

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH - VOL. 1 - NO. 11

SPECIAL NOTES ON

REVELATION

By Howard N. Bonce, Ph.D.

The proper designation of this *last* book of the Bible is given in the first three words: "REVELATION, or unveiling, OF JESUS CHRIST." The order of communication is as follows: God gave the Revelation to Jesus Christ; He signified, having sent through His angel to His servant John, and John, having seen, wrote to the angels of the seven churches the things which he saw; said things to be testified to in the churches (Cp. 1:1, 2, 4 and 22:16).

We believe some suggestions as to certain words and phrases occurring in Revelation would not be amiss.

The word "church" (Greek "ekkleesia") occurs in both singular and plural 20 times; seven times in the singular, and 13 times in the plural. Always the seven churches of 1:4 are meant (Note 22:16). The entire Revelation concerns these_ churches. What John saw he was to write; what he was to write he was to send to the seven churches (Cp. 1:11).

Why attempt an interpretation of Revelation of any church or churches other than the seven churches of 1:4? These seven churches are represented by the seven lampstands (Cp. 1:20). The seven lampstands depict dispersed Israel. The special messages written to each of the seven churches (chaps. 2 and 3) afford sufficient evidence that they are Jewish and Kingdom churches.

By comparing Paul's prison epistles with the Seven Letters of Revelation, one can hardly fail to note the decided contrast. The churches of Revelation are dealt with on an entirely different basis than is the Church of the mystery. The representation of Christ in relation to the churches of Revelation is in itself an impressive point of contrast.

Note the question of works and the corresponding warnings and promises. Note the following words, designations, and expressions:

1. The Nicolaitanes. 2:6, 15.

2. The Claim *to be* Jews. 2:9 and 3:9.

3. The Doctrine of Balaam. 2:14.

4. The Woman Jezebel. 2:20.

5. The Synagogue of Satan. 3:9.

6. The New Jerusalem. 3:12.

These and many other words and expressions are worthy of note. One might mention the hidden manna, 2:17; apostles, 2:2; paradise, 2:7; second death, 2:11; sons of Israel, 2:14.

That Revelation is prophecy and not history is proved by 1:3, 22:10, 18, 19. This last book of the Bible is all future. In Rev. 1:10, we read: "I became in spirit in the Lord's day ..." The

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QUESTION:

Please explain Eph. 5:4.

"Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks."

ANSWER:

This verse comes in the practical portion of Paul's Letter to Ephesians. Here is an appeal. The verse reads literally:

"And impurity and foolish talking [or the talking of a moron], or jesting [one who makes light of, or pokes fun at, things sacred, good, holy], which are not becoming; but rather thanksgiving."

The Verse means just what it says. It is an appeal for the believers to so conduct themselves in speech and conduct as to honor Christ. Our walk is to be pleasing in the sight of the Lord, and these things are not pleasing unto Him, for the appeal is against them. Innocent fun in speech and conduct is not the subject here, but rather that of unbecoming, obscene, vile, disgraceful talk.

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HOW ARE THE SCRIPTURES TO BE VIEWED?

"How shall I describe to you what I found in the New Testament? I had not read it for many years and was prejudiced against it before I took it in hand. The light which struck Paul with blindness on his way to Damascus was not more strange, more surprising to him than it was to me when I suddenly found the fulfillment of all hopes, the highest perfection of philosophy, the explanation of all revelation, the key to all

the seeming contradictions of the physical and moral world. If the Bible is not divine, I know nothing at all. "

Max Muller, Historian

PART I

THE GREATEST QUEST

The greatest quest to which one can give himself is the pursuance of truth. The Lord Jesus Christ stated (John 18:37) "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. " He likewise stated that God's Word is Truth in John 17:17.

The Hebrew word "Yetseh," translated "truth" (there are several others) has the thought of a laid plan, certainty; while the Greek word (N) "alethia" signifies the reality underlying an appearance as, for instance, kwhen Christ is spoken of as "The Truth" (John 14:6) He was the perfect expression of truth. He embodied the truth of God; of the Father; of obedience to the demands of redemption in His death, etc.

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The Christian is pictured as being armored (Ephesians 6:14) and the loins were to be girt about with truth. This was the girding belt upon and to which all other sections of armor were attached; thus truth holds all together. The truth of the word is by divine revelation, not human reasoning, or as it is so well put in 2 Peter 1:19-21, "knowing this first, that any prophecy of scripture never came (come-come to be, originate) of its own unfolding (Gr. sending forth): for not by the will of man was prophecy at any time brought, but, being moved by "pneuma hagion" (Spirit, Holy), meant spake from God" [Translation of E. W. Bullinger].

2 Timothy 3:16 defines all scriptures as "God-breathed. " He spake "by the mouth" of His holy prophets. The mouth and/or pen were theirs; the words were His. They were borne along and, though the calligraphy remained theirs, the Heavenly Breath, the Power and Inspiration was His. Thus we have a divine library called the Bible. It is a varied book dealing with origins, with nations, with a select people meant to be His agency midst world-wide idolatry, with redemption and the Redeemer, with the present revelation of pure grace, with foreboding judgments to come. It is an interesting book and the only one, the knowledge of which, will go beyond the grave.

IMITATE THE NOBLE BEREANS

In the pursuance of truth a simple pattern is set forth in Acts 17:11:

1. These noble Bereans received the Word with all readiness of mind.
2. They searched the Scriptures daily.
3. They tested whether the doctrines taught of men were agreeable thereto.

God's noblemen and women are those who hear and receive truth with readiness of mind; who search the Scriptures daily and who test all they hear (see or read) by the touch-stone of the Holy Book.

OBEY GOD'S COMMANDMENT

In searching the Scriptures, one naturally desires to read with understanding. This Book was given to ordinary people with ordinary minds; it is profound, but not impossible; it is difficult in parts, and, yet sublimely simple in others; it does not gloss over sin as with David, nor does it neglect to mention his heartrending prayer for forgiveness (Psalm 51); it is bold, yet gentle; it shows the faithfulness of God, the frailty of man, the grace of God, and the judgments to come, held back only by the present grand amnesty.

To understand this book, a few simple principles are set forth in the book itself. 2 Timothy 2:15 commands us to:

- 1. Study, study, study. There is no "easy" way of learning anything well.
- 2. Study to SHOW (present) thyself approved (examined, tested) unto God. Since this book is one that deals with the issues and fibers of life, and since all we will be taught from it will mold our hearts and minds, we should then study to present ourselves as those to be examined by God Himself. This awareness would again bring forth men and women of the Book of God.
- 3. A workman, a craftsman (laborer) in the Word of God, unashamed. The Bible is to be a workshop. God wants craftsmen (workers) in the Word.

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- 4. Unashamed - giving and having no cause for shame.
- 5. Rightly dividing - to divide rightly. In Proverbs 3:6 in the LXX it is used of wisdom rightly dividing the paths of those who know it. The latter part of this compound word, "otho-temeo" is still retained in anatomy: tracheotomy and phlebotomy, each retaining the idea to "cut." It is the Word of Truth that is to be rightly divided if we are to study with under-standing.

This concept of "right division" does not imply the casting aside, counting as unimportant, or discrediting or rejecting any portion of the Scriptures. It does mean that the student of the Scriptures is to "distinguish the things that differ" (Phil. 1:10 Greek Text). He is to distinguish between Jew and Gentile, between what was old covenant and passing with Israel (Hebrews 8:13) and a new covenant that would reinstate Israel with all her glory as God's covenant people (Hebrews 8:8-12); a covenant provided for and ratified in the death of Christ (Hebrews 10:16). This is to be distinguished from God's present dictum of grace to Gentiles for salvation; for righteousness; for a dispensation. (Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 2: 1-14; 3:7, Ephesians 3:2)

The principle of rightly dividing may be easily seen by comparing the terms of the Gospel preached in Luke 9:1-6; 18:31-34, with the terms of the Gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. In the former, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ had no part as it was hid from the disciples and, they did not understand it, nor did they preach it: In the latter, the death for sin, the burial and resurrection of Christ is the very heart of the Gospel of salvation. If one does not "rightly divide" these passages, there is confusion instead of "instruction. "

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PART II

ALL SCRIPTURES

The Scriptures were meant to be studied in whole and in part; they are given for the complete furnishing of the man of God unto all good works, {n Timothy 3: 16, 17) As H. B. Bunce so well said, "in our ignorance we need teaching; in our wrong thinking we need conviction; in our wrong doing we need correction; in our self-willfulness we need chastisement. "

In studying and teaching the Word of God we must find room for all Scripture. While loving the Prison Epistles of Paul, and rightfully stressing the truth for the present time, we cannot neglect the rest of the Scriptures without irreparable loss. To stress grace and neglect a holy walk; to stress privilege and neglect personal responsibility; to stress head knowledge while the heart remains cold; to stress what we' have received and not balance it with what we can give of ourselves - love, time and money, would add up to an unbalanced Christian and, need we add, this movement has been unbalanced in this area!

In a recent letter, Charles Welch wrote, "I feel I must look again into the book of Job. " This is the spirit that would keep us in balance - a spirit that lets all Scripture speak and teach us its truths. With Isaiah we need reminding that "Holy, Holy, Holy is the

Lord God Almighty, " and with Paul's Prison ministry of Grace, we need to know that the first part of Ephesians 3 is balanced in the last section by "the love of Christ, " and that "Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Christ over and in the believer... how this simple truth needs realization in this movement to keep us from spiritual pride and intellectual prudity.

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THE SUPREMACY OF THE WORD

The great stalwarts of the faith never supposed that their position in the Scriptures would be placed on par with Scripture itself. We could do this movement no greater disservice than to erect barriers between brethren because we do not see all things alike. In this regard, I can only praise the kindly, Christ-like spirit displayed by Mr. Charles Welch, and Dr. E. W. Bullinger before him. These men were first and foremost concerned with the honor, faith, and heart-homage due the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ was the foundation and goal of their lives and labors. If one would take the effort to read the mountainous writings of these men, one would soon see that they loved and taught from all the Scriptures, and only asked men to follow with them so as to "search and see if these things be so. "

While we deeply revere these men and others that have instructed us in the truth, still our loyalty is due only to God and His Word. We are not to look to man's writing about the Bible or even studies drawn from the Bible, no matter how fine and true, as being on par with the Scriptures themselves. If we keep this at heart we will bear with charity those who are at variance with us, remembering we are not competing against each other, but, rather seeking to clear away the rubbish of traditions, meritorious religions and spiritual intellectual-isms so that the Light of Truth may radiate unhindered.

Our final appeal must be to the Scriptures alone; no more than this, but certainly, no less. Each should feel free to judge studies or Biblical material by the Scriptures and not by what others say about them. This alone is fair to the author. The temptation is to place some authority, ancient or modern, church or state, above the Scriptures.

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Another's knowledge in the Word of God must not be used as our "resting place" for truth. " To the Word and To the Testimony" should be our constant aim. Nor should one with knowledge seek to rule the conscience of a brother. Who so rules, usurps the place of Christ and thus creates a "follower of man" fraught with all its discord and heartbreak.

Satan's lie is that the Bible is obtuse and difficult. The Bible was given for normal, ordinary people, and, with application of time and study, its truths are easily within the humblest believer's grasp.

All doctrines should be tried by the Scriptures before affirming their truthfulness. To believe something before checking the Word of God is to trust the wisdom of man rather than the Word of God. If it is proved to be true, you have gained something; if it is a mere man-made doctrine, its loss will not impoverish your faith. We must let no one dictate the faith of another. To our Master and Head, Christ, we stand or fall.

There have been a host of wonderful Bible teachers over the years but, while we believe God has used these men, still we dare not attribute to them infallibility, nor would we be doing their scholarship an honor to say that more light may not be forth coming from the Word.

Differences of opinion? Yes, even Peter and Paul had their disputes. But "thus saith the Lord" was an end of opinion and we see Paul rebuking Peter for his lapse in faith (Galatians).

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Finally, we are asked to keep God's unity of the Spirit (Ephesians 4:3), and there are many keeping the unity as listed in Ephesians 4:4-6, but not in the bond of peace. None of us can live, love and labor unto himself. We need each other. Dependency upon God alone does not imply independence from others of like precious faith. The same Divine Book teaches us to love one another and to forgive one another, for we are members one of another. The very term "Body of Christ" should teach us our inter-relationship with each other under Christ our mutual Head.

PART IV

HOW FAR CAN I GO AND HOW?

Paul was in great agony or conflict (the life and death agonizing conflict of the gladiatorial contests) that others might "acknowledge the mystery of God and of Christ" (Colossians 2:1, 2). This was God's mystery and, by the context we gather that it was closely related to the believer's being complete in His Son, and being positioned "far above all" at the Father's right hand. (Colossians 1:1-10; 3:3 - Cp. Ephesians 1:5,6; 2:5, 6) The word we want to look at however is translated "acknowledge . " This is from "epi, " an intensive, and "ginosko," to know hence, to know fully-to have a full knowledge of any Biblical subject. If a subject is worth investigating, it is worth investigating well. This involves a willingness to take a humble place as a

student, determining to let the Bible be its own commentary, and to interpret itself to us on its own terms.

We should have a teachable spirit along with a Bible having good print. The Nestle-Marshall "interlinear Greek-English New Testament" or another critical translation is a must. We should have a Strong's or Young's Concordance, and, as soon as we learn to use these, add an Englishman's Concordance, especially of the New Testament. This last will reveal how the Bible uses words in the Greek or Hebrew text - English listings and indexes pilot the student here.

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As students of God's great Library, we have set before us a task of sufficient scope to engage all our waking hours but, since this isn't possible, at least set aside a definite time of study each day, be regular, whether early or late. No one is too young or too old to start.

A teachable spirit involves willingness to unlearn as well as to learn. Some truths are worthy of constant repetition and re-learning especially as they relate to the nature and being of God and our Saviour and Redeemer.

As we gather up information on various Biblical subjects, let us make deductions and conclusions only after all the facts are in and tabulated. Recently a writer mentioned that "eternal" in the Old Testament must always mean eternal since it is used of God, but the same word is used of the length of a slave's bondage to his master (he would serve him forever). But should the Hebrew slave die the next day, this "eternity" would be of one day's duration..... So words are tempered by contexts.

As we study, gathering truth together that goes together, and distinguishing things that differ, perhaps it is in order to suggest right here that we feed the New Man, the heart as well as the head. If our heart does not grow apace with our head knowledge; if one's heart, compassion and love is not broadened as we learn more of Him, then we must take stock of ourselves as to the motive for our studies. Love for the truth is only equated by love for Him and others.

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Biblical intellectualism a-lone can be as cold as a statue of stone, and as lifeless. Truth was meant to be a cause of rejoicing; of cheer, and of happiness (1 Corinthians 13:6). The giving out of what we have taken in is a necessity. Truth is like love -only good as it is shared; doubled as it is divided.

Christ declared He came to bear witness to the truth (John 18:37). This is sufficient reason for study to witness the truth of God to others. This is not a barren gift to give, for, according to Psalms 119:162, truth is a precious treasure when found. Let us share our treasures; let us enrich others.

PART V

DIFFICULTIES

The social church of the religious society is moving toward the "Great Mediocrity." The password seems to be "conformity and union." That the worldly church should jettison the virtues of Scripture comes as no surprise. That the worldly church should foster its Godless, Christless theology and scholarship upon the believer in Christ and pass itself off as a "Christian Institution" is almost beyond understanding.

What should our attitude be? Paul's admonition to Timothy holds true today..... "Hold fast the form (pattern) of sound words" (2 Timothy 1:13), and, "the good deposit guard" (Greek text 2 Timothy 1:14), and, positively, 'folding forth the Word of Life" (Philippians 2: 16). If we are thus engaged, we will have no time nor desire to have concord with these willful enemies of God and demeanors of our Lord. This is not closing our hearts toward the man outside of Christ, nor withholding our succor to the failing saint.

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Is this inviting persecution? Paul writes in Philippians 1:20, 21, "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For me to live is Christ and to die (for Him) is gain" (Christ's gain). See Philippians 1:29:

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake."

Is there no longer this attitude of Paul in God's people? Is Christ esteemed so lowly that we are unwilling to suffer any loss for Him? Are no champions to come forth from the ranks of our generation to contend for the Glory of His Name?

What has enervated the believer of his strength and testimony? The answers to this might be numerous, can it be, while the believer has full freedom of access to the Father (Ephesians 3:12), that he has not been communicating with the Father? Can it be that there is no strengthening of the inner man by God's Spirit (Ephesians 3:16-19); that Christ is not dwelling at home in our hearts; that we are not aware of the multi-

dimensions of God's love and so remain in love or at least in compliance with the world?

The saint has been put upon - not searching the Scriptures for himself. He has let the Word of God be relegated to so-called professionals. Instead of the pure Word of God being preached, the believer is given a heady substitute; that is, religious services. This has been multiplied by borrowing either from Old Testament rituals or from paganism.

The religious system that has evolved as a substitute for the Scriptures of Truth, has done its work well. The believer was placated by priests, altars, rituals, days, fasts, feasts and wafers - by this he is led to think, "This is service for God. "

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Many believers have not been thus entrapped, but carry no burden except their living expenses. Are missionaries, foreign and domestic, only for defaulting denominations? Has this grand message of the Grace of God no voice? Is Paul's call to "Fight the good fight of faith" to have no warriors? Are there none to stand behind those who would carry on this ministry and message? Let each of us search our own hearts for the answers to these questions, and then let us act upon them!

R. H. S.

The Gospel of the Kingdom

Where in all the Scriptures in one to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom and not expect that preaching to be evidenced by healings, miracles, signs and wonders?

What were the results of the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom during the days of our Lord's ministry upon earth, and during the Acts Period following our Lord's ascension ? Cp. Matt. 10:7, 8. Lu. 9:6* and Acts 8:12, 13.

When we read—"the Gospel of the Kingdom" why not respect the true meaning of the expression? It is "good news" concerning the Kingdom.

If, as in Mark 1:1, we referd "the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God" why not be true to the expression and understand that it is good news concerning Jesus Christ, Son of God?

- The "good news" of the Kingdom concerns the Kingdom.
- The "good news" of Jesus Christ concerns Jesus Christ.

- The "good news" of the grace of God concerns the Grace of God.
- The "good news" of God concerns God.
- The "good news" of His Son concerns His Son.
- The "good news" of peace concerns peace.

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CREATION AND CHRIST

Texts: Genesis 1:1; Colossians 1: 18

(Message by William B. Hallman given at the Ewalt Memorial Bible School Conference)

Let us go back in our Bibles as far as we can and read the first verse in Genesis chapter one, "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. " That is the way it reads in our King James' Version. A more accurate translation could be, "in a former state Elohim perfected the heavens and the earth. " We would also like to turn to our New Testament and read a verse from Colossians 1:18, "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."

The Bible is Christo-centric. We mean that somehow, in all of the Bible one will find the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament He is seen in type, symbol, promise, and prophecy; all the shadows point to Him. In the New Testament we really have the revelation of Jesus Christ from Matthew on down through the last book. The words of Genesis 1:1 are no exception. We hope to see in this message that Christ is the most important revelation of this verse; and that if He is not in it the verse has lost its true value.

"In a beginning God" spake and the universe came into being, revealing His creative greatness, "in a beginning God" speaks again, and His word becomes the means of making a new creation in Christ, revealing His creative grace. " In a beginning God " will speak for the third time, and, "Behold, I make all things new, revealing His creative glory.

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In the Hebrew original of Genesis 1:1 there are just seven words, and these seven words are composed of 28 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, of 4x7. Seven in Scripture and elsewhere is always the number of perfection. Four is primarily related to the earth, and three to the heavenly, and this verse speaks about both. Another interesting

feature is this: the subject and predicate have 14 letters each; and the two objects, "the heavens and the earth, " have each 7 letters. So that this first verse is stamped with perfection.

The first word here in Genesis 1:1 is "Bereshith." It is composed of two elements, a preposition and a noun which, according to Hebrew usage, are written as one word. So the preposition "in" is joined with the noun "first, " or "former." The definite article is not here. So it is "a beginning, " rather than "the beginning. "One is prone, however, to ask, What beginning? Is it in the beginning of God, or is it in the beginning of His creating? From the Hebrew word it could well be that neither one is meant here. Yet the latter is the more probably.

There are fixed laws in God's universe. We call them axioms. For example, a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. Or, things that are equal to the same thing are equal to one another, and, a curved line is not shorter than a straight one between two points. The first divine axiom is the existence of God. If He is the Creator of all, He must have existed before all. There was a time when God was, and nothing else existed. Paul speaks of God's pre-existence before creation when he says, "God that made the world and all things therein; seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth" (Acts 17:24). Therefore, if God is absolutely self-sufficient, why did He create?

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In a fascinating book "The Conflict of Truth, " by F. H. Capron, the author refers to the five factors, which Herbert Spencer regards as "the most general forms into which the manifestations of the Unknowable are redivisible. " These forms are, Time, Force, Motion, Space, and Matter. Let us look at them in the light of Genesis 1:1. First, there is Time, "in a beginning"; then there is Force, "Elohim"; then Motion, "created"; then, Space "The heavens"; and finally, Matter, "the earth"

So the Almighty took upon Himself to create in order -

TO DEPICT HIS PLEASURE

In Revelation 4:11 we read, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. "

A perfect God would not create unless there were delight and pleasure connected with it. So creation, we are told, satisfied His pleasure. It pleased Him to create. The true God has not only natural and moral attributes, but also social attributes, such as concord, unity, fraternity, and delight. So His creation must not only satisfy his

natural attributes such as omnipotence and omnipresence, nor His moral attributes of holiness, justice, truth; but also His social attribute of delightful pleasure. Can the Almighty have any real pleasure outside of the Lord Jesus Christ? We shall see!

God also created –

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TO DEMONSTRATE HIS POWER

In Psalms 147:4-5 we read, "Hethelleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names. Great is our God, and of great power; His understanding is infinite. "

How big is the universe? No finite being has ever been able to comprehend its vastness. It goes beyond man's wildest imagination. Nothing demonstrates the finiteness of man more than to rationalize about God's nature, and how He came into existence. Our minds come up against a total blank when we try to project them into the "how" of God's coming into existence.

Man must talk in terms of "light years" in measuring astronomical distances. Light travels at the rate of 186, 000 miles per second. Multiply this by minutes, hours, and days in a year, and one has the distance of a "light year. " Therefore light could travel around the equator 7 or 8 times in a second. It is some eight light years distance to the so-called nearest fixed star. Our planetary system which revolves around our sun is but a little speck in this great universe which God has created. What power God has displayed in creation!

His power is also demonstrated in His ability to uphold all things. We read in Colossians 1:17, "By Him all things consist. " In the use of the atomic bomb we have come to realize the vast potential energy resident in the atoms of such elements as plutonium and uranium. What power is it that holds all these atoms in check? It is the power of God. Every day that we are permitted to exist on this earth is an evidence of God's power to hold His universe together.

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Again, we are told in God's Word that the Almighty created -

TO DISPLAY HIS PERFECTION

Elihu interrogated Job "on God's behalf" and said among other things, "Dost thou know the balancing of the clouds, the wondrous works of Him which is perfect in

knowledge." One can take any part of God's universe, and in spite of the curse, there is exquisite beauty, symmetry of development, and creative design. If one were to take the little unwanted dandelion flower and place it under a microscope one would see the most perfect specimen of beauty and design. Only God could make a dandelion. And that can be said of all God's creative handiwork.

Over 20,000 snowflakes have been photographed, and each one is built on the number seven. There is a center with six distinct points emanating from it. The wonder of the snowflake is that no two are exactly alike. The theory is well established that, while each flake is built on this number seven, no two are exactly alike. What a display of God's perfection this is!

The story is told of a shepherd herding his sheep in the highlands of Scotland who came upon a botanist leaning over his microscope studying a little highland flower. He nudged the botanist and inquired what he was doing in that unusual position with that queer looking instrument. Then the botanist invited him to stoop down and take a look. After several moments of looking, the shepherd finally arose, and with tears in his eyes said, "Oh, how many I have trampled under foot." Yes, if we but take the time to look we shall see the perfection of God's creative handiwork.

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It is wonderful to see God's Pleasure, Power, and Perfection displayed and demonstrated in His universe, but our text gives us another wonder far more wonderful than any one or all of these.

God also has created –

TO DETERMINE HIS PURPOSE

This first verse of Genesis also gives us the Redeemer, and with Him a wonderful redemption. That creation and redemption are closely associated is seen from other Scripture. In Isaiah 45:17-18 we read, "Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not vain, He formed it to be inhabited. Here we see creation and salvation linked together in relation to Israel.

God is Spirit, but this fact does not necessitate any creation. God is also Light, but light does not need any particular creation. God is Love, and, when we say this it demands immediately a demonstration of some kind. Love must express itself, it must give, sacrifice, and show itself in a tangible way.

However marred human love may be because of sin, there is in love, of husband and wife, parents and children, and among brethren, something which is the same kind, though not in purity and degree, as that which dwells in the heart of God. Yes, love must express itself. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15: 13). "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:7-8).

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Here, at least in part, lies the answer to the question why God should create this vast universe, endow it so marvelously, and sustain it: because He loved us. So to express His love He also created a being in His likeness and image, a living soul. God knew when He launched creation that it would cause Him grief and anger; and that it would at length demand the giving of His own Son in the horrible death of crucifixion. But He created because He loved.

As we have said, this first verse of the Bible has seven words in the original Hebrew manuscript. However, only five words are needed to complete the meaning of the sentence. In the Hebrew language there is a particle (eth) which indicates the direct object. In this first sentence of the Bible it is used twice, before "the heavens, " and "the earth. " This particle is composed of two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, Aleph and Tau, which are the first and last letters of the alphabet. These first and last letters of the alphabet occur also as the first letters in the words Urim and Thummim on Aaron's breastplate (See Exodus 28:30). As we probe further into God's Word we find that this idea of the first and the last are connected with the Lord. "I the Lord, the first, and with the last; I am he" (Isaiah 41: 4). "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty, "... "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last" (Revelations 1:8,11). "Alpha and Omega" are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The quotations from Revelations make it clear that the Lord is the "Alpha and Omega. "

So that right here in the very beginning of the Bible, Christ is seen in these two particles that stand before the direct objects, "the heavens and the earth. " We are reminded in Colossians 1:16, "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth."

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And this verse is set right in the context of Christ as Redeemer. (See Colossians 1:13-14). Christ's relation to His creation of the heavens and the earth is not only that of Creator, but also Redeemer.

God created "the heavens and the earth" because He was to have two redeemed companies: Israel to reflect His redemptive glory on the earth, and the Church to reflect His glory in the heavens. And all of this is through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. So before the Almighty put any other objects on the earth and in the heavens, He put His Son there. The use of the particle "eth" before these two objects of creation certainly corroborate this fact, though it may seem a bit cryptic.

God created so that I Corinthians 15:28 becomes a reality, "That God may be all and in all." goal for a redeemed earth and a redeemed heaven. Only Christ the Redeemer can make this possible.

So the cross is the heart of both creation and redemption. In it we see a Display of His Divine love, a Defense of His Divine love, and also a Delight in His Divine love.

- "Son of God! With joy we praise Thee,
- On the Father's throne above;
- All Thy wondrous works display Thee
- Full of grace and full of love:
- Lord, accept our adoration -
- For our sins Thou once wast slain;
- Through Thy blood we have salvation,
- And with Thee we soon shall reign. "

ORTHOGRAPHY

The Greek Alphabet

FORM	EQUIVALENT	NAME	NUMERIC VALUE
1. A – α	a	'Αλφα – Alpha	1
2. B – β	b	Βητα – Bēta	2
3. Γ – γ	g	Γάμμα – Gamma	3
4. Δ – δ	d	Δέλτα – Delta	4
5. E – ε	ě	Επιλόν – Epsilón	5
6. Z – ζ	z	Ζετα – Zēta	7
7. H – η	ē	Ητα – Eta	8
8. Θ – θ	th	Θητα – Thēta	9
9. I – ι	i	Ίοτα – Iōta	10
10. K – κ	c	Κάππα – Kappa	20
11. Λ – λ	l	Λάμβδα – Lambda	30
12. M – μ	m	Μυ – Mu	40

13. Ν – ν	n	Νυ – Nu	50
14. Ξ – ξ	x	Ξι – Xi	60
15. Ο – ο	ō	Ομικρόν – Omicrón	70
16. Π – π	p	Πι – Pi	80
17. Ρ – ρ	r	Ρω – Rhō	100
18. Σ – σ, s	s	Σιγμα – Sigma	200
19. Τ – τ	t	Ταυ – Tau	300
20. Υ – υ	y	Υψιλόν – Upsilon	400
21. Φ – φ	ph	Φι – Phi	500
22. Χ – χ	ch	Χι – Chi	600
23. Ψ – ψ	ps	Ψι – Psi	700
24. Ω – ω	ō	Ωμέγα – Omēga	800

Numerics in Ephesians

By John Boyd

ENUNCIATION AND ENUMERATION

THE WORD "LOVE" Occurs Fourteen Times.

1. Holy and without blame before Him in "LOVE"—Eph. 1:4
2. Faith in the Lord Jesus and "LOVE" unto all the saints— Eph. 1:16.
3. For His great "LOVE" wherewith He loved us—Eph. 2:4.
4. That ye, being rooted and grounded, in "LOVE"—Eph. 3:17.
5. And to know the "LOVE OF CHRIST" which—Eph. 3:19.
6. With long-suffering, forbearing one another in "LOVE"— Eph. 4:2.
7. But speaking the truth in "LOVE," may grow up—Eph. 4:16.
8. Unto the edifying of itself in "LOVE"—Eph. 4:16.
9. And walk in "LOVE," as Christ also hath loved na— Eph. 5:2.
10. Husbands, "LOVE" your wives, even as Christ also— Eph. 5:25.
11. So ought men to "LOVE" their wives as their own bodies —Eph. 5:28.
12. Let every one of you in particular so "LOVE" his wife — Eph. 5:33.
13. And "LOVE" with faith, from God the Father and—Eph. 6:23.
14. Grace with all them that "LOVE" our Lord Jesus Christ —Eph. 6:24.

(Ephesians begins, continues and closes with "LOVE".)

EXPLANATION OF THE NUMBER FOURTEEN:

Fourteen being a multiple of "Seven" partakes of its significance, and being double that number, implies a double measure of spiritual perfection. 7 plus 7 equals 14.

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TEMPTATION

1—THE FACT. 2—THE SOURCE. 3—THE FORCE. 4—THE FINALITY.

1—AS TO THE FACT: Cp. Gen. 22:1. Matt. 4:1. Jas. 1:14.

2—AS TO THE SOURCE:

- (a)—Divine. Cp. Gen. 22:1. Psa. 26:2.
- (b)—Satanic. Cp. Matt. 4:1. 1 Thess. 3:5.
- (c)—Human. Cp. Deut. 6:16. Psa. 78:18. 1 Cor. 10:9.

3—AS TO THE FORCE: Cp. Deut. 7:19. 1 Cor. 10:13. Jas. 1:12. 1 Pet. 1:6.

4—AS TO THE FINALITY: Cp. 1 Cor. 10:13. Jas. 1:12.

—1—

THE HEBREW WORDS

1—BAH-'GHAN. (tempt). Primarily—"to try by heat." It means: To test, investigate, examine. It is a process by which realities and values are determined. • First occurrence—Gen. 42:15.

"ye shall be proved"

Translated:

EXAMINE—Psa. 26:2

PROVE—Gen. 42:15. Cp. Psa. 17:3

TEMPT—Mal. 3:15

TRY—I Chron. 29:17. Cp. Jer. 12:3.

NOTE: In Mal. 3:10 we have these words: "prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord."

In Deut. 6:16 we have these words: "ye shall not tempt the Lord your God."

There seems to be a contradiction. In Mal. 3:10 the word is BAH-'GHAN, but in Deut. 6:16 the word is NAH-SAH.

In one cast the proving is an act of faith; in the other the tempting is an act of doubt.

2—NAH-SAH. (tempt). Primarily—"to lift." To lift up for the purpose of testing the weight. A process that determines the quality of what is, or what is said, or what is done. First occurrence—Gen. 22:1

"God did tempt Abraham."

Translated:

ADVENTURE—Deut. 28:56

ASSAY—Deut. 4:34

PROVE—Ex. 15:25

TEMPT—Gen. 22:1. Cp. Deut. 6:16 TRY—2 Chron. 32:31

NOTE: The MOTIVE in Mal. 3:10 would be good; the MOTIVE in Deut. 6:16 would be evil. One would be a test by FAITH; the other a temptation of DOUBT. In BELIEVING, one may PROVE God; in DOUBTING,, one may TEMPT God.

3—MASSAH. (temptation). Refers to the temptation itself, or to the place of temptation. A word akin to NAH-SAH. First occurrence—Ex. 17:7

"called the name of the place MASSAH." Cp. Deut. 6:16.

Translated:

MASSAH—Ex. 17:7. Cp. Deut. 9:22

TEMPTATION—Deut. 4:34

TRIAL—Job 9:23

NOTE: The complaint and questioning on the part of the Children of Israel was something of a challenge thrown into the face of Jehovah. Ex. 17:7 helps us to understand what is meant when it is said: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." But by Faith, one can always prove Him.

NOTE:—Another word in the Greek translated~"triai" "is DOKIMAZO. It conveys the idea of "approval by testing or assaying." Cp. Lu. 14:19. Rom. 12:2. Eph. 5:10. 2 Cor. 13:5.

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THE GREEK WORDS

1—PEIRAZO (tempt). From "peran," to pierce; then "peira," a piercing. This Greek word corresponds to the Hebrew, NAHSAH. PEIRAZO means, literally, "to try."

First occurrence – Matthew 4:1

Translated:

1. ASSAY – Acts 16:7
2. EXAMINE – 2 Cor. 13:5
3. GO ABOUT – Acts 24:6
4. PROVE – John 6:6
5. TEMPT – Matt. 4:1
6. TEMPTER – Matt. 4:3
7. TRY – Heb. 11:17

NOTE: A process with GOOD intent – John 6:6

A process with EVIL intent – John 8:6

When God tries a person, it is to HELP the one tried.

When Satan tries a person, it is to HARM the one tried.

2—EKPEIRAZO (tempt). From "ek" which means – "out of" and "peirazo" that means – "to try." Therefore, the word EKPEIRAZO means "to try out."

It corresponds to the Hebrew word in Deut. 6:16

First occurrence – Matt. 4:7 "thou shalt not tempt."

Cp. Luke 10:25 and 1 Cor. 10:9.

3--PEIRASMOS (temptation). Trial.

First occurrence—Matt. 6:13 "and lead us not into temptation"

Cp. Luke 8:13; 1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Tim. 6:9.

4—PEIRAZON (tempter). The tempting, or trying one. His process is with evil intent.

First occurrence—Matt. 4:3 "when the tempter came to Him"

Cp. 1 Thess. 3:5

5—APEIRASTOS (cannot be tempted). From "a" meaning—"not" and "peirazo" meaning "tried."

The word "apeirastos" occurs in James 1:13.

The word "peirazo" occurs 3 times in James 1:13.

NOTE: There is no contradiction between Gen. 22:1 and James 1:13. The nature of the temptation in James 1:13 is shown by verse 14. In the case of Abraham his faith was tested.

The temptation in James 1:13 is due to one's lust that bringeth forth sin. It is a process that cannot be from God.

THEME: THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

- I. THE AUTHOR OF THE EPISTLE:
 1. HIS DESIGNATION: JAMES. Chapter 1:1

The identity of the writer has been the subject of dispute among scholars for the reason that three different persons in the New Testament bear the name. Two of the persons named were chosen by Jesus in the early apostolic company (Cp. Matt. 10:1-3). James, the writer of this epistle, was evidently a brother (half-brother) of Jesus (Cp. Matt. 12:46; 13:55; Mark 6:3; Galatians 1:19).

2. HIS POSITION:

1. HIS ANNUNCIATION: Chap. 1:1. "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." The word "servant" is "doulos" in the Greek and should be rendered "bond-servant" or "slave." James considered himself a bond-servant or slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. HIS JURISDICTION: Gal. 2:9. "A Pillar" in the Pentecostal Assembly. This position and honor in the Pentecostal assembly at Jerusalem was shared by three of the apostolic company: namely, Peter, James and John. The term "pillars" (Greek "stoulos," Cp. 1 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 3:12; 10:1) was a term applied by Jews to those who were teachers of the law. The term aptly fitted James who was thoroughly austere, authoritative, legalistic and ceremonial (Acts 21:18-24). James seems to have been the leader (Acts 12:17; Gal. 1:19) and the authoritative apostle in declaring the Word and will of God to that assembly (Acts 15:13-21; 21:18-24; Gal. 2:9; 12-16).

I. THE ADDRESS OF THE EPISTLE:

1. THE SUPERScription: Chap. 1:1

The student should read and ponder carefully the distinct, specific address of this epistle. According to the dictum of the Holy Spirit and the attestation of the penman, it was directed to:

THE TWELVE TRIBES DISPERSED ABROAD.

The verse reads: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, TO THE TWELVE TRIBES scattered (Greek: "diaspora" i.e., "dispersed") abroad." The epistle of James, with six other epistles written by Peter, John and Jude, are generally termed "General (or "Catholic") Epistles," and the implication is that the epistles mentioned were addressed to all believers and churches everywhere. The

title "General" and the consequent implication are both misleading and confusing in the true interpretation of the Word, will and way of God. The assumption that this epistle is addressed to THE CHURCH absolutely contradicts the superscription of the epistle. The epistle contains truth that by application is FOR EVERY BELIEVER, but by strict, literal and therefore true interpretation is Divinely stated to be TO and CONCERNING THE DISPERSED OF THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL.

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III. THE AIM OF THE EPISTLE:

1. ITS ACCENTUATION: The Troth Revealed and Stressed.

Inasmuch as the epistle is addressed to the dispersed of the twelve tribes, logically it contains truth specifically concerning and affecting that particular order of per-sons. Lack of space forbids the full investigation of the distinctions found in the epistle itself, between the purpose of God for the Church which is "His Body" and the believers in that past day and again in a future day, whose relationships are wholly and purely Israelitish and Messianic. Several points, however, may be noted briefly and these points, we trust, will lead our students to a thorough investigation of the differences between Israel, whether past or future, and the Church of the present Dispensation.

(1) THE DISPENSATION: The epistle was written during the Pentecostal Dispensation, a period beginning with the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:) and closing with the Divine, judicial, but temporary rejection of Israel as possessing a national relationship to God (Acts 28:26-28). The epistle therefore, addressed to people of that particular nation in a period before God began to deal with the Church under the new revelation and regime found in Ephesians and Colossians, would logically convey truth and practice connected with the Pentecostal Dispensation. The understanding of this fact will enable the student to gain a true apprehension of the truth and the aim of the epistle. Not a few great theologians have rejected the epistle as a part of the Sacred canon of Scripture because it SEEMED to contradict the "Grace" troth found in the Pauline epistles. There is no contradiction at all when the student discerns

the distinctions set by God Himself, between various peoples in various periods and for various places in His administrative economy.

(2) THE MINISTRATION: James addresses Jews only. The class of Jews addressed were believers whose faith rested upon the truth that Jesus was the Messiah. Therefore, to these who "were of the circumcision," James ministered as one of the ministers "to the circumcision" (Gal. 2:7-9). During the period, of the Pentecostal Dispensation embraced by the book of Acts and shared by the epistle of James, the ministers to the circumcision proclaimed Pentecostal truth as found in the early and succeeding chapters of Acts. Chief among the truths proclaimed was the "Kingdom Gospel," conveying to Israel, as a nation, the opportunity for national repentance. This repentance, *u* manifest, would have issued in a marvelous era for the nation. Christ, the Messiah-King, would have been "sent" back by the Father, and the times of refreshing, revival, restoration and restitution from the presence of the Lord would have been ushered in (Acts 3:18-21).

By Robert Acheron Hadden, D. D.

(Inside back cover)

day of this text is not Sunday, neither is it the Sabbath; it is, however, the future day of Jehovah. It will be a day peculiarly the Lord's. The Lord will be exalted and judgment will be with speed (Cp. Isa. 2:11, 12).

The "Lord's day" of Revelation can fit in only with "The day of the Lord" of Old Testament prophecy.

It is claimed by some that John was banished to the island called Patmos. This we do not believe. A literal reading of 1:9 conveys an entirely different sense. Note the reading: "John, and your brother and fellow-partaker in the tribulation and in the kingdom and endurance in Jesus Christ, became in the island which is called Patmos through the word of God and through the testimony of Jesus Christ." As he became in the island, so he became in spirit. The Greek word "egenomeen" should be translated "became" or "came to be" instead of being translated "was."

The Greek words "en taxei" occur in 1:1 and 22:6, where they are translated in the Authorized Version by the word "shortly." The Greek words mean literally "in speed." The coming and the judgments of the Lord are to be in speed (Cp. 2:5, 16, 3:11, 11:14, 22:7, 12, 20).

"Erkomai" is the Greek word translated "come," and it occurs 15 times in Revelation in relation to Christ (Cp. 1:4, 7, 8, 2:5, 16, 3:11, 4:5, 11:17, 16:15, 22:7, 12, 17* 202);

The Greek word "eidon," translated "I saw, I looked, I beheld," occurs 47 times in Revelation. The instruction given to John was: "What thou seest, write in a book" (Cp. 1:11). 47 times John says, "I saw." This was actual perception. What he saw he wrote, what he wrote we have as the last book of the Bible.

"The threefold designation, "Who is and who was and who is to come," occurs four times as follows: 1:4, 8, 4:8, 11:17.

That the Apocalypse is the consummation book of the Bible is shown by the use of the expression, "into the ages of the ages." The Greek words are: "eis tous aionas ton aionon." This expression occurs 14 times as follows; 1:6, 18, 4:9, 10, 5:13, 14, 7:12, 10:6, 11:15, 14:11, 15:7, 19:3, 20:10, 22:6.

It is of interest to note the perfect balance of Revelation. This, however, is true of all the books of the Bible. It is true of the Bible.

The Bible begins with Genesis, the book of origination. The Bible ends with Revelation, the book of consummation. What God purposes. He performs.