthermore, most of our ancient documents derive basically from Egypt, where the clement climate aided the preservation of the texts. These texts are at best a local family and, as Aland suggests, a revised form of the old Egyptian text whose nearness to the original is open to debate. Kirsopp Lake, another textual critic, favored the idea that the scribes usually destroyed their exemplars when they had copied the sacred books.

The oldest manuscripts extant are P^{66} and P^{75} (c. 200) and combined with B (4th century) they frequently agree on errors, such as their reference to "Bethsaida" in John 5:2 when it should read "Bethesda." Even the most ancient MSS err, and err frequently.

2c. The Majority Text is a revised and hence secondary, form of the Greek text:

1d. The position:

Certain revisers in the 4th century are said to have created this text to present a smooth, acceptable text that combined elements from other, earlier texts. Therefore this eclectic production is only of secondary value. "Older manuscripts" are thus to preferred.

2A. THE PRESUPPOSITIONS OF TEXTUAL CRITICS

3b. The Break with the Received Text:

2c. The Majority Text is a revised and hence secondary, form of the Greek text:

2d. The problem:

This view is now widely abandoned as no longer tenable. Yet it was this view of the Majority Text which was largely responsible for relegating it to a secondary status in the eyes of textual critics generally. Critics now wish to posit the idea of a "process" drawn out over a long period of time. However, this fails to explain the relative uniformity of the text, nor does it explain its rise and its dominance. Contemporary textual criticism has no explanation for the phenomena of the Majority Text.

3c. The readings of the Majority Text are repeatedly inferior to those of earlier manuscripts:

Hodges ably refutes this assertion by observing:

"Perhaps the greatest surprise to many Bible-believing Christians will be the discovery that textual critics seek to defend their preference for the older manuscripts by affirming that they are better because, in fact, they contain the better readings....In the last analysis, a manuscript is attested by its readings rather than the reverse."

Decisions whether a reading is inferior or superior are based on personal opinions and biases, as America's foremost textual critic, E. C. Colwell, points out. The two criteria used to decide a reading are purely subjective: "Choose the reading which fits the context" and "Choose the reading which explains the origin of the reading." These two standards can cancel each other.

3A. THE PRESERVATION OF THE TRUTH

1b. The Uniqueness of the Bible:

According to textual critics, the Bible is a book like any other book. It has no special claim to uniqueness. Colwell writes:

"It is often assumed by the ignorant and uninformed--even on a university campus--that textual criticism of the New Testament is supported by a superstitious faith in the Bible as a book dictated in a miraculous fashion by God. That is not true. Textual criticism has never existed for those whose New Testament is one of miracle, mystery, and authority. A New Testament created under those auspices would have been handed down under them and would have no need of textual criticism" (What is the Best New Testament?, p. 8).

3A. THE PRESERVATION OF THE TRUTH

1b. The Uniqueness of the Bible:

But the New Testament is unique! It is breathed out by a living God and so must be treated differently from any other book. For this very reason the Bible cannot have had a history wholly like that of secular writings. While the finest literary efforts of man can suffer irreparable corruption and can even perish forever, the eternal preservation of the Scriptures is inescapably implied in the very nature of the Word itself: "All flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth forever" (I Pet. 1:24-25). The Psalmist wrote (Ps. 12:6-7): "The words of the Lord are pure words as silver. . . Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever."

2b. The Preservation of the Bible:

While we speak frequently about the inspiration, canonicity, inerrancy and authority of the Scriptures, we generally fail to give to the doctrine of the preservation of the Scriptures the rightful place it deserves. Surely no corollary of inspiration is more logical than the preservation of God's Word which lives and abides forever.

When we subscribe to Westcott and Hort's view of the Critical Text we are really asserting that the true New Testament text has been lost for nearly fifteen centuries. As Burgon so incisively remarks:

> "And thus it would appear that the Truth of Scripture has run a very narrow risk of being lost forever to mankind. Dr. Hort contends that it more than half lay 'perdu' on a forgotten shelf in the Vatican Library;--Dr. Tischendorf that it had been deposited in a wastepaper basket in the convent of St. Catherine at the foot of Mount Sinai;--from which he rescued it on the 4th of February, 1859;--neither, we venture to think, a very likely circumstance. We incline to believe that the Author of Scripture hath not by any means shown Himself so unmindful of the safety of the Deposit, as these distinguished gentlemen imagine" (The Revision Revised, p. 343).

The textual critics make no allowances for the fact that the unique origin, content and purpose of the Bible imply a unique preservation. God promised the preservation of His Word. Is the Majority Text corrupt? If it is, then 90% of the tradition is corrupt. And no one is quite sure how to use the remaining 10%! Those who read the modern critical editions are reading a consensus of scholars and have no guarantee that their text will not change in the future. By contrast, those who read the Textus Receptus are reading a text resting upon a consensus of manuscripts. These manuscripts do not perfectly agree one with another and are not without certain problems; however, with all the evidence available to textual critics, it would suggest that the TR is by far the better of the two texttypes. While it would be a judgment too severe to say that the TR is God's text and the critical text is Satan's text, as some have done, it still seems reasonable to suggest that God preserved *His Word in* a more general way other than a handful of manuscripts that were forgotten for centuries.

4A. THE PRIORITY OF THE TEXTUS RECEPTUS

The ordinary Christian may look upon the controversy surrounding the Textus Receptus as nothing more than an academic exercise of little practical value. The important consequences of the acceptance or rejection of the Majority Text can best be demonstrated on hand of some illustrations from the Greek text. Perhaps more than any other passage of Scripture, the last twelve verses of Mark are greatly affected by question of which of the two texts is best.

1b. The Last Twelve Verses of Mark:

1c. The situation:

Many sincere believers had their confidence shaken in the last twelve verses of Mark, since Aleph and B, which are considered to be the two best MSS of the Greek New Testament, omit this passage. But Dean Burgon has shown in his classic monograph, The Last Twelve Verses of Mark (1871, reprinted 1959) that the omission of the passage actually argues for its inclusion. In B a blank space is left for them in the MSS--the only blank space, indeed, which it contains. This proves that the verses were in the earlier manuscript from which Vaticanus was copied (see Appendix).

9 Ἀναστὰς δὲ πρωῒ πρώτῃ σαββάτου ἐφάνη πρῶτο
Μαρίᾳ τῇ Μαγδαληνῇ, ἀφ' ἧς ἐκβεβλήκει ἑπτ
10 δαιμόνια. ἐκείνη πορευθεῖσα ἀπήγγειλε τοῖς μετ
11 αὐτοῦ γενομένοις, πενθοῦσι καὶ κλαίουσι. κἀκεῖνο
ἀκούσαντες ὅτι ζῇ καὶ ἐθεάθη ὑπ' αὐτῆς, ἠπίστησαι
12 Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα δυσὶν ἐξ αὐτῶν περιπατοῦσιν ἐφανερώθ
13 ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ, πορευομένοις εἰς ἀγρόν. κἀκεῖνο
ἐλθόντες ἀπήγγειλαν τοῖς λοιποῖς· οὐδὲ ἐκείνοι
14 ἐπίστευσαν. Ὕστερον ἀνακειμένοις αὐτοῖς τοῖς ἕνδεκ
ἐφανερώθη, καὶ ὠνείδισε τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν κα
σκληροκαρδίαν, ὅτι τοῖς θεασαμένοις αὐτὸν ἐγηγερ
15 μένον οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν. καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· πορευθέντε
εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα κηρύξατε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πάσῃ
16 τῇ κτίσει. ὁ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθεὶς σωθήσεται
17 ὁ δὲ ἀπιστήσας κατακριθήσεται. σημεῖα δὲ τοῖ
πιστεύσασι ταῦτα παρακολουθήσει· ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μο
δαιμόνια ἐκβαλοῦσι· γλώσσαις λαλήσουσι καιναῖς
18 | ὄφεις ἀροῦσι· κἂν θανάσιμόν τι πίωσιν, οὐ μὴ αὐτοὺ
βλάψει· ἐπὶ ἀρρώστους χεῖρας ἐπιθήσουσι, καὶ καλῶ
ἕξουσιν.
19 Ὁ μὲν οὖν Κύριος μετὰ τὸ λαλῆσαι αὐτοῖς ἀνε
λήφθη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ
20 Θεοῦ. ἐκείνοι δὲ ἐξελθόντες ἐκήρυξαν πανταχοῦ, τοῦ
Κυρίου συνεργοῦντος καὶ τὸν λόγον βεβαιοῦντος διὰ
τῶν ἐπακολουθούντων σημείων. ἀμήν.

Sinaiticus reveals a still more startling fact. Two pages of the original have been taken out and two others inserted, apparently by the writer of the B MSS. These contain the close of Mark and the beginning of Luke. The pages were evidently re-written for the purpose of excluding the twelve verses. The writing on these pages is so spread out that they contain less matter than they ought. Even so, the last column is not completely filled out.

2c. The dilemma:

If we accept the Aleph and B omission, we are left with rather unenviable alternatives: either the Gospel ended on a note of utter despair--which is unthinkable for a Gospel penned especially to glorify Christ, or the ending is hopelessly lost--which in reality is a masked rejection of a belief in the providential preservation of inspired Scripture.

3c. The explanation:

On the other hand, it is relatively easy to determine the reasons which are responsible for the omission. The MSS were written at a bad time--that of the Arian lapse. They show a similarity of omissions in the Gospels relating to the deity of our Lord (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18, e.g., where "begotten" is omitted; Mark 1:1 omits "Son of God" etc.) as well as to everlasting punishment (e.g. Mark 9:44, 46 omitted in both MSS--fire not quenched, worm dieth not). Practical and doctrinal reasons can easily explain the omission of the verses; their preservation argues for their disuse through the years; their

4A. THE PRIORITY OF THE TEXTUS RECEPTUS

1b. The Last Twelve Verses of Mark:

3c. The explanation:

place of discovery hardly argues for their divine preservation by God as the true text (Cf. Urquhart, New Biblical Guide, VII, 383ff; Bibliotheca Sacra, October 1966, p. 306ff).

2b. Other important omissions from Aleph and B which are in the Textus Receptus:

1c. John 3:13 "which is in heaven"

2c. Acts 8:37 "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart..."

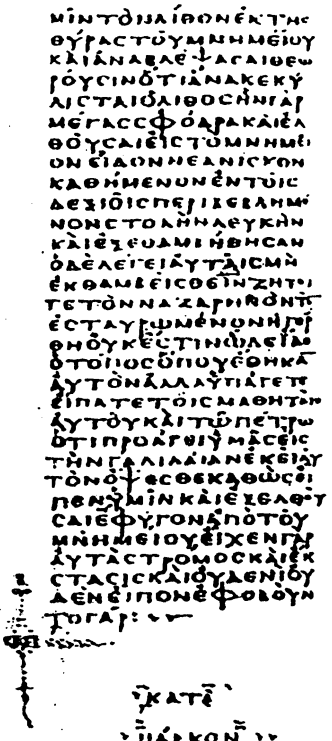
3c. Rev. 1:11 "I am Alpha and Omega..."

4c. Mat. 6:13 "For thine is the kingdom..."

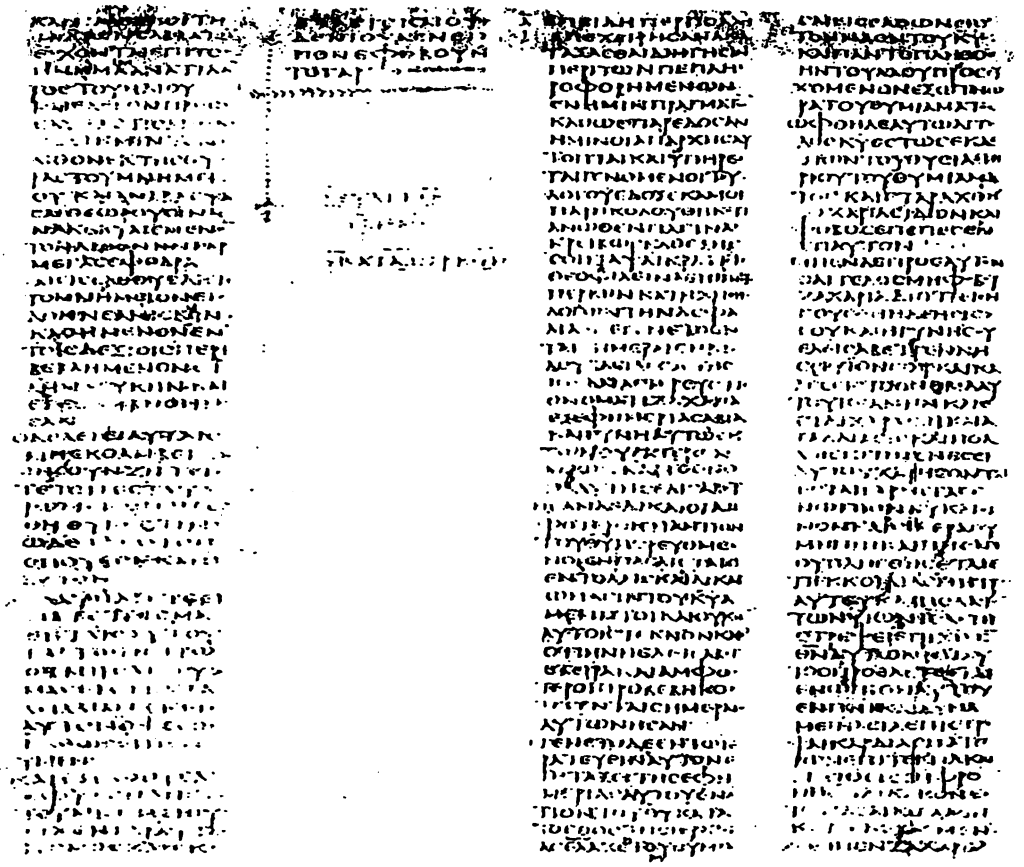
5c. John 7:53-8:11 Pericope de Adultera (the woman taken in adultery)

3b. Reason for the favoring the Textus Receptus on which the KJV is based:

We retain the KJV because of its preparation by godly men, God's providence in the preservation of the true text, its perfection of literary beauty, its permanence in light of the many other versions.



This is a facsimile of the CODEX VATICANUS (B), showing space left for Mark 16:9-20.



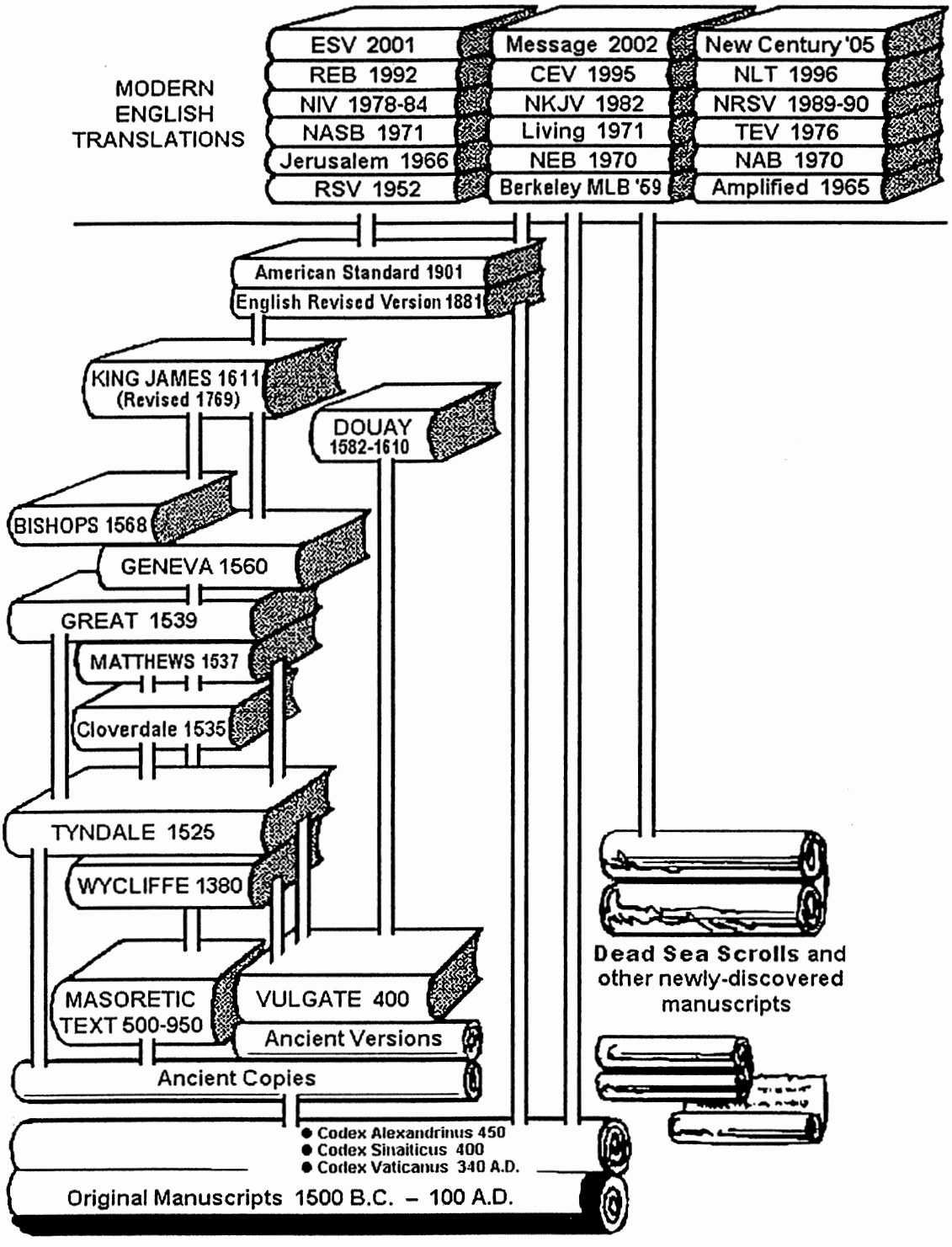


Chart adapted and updated from Thompson Chain Reference Study Bible by David Ahl. Nov. 2010, www.BibleStudyMen.com



Friedrich Constantin von Tischendorf [1815-1874]

His name was Friedrich Constantin von Tischendorf, a world leading biblical scholar who rejected higher criticism, which led to noteworthy success in defending the authenticity of Bible text. Tischendorf was born in Lengenfeld, Saxony, northern Europe, the son of a physician, in the year 1815 and educated in Greek at the University of Leipzig. During his university studies, he was troubled by higher criticism of the Bible, offered by famous German theologians, who sought to prove that the Greek New Testament was not authentic. Tischendorf became committed, however, that a thorough research of the early manuscripts would prove the trustworthiness of the Bible text.

We are indebted to Tischendorf for dedicating his life and abilities to searching through Europe's finest libraries and the monasteries of the Middle East for ancient Bible manuscripts and especially for rescuing the great Codex Sinaiticus from being destroyed. However, our highest thanks go to our heavenly Father, who has used hundreds of men since the days of Desiderius Erasmus, who published the first printed Greek New Testament in 1516, so that the Word of God has been accurately preserved for us today. We can be grateful for the women of the twentieth and now the

John William Burgon

From Textus Receptus

John William Burgon[] (August 21, 1813 - August 4, 1888) (also known as Dean Burgon), was an English Anglican divine who become the Dean of Chichester Cathedral in 1876. He is remembered for his passionate defense of the historicity and Mosaic authorship of Genesis and of Biblical inerrancy in general.



John William Burgon called "Dean" Burgon

Contents

- 1 Biography
- 2 Burgon Quotes
- 3 Burgon in modern times
- 4 Publications
- 5 See Also
- 6 Notes and references
- 7 External links

Biography

Burgon was born at Smyrna, the son of an English merchant trading in Turkey who was also a skilled numismatist and afterwards became an assistant in the antiquities department of the British Museum. His mother is often said to have been Greek but was in fact the daughter of the Austrian consul at Smyrna and his English wife.[2]

During his first year the family moved to London, where he was sent to school. After a few years of business life, working in his father's counting-house[3], Burgon went to Worcester College, Oxford, in 1841, and took his degree in 1845. The same year he took the Newdigate Prize for his poem *Petra*, referring to Petra, the inaccessible city in the present Jordan, which he had heard described but had never seen:

> It seems no work of Man's creative hand,
> by labour wrought as wavering fancy planned;
> But from the rock as if by magic grown,
> eternal, silent, beautiful, alone!
> Not virgin-white like that old Doric shrine,
> where erst Athena held her rites divine;
> Not saintly-grey, like many a minster fane,
> that crowns the hill and consecrates the plain;
> But rose-red as if the blush of dawn,
> that first beheld them were not yet withdrawn;
> The hues of youth upon a brow of woe,
> which Man deemed old two thousand years ago,
> match me such marvel save in Eastern clime,
> a rose-red city half as old as time.

The poem is now chiefly remembered for the famous final line which quotes the phrase "half as old as time" from Samuel Rogers.[4] (This fourteen-line excerpt is often referred to as a "sonnet," but the poem is well over 350 lines long, in rhymed couplets. Burgon published it, apparently in a small pamphlet, around 1845. A "Second Edition" "To Which a Few Short Poems Are Now Added," was published in 1846;[5] the text above follows it. It contained some revisions: "sanctifies" had been "consecrates"; "call'd" had been "deemed"; "But rosy-red,—as if the blush of dawn" had been "But rose-red as if the blush of dawn", and so on. There was also an 1885 book containing the poem.)

Burgon was elected to an Oriel fellowship in 1846. He was much influenced by his brother-in-law, the scholar and theologian Henry John Rose (1800-1873), a conservative Anglican churchman with whom he used to spend his long vacations. Burgon made Oxford his headquarters, while holding a living at some distance. In 1863 he was made vicar of the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, having attracted attention by his vehement sermons against *Essays and Reviews*, a series of messages on biblical inspiration in which he defended against the findings of textual criticism and higher criticism the historicity and Mosaic authorship of Genesis, and Biblical inerrancy in general: "Either, with the best and wisest of all ages, you must believe the whole of Holy Scripture; or, with the narrow-minded infidel, you must disbelieve the whole. There is no middle course open to you."

In 1867 he was appointed Gresham Professor of Divinity. In 1871 he published a defence of the genuineness of the twelve last verses of the Gospel of Mark. He then began an attack on the proposal for a new lectionary for the Church of England, based largely upon his objections to the principles for determining the authority of manuscript readings in the Greek New Testament adopted by Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort. Westcott and Hort led the team producing the Revised Version of the Bible. Burgon assailed Westcott & Hort in a memorable 1881 article in the *Quarterly Review*, and collected his Quarterly Review articles and pamphlets into books, such as "The Revision Revised", in which he denounced Westcott and Hort for elevating "one particular manuscript,--(namely the Vatican Codex (B), which, for some unexplained reason, it is just now the fashion to regard with superstitious deference". He found their primary manuscript to be "the reverse of trustworthy."

Burgon criticised all five oldest Greek manuscripts on which the Revisers relied. Burgon writes that they:

> are among the most corrupt documents extant. Each of these codices (Aleph B D) clearly exhibits a fabricated text - is the result of arbitrary and reckless recension."[6]

John MacArthur:
A Pastor's Dilemma
or
John MacArthur's Doctrinal Deviations and Ethical Expediencies

(A Personal Perspective)

John F. MacArthur, Jr.



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

John MacArthur:
A Pastor's Dilemma
or
John MacArthur's Doctrinal Deviations and Ethical Expediencies

(A Personal Perspective)

Prof. Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

1. HIS DEFENSE OF LORDSHIP SALVATION
2. HIS DOUBLE-TALK ON THE BLOOD OF CHRIST
3. HIS DEVIATION FROM THE ETERNAL SONSHIP OF CHRIST
4. HIS DEPENDENCE ON COVENANT THEOLOGY
5. HIS DISMISSAL OF THE CATEGORY OF "CARNAL CHRISTIAN"
6. HIS DENIAL OF THE TWO NATURES IN THE BELIEVER
7. HIS DE-EMPHASIS OF POSITIONAL TRUTH
8. HIS DISCREPANCIES IN HIS PRESENTED MATERIALS
9. HIS DOCTRINE OF ELDER RULE
10. HIS DESIGNS AGAINST BAPTIST CHURCHES
11. HIS DIATRIBES AGAINST THE DISPENSATIONALISTS
12. HIS DISTORTIONS OF HIS OPPONENTS' VIEWS
13. HIS DEFECTS IN HERMENEUTICS
14. HIS DILEMMA IN RELATION TO THE IFCA

separate from heretical brethren and warn others of their errors? As we attempt to resolve the question in our own minds, may the Holy Spirit give us His discernment to follow the divinely mandated procedure outlined by Paul as we "mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17-18).

1. HIS DEFENSE OF LORDSHIP SALVATION

MacArthur has written two books in defense of Lordship salvation, *The Gospel According to Jesus* and *Faith Works–The Gospel According to the Disciples.* Furthermore, he has authored numerous articles and preached many messages on Lordship salvation, insisting that an individual is not genuinely saved unless he has dedicated his life.

Here is MacArthur's position:
"The call to Calvary must be recognized for what it is: a call to discipleship under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. To respond to that call is to become a believer. Anything less is simply unbelief." (*The Gospel According to Jesus*, p. 30 Quotations from his work are taken from the first edition, published in 1989).

"Forsaking oneself for Christ's sake is not an optional step of discipleship subsequent to conversion: it is the *sine qua non* of saving faith" (*Ibid.*, p. 35, italics in the original).

"Let me say again unequivocally that Jesus' summons to deny self and follow him was an invitation to salvation" (*Ibid.*, p. 196).

"Submission to the will of God, to Christ's lordship, and to the guiding of the Spirit is an essential, not an optional part of saving faith" (*Ephesians*, p. 249).

"Saving faith is placing oneself totally in submission to the Lord Jesus Christ" (*Romans 1-8*, p. 205).

"You give up all that you are and receive all that He is. . A person becomes saved when he is willing to abandon everything he has to affirm that Christ is the Lord of his life" (*The Parables of the Kingdom*, p. 109).

John MacArthur makes full surrender to Christ's Lordship a requisite for salvation. In fact, as Paul taught in Romans 12:1-2, dedication is an important response ··ause of salvation Biblically, faith is the only prerequisite for salvation, yet, thur, quoting with approval in his magazine *Masterpiece* (Fall 1988) A. W s article "I CALL IT HERESY!" labeled such a view as heresy.

Salvation is either by faith alone or by faith, dedication, and surrender. One of these positions comes under the anathema of Galatians 1:8-9: " But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

(Anyone interested in a more lengthy treatment of Lordship salvation may want to consult Charles C. Ryrie's *So Great Salvation*. For a discussion of the various authors on both sides of the debate, see my paper, "Lordship Salvation: A Forgotten Truth or a False Doctrine?")

2. HIS DOUBLE TALK ON THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

MacArthur's discussion of the blood of Christ is confusing at best and misleading and heretical at worst. In his thinking, the physical blood of Christ is of no intrinsic value. It is simply a symbol of the death of Christ.

MacArthur spells this out on Tape #GC 80-44, entitled "The Blood of Christ–selected Scriptures." The sermon from which this quote is excerpted was preached in 1972.

> There is no sense in getting teary-eyed and mystical about blood. We sing hymns about 'There is Power in the Blood,' and so forth, and we don't want to get preoccupied with blood. The only importance that the blood of Jesus has is that it shows He died. There is no saving in that blood itself. We cannot say that the very blood of Jesus--His physical blood--is what atones for sin. It is His death that atones for sin. His blood shed was an act of death. So, we do not want to become preoccupied about fantasizing about some mystical blood that is floating around somewhere. It is by the sacrificial offering of Himself--it is by His death--that we are redeemed. Blood shed is only the picture of His death....So, when Jesus died and shed his blood this is no big thing. This is nothing for Israel to get all bent out of shape about.

MacArthur's slighting of "the precious blood of Christ" (I Peter 1:18-19) prompts Lloyd Streeter to conclude that the above statements are "absolute heresy!. . .The words he speaks are poison to the souls of men! . MacArthur's big error in the above quoted statement is that he separates Christ's bleeding from His dying, and says that only Christ's death was the redemption price " (*The Baptist Arrow*, Vol 2 No. 2, March 1993, p. 4).

Gospel According to the Apostles, persists in his error by entitling a section, "The Myth of the Carnal Christian." Under this heading, MacArthur writes the following:

> Almost all no-lordship theology leans heavily on the notion that there are three classes of humanity: unsaved people, spiritual Christians, and carnal Christians. This was one of the planks in the no-lordship platform that was laid by Lewis Sperry Chafer. Chafer popularized the carnal-Christian idea in his 1918 book, *He That Is Spiritual* (pp. 124-125).

6. HIS DENIAL OF THE TWO NATURES OF THE BELIEVER

Following his Reformed mentors, MacArthur insists that at the moment of the new birth, the believer's old nature is abolished. Unlike Arminian theologians, he does not believe in sinless perfection. A believer still sins, but his sins are explained in terms of the vestiges of the old life, old habits which occasionally break into our life. MacArthur's denial of the old nature explains his disclaimer of the concept of the carnal Christian. Obviously, if the believer no longer battles an old nature, carnality is, in fact, an aspect of the believer's new nature.

In an article entitled "The Good-Natured Believer," MacArthur writes: "If you are a Christian, it's a serious misunderstanding to think of yourself of having both an old and new nature. We do not have a dual personality! Assuming the dual nature of the believer could easily lead one to excuse all kinds of sin by blaming them on the old nature" (*Masterpiece*, March/April 1990, p. 18).

In his more recent volume he writes:

> ...Christians sin because of the vestiges of sinful flesh, not because they have the same old active sinful nature. Certainly we sin, but when we sin it is contrary to our nature, not because we have two dispositions—one sinful and one not. . . Sin has lost its dominating control over us. Obviously we all struggle with sinful propensities. Death to the sinful self does not mean death to the flesh and its corrupted inclinations. Because of the pleasures of sin and the weakness of our remaining flesh, we often yield to sin (*Faith Works—The Gospel According to the Disciples*, pp. 116-117).

The believer's sins, it seems, are unfortunately more than vestiges of a former nature. The picture painted by Paul of the believer's struggle between the flesh and the spirit certainly suggest a daily struggle between the old and the new nature. (Galatians 5:17).

7. HIS DE-EMPHASIS OF POSITIONAL TRUTH

MacArthur displays a great deal of confusion in the matter of positional truth in the two areas of salvation and sanctification. He evidences a defective understanding of the believer's position and practice, his standing and his state. The glorious biblical truth of the Reformation, describing the Christian as *simul iustus et peccator* (at the same time justified and a sinner) seems to escape MacArthur.

MacArthur's basic thesis is that "every Christian is a disciple" (*The Gospel According to Jesus*, p. 196). Any distinction between believer and disciple is "purely artificial" (*Ibid.*, p. 196). And a call to Christian discipleship explicitly demands "total dedication. It is full commitment with nothing knowingly or deliberately held back" (*Ibid.*, p. 197).

Converted individuals such as the Corinthians are positionally perfect before God. They are "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints" (I Corinthians 1:2). And yet, their conduct was characterized by carnality. They had positional sanctification but lacked progressive sanctification. They had accepted Christ as Savior, but had not yet recognized him as Sovereign and Lord. Lordship is imperative for sanctification. It should not be confused with salvation, let alone be made a prerequisite of it. MacArthur's insistence that a new convert (position) give every evidence of dedication (practice) ignores the fact that many believers need some amount of spiritual growth before giving their all to the Savior, as seen in Paul's encouragement to the saints of Rome to present their bodies a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2). In the case of Abraham's nephew Lot, one would never suspect from the Old Testament that he was a believer. Only Peter informs us that Lot was righteous (II Peter 2:7-8). Lot had a righteous standing before God and yet lived an entire life of carnality. His practice never matched his position. Since in MacArthur's thinking an individual cannot be saved without recognizing Christ's lordship and is not plagued by an old nature after salvation, he must live more or less a Spirit-filled and dedicated life. Lot's unseparated and undedicated life to the contrary, MacArthur incredibly considers him an example of a spiritual believer "Lot was certainly not 'carnal' in the sense that he lacked spiritual desires" (*Faith Works*, p. 128). A defective understanding of positional and practical truth leads to defective interpretation.

8. HIS DISCREPANCIES IN HIS PRESENTED MATERIALS

The dictionary defines discrepancy as inconsistency, disagreement. The verb *discrepant* is derived from the French, *dis* + *crepare*, to rattle, creak. Some things in MacArthur's writings creak, or don't sound right. MacArthur's publications are characterized by numerous internal inconsistencies which are apparent even to the casual reader. At one place, MacArthur makes one statement, at another place a

totally opposite statement. Time after time one comes across totally contradictory statements, sometimes in the same book or even the same chapter. The reader is prompted to ask, "Will the real MacArthur please stand up?" Both propositions cannot be right.

Will a believer demonstrate fruit or won't he?

Statement A:

"There is no such thing as a fruitless Christian...There is no such thing as a Christian who does not bear fruit" (*Freedom from Sin*, p. 89, 109).

Statement B:

"A believer can be just as barren and fruitless as an unbeliever. Even a barren and fruitless Christian will enter into the Kingdom" (*Adding to Your Faith*, p. 49)

Does the believer have one nature or two?

Statement A:

"Believers do not have dual personalities. . .There is no such thing as an old nature in the believer" (*Freedom from Sin*, p. 31).

Statement B:

Being a Christian doesn't make you perfect, but you do have the capacity not to sin. Sometimes our fallen nature tempts us to sin, and we give in" (*Ibid.*, p. 85).

Is there a difference between Israel and the Church, Law and Grace, or isn't there?

Statement A:

"I am a dispensationalist and am convinced that the dispensational distinction between the Church and Israel is an accurate understanding of God's eternal plan as revealed in Scripture" (*Faith Works*, p. 220-221).

Statement B:

"The age-of-law/age-of-grace division in particular has wreaked havoc on dispensational theology and contributed to confusion about the doctrine of salvation" (*The Gospel According to Jesus*, p. 25)

Is a believer totally yielded and sanctified or can he resist the Lordship of Christ and live in sin?

Statement A:

"Thus salvation cannot be defective in any dimension. As a part of His saving work, God will produce repentance, faith, sanctification, yieldedness, obedience, and ultimately glorification. Since He is not dependent on human effort in producing those elements, and experience that lacks any of them cannot be the saving work of God" (*The Gospel According to Jesus*, p. 33).

Statement B:

"Once they have come to Him, some Christians lose their first love for Him as Savior and resist obeying Him as Lord. But their lovelessness makes Him no less Savior, and their resistance makes Him no less Lord" (*Ephesians*, p. 39).

Further:

"After salvation, sin no longer resides in the innermost self, which is recreated like Christ. Yet it finds its residuals dwelling in our flesh. That's why Paul said nothing good dwelt in his flesh (v 18)" ("The Good-Natured Believer," *Masterpiece*, March/April 1990, p. 20).

Further:

"You are not less evil now than you used to be. In your unredeemed mortality and humanness you are evil" (Tape GC 45-52, Romans 7).

Further:

"Sin is still present in our humanness, which includes the mind, emotions, and body" (*Freedom from Sin*, p. 173)

9. HIS DOCTRINE OF ELDER RULE

The church is a unique institution for this dispensation. The local church is designated by the Lord to carry on the work of evangelism and edification. The New Testament contains detailed instructions for the church, including its organization, officers, and ordinances. MacArthur differs in several aspects from Baptists in the area of ecclesiology. He insists that Baptists are unbiblical in their concept of congregational rule. In his thinking, the final authority of the local church is not the congregation but the board of elders.

MacArthur forcefully argues for elder rule in his booklet, *Answering the Key Questions About Elders*. He insists that:

> The biblical norm for church leadership is a plurality of God-ordained elders. Furthermore, it is the only pattern for church leadership given in the New Testament. Nowhere in Scripture do we find a local assembly ruled by majority opinion, or by one pastor (p. 1).

> Elders are called and appointed by God, confirmed by the church leadership and ordained to the task of leadership. . . Nothing in Scripture indicates that anyone at a lower level of leadership should be involved in decision making as it relates to church policy or doctrine (p. 31).

Baptists maintain that a close examination of the biblical data will bear out the concept of congregational rule. In Matthew 18, the final court of adjudication in a local church matter is not the board of elders but the congregation. "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (18:17). In matters of church discipline, the final say is not given to the elders but to the congregation. "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." (I Corinthians 5:4-7)

10. HIS DESIGNS AGAINST THE BAPTIST CHURCHES

MacArthur's ecclesiology is at variance with Baptist doctrine in the area of who heads the flock and who has the final authority. Baptists traditionally have maintained that each congregation need only have one pastor/bishop/elder. They further defend the concept of congregational rule.

MacArthur espouses the plurality of elders view and the elders as the final authority in the church. He is not content to live and let live. In his Shepherds' Conferences, he instructs pastors how to undermine Baptist churches and other churches with a congregational form of government and change them into plurality of elders and eldership-rule churches. On one of the tapes from the Shepherds' Conferences to which I listened, MacArthur was asked by a pastor how he should go about starting elder-rule type churches. MacArthur's response was that rather than starting new churches it was better to take existing churches with congregational rule and convert them to elder rule. This writer has spoken with several pastors who were so enamored with MacArthur's position that they completely changed their churches to non-Baptist eldership-rule congregations.

In an article entitled, "Honesty in the Ministry," by Frank Bumpus in *Frontline* (Vol. 6, No. 1, p.18), an audio tape from one of the Shepherd's Conferences is quoted. The speaker relates the following conversation:

> I had a guy call me from the inter-city in Los Angeles, and he said, 'Dr. Barsaw, we are going to change to "elder rule." '
> I said, "Great. What are you going to do?'
> He said, 'We are rewriting our constitution and our bylaws.'
> I said, 'What are you going to do when they are rewritten?'
> He said, 'We are going to bring them to the congregation, and they are going to pass this new constitution and these new bylaws.'
> I said, 'Sure they are.'
> He said, 'Do you have any advice?'
> I said, 'Yeah, I have some great advice for you.'
> He said, 'What is that?'
> 'Tear it [the constitution and bylaws] up—tear it up! When you [church] start functioning, then you can worry about rewriting. That is what we had to do at Grace....We first built a credible group of elders that no one minded following, and they [congregation] had been so used to following them [elders] that, when they came in with a change, they [congregation] said, 'Sure. If they say it, it must be true.' 'Credibility' is the key word in this whole thing. (*How to Go from Congregational to Elder Rule.*)

Bumpus registers his total objection to the above practice: "I disagree. The 'key word' is 'dishonesty,' not 'credibility.' The speaker is telling those pastors not to be honest and straightforward with their churches, but to hide their objective until they have gained the confidence of the people in order to set the stage for a takeover. This speaker is saying that if you are open and honest about your intention, it won't work. Listen to his next comment: 'All right, so pitfall number one is, "Don't try to rewrite it before you do it. Do it and then worry about rewriting it." '

Bumpus quotes from yet another audiotape which relates a query directed to John MacArthur from a man in the audience:

> As churches go from congregational to elder rule, a lot of times there is a fear in the hearts of the congregation that they are losing their voice and their say in the decision and direction of the church. What place, then, does the congregation have in the direction or decision-making in the church? [Dr. MacArthur answers] 'Well, it's a justified fear because that is, in fact, what's happening' (*Questions and Answers*). (*Frontline, Ibid.*)

When MacArthur took over the leadership of the Los Angeles Baptist College, a school built with money from fundamental Regular Baptists, apparently by his insistence, the name Baptist was dropped immediately. No one disputes MacArthur's prerogative to preach and practice what he pleases, but one wonders

why Baptist churches, schools and state fellowships are so enamored with one who espouses so many doctrinal aberrations and has a well-known antipathy toward Baptist distinctives.

11. HIS DIATRIBES AGAINST THE DISPENSATIONALISTS

It has already been noted under point 5 that MacArthur accuses dispensationalists of inventing the category of carnal Christian. MacArthur claims to be a dispensationalist, yet in a strange twist of logic, he berates the dispensationalists for believing what makes them dispensationalists: that the church is not Israel, that the Law is not Grace, and that the Old Testament is not New Testament truth. His cavalier treatment of dispensationalists such as Chafer, Walvoord, Ryrie, and Hodges has endeared him to leading covenant theologians who commend his theology warmly on the dust jackets of his books. His Reformed position on salvation and sanctification as well as his nondispensational exposition of the Sermon on the Mount set him at odds with dispensational distinctives and raise all sorts of questions about his claim to belong to the dispensational camp.

MacArthur defines dispensationalism as "A system of biblical interpretation that sees a distinction between God's program for Israel and His dealings with the church" (*Faith Works*, p. 219).

And yet, MacArthur accuses dispensationalists of extreme exegesis for making distinctions between Law and Grace and Israel and the Church:

> There is a tendency, however, for dispensationalists to get carried away with compartmentalizing truth to the point that they can make unbiblical distinctions. An almost obsessive desire to categorize everything neatly has led various dispensational interpreters to draw hard lines not only between the church and Israel, but also between salvation and discipleship, the church and the kingdom, Christ's preaching and the apostolic message, faith and repentance, and the age of law and the age of grace. The age of law and the age of grace division in particular have wreaked havoc on dispensational theology and contributed to confusion about the doctrine of salvation (*The Gospel According to Jesus*, p. 25).
>
> It is a mistake of the worst sort to set the teachings of Paul and the apostles over against the words of our Lord and imagine that they contradict one another or speak of different dispensations (*Ibid.*, p 214)
>
> I decried the methodology of dispensationalists who want to isolate salvation from repentance, justification from sanctification, faith from

works, and Christ's Lordship from His role as Savior, in a way that breaks asunder what God has joined together" (*Ibid.*, p. 221).

In *Faith Works*, MacArthur continues his denunciation of dispensationalism as taught by Chafer and Ryrie. First, he observes that Ryrie and he are "in essential agreement on the distinction of Israel and the Church and literal hermeneutics" (*Faith Works*, p. 221). Then he says his purpose is "to plead for a purer, more biblical application of the literal, historical, grammatical principle of interpretation" (*Ibid.*) But when dispensationalists practice literal, historical, and grammatical hermeneutics, MacArthur calls it a "rigid partitioning of 'the age of law' and 'the age of grace,'" such as when Chafer notes that "the teachings of the law, the teaching of grace and the teachings of the Kingdom are separate and complete systems of divine rule" (*Ibid.*, pp. 229-230).

MacArthur deplores these distinctions as "rigid forms of extreme dispensationalism" (*Ibid.*, p. 232) which teach that the Mosaic law has ended. Chafer's system, with its "grace teachings. . .pave the way for a brand of Christianity that has legitimized careless and carnal behavior" (*Ibid.*, p. 228).

MacArthur concludes with a word of warning. "Dispensationalism is at a crossroads. The lordship controversy represents a signpost where the road forks. One arrow marks the road of biblical orthodoxy. The other arrow, labeled 'no-lordship,' points the way to a sub-Christian antinomianism" (*Ibid.*, p. 233).

There you have it. The system of dispensationalism championed by Chafer and Ryrie leads to careless and carnal behavior as well as to a sub-Christian antinomianism!

12. HIS DISTORTIONS OF HIS OPPONENTS' VIEWS

In scholarly debate, whether oral or written, it is always important to represent one's opponent's views correctly and quote him accurately. One deplorable feature of MacArthur's writings is that he does not represent his opponent's positions accurately. In quoting others he adds a word here, changes a phrase there, thus altering the original meaning of the quote. This is unscholarly and unethical, but in this fashion he constructs straw men which he then proceeds to dismantle, never mind what the author's actual position is.

One of MacArthur's main criticisms of dispensationalists is that they have created easy-believism which has ruined the purity of the church. To support his point, MacArthur quotes Lewis Sperry Chafer as saying that grace is "the Christian's liberty

to do precisely as he chooses" (*The Gospel According to* Jesus, p. 31) What MacArthur omits is that in the same paragraph Chafer also said, "but God has provided a sufficient safeguard which consists in the fact that the divine ideal is first wrought in the heart: 'for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure'" (*Grace*, p. 345).

In *Faith Works*, MacArthur contrasts the Lordship and free grace positions (pp. 26-27). He especially quotes Ryrie's book *So Great Salvation*, but unfortunately alters numerous quotes by Ryrie in a most unfair, unscholarly, and unethical manner.

MacArthur quoting Ryrie: "Saving faith is simply being convinced or giving credence to the truth of the gospel (*SGS* 156)."

Ryrie's actual statement: "*Faith*. Being convinced or giving credence. . ." MacArthur adds the word *simply*.

MacArthur quoting Ryrie: "Christians can even lapse into a state of permanent spiritual barrenness (*SGS* 53-54)."

Ryrie's actual statement: "Christians may even slide back to a fruitless condition for some period of time."

MacArthur changes "some period of time" to "permanent," thus totally twisting the meaning.

MacArthur quotes Ryrie: "disobedience and prolonged sin are no reason to doubt the reality of one's faith (*SGS* 48)."

Ryrie neither says this nor believes this. It must be very exasperating for scholars like Ryrie and Hodges not simply to be misunderstood but to have one's words misquoted. Whatever happened to Christian scholarly integrity?

13. HIS DEFECTS IN HERMENEUTICS

No one disputes the fact that John MacArthur is one of America's foremost Bible teachers. His radio messages, tapes and books have blessed millions around the world. A careful examination of his exegesis of Bible passages and terms shows that when he teaches in controversial areas, he falls prey to a temptation that we all must resist: —to make the passage or term say what he wants it to say—not what it actually says—or to simply ignore passages which appear to support his opponents' views. For example, because of his Lordship salvation stand, in which he makes Lordship a prerequisite of salvation, he needs to give a new and unbiblical meaning to such terms as "faith," "believe," and "repentance." After all, Acts 16:31 says nothing about Lordship or dedication. Salvation is simply based on faith: "And they

said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31). Since in MacArthur's thinking this cannot be, he expands the definition of faith (*pistis*) beyond the meaning of confidence and trust to commitment and yielding. "Repentance" (*metanoia*), which is biblically a change of mind, becomes a term of surrender and complete yieldedness. The significant title of "Lord" is, especially in soteriological passages, a reference to Jesus not as Master but as Yahweh. It is a designation of deity. The Jews of Romans 10:9-10 had difficulty recognizing Jesus as Yahweh, the eternal creator God.

Besides changing the meaning of terms, MacArthur twists Scriptures for support of his position that saving faith involves not simply trust but dedication. One illustration must suffice. The account in Numbers 21:7, as quoted by Christ in John 3, relates to the brazen serpent. MacArthur writes as follows:

> In order to look at the bronze snake on the pole, they had to *drag themselves* to where they could see it. They were in no position to *glance flippantly* at the pole and then *proceed with lives of rebellion*" (*The Gospel According to* Jesus, p. 46; italics added).

Hodges, who comments on MacArthur's exposition, rightly observes. "Most readers will rightly regard these comments as totally without support from the biblical text in Numbers. MacArthur is guilty of distorting the obvious simplicity of our Lord's illustration about saving faith" (*Absolutely Free!*, p. 212).

14. HIS DILEMMA IN RELATION TO THE IFCA

The fellowship of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America (IFCA) has a very clear doctrinal statement. Twice the eternal Sonship of Christ is mentioned, and the wording is precise and unmistakable. This should pose a dilemma for John MacArthur, who for years has been associated with the IFCA. MacArthur equally clearly and consistently denies the eternal Sonship. He wants to remain a part of the IFCA, but his position is diametrically opposed to that of the IFCA. What to do? He signed the IFCA's doctrinal statement anyway. How can one ethically sign a doctrinal statement which is clearly and diametrically opposed to one's stated position?

The IFCA Doctrinal Statement clearly speaks to the issue of the eternal Sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ: 'WE BELIEVE IN ONE TRIUNE GOD, ETERNALLY EXISTING IN THREE PERSONS--FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT' [Article IV; Section 1 (2)]; 'WE BELIEVE THAT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE ETERNAL SON OF GOD, BECAME MAN, WITHOUT CEASING TO BE GOD' [Article IV; Section 1 (3a)].

ARTICLE IV
FAITH AND DOCTRINE

Section I. Articles of Biblical Faith

Each and every person, church, or organization, in order to become or remain a member of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America (IFCA), shall be required to subscribe to the following articles of faith:

(1) The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the verbally inspired Word of God, the final authority for faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and God-breathed (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21; Matthew 5:18; John 16:12,13)

(2) The Godhead

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

(3) The Person and Work of Christ

a. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that he might reveal God and redeem sinful men (John 1:1,2,14, Luke 1:35).

As already quoted, MacArthur denies the eternal Sonship of Christ. His position is very clear: "The Bible nowhere speaks of the eternal Sonship of Christ....Christ was not Son until His incarnation....His Sonship began in a point of time, not in eternity....He is no 'eternal son'" (*Hebrews*, pp. 27-28).

In light of this contradiction between what MacArthur teaches and the IFCA's official position, five IFCA Regionals on the east coast adopted in 1991 "A Statement of Doctrinal Integrity." This urgent appeal is addressed to the IFCA National Executive Committee which feels that MacArthur's divergent view falls within the area of "interpretive freedom." In a strongly worded-statement the IFCA pastors and churches state:

> We are obligated to hold firmly to our Doctrinal Statement which *declares* that Jesus Christ is 'the eternal Son of God.' We cannot and must not accommodate, tolerate or allow for contrary positions. Any member of the IFCA who denies the eternal Sonship of Christ is out of harmony with our doctrinal position and he must be denied membership in our Fellowship. Renewal of membership must be denied to any who do not express wholehearted concurrence with our doctrinal position regarding Sonship or any other issue.

Rev. George Zeller of Middletown Bible Church in Middletown, Connecticut, rightly concludes:

> In light of this a fair question would be this: How could John MacArthur sign the IFCA doctrinal statement and be in hearty agreement with it when it clearly states that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God? Such an affirmation is in clear conflict with MacArthur's published statements found in five of his commentaries (not to mention his public tapes, official position papers, etc.). ("The Teachings of John MacArthur, Jr.", p. 11; emphasis in the original).

Was it ethical for John MacArthur to sign the IFCA doctrinal statement? Is it proper for the IFCA to permit in its membership individuals who deviate decisively from its doctrinal statement? It is no wonder that because of this ethical dilemma a number of IFCA churches left the fellowship.

Besides clearly affirming the eternal Sonship of Christ, the IFCA doctrinal statement likewise recognizes that the believer has two natures, an old nature and a new nature: "We believe that every saved person possesses two natures, with provision made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and, that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural" (Section 1, Article 8).

How could MacArthur sign the statement when his teachings flatly contradict the official IFCA position? MacArthur writes, "I believe it is a serious misunderstanding to think of the believer as having both an old and new nature. Believers do not have dual personalities. There is no such thing as an old nature in the believer" (*Freedom from Sin*, p. 31-32).

Let us come back once more to the question that was raised in the introduction to this paper. How many doctrinal errors or ethical expediencies should one tolerate? It depends how highly one values the doctrine of salvation and the Sonship of Christ. It depends on one's convictions concerning the biblical distinctives of Baptists and the importance of sanctification. Do we have a right to mark those who cause divisions among us and avoid their error? Biblically, we have both the right and the responsibility (Romans 16:17-18). While we would not deny others the freedom to speak even in error, we have the responsibility to speak the truth, but to speak it in love. We must always be mindful as ministers of the Word that those of us who teach the Word of God have a great responsibility because of our future accountability (James 3:1)

When others bring confusion to the faithful, it is not wrong to contend earnestly for the faith. When salvation by faith alone and the Sonship of Christ are denied, it is cowardly not to contend for the truth and to combat unbiblical compromise with error

www.ligonier.org /podcasts/open-book-with-stephen-nichols/john-macarthur-and-lloyd-jones-studies-in-the-sermon-on-the-mount

John MacArthur and Lloyd-Jones' Studies in the Sermon on the Mount

On this episode of *Open Book*, Stephen Nichols and John MacArthur discuss the Sermon on the Mount, misinterpreted parables, and a pastor known as "the Doctor."

Transcript *[Transcript lightly edited for readability.]*

STEPHEN NICHOLS: It's good to see you again, Dr. MacArthur.

JOHN MACARTHUR: Thank you, Stephen.

NICHOLS: We're still talking about books that have influenced you, and we had talked about one London pastor already with John Stott. Now we're going to talk about another. He's known as "the Doctor," and he's Welsh. We're talking about none other than D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

MACARTHUR: Of course I knew about him, and I had read some of his writings, but I was starting the book of Matthew at Grace Community Church. It was probably the most definitive book I taught in the history of my pastoral ministry.

NICHOLS: May I just ask you a question at this point? Were you planning at that point to preach through the New Testament, or did you just start with Matthew?

MACARTHUR: Yes, I wanted to preach through the New Testament from the get-go.

NICHOLS: Okay.

MACARTHUR: I didn't know if I'd do it. I mean, who stays in one place long enough to do that, at the pace that I do it? Criswell did it because he took chapters, but—

NICHOLS: You do verses.

MACARTHUR: — I do verses, yes. Phrases.

NICHOLS: Phrase by phrase.

The ugly head of dispensationalism???

MACARTHUR: But I came to the book of Matthew, and I was fine until I got to chapter 5, and I got to the Sermon on the Mount, and all my dispensational background reared its ugly head. I had read a couple of commentaries by guys at Dallas Seminary, like Walvoord and others, and I said, "I do not believe this. I do not believe that the Sermon on the Mount has no relevance to the living church, and it's some kind of a formula for living in the millennium in the future." And I said, "I need help. I need help to understand this, and I need help, not on some kind of big picture. I need help with the details of this."

NICHOLS: The details, yes. The fine print.

MACARTHUR: So, I got a copy of Martyn Lloyd-Jones *[Studies in the Sermon on the Mount – link].* In the process of going through that, I jettisoned virtually all of that sort of dispensational stuff that had been concocted and imposed on the book of Matthew and on the rest of Scripture. It all died in the encounter that I had with Matthew 5 through 7.

MACARTHUR: Then once that became clear, by the time I got to the parables, I understood those correctly for the first time because they were all misinterpreted as well.

NICHOLS: And discipleship.

MACARTHUR: Well, yes.

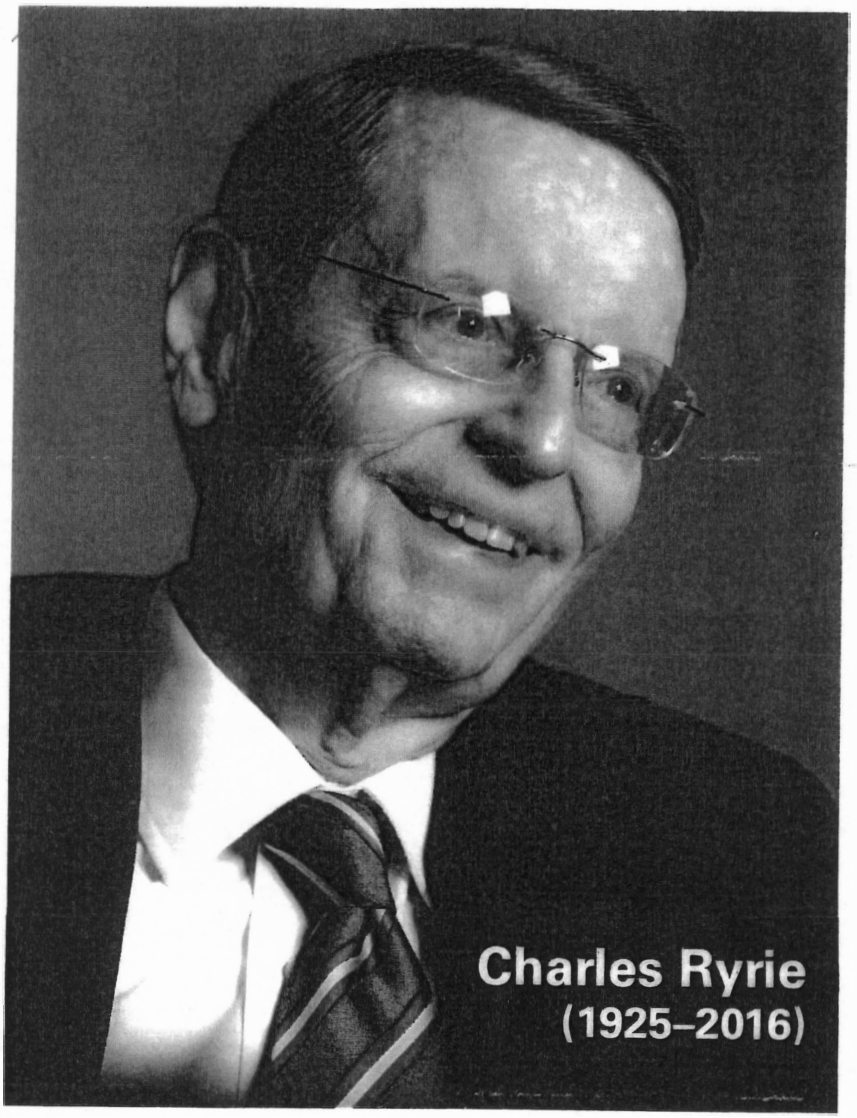
NICHOLS: Jesus was going to come to demonstrate.

MACARTHUR: And the whole Lordship issue came roaring out of that. But yes, I devoured the *Sermon on the Mount*. I read it and reread it and scribbled it. I marked it up extensively because I was going through a metamorphosis in my mind. It was changing me, so I was having to let go of things and see things in a different way. Some of those bolts were already loose, but they completely came undone. Some of the dispensational bolts came undone under the influence of Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

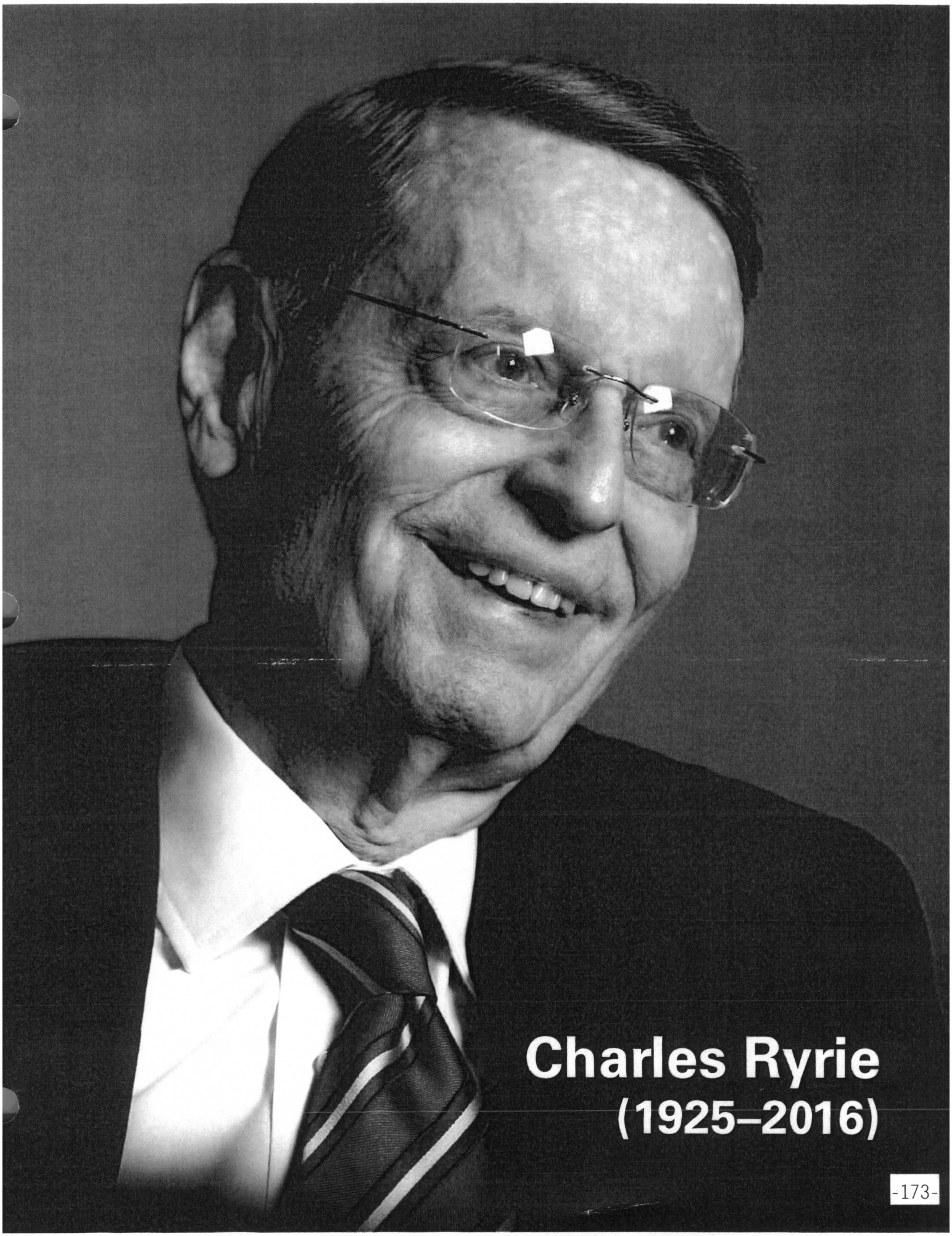
NICHOLS: I just picture you right now like a submarine— bolts popping and the water flooding in.

What is so unusual about the doctrinal clarity of

Dr. Charles C. Ryrie?



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.


Charles Ryrie
(1925–2016)

In the preface to his celebrated Study Bible, Charles Ryrie wrote, "The Bible is the greatest of all books; to study it is the noblest of all pursuits; to understand it, the highest of all goals." On Feb. 16, after a lifetime of studying and teaching the Scriptures that he loved so well, Dr. Ryrie slipped quietly into the presence of their Author. He was 90 years old.

"The Bible is the greatest of all books; to study it is the noblest of all pursuits; to understand it, the highest of all goals."
—Charles Ryrie

Charles Ryrie was born on March 2, 1925, to John and Elizabeth Ryrie, and raised in Alton, Illinois. He was a fifth-generation attendee of First Baptist Church of Alton. At a very early age, Charles trusted Christ as Savior under the influence of his father. Although banking was his profession, John Ryrie had a passion for teaching the Bible and served his church as Sunday School teacher and superintendent. Clearly, this passion rubbed off on young Charles, who would later become the most iconic dispensational theologian of his generation.

After graduating as valedictorian of his class in 1942, Ryrie spent a semester studying at Stony Brook boarding school under Frank Gaebelein, and then enrolled at Haverford College. He expected to follow his father into the banking industry, and so declared mathematics as his major. God, however, had other plans for Ryrie's life. In April 1943, Ryrie had an opportunity to visit with Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder and president of Dallas Theological Seminary. During that visit, Ryrie felt a decisive pull toward full-time Christian ministry. In a 2012 interview with Paul Weaver, he reflected on this pivot point: "That night I felt a call to ministry. . . . We talked and prayed. I date that night as two things, a dedication of life and call to Christian service."

Ryrie left Haverford College and enrolled at Dallas Theological Seminary, graduating with a ThM in 1947 and a ThD in 1949. (Although he did not complete his undergraduate work at Haverford, the college did confer a baccalaureate degree on Ryrie in 1946, partially on the basis of his graduate work at Dallas.) He later pursued a second doctorate at the University of Edinburgh, graduating with his PhD in 1953. Throughout his studies, he excelled academically and consistently distinguished himself as a sharp thinker and indefatigable student.

Charles Ryrie is remembered chiefly as an educator, writer, and theologian. During the course of his career he taught Biblical studies and systematic theology at Dallas Theological Seminary, Word of Life Bible Institute, Westmont College, and Criswell College. He also served as president of Philadelphia College of Bible (now Cairn University) from 1958 to 1962. Veteran Regular Baptist minister and educator David Wilcox recalls his studies under Ryrie with fondness:

> When many academics loved the obscure, Dr. Ryrie taught me to take the complex details of theology and communicate them in an understandable way. Without any question, as the champion of dispensational truth he stands head and shoulders above all others in our generation. My wife and I were part of a small group at the Dallas home of Dr. and Mrs. Wendell Johnston and Dr. Ryrie was there too. He and I sat alone in the living room while all the others gathered in the family room in another part of the house. I will never forget his gentleness, humility and kindness as he credited the Lord with all praise and glory for anything that he may have accomplished in his life. I love the man. He was a master teacher and a gentleman.

As a writer, Ryrie produced an impressive body of work, the variety of which is staggering. He wrote on Biblical theology, systematic theology, spiritual maturity, isagogics, pedagogy, and theological method. He produced a perennially popular study Bible. He wrote commentaries on Acts, Revelation, and the Thessalonian epistles. His many published articles covered a whole host of issues, including controversial social concerns like capital punishment, civil disobedience, divorce and remarriage, and the problem of poverty. In the academic realm, characterized as it is by specialization and fragmentation, such a varied output is exceedingly rare. To cover this much ground with the competence, comprehensiveness, and clarity that characterized all of Ryrie's writings is even rarer.

It was in his capacity as a theologian, however, that Ryrie truly set himself apart. As a spokesman for traditional dispensationalism, Ryrie was utterly unmatched. Prior to the publication of *Dispensationalism Today*, many works had been written from a dispensational perspective, but relatively few had been written to explain the essence of the dispensational system itself. Ryrie's work rectified this. It provided a careful exposition of the dispensational system, and also furnished a powerful apologetic for why Bible-believing Christians should prefer it over competing theological systems. Ryrie argued persuasively that dispensationalism springs naturally from the consistent use of a literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic, and that the literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic itself is rooted in a proper understanding of God's character:

> If God is the originator of language and if the chief purpose of originating it was to convey His message to humanity, then . . . it must follow that He would use language and expect people to understand it in its literal, normal, and plain sense. The Scriptures, then, cannot be regarded as some special use of language so that in the interpretation of these Scriptures some deeper meaning of the words must be sought.

His work on premillennialism (the topic of his ThD dissertation at Dallas) deployed a similar argument. Ryrie acknowledged that premillennialism was the accepted view of

"In my presence, I never heard Dr. Ryrie make a disparaging remark about anybody. Disagreement, yes. Disparagement, no. He was a quiet and unassuming man. . . . He was in love with Christ and His Word." —Mike Stallard

the early church, but this alone was not enough to settle the matter. More importantly, he argued, Christians should accept premillennialism on the basis of God's faithfulness:

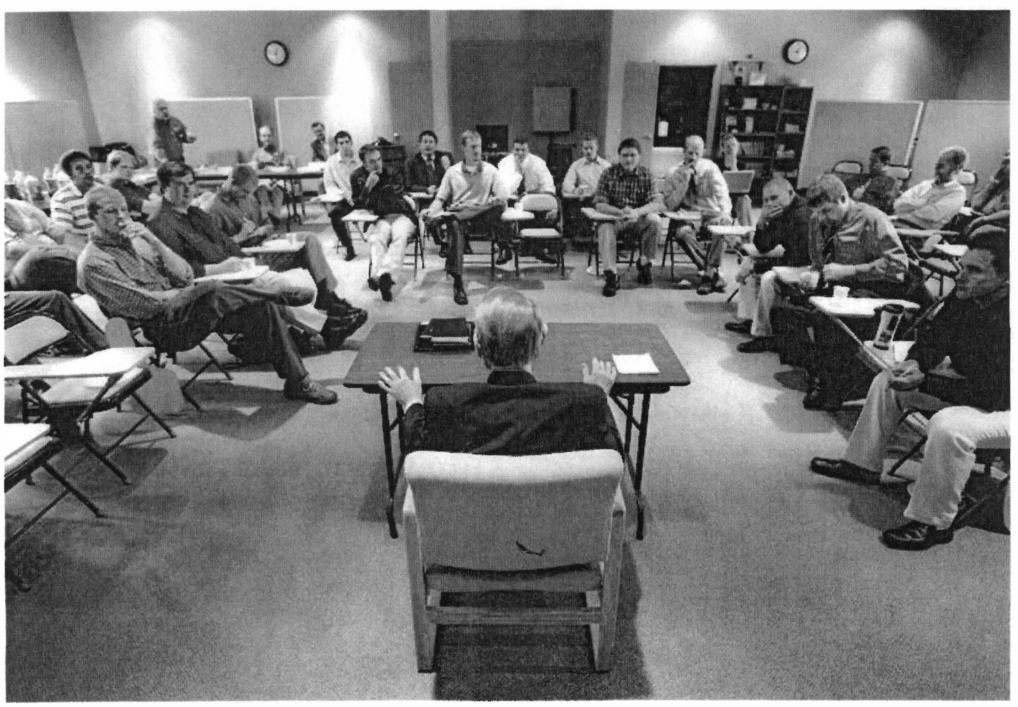
> Altogether they [the Biblical covenants] form an harmonious whole and an unshakeable basis upon which premillennialism rests. And underlying it all is the very nature of God Himself in that what He has plainly spoken He will do, and what He has assuredly promised He will perform. This is the basis of the premillennial faith.

Ryrie's theological influence also extended to other controversial topics. He was an important critic of the charismatic movement, neoorthodoxy, neoevangelicalism, lordship salvation, and Reformed theology. And yet, despite having taken strong stances on so many controversial topics, Ryrie always displayed an irenic spirit. He was never quarrelsome or mean-spirited, and he judiciously refrained from ad hominem arguments. Reflecting on this, Mike Stallard, professor of systematic theology at Baptist Bible Seminary, writes, "In my presence, I never heard Dr. Ryrie make a disparaging mark about anybody. Disagreement, yes. Disparagement, no. He was a quiet and unassuming man."

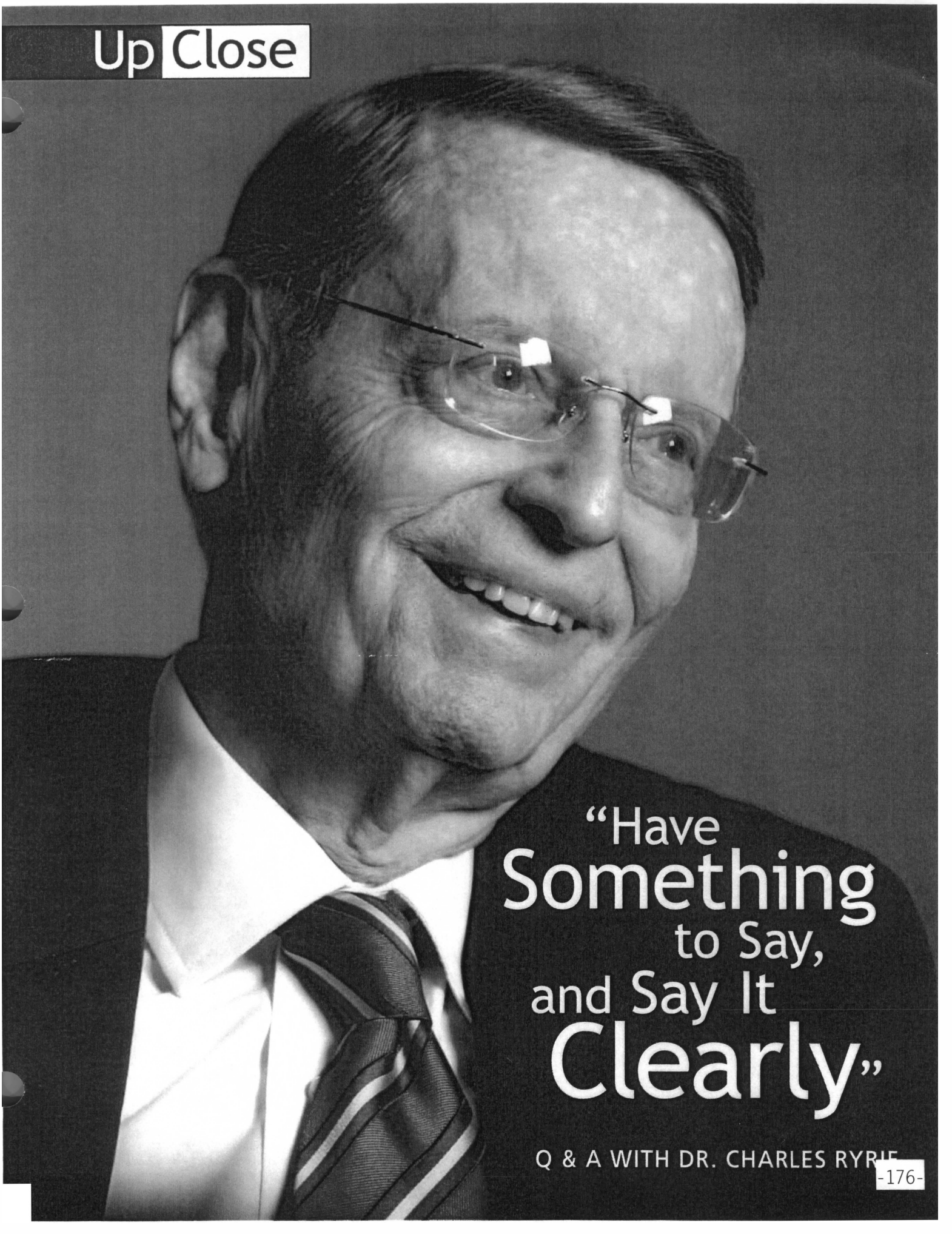
Perhaps the most impressive thing about Ryrie was his fervent desire to make Scriptural and doctrinal truth accessible to the layperson. Although he was a gifted scholar in his own right, the bulk of his work was not directed to the academy. It was directed to the average churchgoer. In this, he was a true servant to the Body of Christ. "When I was working on the Study Bible," Ryrie told the *Baptist Bulletin* in 2008, "I thought of the people in home Bible classes." The same was true of his theological work. "Theology is for everyone," Ryrie wrote in the introduction to his magnum opus *Basic Theology*. "Indeed, everyone needs to be a theologian." So he wrote theology, not just for the seminarian and philosopher, but for everyone. And in framing the task of theology, he was very careful to insist that theology should not be studied merely for its own sake; the true purpose is relational and Christ-centered: "To conform our lives to the image of Christ is the ultimate goal in studying theology. Yet in the final analysis no book can do that. Only God and you can."

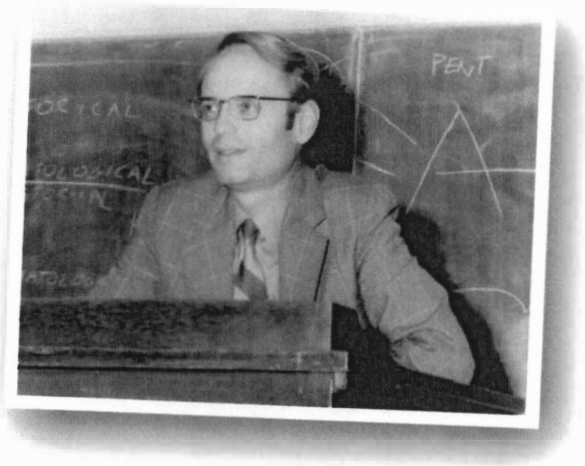
With the passing of Charles Ryrie from this world to the next, the Christian church has lost a spiritual giant. Countless scores of people have come to know Christ, have developed an appetite for sustained Biblical and theological study, and have grown stronger and deeper in their relationship to Jesus Christ, all because of the tireless work of Charles Caldwell Ryrie. Heaven's gain is truly our loss. Well done, good and faithful servant. Bb

David Gunn is managing editor of the Baptist Bulletin.



Charles Ryrie participates in the inaugural meeting of the Council on Dispensational Hermeneutics. The meetings were held Sept. 24 and 25, 2008, on the campus of Summit University and resulted in the Summit Statement on Dispensational Hermeneutics. Now nine years old, the Council continues the important work of advancing scholarly Biblical studies from the perspective of traditional dispensationalism, a cause that Ryrie spent his entire career championing.


Up Close
"Have Something to Say, and Say It Clearly"
Q & A WITH DR. CHARLES RYRIE



Charles Ryrie has spent the last 60 years teaching the Bible. While on the faculty of Dallas Theological Seminary, he taught hundreds of the pastors and teachers who have led our movement. Now retired, he has lived long enough to see his ideas embraced by his students and, in turn, their students.

But he has never been an "ivory tower" seminary professor—his teaching and writing ministry has always been aimed squarely at the congregation. "When I was working on the Study Bible," he explains, "I thought of the people in home Bible classes."

The Baptist Bulletin *was grateful to interview Dr. Ryrie when he was on the campus of Baptist Bible Seminary, where he spoke at the recent Barndollar Lecture Series and participated in the Council on Dispensational Hermeneutics.*

PHOTOS BY DARRELL GOEMAAT | INTERVIEW BY KEVIN MUNGONS

Tell us a bit about your life in Alton, Ill.

I grew up at First Baptist Church of Alton, which was Northern Baptist—American Baptist. I was the fifth generation from our family in that church.

My father taught Sunday School there, after beginning with home Bible classes. Many of the people who came to the house were schoolteachers, mostly women. My father would occasionally teach Scofield's *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth.* One time I was able to sit in on that series, if I promised to keep quiet and be still. I still remember some of that.

Dr. Ryrie recalls this Bible study as the first time he studied the ideas of dispensationalism, though he did not yet know the term. He graduated from Alton High School in January 1942, just six weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Though he modestly avoided the fact during our interview, Ryrie was always a gifted student. The Alton Evening Telegraph *reported his 96.8 grade average in bold print under the front-page headline "Charles Ryrie Valedictorian at Alton High." No one had to remind the graduates of the growing world turbulence. The girls' chorus ignored the ill-timed sentimental songs printed in the graduation program (such as "Within a Dreaming Harbor"), and instead sang a medley of patriotic tunes. The high school music teacher wore his newly issued army uniform and shipped out two days after the ceremony.*

A gifted pianist, Ryrie played Chopin's Ballade No. 3 in A-flat *just before the diplomas were awarded. Today he calls himself a "past tense" pianist, though he still has a piano at home and occasionally sits down to play favorite hymns such as "Marvelous Grace" and "Like a River Glorious."*

Following the ceremony, Ryrie left for Stony Brook School on Long Island, where he studied for an additional semester with Frank E. Gaebelein. Ryrie then entered college with the intention of studying math and music—and with the expectation that he would follow his father into the banking industry.

What changed your career path toward ministry?

Lewis Sperry Chafer is the reason I am in the ministry and the reason I went to seminary. That happened when I was a junior in college. At the time, I went to Haverford College in Pennsylvania, a Quaker school. Chafer was holding meetings in the area. I went to one of the meetings and said to him, "I should like to talk to you." He said, "I'll let you know after I check my schedule." So eventually he sent—this will tell you how old I am—he sent me a telegram. There were no phones in the Haverford dorms at the time. He said, "I can meet you at a certain time and a certain place at a hotel." And during that meeting is when I feel I was called to the ministry. (I still like the phrase "called to the ministry.") And from there I went to the seminary, where Chafer was teaching all of those years.

Prior to that, Chafer was a friend of your family, a friend of your parents.

Yes, it started back with my grandfather. My grandfather was a widower, so he lived with my family. Chafer would come to St. Louis to a Brethren Assembly to speak—at least that's the one I remember—my parents kind of dragged me along, you know. Yes, I had known him for some time before we met in that hotel room.

I thought about this once in a while, when seminary students asked to meet with me. I was sometimes tempted to think, "I don't have time for you." But then I would think of Chafer, who took time for me, and not just because I was a potential seminary student—because I wasn't at that time.

Soon after you finished your first degree at Dallas, you were ordained. Didn't your parents leave your home church soon after this?

I was ordained at First Baptist . . . sometime just after Noah came out of the ark. 1947. Ancient history. So when my folks thought they couldn't stay [at First Baptist] any longer, it was a big deal. It wasn't really a church split—they just left. They joined Brown Street Baptist Church, and by that time I was in seminary, so I never belonged to Brown Street, but that's where I attended when I went home.

In 1941, at the height of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the Northern Baptist Convention, Milton Heights Baptist Church began fellowshipping in the GARBC. John and Elizabeth Caldwell Ryrie joined the church soon after it moved to a new building on Brown Street in 1949.

"His parents were leaders in a Sunday School class here at church," says Clint Bonnell, a retired ABWE missionary who is still a member of Brown Street Baptist Church. "This was often referred to as 'the Ryrie class.' It was a ladies' class—for teachers, businesswomen, professionals."

"When the Ryries left First Baptist, they brought their whole Sunday School class with them," says Clint's wife, Dorothy. "Not all of them ended up joining Brown Street, but many did."

John and Elizabeth Caldwell Ryrie spent the rest of their lives ministering at Brown Street Baptist, even donating a piano to the church. By this time Charles Ryrie had joined First Baptist Church in Dallas, befriending the pastor, W. A. Criswell, and regularly teaching a Sunday School class there. He returned to Brown Street Baptist several times for prophecy and dispensationalism conferences; though he had had a full teaching and writing ministry, he continued to minister to people in local church settings.

Do you think the average person understands dispensationalism as well as it was understood 20 or 30 years ago?

Probably not. Part of it is a general decrease in Bible knowledge in our conservative evangelical churches. And part of it is that you don't have the prophecy conferences today, which are kissing cousins to dispensationalism. We just don't have them that much anymore. We have every other kind of seminar, but not prophecy. I think that's a contributing factor.

How would you advise a young pastor who wants to teach dispensationalism to his congregation?

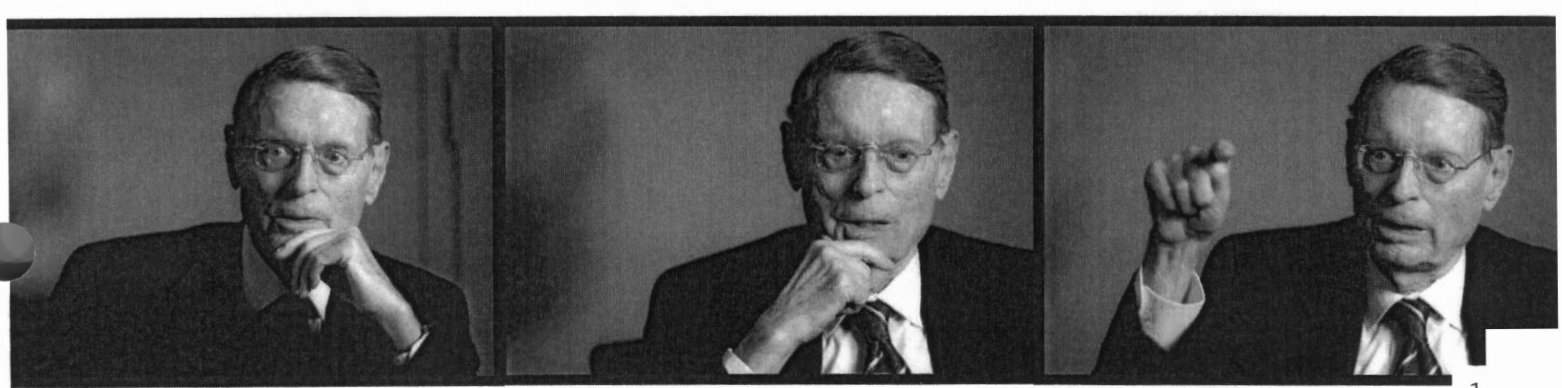
Do a teaching series. I went to a church in Oklahoma last fall where the pastor had taken Wednesday nights to talk about dispensationalism. Then on the last night he asked me to come up as a guest. The church was filled—three or four hundred people there, many from outside his church.

I don't think you have to teach dispensationalism every Sunday. I think if a church or a denomination has a doctrinal statement, then the pastor should go over that with the congregation in some kind of cycle. New people are coming in, and the older people have stopped thinking about those things. And I also think he should go over it meticulously with the leadership.

Take all the layers away, and it is ultimately leadership by a board—deacons, elders, whatever your polity is—it is ultimately their responsibility where the church goes. Unless we keep feeding and teaching the leadership, not just the members of the congregation, I think we're in trouble. And the same carries for our schools—if the boards of trustees are not spiritually alert and mature, anything could happen. I think the faculty is extremely important, but ultimately the board of the church or the organization holds the responsibility for doctrinal truth.

Can you tell us what led to your work on the Ryrie Study Bible?

It started one year on the way to my first Christian Booksellers Association meeting in Cincinnati. On the bus going in, a publisher who had published a book of mine said, "I want to talk to you." He wanted me to edit a multiauthor volume of some sort, I don't remember now, a dictionary or something. I said, "No, thank you! I am no good at riding heard on a hundred authors, making deadlines, and all that." So in return he said, "Propose something to me." I thought about that a while. There weren't many study Bibles available then. The Scofield Bible had just been revised. The Pilgrim Bible was



good, and used. There was a Lutheran New Testament Study Bible, and the Open Bible was maybe out by then. . . . I'm not sure of the dates. So I told him, "I think evangelicals need another study Bible. Not like the Scofield—there's nothing wrong with it—but more interpretive." I tried to write something with exegetically standard notes. I would say that the Scofield notes are more thematic, a synthesis of things. (I like the Scofield, that is not a criticism, believe me.) So I proposed this to him, and he agreed.

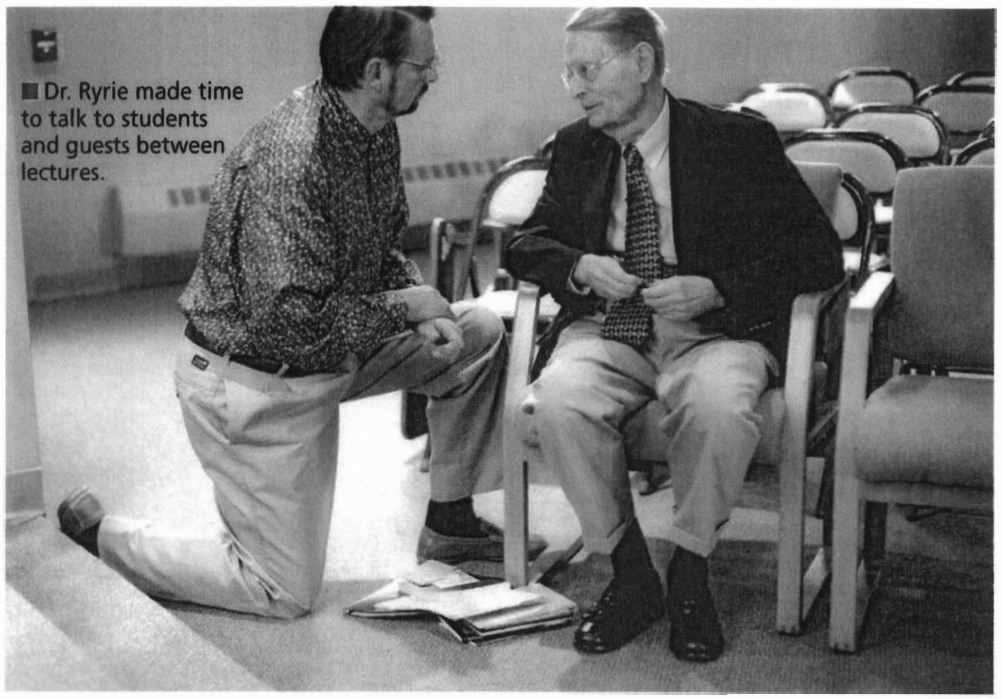
So we agreed on a New Testament. That's all they wanted to take a chance at. But by the time I finished my part, that publisher had been sold to a larger conglomerate. The man came back to me and said, "I don't think we'll be able to publish your Bible for years, because we've got so much going with this merger. So you have the right to do whatever you want with it."

And ultimately I went with Moody. One reason was that at that point, Moody was pretty sure they could get rights to the New American Standard, which had just come out. (I had written the notes using the King James.) But they did get the New American, so the notes were adapted to that, and later to other translations as well. That's how it came to be.

Many of us admire your writing for its famously spare, crisp explanations of complex issues.

Writers can't always do that easily. It's not easy. When I was working on the study Bible, I thought of people in home Bible classes, and I would sometimes ask, "Would they want a note on this verse or an explanation of this doctrine? Simply?" These people were my make-believe audience. Actually, they weren't make-believe, they were real people.





■ Dr. Ryrie made time to talk to students and guests between lectures.

The Ryrie Study Bible was released in 1976 as a New Testament, with the complete Bible finished in 1978. Dr. Ryrie also prepared a significant revision in 1995. "The expansion had about 2,000 more notes, more in-text helps, charts, diagrams, that sort of stuff," Ryrie says. He recently traveled to Hong Kong for the release of a Chinese version of the study Bible, which had previously been translated into Spanish and Portuguese. "I think someone is talking about a Hindi version, but I don't know what stage that is in," Ryrie says.

A representative of Moody Publishing estimates they have sold about 2.5 million copies of the Ryrie Study Bible.

"Well, they are probably about right," Ryrie comments. "I don't keep a running total! The Evangelical Press Association started giving a platinum medallion if you have any books over a million copies. I have one of those, and it was already at a million and a half before they started.

"But I really don't like to parade those figures. . . . I just don't like that."

With your study Bible in several translations, which translation do you prefer to use?

I do use the New American Standard, and one of the reasons is I feel more secure with it. When I'm traveling, people will ask for a question-and-answer session. I feel if I need to quickly look something up in the New American, I can be more secure that the verses are translated more accurately.

The New International is good for reading, but it takes some liberties, especially the new one, the Today's New International Version—the gender neutral one.

Which of your books has been the most influential?

Well, excluding the study Bible from my answer, I would say the Lord has . . . well, the variety of my books amazes me. *Object Lessons* for teachers is one. *Dispensationalism* is one. *Basic Theology* is one. And of the older books, *Balancing the Christian Life* comes up once in a while. I've had people here today talk about reading that as new Christians.

When I studied with Myron Houghton (one of your former students), he referred to you as a Baptist theologian. Do you think that is a fair label?

I'm not ashamed of the fact that I'm a Baptist! I've never been anything else in church affiliation.

How did you develop your ability to explain things in simple language that a layperson can understand?

On one side, that's God's gift to me. Or to be more technical, it's the way the gift of teaching or exhortation is worked out in me: conciseness.

On the human side, I think it is because off and on through the years, I've taught children. If you want to advise your writers to write more clearly, tell them to go host a

Good News Club somewhere, and *teach* it!

Do you still teach Bible study classes for church members?

Everywhere I've been, not all the time, but in every place I have been located, I've tried to teach home Bible classes. And I'm teaching one now, about 15 people in the Dallas area. I think that's a good size. If you teach—not quite one-on-one, but on a small group basis—if you want them to learn something, you have to put it at their level. Do you remember the *Sunday School Times?* Philip Howard was the editor for many years. Many years ago he came to speak, and I went up to him afterward. (This was a big thing for me. I'm shy, I really am.) I said, "Dr. Howard, how do you learn to write?" I wasn't a writer yet, I hadn't written anything, but I guess I had some latent interest. He said to me—at the time, I was probably a sophomore in college—he said, "Have something to say and say it clearly."

You can't improve on that.

Do you have any more books you would like to write?

If you have an idea for one, you can tell me, but I don't have any guarantees now!

You are still keeping a pretty lively speaking schedule.

I'm very thankful to the Lord for both the ability to do things and to have something to do. I've seen people, not as old as I, who not only don't do anything, they don't *want* to do anything. They seem glad to get out of the swim of things. I understand that, but there's still lots to do, and occasionally I have to turn down some requests.

Traveling is not easy anymore, but I'm glad I can do it. The only quarrel I have with the Lord on this matter is that He doesn't spread out the opportunities. They all seem to come at once. Sometimes I still get overextended.

Tell us a little bit about your family.

All three of my children live in Dallas. I also have three grandchildren. Now this is an interesting thing . . . early in the summer, I baptized two of my grandchildren. One was 12 [Matthew], and the older one [Stephen] wanted to be baptized on a certain date in September. It was his birthday, his 16th birthday.

What do you think are some of the core issues that people in the pew need to know and understand now?

It's hard to say what is most important for them without knowing each one and where they stand spiritually. The most important issues are always about what you believe. What you believe will determine what you do. If what you believe is good, healthy doctrine, you will have healthy actions and practices. But you can't have good practice if you don't have good doctrine.

"Everybody criticizes me on the Internet," Dr. Ryrie had told us at the start of his interview. And then he laughed and added, "If you run out of material for this article, just Google my name!"

We didn't run out of material. In fact, we've posted the rest of the interview at www.BaptistBulletin.org, including questions about Dr. Ryrie's collection of Bibles, his ideas on current theological controversies, his thoughts about the role of women in the church, more thoughts about his ministry of writing, and a few parting comments on the decline of systematic theology. ■

Interview by Kevin Mungons, managing editor of the Baptist Bulletin. *Photos by Darrell Goemaat, director of photography. Photo page 27 courtesy Dallas Theological Seminary Archives.*

■ Two of Charles Ryrie's grandsons, Matthew (left) and Stephen, help cut the cake for the recent opening of the Charles Ryrie Library and Study Center on the campus of Word of Life Bible Institute. Dr. Ryrie was pleased to baptize both of his grandsons this year. (Photo courtesy Adam Rushlow, Word of Life Bible Institute.)



The Essential Ryrie

Our editors chose a dozen practical books by Charles Ryrie—worthy of any church or home library.

- *A Survey of Bible Doctrine.* Moody (11th edition, 1989), 192 pages, paper, $13.99
- *Balancing the Christian Life.* Moody (25th Anniversary Edition, 1994), 256 pages, paper, $14.99
- *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth.* Moody (1999), 560 pages, hardcover, $34.99
- *Biblical Answers to Contemporary Issues.* Moody (1991), 135 pages, paper, out of print
- *Dispensationalism.* Moody (2007), 272 pages, paper, $14.99
- *Nailing Down a Board: Serving Effectively on the Not-for-Profit Board.* Kregel (1999), 96 pages, paper, $8.99
- *Object Lessons: 100 Lessons from Everyday Life.* Moody (1991), 112 pages, paper, $6.99
- *Ryrie's Practical Guide to Communicating Bible Doctrine.* B&H Publishing Group (2005), 88 pages, hardcover, $12.99
- *So Great Salvation: What It Means to Believe in Jesus Christ.* Moody (1997), 160 pages, paper, $12.99
- *The Miracles of Our Lord.* ECS Ministries (2005 reprint), 192 pages, paper, $9.95
- *The Ryrie Study Bible with DVD.* Moody (2008), 2,336 pages, leather, $84.99

6 aPs 96:1, 2 bPs 116:7; 119:17; 142:7

6 I will asing unto the LORD, because he hath bdealt bountifully with me.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David.

★1 aPs 10:4; 53:1 bPs 14:1-3; 130:3; Ro 3:10-12

14 The fool hath asaid in his heart, *There is no God*. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* bnone that doeth good.

★2-3 2 aPs 33:13, 14; 102:19 bPs 92:6 c1 Ch 22:19

2 The LORD alooked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did bunderstand, *and* cseek God.

3 aPs 58:3 bPs 143:2; Ro 3:10-12

3 They are all agone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* bnone that doeth good, no, not one.

4 aPs 82:5 bPs 27:2; Jer 10:25; Amos 8:4 cPs 79:6; Is 64:7

4 Have all the workers of iniquity no aknowledge? who beat up my people *as* they eat bread, and ccall not upon the LORD.

5 aPs 73:15; 112:2

5 There were they in great fear: for God *is* in the ageneration of the righteous.

6 aPs 42:3, 10 bPs 40:17

6 Ye have ashamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD *is* his brefuge.

★7 aPs 53:6 bPs 85:1, 2

7 Oh that athe salvation of Israel *were come* out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

A Psalm of David.

1 aPs 27:5, 6; 61:4 bPs 24:3

15 LORD, who shall abide ain thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy bholy hill?

2 aPs 24:4; Is 33:15 bZec 8:16; Eph 4:25

2 He that awalketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and bspeaketh the truth in his heart.

★3 aPs 50:20 bPs 28:3 cEx 23:1

3 *He that* abackbiteth not with his tongue, nor bdoeth evil to his neighbour, nor ctaketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

★4 aPs 53:5; Ps 73:20 bAc 28:10 cJudg 11:35

4 In whose eyes aa vile person is contemned; but he bhonoureth them that fear the LORD. *He that* cswareth to *his own* hurt, and changeth not.

★5 aEx 22:25; Lev 25:36; Deu 23:20 bEx 23:8; Deu 16:19

5 *He that* aputteth not out his money to usury, nor btaketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these *things* shall never be moved.

Mich'tam of David.

1 aPs 17:8 bPs 7:1

16 aPreserve me, O God: for in thee do bI put my trust.

★2 aPs 73:25

2 *O my soul,* thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my Lord: amy goodness *extendeth* not to thee;

★3 aPs 101:6 bPs 119:63

3 *But* to the asaints that *are* in the earth, and *to* the excellent, bin whom *is* all my delight.

Psalm 14 David laments the moral foolishness and corruption of the whole human race (vv. 1-6), and longs for the establishment of the righteous kingdom of the Lord on earth (v. 7). This psalm, with only slight changes in verses 5-6, is identical to Psalm 53.

14:1 *The fool* (one who is **morally perverse**, not mentally deficient) is described as to his belief ("no God") and behavior ("no good"). His is a practical rather than a theoretical atheism.

14:2-3 Paul cites these verses in Rom. 3:10-12 in support of the universal and perennial sinfulness of mankind. *filthy.* Morally corrupt.

14:7 David longs for the establishing of the Messianic kingdom on earth (cf. Isa. 59:20-21; Rom. 11:26-27).

Psalm 15 Here David describes the character of the person who qualifies to be a guest of God. The synonymous, parallel questions of verse 1 are answered in the following verses by an elevenfold description of the righteous man who is upright in deed, word, attitude, and finances. These qualities, not natural to men, are imparted by God.

15:3 *backbiteth.* Slanders.

15:4 *contemned.* Despised (see note on Psalm 10:13).

15:5 *to usury.* See notes on Lev. 25:35-46 and Deut. 24:10-13.

Psalm 16 In this song of trust, David declares that as he has trusted the Lord to be his portion in life (vv. 1-8), so will he trust Him to preserve him in death (vv. 9-11). The meaning of *Michtam* (also used in the headings of Psalms 56-60) is uncertain. It is apparently derived from a verb meaning "to cover," and may indicate psalms dealing with protection (covering) from one's enemies or psalms recited silently (with lips covering the mouth).

16:2 *my goodness extendeth not to thee.* Better, I have no good besides Thee.

16:3 David delights not only in God but also in the people of God.

The footnotes in the Ryrie Study Bible:
Clear, concise, conservative but comprehensive

★2 aMt 4:17; 24:14 bDan 2:44; Mt 4:17, 23; 10:7

2 And saying, aRepent ye: for the bkingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 aIs 40:3 bJn 1:23

3 For this is he that was spoken of aby the prophet Esa'ias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, bPrepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 a2 Ki 1:8; Zec 13:4 bLev 11:22

4 And the same John had his araiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was blocusts and wild honey.

5 aLk 3:3

5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all athe region round about Jordan,

6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

★7 aMt 16:1; 23:13, 15 bMt 16:1; 22:23; Ac 4:1; 5:17; 23:6-10 cMt 12:34; 23:33 d1 Th 1:10; 5:9

7 But when he saw many of the aPharisees and bSad'ducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O cgeneration of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from dthe wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits ameet for repentance:

8 aAc 26:20

9 And think not to say within yourselves, aWe have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

★9 aJn 8:33, 39

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore aevery tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

10 aMt 7:19

11 aI indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: bhe shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

★11 aJn 1:26 bJn 1:33

12 Whose afan *is* in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and bgather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with cunquenchable fire.

★12 aLk 3:17; Is 30:24 bMt 13:30 cMk 9:43, 48

3:2 *Repent ye.* Repentance is a change of mind that bears fruit in a changed life (see v. 8). *kingdom of heaven.* This is the rule of heaven over the earth. The Jewish people of Christ's day were looking for this Messianic or Davidic kingdom to be established on the earth, and this is what John proclaimed as being "at hand." The rejection of Christ by the people delayed its establishment until the second coming of Christ (Matt. 25:31). The character of the kingdom today is described in the parables of Matt. 13.

3:7 *Pharisees.* The Pharisees were the most influential of the Jewish sects at the time of Christ. Though holding orthodox doctrines, their zeal for the Mosaic law led them to a degenerate, though strict, outward observance of both the law and their equally authoritative (in their own eyes) interpretations of it. They knew the Scriptures (Matt. 23:2), tithed (Luke 18:12), fasted (Matt. 9:14), prayed (Mark 12:40); but they were also hypocritical (Matt. 23:15), self-righteous (Luke 18:9), and the foremost persecutors of the Lord (Matt. 9:3). *Sadducees.* The Sadducees, whose membership came largely from the priesthood and upper classes, were the anti-supernaturalists of Christ's day. They denied the truth of bodily resurrection, of future punishment and reward, and of the existence of angels (Acts 23:8). Though they upheld the written law of Moses, they were opposed to the oral traditions observed by the Pharisees. They were the party of the high-priestly families of Jerusalem with direct interests in the apparatus of temple worship and generally collaborated with the Roman rulers. They opposed Christ as vigorously as the Pharisees and were condemned by Him as severely, though not so frequently (Matt. 16:1-4, 6).

3:9 *We have Abraham to our father.* The common teaching of that day said that the Jews participated in the merits of Abraham, which made their prayers acceptable, helped in war, expiated sins, appeased the wrath of God, and assured a share in God's eternal kingdom. Consequently the people were startled when John and Jesus preached the necessity of personal repentance.

3:11 *baptize. Baptism* is a form of identification. John's baptism was a sign of an individual's acknowledgment of his need of repentance for the remission of his sins. When Jesus was baptized by John (v. 15) He identified Himself with John's message of righteousness (though, being sinless, He Himself needed no cleansing from sin). The baptism with the Holy Spirit, predicted here, identifies members of the body of Christ with Christ, the risen Head of that body (1 Cor. 12:13). Christian baptism is identification with the Christian message and the Christian group. *with fire.* Probably a reference to the judgments associated with the return of Christ (v. 12; Mal. 3:1-5; 4:1-3).

3:12 *Whose fan is in his hand.* A wooden shovel used for tossing grain against the wind after threshing so that the lighter chaff would be blown away, leaving the kernels to settle in a pile.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN PROOFS
for the
PRE-TRIBULATIONAL RAPTURE?



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

Eschatology Timeline



JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST



MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

CELEBRATION



GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

RAPTURE FOR US

RETURN

REVELATION WITH US



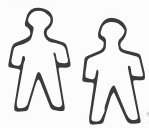
CHURCH

TRIBULATION

MILLENNIUM

ETERNITY

PREPARATION | PROTECTION | PERSECUTION





666

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

MK

3A. THE PROOF FOR THE PRE-TRIBULATIONAL RETURN:

1b. Passages dealing with the any-moment return of Christ:

Even those who do not subscribe to the pretribulational Rapture, agree that the New Testament teaches the vivid expectation of Christ's imminent coming. Numerous passages could be cited; two must suffice.

1c. Phil. 3:20 "For our citizenship is in heaven from which we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."

The words translated "look for" speak of eager anticipation and intense yearning. The Second Advent of Christ is preceded by various signs (Matt. 24; Rev. 19). The Rapture could occur at any moment.

2c. Titus 2:13 "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearance of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ."

The term "looking for" means to await eagerly. For the Christian the Rapture can be joyfully anticipated, for it will deliver him from sin, suffering and the coming tribulation (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9).

2b. Passages declaring the believer's exemption from wrath:

1c. 1 Thess. 1:10 "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

2c. 1 Thess. 5:9 "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

The context suggests that the wrath in these verses is not a reference to God's eternal wrath but to the wrath upon the Christ-rejecting world during the seven-year Tribulation.

3b. The clearest text indicating the believer's exemption from the very period of tribulation:

There is a clear verse which, taken in its normal historical-grammatical sense, forcefully teaches the pretribulational rapture.

Revelation 3:10: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which hall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

1c. The promise:

Christ's promise to the church at Philadelphia (and to any subsequent church, Rev. 3:11) is that the believers will experience **protection from**, not **preservation during**, the period of tribulation.

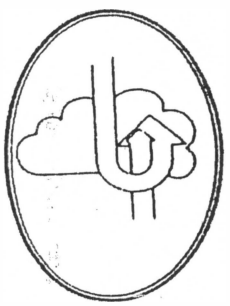
2c The protection:

The phrase "keep from" is used only one other time in the New Testament, in John 17:15, where our Lord prays that believers be kept from the evil one. This He does by transferring us into the kingdom of His beloved Son (Col. 1:13).

To be "kept from" is not the same as being "saved in."

Believers in the tribulation will not be exempt from judgment or death (Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9-14, 14:1-3, etc.).

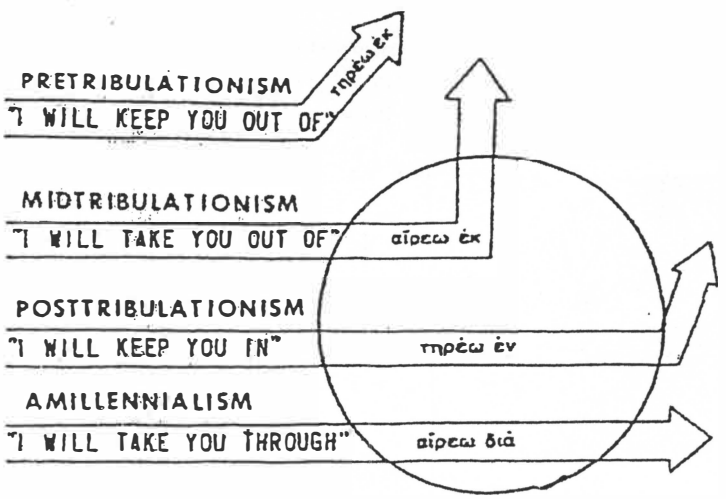
As Charles Ryrie observes: "If the church will not be raptured before the hour begins, then the promise will not be fulfilled because many saints simply will not be preserved in the tribulation but will suffer and die along with unsaved people" (*Revelation*, 1996, 34).



If you should be asked to present a clear proof text for the pretribulational rapture, Revelation 3:10 would be it. Charles Ryrie shares the logical implications of the passage: "But how clear and plain the promise is. 'I. .will keep you from the hour of testing.' Not from just any persecution, but the coming time that will affect the whole earth. (The only way to escape worldwide trouble is not to be on the earth.) And not from just the events, but from the time. And the only way to escape the time when events take place is nott o be in a place where time ticks on. The only place that meets those qualifications is heaven" (*What You Should Know About the Rapture*, 1981, 117).

The Removal from Temptation: Rev. 3:10b

1c. Protection: "Keep thee from the hour of temptation"
2c. Preservation: "Keep the from the hour of temptation"
3c. Period: "Keep thee from the hour of temptation"



The proof for the pretribulation rapture:

THE RAPTURE

NO SIGNS

CHRIST WILL COME

CERTAINLY

JN. 14:3

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, [there] ye may be also.

SUDDENLY

1 COR. 15:52

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

UNEXPECTEDLY

1 THESS. 5:2

For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

PHIL. 3:20

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

THE REVELATION

MANY SIGNS

1. ATMOSPHERIC SIGNS:

ZECH. 14:6-7

And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the light shall not be clear, [nor] dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, [that] at evening time it shall be light.

2. ASTRONOMIC SIGNS:

MT. 24:29-30

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

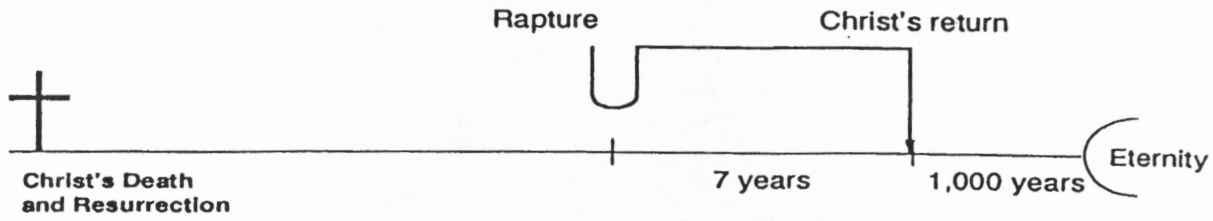
3. AUTHENTICATING SIGNS:

ZECH. 12:10

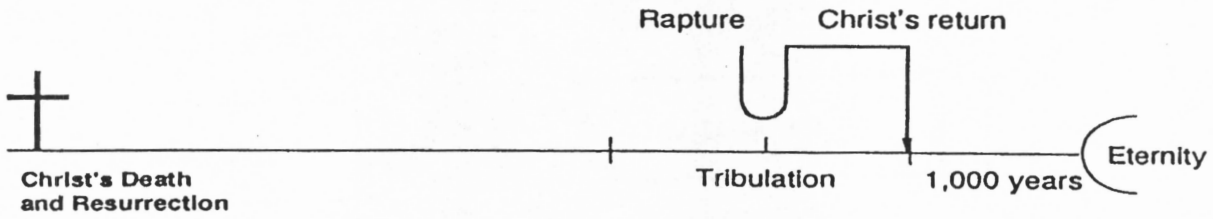
And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for [his] only [son], and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for [his] firstborn.

The Five Rapture Positions

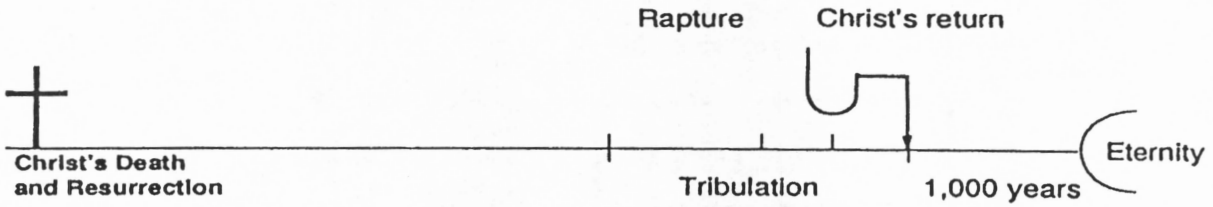
PRETRIBULATIONISM



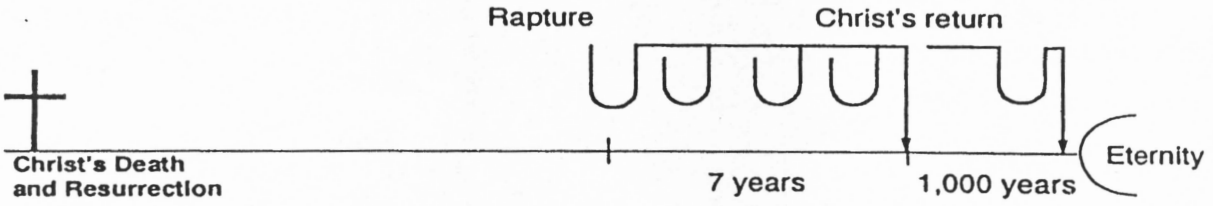
MIDTRIBULATIONISM



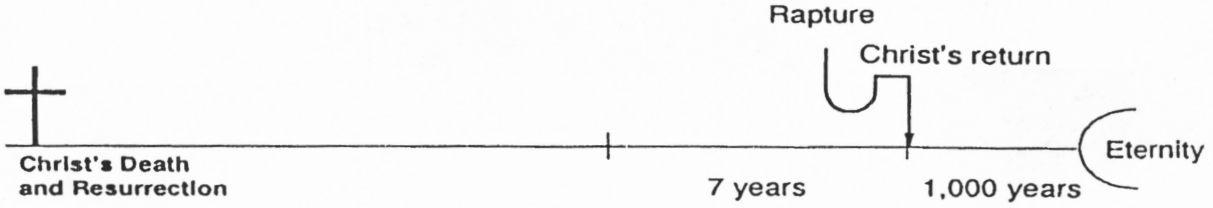
PRE-WRATH RAPTURE



PARTIAL RAPTURE



POSTTRIBULATIONISM



DID CHRIST DIE FOR ALL MEN?

The Case for Unlimited Atonement



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

The Case for Unlimited Atonement

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.





The Case for Unlimited Atonement

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

A PERSONAL TESTIMONY:

After high school I attended Baptist Bible Seminary in Johnson City, NY. I enrolled in the five-year Th.B. program, which was primarily designed to be a thorough program for pastors and missionaries.

This school (now Clarks Summit University of Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania) was thoroughly fundamental and the education there was second to none. I had planned to attend for only one year because of my interest in mechanical engineering and drafting, an interest developed during my three years at the Technical High School in Springfield, Massachusetts. My high school teacher had a designing business in nearby Agawam, developing the M-1 rifle for the Springfield armory (established by President Abraham Lincoln). He was able to secure a scholarship for me to attend the University of Massachusetts or another, Rensellear Polytechnic Institute, instead. He asked me to work for him after completing my education.

I knew I wanted some further grounding in the Bible and theology (David Nettleton had been my pastor from the day that I arrived in the USA in 1953). So I asked my high school teacher to let me study Bible and theology for one year. He readily agreed.

I recall returning home for the first Thanksgiving, and during a testimony meeting at the midweek service, I shared how good it was to be back home but that I couldn't wait to get back to school. I knew that not the study of mechanics, but the study of God's Word was God's direction in my life.

One of my professors (who has been my friend now for 58 years) was Dr. Robert Lightner. His clarity of presentation and alliterated outlines greatly impressed me. He had come from (and later returned to) Dallas Theological Seminary. He authored numerous theological volumes. I believe at the time at which I had him as a professor, he was contemplating writing his book, *The Death that Christ Died*. I recall that in class he was very firm about the fact that Christ died not just for the elect but for all men. I vividly remember his ominous statement: "if you espouse limited atonement—that Christ died for only the elect—you will never graduate from this school!"

In fact I did subscribe to the five points of Calvinism, including limited atonement. I had studied Loraine Boettner's *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* and the theologies of Hodge and Shedd. I knew all the arguments for particular redemption and they made sense to me.

And thus I approached my final oral exam with some trepidation. Would I graduate or not? I'd finished my classes with a rather acceptable grade point average. My thesis on *The Time of Christ's Death and Resurrection* was accepted. And thus I went into the senior oral exam. Wendell Kempton, Dr. W. W. Barndollar and two other faculty members were there. Dr. Kempton (later president of ABWE) asked about the atonement. Did I have a verse for the substitutionary atonement? Indeed I did. I cited Matthew 20:28, **Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many** (parallel passage Mark 10:45). Christ gave His life a ransom "in the place

(*anti*) for many." Dr. Kempton wanted to know if the many was a reference to just the elect or the whole world. I answered that I believed that it referred to the elect only. Whereupon, needless to say, an interesting discussion followed. My examination committee saw that I had done my homework. I was not in a combative mood. The exchanges were very irenic. I knew all the Calvinistic explanations for the universal passages that God loved all men and that Christ died for everyone.

Well, I distinctly remember gracious Dr. Barndollar saying to me, "Brother Manfred, we respect your responses but I would ask you that when you read the Bible, you do so with an open mind and I believe that you will come to realize that Christ gave Himself as a substitute for everyone." Whew! I passed the oral and graduated from the school. I subsequently did doctoral work at the University of Erlangen and earned my Th.M. and Th.D. at Dallas Theological Seminary.

I did what Dr. Barndollar recommended, and before long came to see clearly that the Scriptures did not teach a limited atonement but the fact that Christ tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9) I only wish my interrogators had given me one or both of the irrefutable passages which convinced me of Christ's limited atonement. Before considering these two passages, it would be well to differentiate once more between the two major views, Calvinism and Arminianism.

1A. THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM:

Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) was a Dutch theologian who taught at the University of Leyden and advocated a position contrary to the doctrinal stand of the school. Incredibly, he called upon the Dutch government to outlaw the Calvinists, though he had joined the school, pledging to support that position. After his death, in 1618-1619 in the town of Dordt, the Netherlands, a council was called and the Arminians presented their five points, whereupon the Calvinists issued their five points.

1b. The five points of Arminianism:

1c. Partial depravity:
Humanity is depraved but still able to seek God. We are fallen and tainted by sin but not to the extent that we cannot choose to come to God and accept His salvation with the help of prevenient grace of God.

2c. Conditional election:
God only chooses those whom He knows will choose to believe. No one is predetermined for either heaven or hell.

3c. Unlimited atonement:
Christ died for everyone, even those that are not chosen and will not believe. Jesus' death was for all humanity and anyone can be saved by belief in Him.

4c. Resistible Grace:
God's call to be saved can be resisted and/or rejected.

5c. Conditional salvation:
Christians can lose their salvation if they actively reject the Holy Spirit's influence in their life. The maintenance of salvation is required of a Christian to retain it.

2b. The five points of Calvinism:

1c. **T**otal depravity:
Every facet of every person everywhere has been marked by sin.

2c. **U**nconditional Election:
God chooses those to be saved based solely on His will.

3c. **L**imited Atonement:
Christ died only for those who are elect.

4c. **I**rresistible Grace:
The elect cannot resist God's call to salvation.

5c. **P**erseverance of the Saints:
The elect cannot lose their salvation.

3b. Modified Arminianism:

A number of Arminians reject the last point, that of conditional salvation, and believe in the eternal security of the believer.

4b. Modified Calvinism:

Modified Calvinism, also known as four-point Calvinism, accepts the fact of Christ's universal death, that He gave His life a ransom for every person.

Modified Calvinism finds the other four points of Arminianism to be unbiblical, to varying degrees. Some have called Arminianism by the term **DAISY**. Some jokster suggested the view as being: **He loves me . . . He loves me not . . . He loves me . . .**

Diminished depravity:
Humanity is depraved, but God uses prevenient grace to restore man's ability to respond to him. In fact, the Bible speaks of the total sinfulness of man. Every aspect of his being has been affected by sin.

Abrogated election:
God bases His election on foreknowledge, who freely choose Him. This conditional election based on God's foreknowledge of human action underemphasizes the sovereignty of God (Rom. 8:28-30).

Impersonal atonement:
Christ died for everyone. This point is accepted by the modified Calvinists.

Sedentary grace:
God calls everyone to salvation but many freely reject it. Conditional salvation makes salvation a reward for work rather than a gift of grace (Eph. 2:8-10).

Yieldable justification:
The saved can fall from grace and lose their salvation. In fact, John 10:28 and 1 Peter 1:5 clearly indicate Christ's promise and the Father's power to keep the believer secure for all eternity.

2A. THE PROOFEXTS FOR UNLIMITED ATONEMENT:

1b. First proof text: (which convinced me)

> Isaiah 53:6 **All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.**

Those who espouse limited atonement such as theologian John Gill, who preceded Charles Haddon Spurgeon at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, says "All we like sheep have gone astray, . . here the prophet represents all the elect of God, whether Jews or Gentiles; whom He compares to 'sheep,' not for their good qualities but for their foolishness and stupidity."

Advocates of limited atonement frequently challenge moderate Calvinists to show them a single verse in which the word "**all**" must definitely mean every person on earth. This challenge can easily be met with this verse. Thomas W. Jenkin, in an old volume on the atonement, has a statement worth quoting:

> The word "ALL" has often been most candidly and dishonestly tortured and wrested, to mean a generality of kinds and degrees, and not a universality of the mass of the human race. Prophecy, however, supplies us with one text at least, that has bid stubborn defiance to all theological tortures. It is Isa. 53:6, "ALL we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned EVERY ONE to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Some of the advocates of particular atonement have challenged their opponents to present one single text in which the work "all" means indisputably every individual of the human race. Here it is. The word "all" in the last part of the sentence means the "all" mentioned in the first part; and both mean the "every one," in the middle portion of the verse. If you apply to the word "all" in the first sentence, the tortuous criticisms which are generally employed on the "all" in the last sentence, you offend equally against sound interpretation, theological fairness, and logical deduction (*Extent of the Atonement*, Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1833, 196).

As someone has rightly observed, the redemption in this verse is as universal as the sin.

2b. Second proof text: (which convinced me)

2 Peter 2:1 **But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.**

This verse is just as emphatic and clear as Isaiah 53:6, that Christ paid the penalty for everyone's sins. Here in this passage reference is to false teachers, who are obviously unsaved ("damnation" verse 3) who were bought by the Lord. The penalty for their sins has been paid though they are destined for eternal damnation.

Ellicott, in his *Commentary for English Readers*, (Bible Hub.com/commentaires-secondpeter2:1) notes correctly:

> Even denying the Lord that bought them.—Better, denying even the master that *bought them*. . .the phrase is remarkable as coming from one who himself denied his Master. Would a forger have ventured to make St. Peter write thus?
>
> This text is conclusive against Calvinistic doctrines of partial redemption; the apostle declares that these impious false teachers were redeemed by Jesus Christ.

3b. Additional proof texts for unlimited atonement:

Besides the strongest proof texts, Isa. 53:6 and 2 Peter 2:1, other texts clearly indicate that Christ's death is for all. The passages are simply too universal in scope than to be explained away by the limited redemptionists as referring to the elect only.

1c. Christ's death is universal
Heb. 2:9 **But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.**

2c. Christ's salvation is universal:
1 Tim. 4:10 **For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.**

3c. Christ's redemption is universal:
As has been mentioned above **in 2 Peter 2:1, Peter refers to false teachers who are headed for eternal damnation and yet are redeemed by their Master**

4c. Christ's reconciliation is universal:
2 Cor. 5:19 **To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.**

History of Soteriology

GREEK PHILOSOPHY



Antique Bust of Plato



PAUL

CHURCH FATHERS

PELAGIUS



AUGUSTINE





SEMI-PELAGIANISM
CASSIANUS

RENAISSANCE
RATIONALSIM



REFORMATION
LUTHER, CALVIN



ROMAN
CATHOLICISM

ARMINIANISM


Papal Insignia



LIBERALISM
UNIVERSALISM

CALVINISM

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT:

LIMITLESS AND YET

1 Tim. 2:6

6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

SUBSTITUTION

Mt. 20:28

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

LIMITED

2 Cor. 5:19

19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

RECONCILIATION

2 Cor. 5:18

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

2 Pet. 2:1

BUT there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

REDEMPTION

Acts 20:28

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

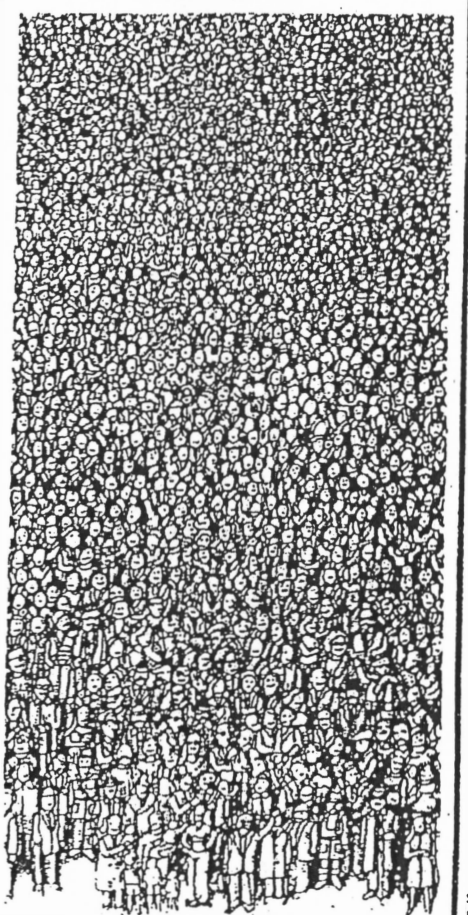
1 Jn. 2:2

2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

PROPITIATION

1 Jn. 2:2

2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.



Heb. 2:9

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

DEATH

Jn. 10:11

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

Eph. 5:25

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Is. 53:6

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

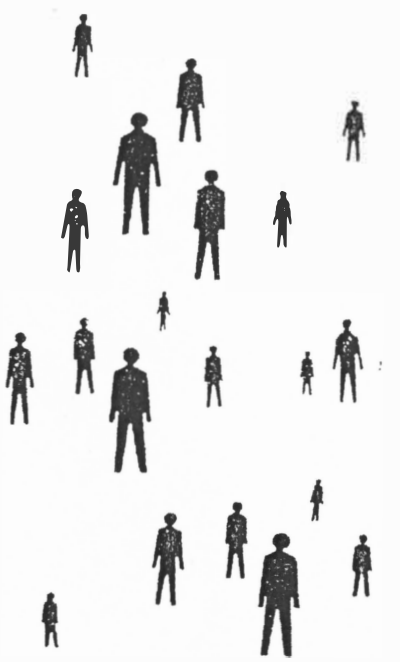
1 Tim. 4:10

10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

SALVATION

1 Tim. 4:10

10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

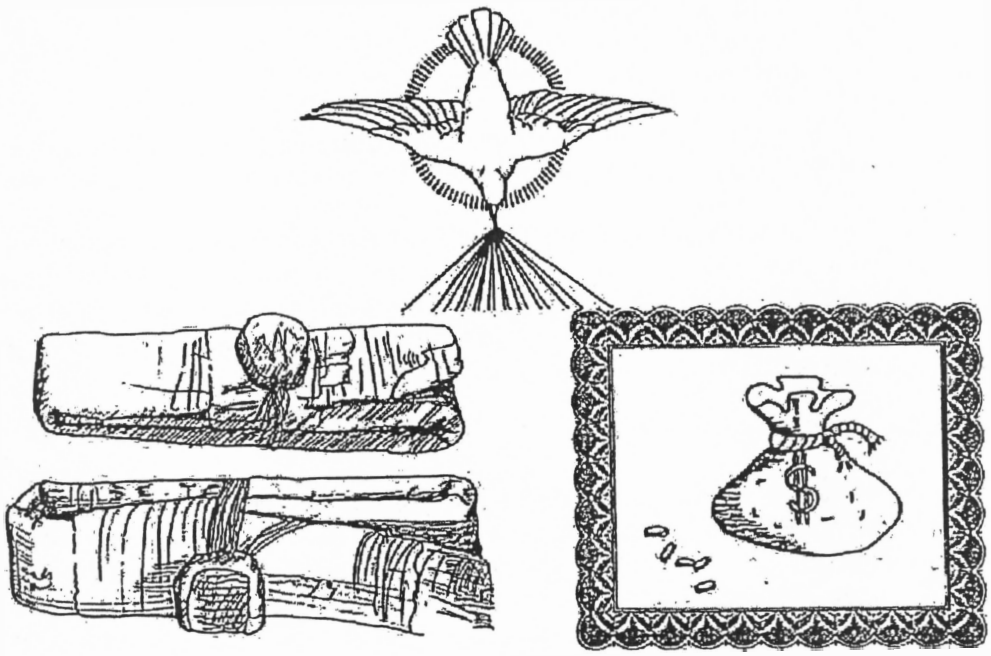


Passages above the aspects of the atonement deal with its universal extent, passages below with the particular aspect. Christ's death was sufficient *for all and* efficient for the elect.

MANFRED E. KOBER, Th.D.

IS THE BELIEVER SAVED FOREVER?

The Case for Eternal Security



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.



ETERNAL SECURITY:
A Definite Doctrine or a Dreadful Delusion?

1A. THE CENTRAL QUESTION:

Can a true believer ever lose his salvation by either sinning or ceasing to believe or in any other way?

2A. THE HISTORICAL PROBLEM:

1b. The teachings of Calvin:

John Calvin (1509-1564), the Swiss Reformer, emphasized in his teachings the sovereignty of God. His followers set up the so-called 5 points of Calvinism or T-U-L-I-P:



1. Total Depravity
2. Unconditional Election
3. Limited Atonement
4. Irresistible Grace
5. Perseverance of the Saints

In his famous ***Institutes of the Christian Religion*** (1536) he systematized biblical truth and taught forcefully the perseverance of the saints.

The Westminster Confession of Faith expresses clearly the Calvinistic viewpoint: "They whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end and be eternally saved" (Chapter XVII, Section 1).

2b. The teachings of Arminius:



James Arminius (1560-1609) was trained in strict Reformed theology, but he weakened in his position while a professor at the University of Leiden in Holland. His system, known as Arminianism, taught that man is not totally depraved, that he cooperates with God in salvation and that a believer may lose his salvation. Arminius admitted: "I never taught that a true believer can either totally or finally fall away from the faith and perish; yet I will not conceal that there are passages of Scripture which seem to me to wear this aspect" (***Works***, I :254).

3A. THE CONTEMPORARY DENIALS:

1b. The Roman Catholic position:

Mortal sin removes man from grace. Salvation depends on continued obedience.

2b. The Lutheran position:

Salvation is contingent upon man's continued activity of faith.

3b. The Arminian position:

Salvation depends on man's will to believe and his good works.

4A. THE CRUCTAL DISTINCTION:

1b. Assurance:

Assurance is what man knows.

Every believer is saved, but not everyone is sure.

2b. Security:

Security is based upon what God does.

To put it differently:

- Security is based on the work of God: the blood of Christ.
- Assurity is based on the word of God: belief in Christ.

The Council of Trent (1546) declared that "The believer's assurance of pardon for his sins is a vain and ungodly confidence."

Cardinal Bellamy called assurance "a prime error of the heretics."

3b. Scriptures:

1c. Job knew he was saved:

"For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God:" (Job 19:25-26)

2c. John said we could be sure of our salvation:

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (1 John 5:13)

5A. THE BIBLICAL PROOF:

Abundant proof may be adduced from the Scriptures for eternal security. We will be selective for the sake of time and space. We will highlight two works by each member of the Trinity which guarantee our salvation.

1b. The work of God the Father:

1c. The purpose of the Father:

It is God's purpose to glorify those whom lie has made the special objects of His favor.

1d. The span of salvation:

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. [29] For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. [30] Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. (Rom. 8:28-30)

God has foreknown, predestinated, called, justified and glorified every believer. If one of those is true of the believer, all are true in this unbreakable chain. The words are in the past tense, guaranteeing that these works are as good as accomplished.

2d. The strength of security:

[31] What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? [32] He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? [33] Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. [34] Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. [35] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? [36] As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. [37] Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. [38] For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, [39] Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:31-39)

1e. There is no chance that God is against us: v. 31.

2e. There is no charge because God ls the justifier: vs.33-34.

3e. There is no change in God's love: vs. 35-39.

2c. The power of the Father:
While "the perseverance of the saints" emphasizes man's part, it is actually God who perseveres. His infinite power keeps the believers secure.

1d. The power:

"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:5)

2d. The promise:

Even if the time should come in a Christian's life that he can no longer believe, God's promise is clear,

"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." (2 Tim. 2:13)

Other passages speak equally forcefully about God's keeping power. Jude says that "he is able to keep you from falling." (v. 24) and Matthew 18:14 teaches that God is not willing that even one should perish. The syllogism would be thus:

God is able to keep us (.Jude 24).

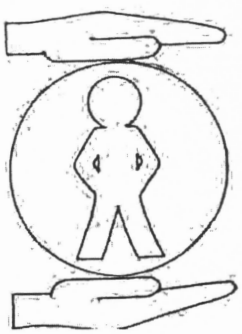
God wants to keep us (Matt. 18:14).

Therefore God *will* keep us (Perry Lassiter, ***Once Saved, Always Saved***, p. 34)

2b. The work of Christ the Son:

1c. The promise of the Son:

Perhaps the strongest prooftext for eternal security is John 10:28-29:



"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My rather, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

Our Lord said that we are secure in His hand as well as in the Father's hand and that no one can remove the believer from the safe position. The "no one" would apply to the individual himself. An old, sweet Christian saint was asked whether she was not afraid that she might some day slip out of the Father's hand. "No," she replied, "because I am part of His hand."

2c. The prayer of the Son:

A two-fold aspect of Christ's prayer assures us of our salvation. Christ in his intercession prays in a preventive ministry (John 17) and in his advocacy prays in a curative ministry (1 John 2:1). Dr. Ryrie has well stated the case for the intercession of the Son:

> "His prayer in chapter 17 illustrates the preventive aspect. There He prayed that we might be kept from the evil one (v. 15), that we would be sanctified (v. 17), that we would be united (v. 21), that we would be in heaven with Him (v. 24) and that we mjght behold His glory (v. 24). Because of His unceasing intercession for us He is able to save us completely and eternally (Heb. 7:25)." (***Basic Theology***, p. 331).

In verse 24, Christ prays that we would be with Him in heaven. In John 11:42 Christ assures us that his prayers are always heard by the Father. All prayer prayed in the will of God will be answered by the Father. The Son always prayed in the will of God, therefore, this prayer, that we will be with him forever in glory will surely be answered.

Christ secured our salvation by His provision on the cross. When He cried, "It is finished" (John 19:30) He meant His death paid for sin in full. All we can do is accept His salvation, but we cannot add to His salvation. But Christ also secured our salvation, as we have seen by His prayers. Hebrews 7:24-25 says:

> "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

As the unchanging and unchangeable Priest, Christ is praying for us. Therefore, lie can save us to the uttermost—that is completely, totally, eternally!

3b. The work of the Holy Spirit:

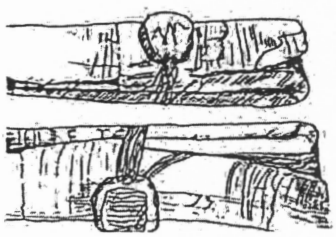
Every believer has residing in him the Holy Spirit. Christ promised that He would abide with us forever (John 14:16). Two ministries of the Spirit especially relate to our eternal security: the earnest and the sealing of the Spirit.

1c. The sealing of the Spirit:

> "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." (Eph. 1:13-14)

"Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God: Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." (2 Cor. 1:21-22)

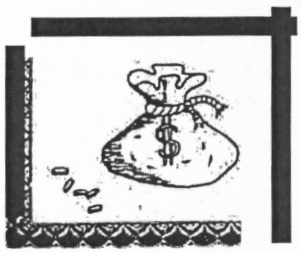
Lewis Sperry Chafer, commenting on these two passages, observes:



"Nothing could be more final than this. The Spirit Himself is the seal. His blessed presence in every true child of God is the divine mark of ownership, purpose and destiny. The Spirit Who was sent to abide in us will not withdraw. lie may be grieved, or· quenched (resisted), but He abides. This He does as the divine guaranty that there shall be no failure in any purpose of God and the sealed one will reach his eternal glory and the eternal blessedness of 'the day of redemption." (***Salvation***, p. 125)

2c. The earnest (2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14)

Well stresses Charles Ryrie the significance of the earnest in relation to the believer's security:



"The principal idea in the earnest is pledge. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer's heart is the pledged guarantee on the part of God that he will receive all the promised future blessings of his salvation. The fact that God gives the earnest of the Spirit binds Him to complete fully the salvation which He has begun in the heart. Even in human affairs, once earnest money has been given, the purchaser is pledged to go through with a transaction. What a sure guarantee is the presence of the Spirit, God's earnest, that He will never fail any of His promises connected with our salvation!" (***The Holy Spirit***, p. 26)

6A. THE SINNING BELIEVER:

The Bible teaches eternal security, but sometimes a problem arises with this teaching. Some individuals get the impression that they can sin with impunity and immunity. The Word of God is clear that a believer will never lose his salvation, but if he persists in sinning he will lose much nonetheless:

1b. He can lose fellowship (1 John 1).
2b. He can lose joy (Ps. 51:12).
3b. He can lose rewards (1 Cor. 3:11-12).
4b. He can lose his health (1 Cor. 11:30).
5b. He can lose his life (1 Cor. 11: 30).

(G. Michael Cocoris, "'The Doctrine of Eternal Security," *Biblical Research Monthly*, April/May 1982, p. 10).

A believer cannot lose his salvation but that is not an endorsement or an encouragement to sin. Sin will lose fellowship but not relationship, rewards but not redemption.

THE SOVEREIGN GOD AND ETERNAL SECURITY

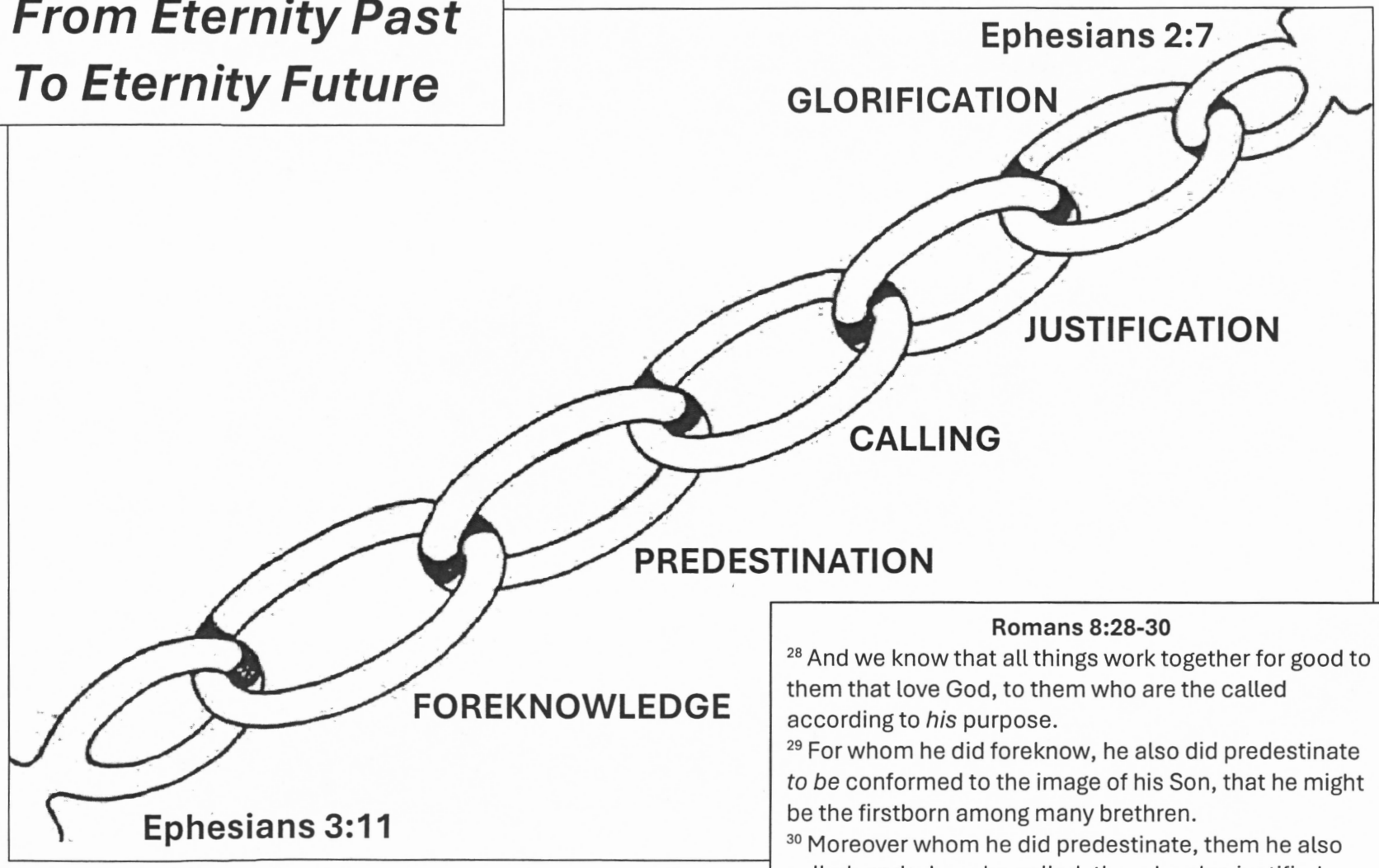
(SIX SUPPORTS FOR THE SINNER'S SECURE SALVATION)

MEMBERS OF THE TRINITY	THE WORK	SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT
THE FATHER 	**THE FATHER'S PLAN**	"... called according to his promise. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate... Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. **Romans 8:28b-30**
	THE FATHER'S POWER	Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. **1 Peter 1:5**
THE SON 	**THE SON'S PRAYER**	Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. **John 17:24 (Rom. 8:34)**
	THE SON'S PROMISE	And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. **John 10:28-29**
THE HOLY SPIRIT 	**THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT**	"...ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. **Eph. 1;13b-14**
	THE SEALING BY THE SPIRIT	And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. **Eph. 4:30** Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. **1 Cor. 1:22**

MK

SALVATION

From Eternity Past
To Eternity Future



Romans 8:28-30

[28] And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.
[29] For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
[30] Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Dr. Manfred Kober

WHY IS FUNDAMENTALISM IN DECLINE?

FUNDAMENTALISM

Positively		Negatively
Declares the Truth		**Defends the Truth**
Expounds the Truth	The System	Exposes Error
Upholds the Fundamentals	The Spirit	Upbraids Falsehood
Stands for Sound Doctrine	The Stand	Separates from Denials

The Fundamentals of the Faith are:

1. Inspiration of the Scriptures
2. Virgin Birth
3. Deity of Christ
4. Substitutionary Atonement
5. Physical Resurrection and Return

MK

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

3A. The Directions of Theology in the 20th Century.

3b. The Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy.

1c. The rise of Fundamentalism:

1d. The background of the controversy: attacks on orthodoxy.

1e. Philosophical attacks:

1f. Rationalism:

2f. Naturalism:

3f. Materialism:

2e. Scientific attacks:

3e. Theological attacks:

Excerpt from my manual "Current Theological Trends" posted on my website.

2d. The beginnings of Fundamentalism:

1e. Definition:

A theological movement, originating in 1909, which is determ to conserve the doctrines which lie at the foundation of the Christian system and to combat the dangerous tendencies of liberalism and modernism.

2e. Development:

1f. Bible conferences:

Prophetic Bible conferences. The first major conference met in 1877 in New York City. Its purpose was to assert the personal, premillennial return of Christ in opposition to th postmillennial idea of Christ's advent. The most influentia conference was the Niagara Bible Conference in 1895 where th famous five fundamentals were set forth:

(1) inerrancy of the Scriptures,
(2) the deity of Christ,
(3) His virgin birth,
(4) substitutionary atonement, and
(5) physical resurrection and His bodily return.

To these five fundamentals one other may be added:
(6) the imminent return of Christ. This principle was incorporated at the World Conference in Christian Fundamentals, which convened at Philadelphia in May of 1919, with W. B. Riley as president.

2f. Mass evangelism:

Revivals counteracted carnality and liberalism: Edwards Whitefield, Finney and later, Moody, Torrey, and Sund

THE FUNDAMENTALS

1. INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE
2. VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST
3. DEITY OF CHRIST
4. SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT
5. PHYSICAL RESURRECTION AND RETURN

EVANGELICALS & FUNDAMENTALISTS	FUNDAMENTALISTS
DECLARE THE GOSPEL	DEFEND THE GOSPEL
ASSERT THE TRUTH	ATTACK ERROR
WITNESS THE TRUTH	WITHDRAW FROM ERROR
SUBSCRIBE TO THE FUNDAMENTALS	SEPARATE FROM HERESY AND APOSTASY





Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

The Matter of Militancy

By George Houghton, Th.D. May 1994

I. Militancy – its meaning

The matter of militancy among Bible-believing Christians has fallen upon hard times. This is the age of openness, cooperation, diplomacy, negotiation, and dialogue. To be militant is to be out of step! It is not thought wrong to hold your own convictions, but you must do so quietly and without insisting that others agree with you. Tolerate diversity and pluralism, and you will be well thought of.

What exactly is militancy, anyway? One dictionary says it is to be "engaged in warfare or combat ... aggressively active (as in a cause)." It springs from one's values, is expressed as an attitude, and results in certain behavior. One's values are those things in which one strongly believes. They are what one believes to be fundamentally important and true. From this comes an attitude which is unwilling to tolerate any divergence from these fundamentally important truths and which seeks to defend them. It results in behavior which speaks up when these truths are attacked or diluted and which refuses to cooperate with any activity which would minimize their importance. The term is a military one and carries the idea of defending what one believes to be true.

II. Militancy – its significance

A. Historically:

When the question is asked, "Should we be militant fundamentalists?" the answer is, "There is no other kind!" To genuinely be a fundamentalist, one must be militant. When Curtis Lee Laws coined the term "fundamentalist," he applied it to those who not only believed in the fundamental doctrines of the faith but who also were willing to do "battle royal" for those fundamentals. American Church historian, Robert T. Handy, in describing the differences between the fundamentalists and conservatives in the Northern Baptist Convention in the 1920's, comments, "The main difference between them was probably more a matter of mood and spirit than basic theological divergence. Both subscribed to orthodox Protestant theological tenets, but the fundamentalists were more aggressive, more intransigent, more certain that they had the whole truth and their opponents had none. They not only militantly asserted the plenary inspiration of Scripture, but insisted that they had correctly apprehended its meaning and their opponents not at all." (Robert T. Handy, "Fundamentalism and Modernism in Perspective," *Religion in Life*, Vol. XXIV [1955], p. 39P.)

George Marsden defines a fundamentalist by stating, "A Fundamentalist is an Evangelical who is angry about something .... A more precise statement of the same point is that an American fundamentalist is an evangelical who is militant in opposition to liberal theology in the churches or to changes in cultural values or mores, such as those associated with 'secular humanism.' In either the long or the short definitions, fundamentalists are a subtype of evangelicals and militancy is crucial to their outlook. Fundamentalists are not just religious conservatives, they are conservatives who are willing to take a stand to fight." (George M. Marsden. *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991. p. 1.)

When the March 1956 issue of Christian Life magazine sought to answer the question, "Is Evangelical Theology Changing?," it prefaced its "yes" answers by saying that in earlier days the fundamentalist watchword was "ye must earnestly contend for the faith," but that today's evangelical watchword was "ye must be born again." The difference was one of emphasis and attitude. Notably missing from evangelicalism today is fundamentalism's militancy.

B. Biblically:

Militancy is presented in Scripture as a proper response for believers. We see the Apostle Paul's condemnation of doctrinal error and those who taught it to the Galatians (1:6-9), his urging that believers in Rome note and separate from those causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which they had learned (16:17), and his commands to the Ephesian church's leadership (in Acts 20:17-38) challenging them on the basis of the kind of ministry he had had in their midst to take heed to themselves and to their flock that they should shepherd it in a God-honoring way (v. 28). This includes declaring to their people the entire counsel of God (v. 27) and watching out for the flock's spiritual welfare by warning them of wolves and false Christian leaders (v. 29-31). This is the sum and substance of militancy!

Many today, having grown up in fundamentalist circles, do not bear the scars of militancy which their fathers had as a result of conflict with error and defense of the truth. They wear the fundamentalist label, but perhaps a reexamination should be made in light of the militancy issue to see if there is a mislabeling. Perhaps some would really feel more comfortable with the evangelical label. For others such reexamination could be a reminder to them of their need to stand firm and steadfast for the truth, not tolerating error or a toning down of the whole counsel of God. The fundamentalist is convinced that contending earnestly for the faith (Jude 3) is not a debatable option but a divine order.

III. Militancy – its abuse

Some, no doubt, shy away from militancy because it can easily be abused. Militancy, however, is not the same as meanspiritedness. It does not have to arise from poor motives or the desire for personal power. It does not need to be imbalanced, where "issues" become one's hobby horse. Nor does it imply a lack of ethics - rushing into print without checking the facts, false labeling, or guilt by association. If some may be guilty of these abuses, the corrective is not an abandonment of militancy, but, rather, an ethical, careful, kind and yet firm outspokenness which stands for the truth and is willing to defend it against error. May God help us to be militant fundamentalists!



Dr. George Houghton

Former V.P. of Academic Services at Faith Baptist Bible College Other Articles

George Houghton, former vice president for academic services and college dean at Faith Baptist Bible College and Theological Seminary, is a graduate of Bethel College, Central Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary, and holds a Master's and a Doctor of Theology degree from Dallas Theological Seminary. He retired in 2010 after serving for 36 years at the institution.

The Fundamentals for Today

CHARLES L. FEINBERG, *Editor*

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME



KREGEL PUBLICATIONS
GRAND RAPIDS 6, MICHIGAN
1961

-226-

Contents

Foreword 5

Editor's Preface 7

1. The History of the Higher Higher Criticism — *Canon Dyson Hague, M.A.* 13
2. The Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch — *and* Three Peculiarities of the Pentateuch Incompatible with the Graf-Wellhausen Theories of its Composition — *Prof. George F. Wright, D.D., LL.D.* ..... 21 *Andrew C. Robinson, M.A.*
3. The Bible and Modern Criticism *F. Bettex, D.D.* 27
4. The Holy Scriptures and Modern Negations — *Prof. James Orr, D.D.* 33
5. Old Testament Criticism and New Testament Christianity — *Prof. W. H. Griffith Thomas, D.D.* 45
6. The Testimony of Christ to the Old Testament — *William Caven, D.D., LL.D.* 57
7. The Internal Evidence of the Fourth Gospel — *Canon G. Osborne Troop, M.A.* 67
8. The Early Narratives of Genesis — *Prof. James Orr, D.D.* 75
9. One Isaiah — *Prof. George L. Robinson, D.D.* 81
10. The Book of Daniel — *Prof. Joseph D. Wilson, D.D.* 89
11. The Doctrinal Value of the First Chapter of Genesis — *Rev. Dyson Hague, M.A.* 95
12. The Testimony of Archaeology to the Scriptures — Being the chapter on "The Testimony of the Monuments to the Truth of the Scriptures" — *and* the chapter on "The Recent Testimony of Archaeology to the Scriptures" — *Prof. George F. Wright, D.D.* .....109 *M. G. Kyle, D.D., LL.D.*
13. Science and Christian Faith — *Rev. Prof. James Orr, D.D.* 115
14. The Inspiration of the Bible — Definition, Extent and Proof — *Rev. James M. Gray, D.D.* 125

Inspiration — *L. W. Munhall, M.A., D.D.*.....147

The Moral Glory of Jesus Christ, A Proof of Inspiration — *Rev. Wm. G. Moorehead, D.D.* 159

The Testimony of the Scriptures to Themselves — *Rev. Geo. S. Bishop, D.D.*.....171

Testimony of the Organic Unity of the Bible to Its Inspiration — *Arthur T. Pierson* 177

Fulfilled Prophecy a Potent Argument for the Bible — *Arno C. Gaebelein* 185

Life in the Word — *Philip Mauro* 191

Is There a God? — *Rev. Thomas Whitelaw,*.....215 *M.A., D.D.*

God in Christ the Only Revelation of the Fatherhood of God — *Robert E. Speer* 225

The Deity of Christ — *Prof. Benjamin B. Warfield*....235 *D.D., LL.D.*

The Virgin Birth of Christ — *Rev. Prof. James Orr, D.D.*....241

The God-Man — *John Stock* 251

The Certainty and Importance of the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead — *Rev. R. A. Torrey, D.D.*.....265

The Personaltiy and Deity of the Holy Spirit — *Rev. R. A. Torrey, D.D.*.....281

The Holy Spirit and The Sons of God — *Rev. W. J. Erdman, D.D.*.....287

Christianity No Fable — *Rev. Thomas Whitelaw,* .....295 *M.A., D.D.*

The Biblical Conception of Sin — *Rev. Thomas Whitelaw, M.A., D.D.* 305

Paul's Testimony to the Doctrine of Sin — *Prof. Charles B. Williams, B.D., Ph. D.*..... 315

Sin and Judgment to Come — *Sir Robert Anderson, K.C.B., LL.D.* 327

What Christ Teaches Concerning Future Retribution — *Rev. William C. Proctor, F. Ph.* 333

The Atonement — *Prof. Franklin Johnson, D.D., LL.D.* 341

At-One-Ment, By Propitiation — *Dyson Hague, M.A.*..... 351

The Grace of God — *C. I. Scofield, D.D.*..... 363

Salvation By Grace — *Rev. Thomas Spurgeon*..... 373

38. The Nature of Regeneration — *Thomas Boston* 389

39. Regeneration, Conversion, Reformation — *Rev. George W. Lasher, D.D., LL.D.* 395

40. Justification By Faith — *Bishop H. C. G. Moule*..... 401

41. The Doctrines That Must Be Emphasized in Successful Evangelism — *L. W. Munhall, M.A., D.D.*..... 409

42. Preach the Word — *Howard Crosby* 417

43. Pastoral and Personal Evangelism, or Winning Men to Christ One by One — *Rev. John Timothy Stone, D.D.* 425

44. The Sunday School's True Evangelism — *Charles Gallaudet Trumbull*.... 433

45. The Place of Prayer in Evangelism — *Rev. R. A. Torrey, D.D.*..... 443

46. Foreign Missions, or World-Wide Evangelism — *Robert E. Speer*..... 451

47. What Missionary Motives Should Prevail? — *Rev. Henry W. Frost*..... 467

48. Consecration — *Rev. Henry W. Frost*..... 475

49. Is Romanism Christianity? — *T. W. Medhurst*..... 485

50. Rome, the Antagonist of the Nation — *Rev. J. M. Foster*..... 495

51. The True Church — *Bishop John C. Ryle*..... 505

52. The Purposes of the Incarnation — *Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, D.D.* 509

53. Modern Philosophy — *Philip Mauro, Counsellor-at-Law* 525

54. The Knowledge of God — *Rev. David James Burrell, D.D., LL.D.* 539

55. The Science of Conversion — *Rev. H. M. Sydenstricker, Ph.D.* 549

56. The Passing of Evolution — *Prof. George F. Wright D.D., LL.D.* 559

57. The Sabbath — *Charles L. Feinberg, Th.D., Ph.D.* 573

58. The Apologetic Value of Paul's Epistles — *Rev. E. J. Stobo, Jr., B.A., S.T.D.* 579

59. Divine Efficacy of Prayer — *Arthur T. Pierson, D.D.*..... 585

60. Our Lord's Teachings About Money — *Arthur T. Pierson, D.D.*..... 601

61. "The Scriptures" — *Rev. A. C. Dixon, D.D.*..... 609

62. What the Bible Contains for the Believer — *Rev. George F. Pentecost, D.D.* 617

63. The Hope of the Church — *Rev. John McNicol, B.A., B.D.*.. 627

64. The Coming of Christ — *Prof. Charles R. Erdman, D.D.* 637

65. The Testimony of Christian Experience — *Pres. E. Y. Mullins, D.D., LL.D.* 647



Harry Emerson Fosdick



Karl Barth



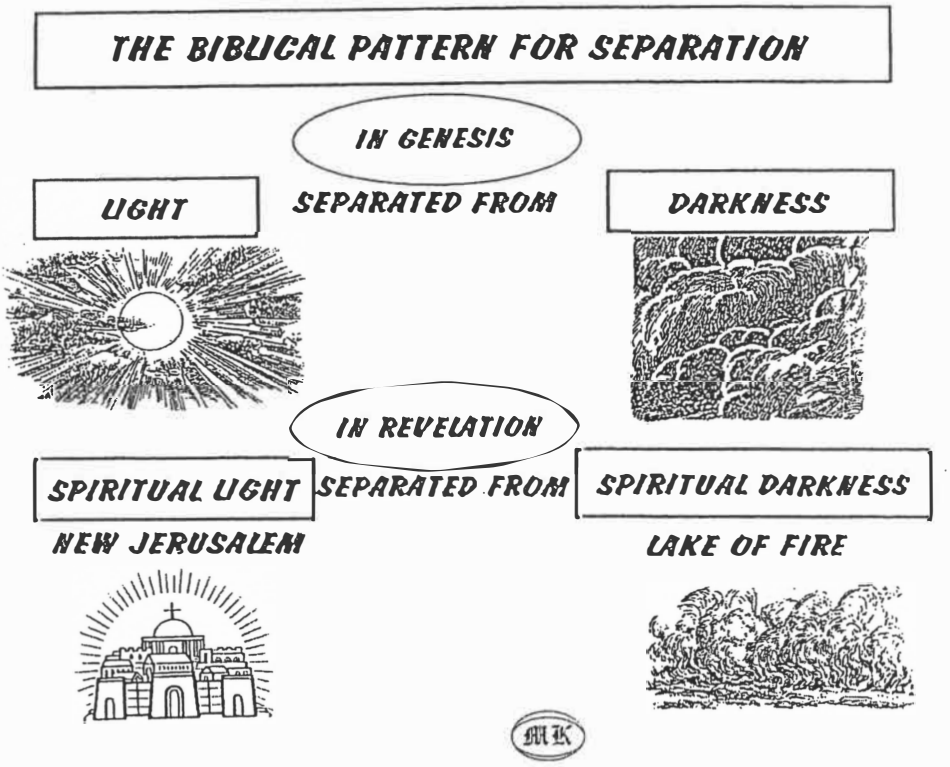
Carl F. H. Henry



Carl McIntire

LIBERALISM	NEOORTHODOXY	NEO-EVANGELICALISM	FUNDAMENTALISM
1850+	1919	1956	1909
STARTED HIGHER CRITICISM	**SELECTS SOME TRUTHS** (Deity of Christ, Sinfulness of Man)	**STRESSES SCHOLARSHIP**	**STANDS FOR THE FIVE FUNDAMENTALS**
SEES ERRORS IN THE BIBLE	**SURRENDERS OTHER TRUTHS** (Inerrancy of the Scriptures, Impeccability of Christ)	**SEEKS DIALOGUE WITH EVERYONE**	**SEPARATES FROM ERRING BELIEVERS, UNBELIEVERS**

WHAT ARE THE GUIDELINES FOR BIBLICAL SEPARATION?



SEPARATION: *A Fundamentalist Folly or Divine Duty?*

1A. THE PATTERN OF SCRIPTURAL SEPARATION:

The Bible represents God as a God of light in whom is no darkness (1 John 1:5). Light cannot coexist with darkness. The Bible presents God as separating light from darkness through the Word. The system of separation spans the Scriptures.

--The Bible commences with God separating physical light from physical darkness (Genesis 1:3-4).

--The Bible concludes with God separating spiritual light from spiritual darkness. Saints enter the eternal city; sinners are consigned to the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:15; 12:6-8).

2A. THE PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURAL SEPARATION:

1b. The predicament:

It should not be necessary to demonstrate that the Scriptures teach separation. However, in contemporary evangelicalism, separation is ridiculed and rejected even by those who once were in fundamentalist ranks. The concept of separation is a scriptural one. We dare not dodge or deny the doctrine!

2b. The passages of Scripture:

The following is adapted from an unpublished paper by G. Archer Weniger, "What the Bible Says About a Godly Attitude Toward Heresy."

In these days of theological confusion and ecclesiastical compromise, what is the Biblical position for an evangelical to assume toward heretics and false religious teachers? Are we to patronize them, associate with them, accept their sponsorship, increase their numbers, send them converts, add to their prestige, follow their leadership, identify our churches with them, and obliterate important Biblical distinctions with them? The Bible's answer is clear:

1. **Try them. . . . . .** 1 John 4:1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

2. **Mark them. . . .** Romans 16:17, "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them." Verkuyl says, "and to keep away from them."

3. **Rebuke them . . .**Titus 1:13, "This witness is true. Wherefore, rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith." Verkuyl says, " Correct them sternly."

4. **Have no fellowship. . .** Ephesians 5:11, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Verkuyl says, "Expose them."

5. **Withdraw thyself . . .**2 Thessalonians 3:6, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us."

6. **Receive them not . . .** 2 John 10-11, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." Verkuyl says, "Do not extend him your greeting." To our day false teachings are fostered by misplaced hospitality.

7. **Have no company with him . . .**2 Thessalonians 3:14, "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." Berkeley Version says, "Do not get mixed up with him, so he may grow ashamed."

8. **Reject them . . .** Titus 3:10, "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition, reject."

9. **Be ye separate . . .**2 Corinthians 6:17, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."

10. **Put them out . . .**1 Corinthians 5:7, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."

3A. THE PROBLEM OF BIBLICAL SEPARATION:

1b. The system of fundamentalism:

In the latter days of the last century, and especially in the early years of this century, a fundamentalist-modernist battle raged in the United States. Many churches withdrew from main-line denominations because these denominations had become liberal and denied certain fundamentals of the faith. Bible believers insisted that a denial of the central doctrines was a departure from the Christian faith. They formulated the fundamentals and thus became known as fundamentalists, declaring and defending these doctrines to be the statement of the fundamentals:

1. *Inspiration of the Bible*
2. *Virgin Birth of Christ*
3. *Deity of Christ*
4. *Substitutionary Atonement*
5. *Physical Resurrection and Return*

2b. The statement of the fundamentals:

Robert Lightner writes correctly about these fundamentals of the faith:

"These are still the criteria by which to establish whether an individual of an organization is orthodox or heterodox. Other doctrines might be listed as equally essential to the faith. What is believed about these, however, will reveal what is believed about other Biblical truths. They are determinative! A glance at these five historic fundamentals of the faith reveals that they all center around two crucial doctrines, the very two which liberal church unionists of our day deny in any orthodox sense—the doctrine of Christ, the living Word and the Bible, the written Word" (*Church Union—A Layman's Guide*, 126).

3b. The spirit of fundamentalism:

Many evangelicals can give whole-hearted endorsement to the five fundamentals but are not fundamentalists. They have a belief in these doctrines, but are not willing to do battle for them. They declare the fundamentals but do not defend them against heresy and apostasy. A life of comfort is to be preferred over a life of conflict. But the believer is in enemy territory. He is engaged in a battle. Fighting for the truth is not optional but an order.

1 Timothy 6:12: "The good fight of faith. . ."
Jude 3: "Earnestly contend for the faith."

4b. The skepticism toward separation:

1c. Because of the extreme positions of some.
2c. Because of the great ignorance of the nature of liberalism.
3c. Because of the ignorance of the biblical teaching on separation.
4c. Because of the compromise of many evangelicals.

4A. THE PURPOSE OF BIBLICAL SEPARATION:

The late National Representative of the GARBC, Dr. Paul R. Jackson, has spelled out the ultimate need for the practice of separation:

"Separation, as I have so often explained, is to the whole ministry of the Word of God and the service of Jesus Christ what sanitation and sterilization are to surgery. When you

go into surgery you are not at all prejudiced against the practice of surgeons, and others that enter that room, to scrub and scrub and scrub! You want every germ destroyed. If there is any possible chance of an infection you may be the victim of it, and you are well satisfied for sanitation at its ultimate and absolute to mark those who minister to you. But, as a matter of fact, no matter how long the surgeon scrubs, it will do you no good until he finally takes hold of the scalpel and the other instruments to perform the surgery. Unless he ministers to you in the other spheres of medical attention, the sanitation is valueless to you. Cleanliness is only the necessary condition and atmosphere in which the real ministry of the surgeon takes place. It is not an end in itself, but it is an essential condition to the rightful end.

If we make Biblical separation an end in itself, or major upon it to the neglect or exclusion of other great Biblical doctrines, we have failed those to whom we minister, as the surgeon would fail who sterilizes but never operates. But, on the other hand, let us never forget that we also fail if we do not preach and practice this doctrine of separation, as the surgeon will fail, no matter how skillfully he operates, if he neglects proper sanitation in the operating room. We must be clean in order to carry out the total ministry of the Word" (GARBC Information Booklet #12, "The Position, Attitudes, and Objectives of Biblical Separation," 1-2).

5A. THE PRINCIPLES OF SEPARATION:

1b. Separation from apostasy and unbelief:

An *apostate* is an unbeliever who has formerly professed the truth but has departed from it. A *heretic* is a believer who brings doctrinal disunity.

Many passages could be cited to support separation from apostasy. A few must suffice:

Ephesians 5:11
2 Corinthians 6:14-17
1 Timothy 6:5
2 Timothy 3:5
2 John 9-10

Dr. Ernest Pickering, in his classic book, *Biblical Separation: A Struggle for a Pure Church*, suggests that it is not all that difficult to identify an apostate group. The believer is not simply asked to separate from apostate individuals who hold false doctrines, but from groups who espouse the same doctrines. Dr. Pickering suggests the following:

> **A body is apostate when:**
> (1) Men and women in its leadership deny the verities of the Christian faith. If such are welcomed into places of leadership, the body has departed, though individuals within it may yet be sound.
> (2) Official periodicals and media presentations promote views contrary to the orthodox Christian faith.

(3) Official schools of the body employ faculty members and/or utilize visiting speakers who teach views that are at variance with essential Christian doctrines.
(4) No effort is made by the leadership of the group or the majority of its constituency to expunge the offending parties.

Sometimes objection is raised that to ascertain what constitutes essential doctrine and to determine when a group is actually apostate requires the making of a judgment. Yes. It is true. Judgments are to be made here as in many other areas of the Christian walk. But this does not invalidate the principle of separation. Because the act of separation requires a judgment does not imply that the judgment is wrong or that the action is wrong. God has given ample spiritual guidelines to help the Spirit-taught believer make those judgments.

2b. Separation from heresy and immorality:

Many evangelicals would concur that separation from apostasy is necessary. Some evangelicals, however, reject the idea of separation from other believers. Paul Lightner's comments are much to the point:

> An even more difficult truth for many to accept and obey is that Holy Scripture commands separation from Christian brethren who persist in walking in disobedience. As in the case of separation from apostasy and false teachers this does not mean each believer is to set up his own beliefs as equivalent to God's truth. God's Word and the essentials of the faith constitute that from which there can be no deviation, and these must be the norm by which our views are to be judged.
>
> Though difficult to understand and sometimes even more difficult to obey, God's Word addresses itself to the question of a believer's fellowship with another believer who persists in disobedience and specific sins. The Corinthian Christians were told bluntly to "put away from among yourselves that wicked person" in their assembly who was guilty of gross sin and who refused to confess it (I Cor. 5:13). The "wicked person" is described as one who is called a brother and is guilty of fornication, coveteousness, and drunkenness, among other things (I Cor. 5:9-11). Again to the saints at Thessalonica the Apostle wrote definitely: "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Thess. 3:6). Here the issue was doctrinal. Professed believers seem to be in view in Paul's words to the Christians at Rome: "Mark them who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17). The Apostle insisted that his inspired messages concerning the Lord Jesus Christ allowed for no deviation. Christ is crucial to Christianity: in fact, without the Christ of Scripture Christianity does not exist.

6A. THE PRACTICE OF BIBLICAL SEPARATION:

1b. The importance of separation from error and fighting for the truth:

Jude 3 "Contend for the faith"

2 Timothy 1:13 "Hold fast to the form of sound doctrine"

Colossians 1:23 "continue in the faith"

1 Corinthians 15:58 Abound in "the work of the Lord"

2b. The imperative for separation:

Commands of Scripture to separate are not completely obeyed until the believer exhibits humility and love. Right after Paul's exhortation against false doctrine he said, "Now the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned" (1 Timothy 1:5).

Humility needs to characterize those who seek to restore one, "overtaken in the fault" whatever that doctrinal or moral fault might be (Galatians 6:1).

A bitter and harsh attitude, the prideful and holier-than-thou spirit are wrong. But just because these attitudes are sometimes associated with some who practice separation does not make the doctrine of separation unbiblical. What is needed desperately in our day is an obedient spirit in the Word of God, a commitment to His truth, and a balanced ministry which has a concern for the lost and a concern for the truth. Ignoring separation is ignoring Scripture. May God grant us a balanced ministry.

FUNDAMENTALISM

Positively		Negatively
Declares the Truth		Defends the Truth
Expounds the Truth	The System	Exposes Error
Upholds the Fundamentals	The Spirit	Upbraids Falsehood
Stands for Sound Doctrine	The Stand	Separates from Denials

The Fundamentals of the Faith are:

1. Inspiration of the Scriptures
2. Virgin Birth
3. Deity of Christ
4. Substitutionary Atonement
5. Physical Resurrection and Return

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D. MK

What the Bible Says About A Godly Attitude Toward...

H|E|R|E|S|Y

TRY THEM

1John 4:1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

MARK THEM

Romans 16:17, "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them."

REBUKE THEM

Titus 1:13, "this witness is true. Wherefore, rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith."

HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP

Ephesians 5:11, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

WITHDRAW THYSELF

II Thessalonians 3:6, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us."

RECEIVE THEM NOT

II John 10-11, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

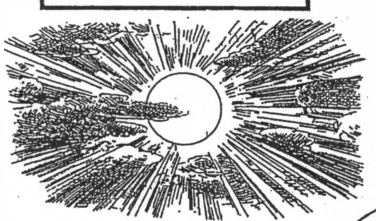
HAVE NO COMPANY WITH HIM

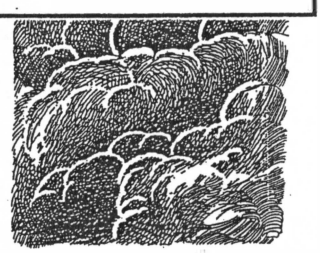
II Thessalonians 3:14, "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed."

THE BIBLICAL PATTERN FOR SEPARATION

IN GENESIS

LIGHT — SEPARATED FROM — DARKNESS





IN REVELATION

SPIRITUAL LIGHT — SEPARATED FROM — SPIRITUAL DARKNESS

NEW JERUSALEM



LAKE OF FIRE



Manfred E. Kober, Th.D. MK

Distinctives of the Evangelical Free Church of America

"In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, charity. In all things, Jesus Christ."
— Chrysostom

1. The Evangelical Free Church of America is inclusive not exclusive.

The great heritage of EFCA people around the world includes the fact that fellowship and ministry opportunities in the local church are based solely on one's personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and trusting in Him alone for salvation. Membership requires commitment to sound doctrine as expressed in our Statement of Faith. However, a person is not excluded from membership because he or she does not agree on every fine point of doctrine. Within the EFCA, there is allowance for legitimate differences of understanding in some areas of doctrine.

2. The Evangelical Free Church of America is evangelical but not separatistic.

The EFCA was born out of a heritage of commitment to the authority and inerrancy of Scripture. We have deep convictions based on the authority of God's Word, but we do not draw battle lines over minor points. Nor do we make minor issues of doctrine a test of fellowship in the local church. We are evangelical. We believe in separated living and personal holiness, but we are not separatists.

3. The Evangelical Free Church of America is ecumenical in spirit though not in structure.

We believe in the spiritual unity of the Church though not necessarily in structural union. We join with other Christians and other denominations of like, precious faith in common goals and ministries to accomplish the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. But we believe that there is strength in diversity and that it is important to preserve our distinctives. We recognize that union in structure does not guarantee unity of spirit. Our foremost concern is unity of spirit with our Lord, with each other and with other Christians.

4. The Evangelical Free Church of America believes in liberty with responsibility and accountability.

We believe in Christian liberty, but freedom always has its limitations. Responsible Christians do not abuse freedom. The apostle Paul wrote forcefully about Christian liberty in the Book of Galatians. He shattered the legalists with the doctrine of grace. But in First and Second Corinthians and Romans, the apostle also rebuked believers when liberty was abused. He declared boldly the principles of Christian liberty, but spoke with equal forcefulness about Christian accountability. The EFCA desires to preserve our freedom in Christ. We encourage our people to be responsible, godly men, women and young people who desire to live under the control of the Holy Spirit in obedience to the principles and precepts of God's Word, and in harmony with God's will for life as revealed in the Scriptures.

5. The Evangelical Free Church of America believes in both the rational and relational dimensions of Christianity.

We believe the Scriptures must be applied to our individual lives with warmth of heart, warmth of message and warmth of concern. We believe it is essential to have solid, biblical content in our doctrinal understanding of faith, but it is equally important to have a dynamic, vital relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ the Son and to live by the power of the Holy Spirit. Sound Christian doctrine must be coupled with dynamic Christian experience. Ours is a ministry of love and spiritual reconciliation.

6. The Evangelical Free Church of America affirms the right of each local church to govern its own affairs.

The EFCA is committed to a congregational form of government as stated in Article 10 of our

What the Bible Says About
A Godly Attitude Toward...
APOSTASY, HERESY & IMMORALITY

TRY THEM

1 John 4:1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

REJECT AND AVOID

Titus 3:10, "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject."

MARK THEM

Romans 16:17, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

BEWARE OF THEM

Matthew 7:15, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

REBUKE THEM

Titus 1:13, "This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith."

HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP

Ephesians 5:11, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

WITHDRAW THYSELF

2 Thessalonians 3:6, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

RECEIVE THEM NOT

2 John 10-11, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

HAVE NO COMPANY WITH HIM

2 Thessalonians 3:14, "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed."

"BE YE SEPARATE"

2 Corinthians 6:17, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."

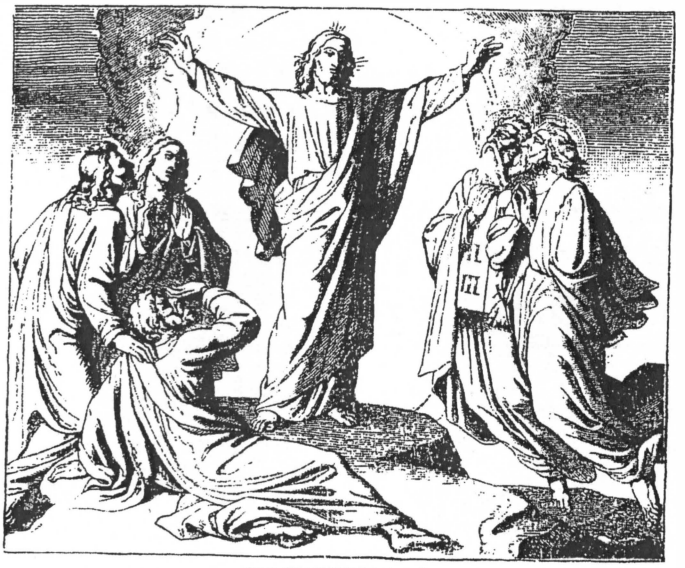
PUT THEM OUT

1 Corinthians 5:7a, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened."

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

THE BELIEVER'S INTERMEDIATE BODY





THE TRANSFIGURATION.



LAZARUS CARRIED TO HEAVEN.

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.

The Chronology of the Resurrection

1A. The Fact of the Resurrection:

John 5:25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. . .28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice.

1b. Every individual who was born and died will be resurrected.

2b. The agent of the resurrection is Jesus Christ.

A **resurrection** involves the restitution of the former body which has perished into a new body suited for eternal existence. The resurrection of Lazarus was, in fact, a **resuscitation**.

2A. The Two Types of Resurrection:

John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

1b. The first resurrection is the resurrection of life (Rev. 20:5-6).

2b. The second resurrection is the resurrection of damnation.

3A. The Stages of the Resurrections:

1b. The first resurrection:

1c. The resurrection of Jesus Christ—in A.D.32: Luke 24:46; 1 Cor. 15:1-11

2c. The Jerusalem saints—at the time of Christ's resurrection: Mt. 27:51-53

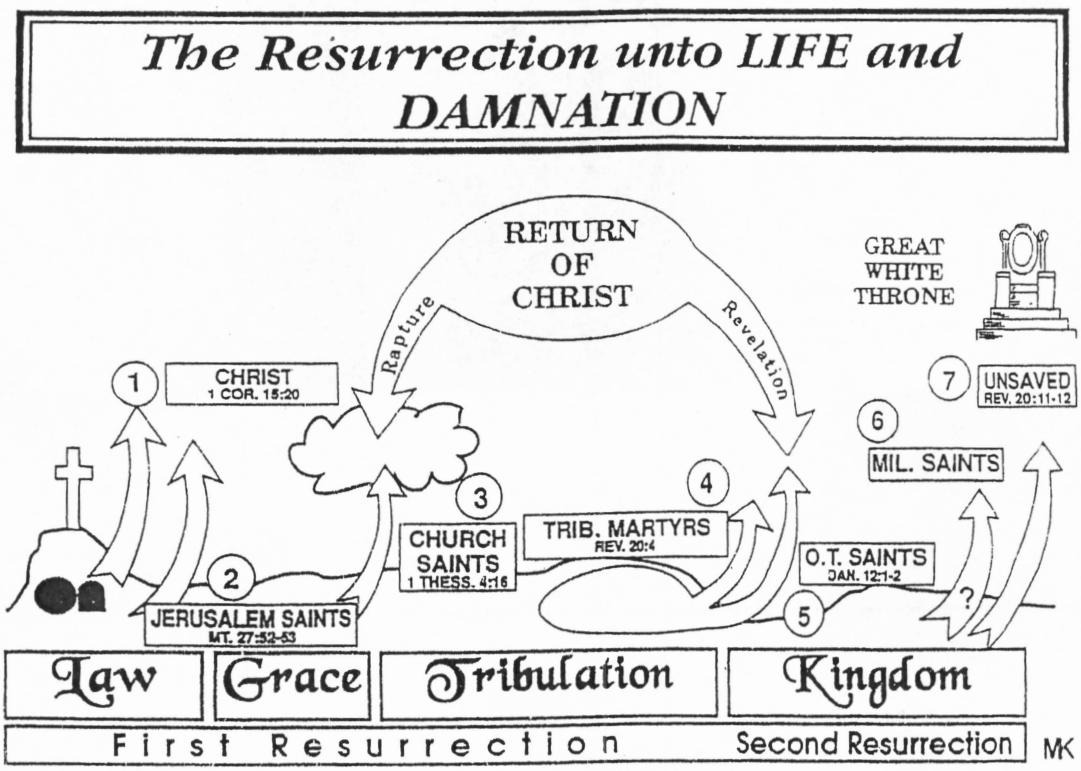
3c. The Church Age saints—at the Rapture: 1 Thess. 4:16

4c. The OT saints—at the Second Advent: Dan. 12:1-2

5c. The Tribulation martyrs—at the Second Advent: Rev. 20:4

2b. The second resurrection—at the end of the Millennium: Rev. 20:11-15

The Great White Throne Judgment is a judgment of all the unbelieving dead. It occurs at the end of the Millennium and is based on works in order to show that the punishment is deserved and how severe it should be (Rev. 20:12). Of course. the unsaved people are in this judgment because they rejected Christ as their Savior while they were alive.



The Nature of Man

1A. The Defense of the Inseparable Nature of Man:
Man has a body, soul, spirit, heart, mind, conscience and other immaterial capacities.

2A. The Demand for an Intermediate Body:
For man to function properly and to communicate with those around him, he needs a body.

3A. The Differences about an Intermediate Body:

1b. Ignoring the issue:
Many theologians make no reference to the condition of an individual in the intermediate state.

2b. The Roman Catholic Church espouses the unbiblical notion that all individuals suffer consciously and physically in purgatory for a period of time.

3b. Many evangelicals either ignore or deny the possibility of an intermediate body.

Typical are Loraine Boettner's comments. He calls the intermediate state a state of imperfection: "This imperfection consists, first of all, in that the spirit is without a body, which for the human species is an abnormal condition. The body, with its organs of sense, is the instrument through which we make contact with the physical world. As long as the disembodied state continues the soul has, so far as we know, no instrument by which it can make contact with the physical world or communicate with the individuals here." (Loraine Boettner, *Immortality*, 1989, 95)

Boettner's view represents the position of most evangelical theologians:
"The life of man thus falls not into two stages, as it is so often assumed, but into three. First, is the stage from birth until death, which is life in the present world and in the natural body; second, life between death and the resurrection, in the intermediate state, which is life without the body; and, third, life in the resurrection body, which is the final and eternal state. (*Ibid.*,96)

Respected Southern Baptist theologian Gregg R. Allison, in an incisive article entitled "Four Theses Concerning Human Embodiment," cogently argues that human existence necessitates embodiment, but then, paradoxically, rejects the idea of a body in the intermediate state. Thus he speaks of "the strangeness of the disembodiment in the intermediate state." He further observes that "Physical death is the temporary separation of people from their body, so the intermediate state is an abnormal condition of disembodiment. At the return of Christ and its corollary event of bodily resurrection, people will be re-embodied and remain so for all eternity" (*The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 23.2 [2019], p.157, 173).



The Human Body's Three Stages



The Three Facets of Man's Existence:

This Earthly Life	The Intermediate State	The Eternal State
Earthly, physical body in this life	Heavenly, physical, temporary body for the intermediate state	Resurrected and glorified old earthly body for all eternity

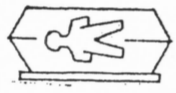
Given at Conception

Given at Death

Church Age Saints:
At the Rapture

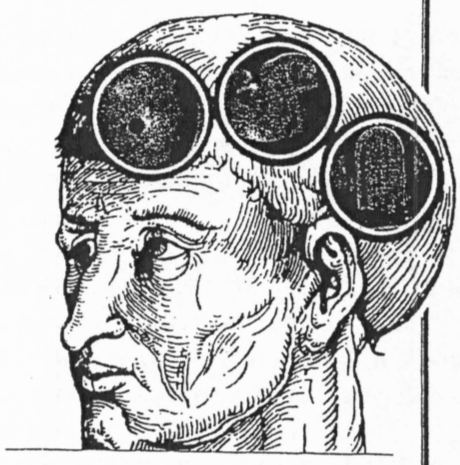
O.T. Saints and Tribulation Martyrs
At the Second Advent

The Unsaved of All the Ages: (unglorified bodies)
At the Great White Throne



THE STAGES OF THE HUMAN BODY

1. THE FORMATION OF THE BODY
2. THE MATURATION OF THE BODY
3. THE DETERIORATION OF THE BODY
4. THE DIVESTATION OF THE BODY
5. THE DISSOLUSION OF THE BODY
6. THE SUBSTITUTION OF AN INTERMEDIATE BODY
7. THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY





Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.



Will We Have An Intermediate Body After Death?

INTRODUCTION: What constitutes man's existence between death and the resurrection? Will he be bodiless, an unclothed spirit, or will he exist in a temporary, intermediate body? What is the nature of that body?

1A. THE EVIDENCE FOR THE INTERMEDIATE BODY FROM THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN

1b. The unity of man:

Scripture refers to man as having not just a body and mind, conscience, will, etc. Trying to classify all that constitutes man into two or three categories causes too many problems. Man must be thought of as a unit. Lacking any one element the existence is no longer man. Therefore, to exist as man in any environment or state of being, he must have a body whether it be physical, intermediate, or glorified.

2b. The function of man:

Man is composed of material and immaterial. The immaterial gives life to and directs the material. Without the material the immaterial can no longer function. The immaterial gives expression only through the material.

3b. The nature of man:

"We need to remember that the whole nature of man is redeemed and shall be up in glory. Man consists not only of spirit, but also of body and soul. He owns a personality, possesses a will, desires, capacity to love and be loved. . .There must be all the things necessary for a full and complete existence" (N. A. Woychuck, "Life in Heaven," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, October/December 1950).

2A. THE EVIDENCE FOR THE INTERMEDIATE BODY FROM SCRIPTURE:

1b. The intimation of the Old Testament concerning the intermediate body

1c. The general teaching:

The Old Testament affirms the conscious form of the intermediate state: Gen. 37:35; 2 Sam. 12:23; Prov. 1:12, 12:28; Isa. 14:10; Ezek. 32:21; 1 Sam. 28, Eccl. 12:7

2c. The central passage: 1 Samuel 28

1 Sam 28:12, 15, 16, 19, 20 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. . . And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?... Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.



SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR.

1d. Presuppositions:

1e. It was Samuel who appeared, rather than a spirit:
- The terror of the medium, who expected a spirit to come but instead saw Samuel.
- Samuel talked directly with Saul.
- The prophecy of Samuel was fulfilled the next day.

2e. Samuel appeared in the intermediate state:
- The final resurrection had not taken place.
- He was brought up directly from Sheol: "why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up!"
- Samuel's physical resurrection will be with the rest of the O.T. saints at the second advent of Christ (Dan. 12:1-2).

2d. Contribution:

1e. The body had supernatural characteristics, for the witch said, "I see gods (elohim) ascending out of the earth," referring to Samuel.

2e. The body of Samuel was physical, recognizable and therefore had distinguishable similarities to his earthly condition. He was seen as an old man, clothed in accordance with his office of a prophet, features which were easily discernible by Saul.

3e. There was extended physical and vocal contact sustained between Saul and Samuel.

4e. According to 1 Samuel 28, the person in the intermediate state possesses a visible, physical (type) body, which makes possible physical, visual and vocal contact.

Saul bei der Wahrsagerin zu Endor.



I. Samuelis. Kap. 28, Vers 7—18.

2b. The New Testament revelation concerning the intermediate body:

The issue on the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7, as well as Matthew 17 on the transfiguration, centers on the future kingdom period and not on the intermediate state On the other hand, the passage in Mark 12, dealing with the question of marriage in heaven, clearly concerns the post-resurrection state. Several passages offer insight into the intermediate state; the clearest one is Luke 16:19-31 which offers concise teaching both on the intermediate body and its relationship to the intermediate state.

1c. The account of the rich man and Lazarus: Luke 16:19-31

Luke 16:19-31There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.



LAZARUS CARRIED TO HEAVEN.

1d. Presuppositions:

1e. Christ's parables have correspondence to historic events, factual reality and real persons.

2e. Sound doctrine can be illustrated by parabolic truth.

3e. Dives (the rich man) and Lazarus were real persons who died, and the picture painted by Christ is that of the intermediate state and the intermediate body.

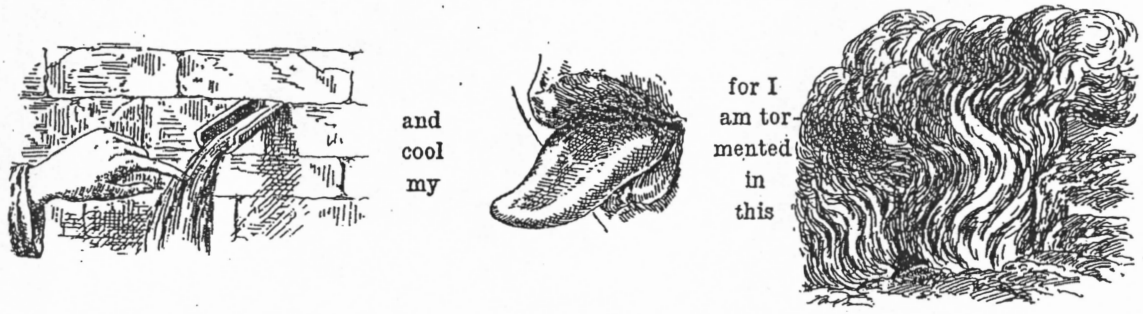
2d. Support for the historicity of the incident:
The account of Dives and Lazarus appears to be of historical nature:

1e. It is never called a parable.
2e. It starts with certainty, "tis."
3e. It names one of the characters, "Lazarus."
4e. Christ referred to a historical person, "Abraham," in his conversation with Dives.
5e. The early church favored this view.
6e. The account possesses definite characters, "five brothers."
7e. The vividness of the account supports this.

3d. Contribution:

1e. There is life both for the lost and saved beyond the grave.
2e. This after-life is lived in a conscious state as seen in the expression of the rich man.
3e. There is an eternal separation of the lost and saved.
4e. The intermediate body is vividly set forth for both saved and unsaved (Lazarus' possession of a finger implies that he also has an arm, a torso and a body. Dives' tongue implies that he has a mouth, a head and a body).

And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may



5e. The lost will carry with them memories of their earthly experience.
6e. Between death and resurrection men see, feel, talk and remember (Lazarus, as an O.T. saint, will be resurrected at the second advent. Dives, as an unbeliever, will be resurrected with all the unbelievers of all the ages at the Great White Throne Judgment [Rev. 20]).

Das Gleichnis von dem reichen Manne und dem armen Lazarus.



Ev. Lucä. Kap. [illegible]ers 19—31.

4d. Conclusion:

The account of Luke 16 is the first conclusive argument in the progress of revelation from our Lord's lips regarding the existence of the nature of the intermediate body and the intermediate state. This body admits of a physical recognizable form which partakes of sight, feeling, speech and memory. This verifies the intimations of prior references such as Samuel conversing with King Saul.

3c. The appearance of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration: Luke 9:27-36 (Mt. 17:1-8; Mk 9:2-8)



THE TRANSFIGURATION.

But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God. 28 And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. 29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering. 30 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: 31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. 32 But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. 33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. 34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. 35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. 36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

1d. Moses represented the Law, Elijah the prophets. They conversed with Jesus concerning His "Exodus," Luke 9:31. The Exodus is not just a reference to His death, burial and resurrection, but also to His ascension to heaven.

2d. The physical nature of Moses and Elijah:

Peter, James and John probably intuitively recognized the two individuals who made a sudden and startling appearance from the intermediate state. The fact that Peter suggested tabernacles be built indicates his perception of them being physical beings, in need of shelter. Mt. Hermon, where the transfiguration took place, has an elevation of 9,000 feet. Even if they were on a lower spur of the

Die Verklärung Jesu.



mountain, the temperatures would still be inclement. Peter attempted to prolong the marvelous experience of witnessing this exchange between Christ and these two Old Testament saints. He gave no thought for his own comfort but was interested only in giving a safe and protected environment to those who came to encourage Christ concerning the suffering and ascension which lay ahead.

4c. The teaching of 2 Corinthians 5:1-6:

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: 3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. 4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. 5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. 6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

1d. Presuppositions:

1e. The passage is to be interpreted normally.

2e. The body spoken of is the intermediate body.

2d. Support:

1e. This view has ancient as well as modern supporters—Ephraem, Herveius, Aquinas, Hodge, Stanley, Tasker, Pinter.



2e. This passage fits the scheme of the progress of revelation.

3e. The force of the passage indicates this "we know. . .we have. . .

4e. The account accepts Paul's earnest groanings and desires as genuine and attainable because God has provided an intermediate body that **"we shall not be found naked."**

5e. It is more consistent in its anthropology: there is a body for now, a body for the future, and a body for the intermediate state.



6e. Arguments made by some that this is the resurrection body, rather than the intermediate body, do not nullify the existence of and reference to an intermediate body in Scripture. The passage asserts that this body is prepared by God, itis from heaven, and has existed from past eternity.

7e. Even the opponents of the intermediate body acknowledge that the language argues for a body after death, (e.g. Plummer).

8e. Lewis Sperry Chafer remarks:
"The thought here expressed is that the redeemed do not desire a disembodied state, which state is inevitable if there be no intermediate body. The body described in this passage is said to be 'from heaven,' rather than from the grave. Being of heavenly origins, it belongs to those realities which are eternal.

That it belongs to things eternal does not require that it be employed forever. Certainly, the final body of glory is secured only at the coming of Christ. And, as certainly, the body of 2 Corinthians 5:1-8 is provided that there may be no moment of disembodiment. These two facts seem to compel the conclusion that there is an intermediate body." (*Systematic Theology Vol. II*, p. 156)

5c. The dead saints in heaven in Revelation 6:9-11:

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? 11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.



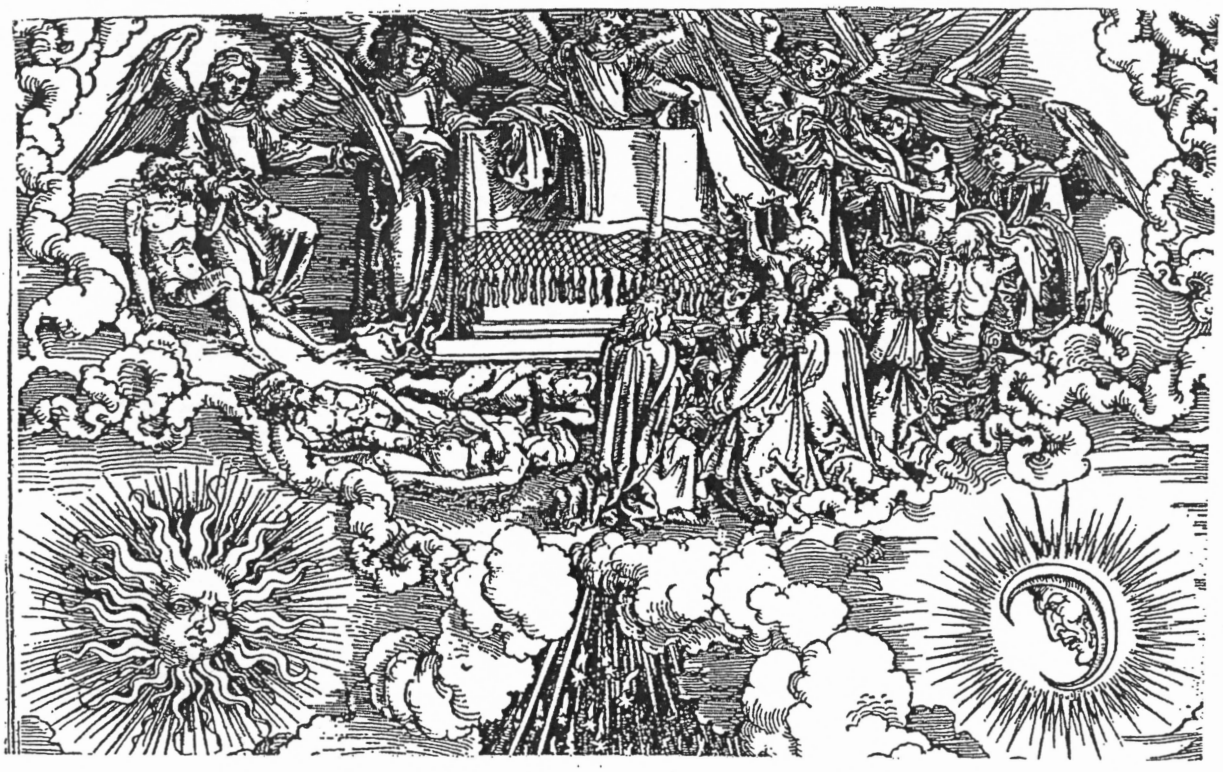
1d. Presuppositions:
This is not the Church in heaven, but the intermediate state for Tribulation saints.

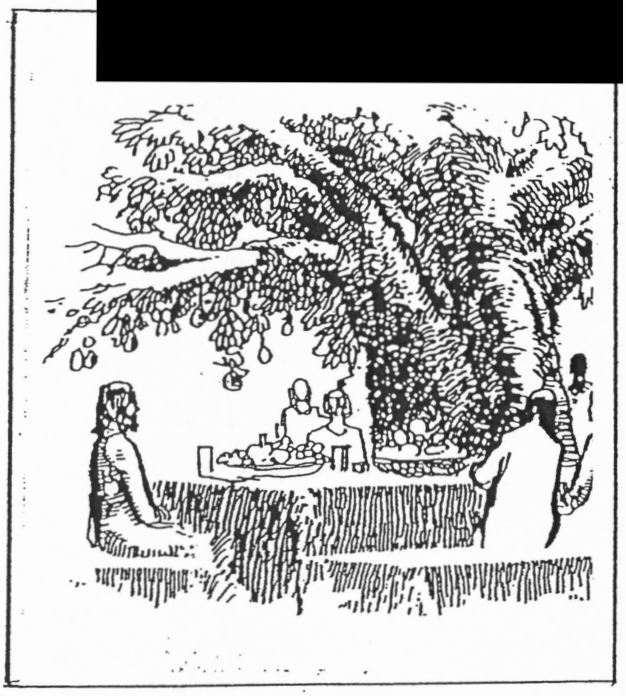
2d. Support:
Many premillennial, pretribulational, dispensational commentators agree on this view.

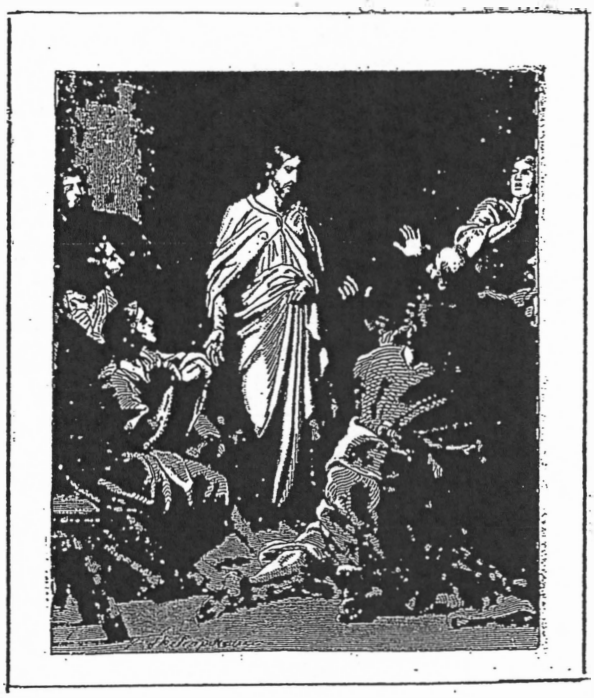
3d. Conclusions:
The intermediate body is in a visible, bodily form in which the souls of the redeemed vocalize prayer and praise, remember their martyrdom, and occupy space. The fact that they wear white robes indicates the physical nature of their bodies.

Support for the Believer's Intermediate Body

The Case of Samuel	1. Samuel 28	Samuel appears to Saul in a physical, recognizable body
The Situation of Dives	Luke 16:19-31	The rich man in hell suffered physical pain, arguing for a body
The Condition of Lazarus	Luke 16:19-31	Lazarus in Paradise, long before his resurrection, has a body
Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration	Lk. 19:27-36	They appeared as recognizable, physical beings, in need of shelter
Paul's Prayer for a Body	2. Cor. 5:1-6	Paul desired a body after death rather than a disembodied state
The Tribulation Martyrs in Heaven	Rev. 6:9-11	The saints' wearing of white robes argues for a physical body








GOODSALT



WILL WE BE ABLE TO EAT IN OUR RESURRECTION BODIES?

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D.



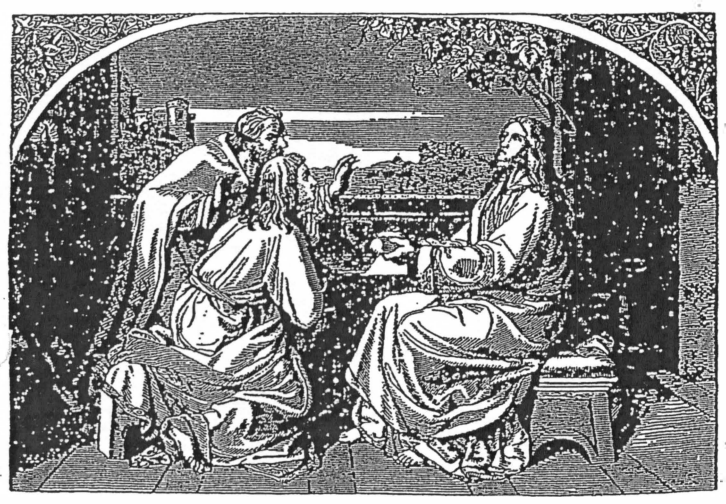
A number of folks have recently asked whether we as believers will be able to eat in our resurrection body. The question concerning food in our future is a good one. The topic is significant for four reasons.

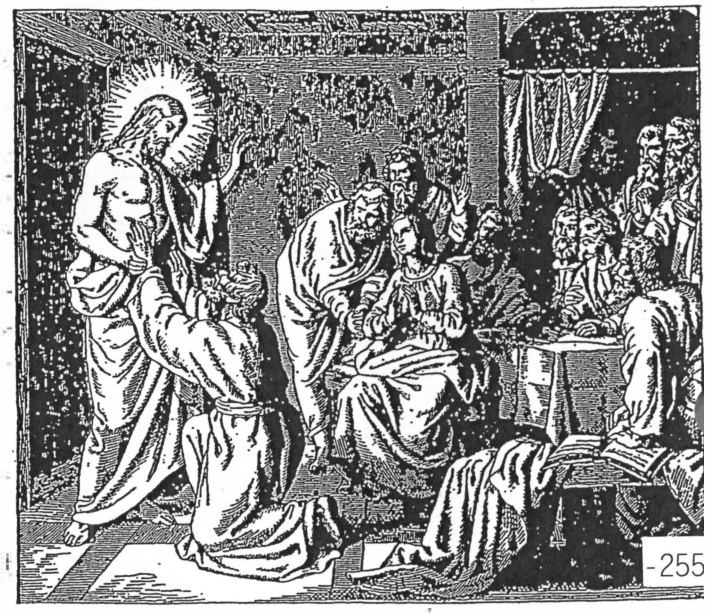
(1) One can scarcely find any reference to the topic in prophetic literature.
(2) Biblical revelation affords a clear and positive answer.
(3) Prophetic references to future food give rather detailed information as to the nature of our culinary enjoyment.
(4) An understanding of the actual situation will heighten the believer's anticipation of this future felicity.

1. The Practice of Christ.

a. Eating as confirmation of this physical body:

Repeated New Testament passages refer to Christ's ability to eat in His resurrection body. For example, after blessing the evening meal at Emmaus on resurrection Sunday (Luke 24:30) and then vanishing, He appeared to His disciples in a locked room (John 20:19). He tried to convince the terrified disciples that He was not an apparition "for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have" (Luke 24:39). Then He gave the unconvinced disciples one additional proof of the physical nature of His resurrection body. He asked them for food and, to their amazement, He ate what they had, namely **fish and honeycomb** (Luke 24:42-43). One may assume that if the disciples had had Campbell's soup or cornflakes, He would have eaten those. One week later He asked doubting Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands: and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side." (John 20:27)





b. Eating and drinking as part of fellowship:

Sometime later, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, He prepared and enjoyed breakfast with His disciples (John 21:12-13). In fact, Peter mentions that he and the other disciples "did eat and drink with him after he arose from the dead" (Acts 10:41). Christ taught His disciples for at least forty days but also enjoyed times of blessed fellowship, which included eating and drinking. Apparently the life principle of the resurrection body is no longer blood but the Holy Spirit, thus food is no longer necessary for sustenance and yet a glorious possibility.





2. The Pattern of the Believer's Resurrection Body.

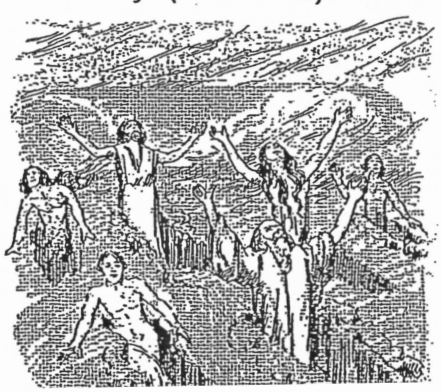
a. The capability of Christ's resurrection body:

Christ's resurrection body was similar to His former body and yet distinct in several aspects. As primarily His walk with the Emmaus disciples indicated, He appeared and disappeared at will. He talked, walked, spoke, stood, sat, touched, heard, prayed, ate and drank. At times He even changed His appearance. "After that he appeared in another form unto two of them [the Emmaus disciples]" (Mk. 16:12).

b. The similarity of our resurrection body to that of Christ's:

What Christ could do in His resurrection body the believer will also be able to do in his glorified state, such as appear and disappear at will, penetrate solids, eat and drink. John writes with assurance, "we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. The blessed truth is that " we shall be like him"—not unlike Him (1 John 3:2). Similarly, the Apostle Paul assures us that Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21).

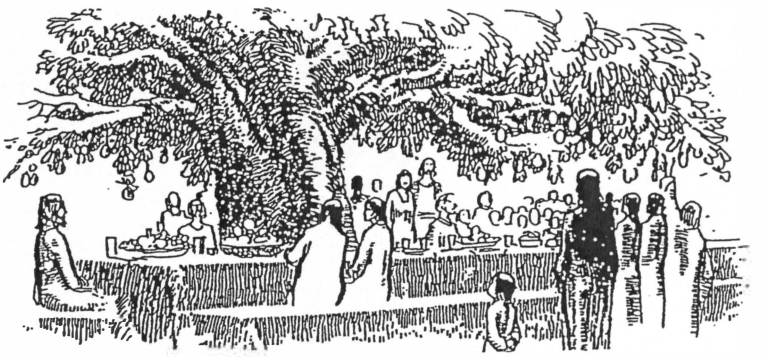




3. The Predictions for the Millennium.

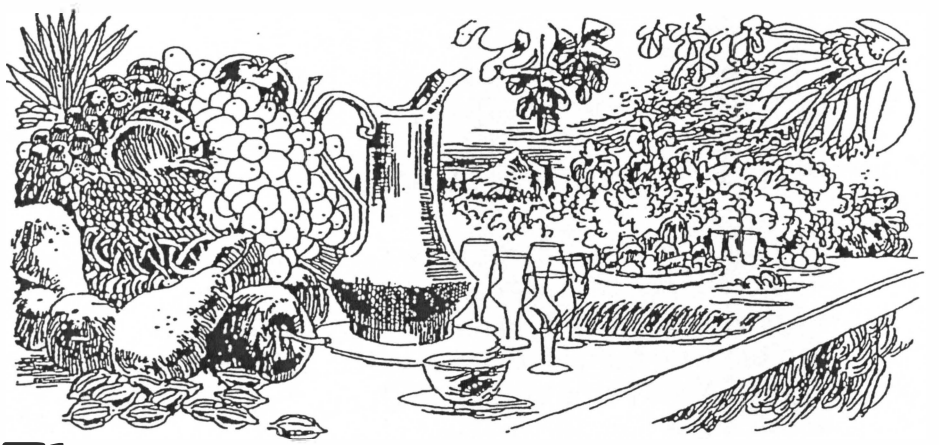
a. The promise of the marriage supper:

Based on the words of her Bridegroom, the Bride of Christ eagerly anticipates the marriage supper. *"And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."* (Rev. 19:9) We have Christ's solemn promise that this will happen. This special feast will occur either in heaven prior to the Second Advent or on earth at the commencement of the millennial kingdom. The meal will involve the Bridegroom and the Bride and most likely all the saints of all the ages as friends of the Bridegroom. Undoubtedly the meal will include food and beverages.



b. The prophecies concerning Christ's eating and drinking with His disciples:

Further confirmation for our ability to eat and drink in the future is found in Christ's direct promise at the institution of the Lord's Supper, that He would no longer drink this cup with His disciples "until we drink it again in the kingdom" (Mt. 26:29, cf. Mark 14:25). He assured the eleven that He would "eat and drink with them in the kingdom" (Luke 22:30).



The Celebration

ST. MATTHEW 26

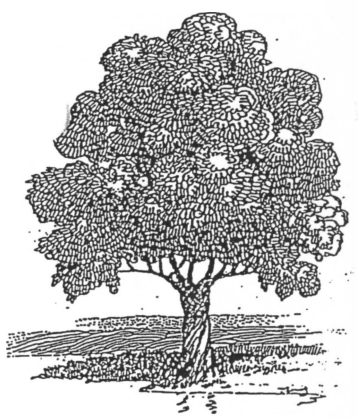
29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

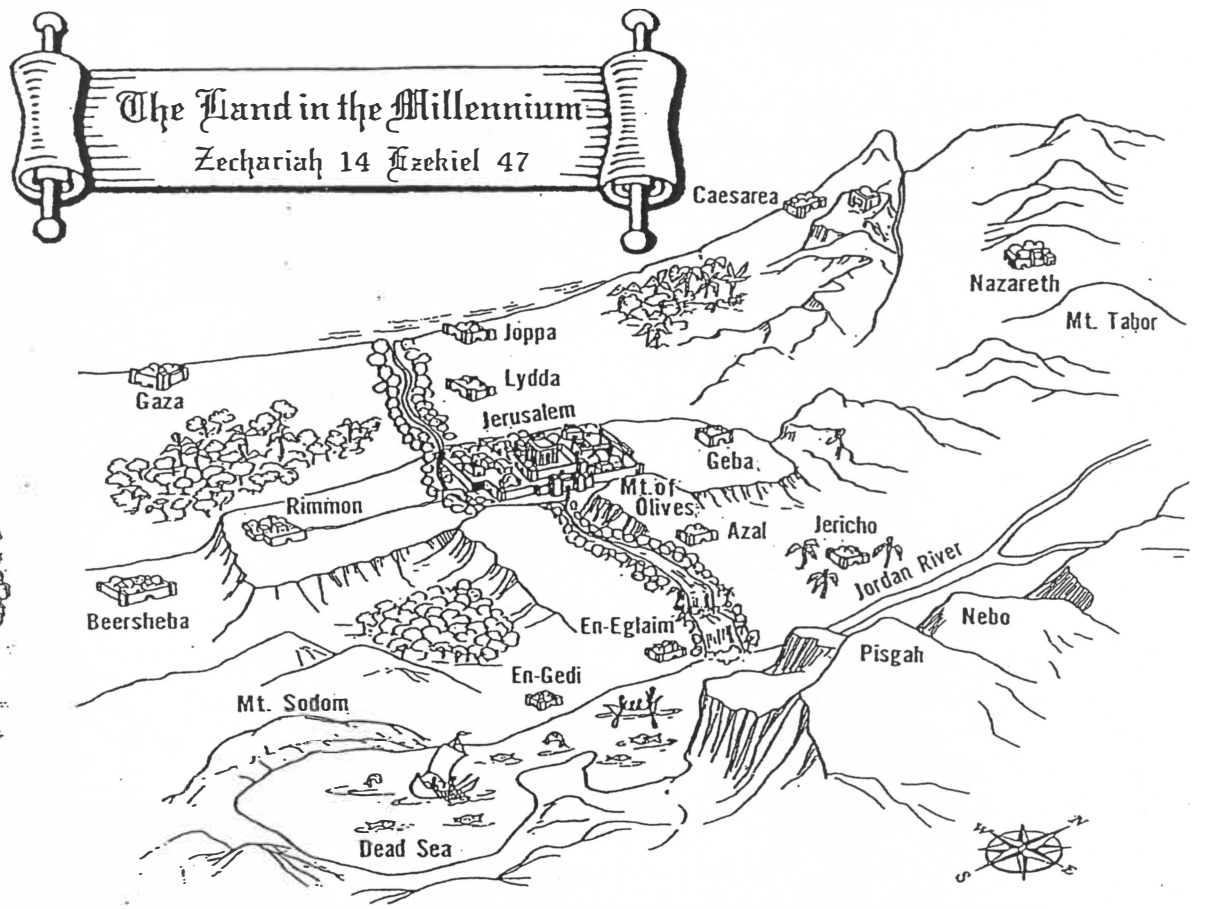
ST. LUKE 22

29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, my Father hath appointed unto me;
30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

4. The Productivity of the Earth in the Millennium.

The prophet Ezekiel describes a marvelous millennial river issuing from Jerusalem and healing the desert and Dead Sea (Ez. 47). The Dead Sea will be teeming with an abundance of fish (Ez. 47:9-10). Along the banks of the river will grow a miraculous tree, producing a different fruit each month (Ez. 47:12). The believer may anticipate even now the future enjoyment of the fish from the sea and the fruit from the tree. Perhaps these viands will be on the menu of the millennial meals our Savior promised to host (Luke 13:29).





5. The Provisions for the New Jerusalem

So far, our discussion has focused on the human ability to eat during the millennial kingdom. But what of the endless eons of eternity? Even here the Bible affords a plausible positive answer.

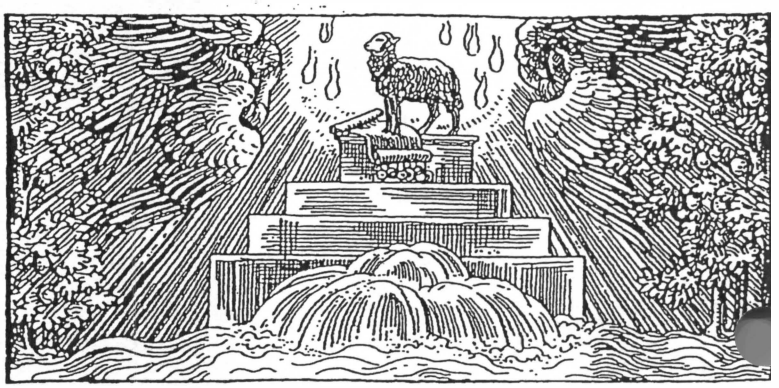
John describes our eternal home as a city of extraordinary dimensions and exquisite delight (Rev. 21:1-22:5). Interestingly enough, the city boasts a river of life issuing from under the throne of God, watering the tree of life which, like its millennial counterpart, bears twelve different fruits.

It seems reasonable to conclude that the saints' eternal and glorious fellowship with the Savior and the angels will involve the enjoyment of the succulent and supernatural fruit from the tree of life and water from pristine and pure river of life. Indeed that is the delightful promise of the Holy Spirit to the church at Ephesus, "To him that overcometh I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7).



Every believer is an overcomer (1. Jn. 5:5), in fact, more than a conquerer, or a "supervictor" (Rom. 8:37). This being so, we will all enjoy the abundant provisions of paradise!

Finally, it must be stressed that **this glorious future is ours as part of our salvation**. By asking Jesus to be our Savior, we receive with Him "freely all these things" (Rom. 8:32). Have you asked Jesus to be your personal Savior? If so, you too may anticipate this glorious future.



BECAUSE OF CALVARY



AND MEN WILL COME FROM EAST AND WEST, AND FROM NORTH AND SOUTH, AND SIT AT TABLE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD. AND BEHOLD, SOME ARE LAST WHO WILL BE FIRST, AND SOME ARE FIRST WHO WILL BE LAST"
— CHRIST (LUKE 13:29,30)

6. The Present Provisions in Heaven

Rev. 7:9-17 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and PALMS IN THEIR HANDS;
[10] And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.
[11] And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,
[12] Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.
[13] And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?
[14] And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
[15] Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.
[16] They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.
[17] For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne SHALL FEED [SHEPHERD] THEM, and shall LEAD THEM UNTO LIVING FOUNTAINS OF WATERS: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

1b. Who?

A great multitude of saved individuals stand before the throne in Heaven. With them are the angels and the 24 elders.

2b. Where?

The multitude stands before the throne of the Father and the throne of Christ in Heaven.

3b. When?

The vision relates to the situation part-way through the Great Tribulation.

4b. How?

During the tribulation period, people from every national and geographical group will be saved. Most likely the scene in Heaven shows the worldwide martyred multitude. Most likely they were saved through the ministry of the 144,000.

5b. Why?

The redeemed worship God and serve Him day and night.

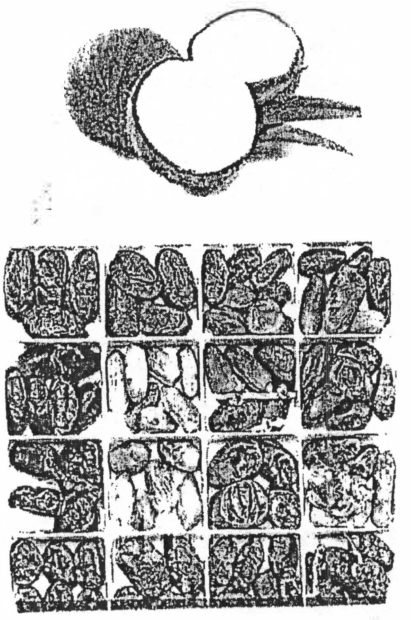
6b. What?

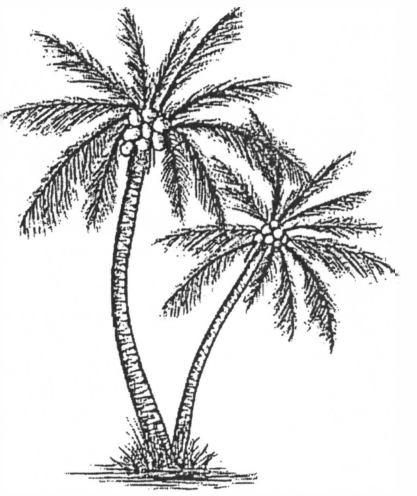
1c. We have here a host of glorified saints carrying palm branches.
--Either the dead brought them with them to Heaven
--or—the branches were created in Heaven
--or—there are palm trees in Heaven from which the branches were taken.

The latter explanation seems to be the best.

2c. Palm trees:
If there are palm trees, they most likely resemble palm trees on earth.







--There are over 100 varieties of coconut palm trees
--There are over 200 different date palm trees.

3c. Food
The saints will be able to eat in their intermediate and resurrected bodies: **Rev. 17:17 For the Lamb . . . shall feed them.** What a glorious prospect! What might that food be? Since there appears to be actual palm trees in Heaven—both coconut palms as well as date palms—the saints might well enjoy the luscious fruits. If the variety of the trees approximates that of the trees on earth, we may enjoy the fruit from some 100 different coconut trees and over 200 different date palm trees.

4c. Drink
Rev. 17:17 [He] shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.



It may be asked whether these are real fountains. Indeed they are! The same word for fountain is used for earthly fountains which are polluted by a star called Wormwood (Rev. 8:11). If those fountains on earth are actual water fountains, so are the ones in Heaven. The juxtaposition of the fountains is remarkable: **the saints in Heaven are refreshed by the fountains. The sinners on earth are repulsed by the fountains**. While we imagine Heaven to be a



sterilized, holy place with streets of gold and pearly gates, we ignore the details of Scripture.

Thus close observation permits us to conclude that there are palm trees in Heaven, with a great variety of fruit. Situated in the New Jerusalem, and perhaps already existing separately, is the tree of life with a different fruit each month (Rev. 22:1-5), undoubtedly numerous in number, to refresh the multitude of glorified saints.

There is an oblique reference to drink in Paradise. In the account of the Rich Man and Lazarus, the latter is seen reclining in Abraham's Bosom (Lk. 16:22-23). Lazarus, a recent arrival in Paradise, is seen reclining at a banqueting table in the immediate proximity of Abraham where he is afforded a place of honor and dignity.

The rich man observes the banqueting scene and requests some water (Lk. 16:24), obviously one of the beverages at the festive meal.



In fact, Heaven is designated as Paradise. The word, derived from the Persian language, means "a beautiful garden, watered, with lush and varied foliage." Putting all these details together, we may conclude that Heaven is a lush garden, offering spiritual and physical delight to the saints.

The Great Multitude in White Robes

9 After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice:

"Salvation belongs to our God,
who sits on the throne,
and to the Lamb."

11 All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying:

"Amen!
Praise and glory
and wisdom and thanks and honor
and power and strength
be to our God for ever and ever.
Amen!"

13 Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?"

14 I answered, "Sir, you know."

And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore,

"they are before the throne of God
and serve him day and night in his temple;
and he who sits on the throne
will shelter them with his presence.
16 'Never again will they hunger;
never again will they thirst.
The sun will not beat down on them,'[a]
nor any scorching heat.
17 For the Lamb at the center of the throne
will be their shepherd;
'he will lead them to springs of living water.'[b]
'And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'[c]"

The Seventh Seal and the Golden Censer

8 When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

10 The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water— 11 the name of the star is Wormwood.[d] A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.