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"The Lamb opened the seventh seal." "Ye have approached Mount Zion, and the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem. . . See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh . . . saying . . . 'Yet once more I shake not the earth only but also heaven' . . . Wherefore, receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear." "Christ being come an High Priest . . . by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle . . . obtained eternal deliverance."—Rev. 8: 1; Heb. 12: 22, 25, 26, 28; 9: 11, 12.

A BRIEF GENERAL HISTORY OF ISRAEL'S WANDERINGS

DEUTERONOMY 1-4

This article is taken from the July-August 1968 Present Truth, pp. 57-60. Minor changes have been made to match our current style, otherwise, it is presented as originally written.

THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES is named *Debarim* in the Hebrew Scriptures (see, e.g., Leeser), from the first two words in it; but the name by which it is commonly known in English — Deuteronomy — is derived from that used in the Septuagint Greek (and, similarly, in the Vulgate Latin) translation, namely, *Deuteronomion*, meaning the *second law*. It is so called because it contains largely a *repetition* of the preceding laws. From this circumstance it has been termed by some of the rabbis *mishneh*, the *iteration*, or *doubling*. However, there are some supplementary things in it, not previously stated in the Pentateuch, that well deserve attention (Deut. 29: 1). We will treat of some of these, noting some points that have not already been sufficiently

covered. It is not our purpose to examine the book of Deuteronomy in detail.

The period of time in which the events of Deuteronomy took place was evidently only about two months. It began in “the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month” (1: 3) and lasted until the thirty-day mourning period after Moses’ death at 120 years of age was over (34: 1, 7, 8). Shortly thereafter Israel marched and after three days came to Jordan and the next day crossed it, *i.e.*, “on the tenth day of the first month” (Josh. 3: 1-5; 4: 19). Therefore Moses gave his farewell addresses and died sometime before the seventh of the preceding month. These farewell addresses constitute the greatest oration of all time, especially when their utterances are viewed in the light of the background of Israel’s preceding 40 years’ experiences and the approaching death of Moses, their beloved leader. How wonderfully this great and good man of God used his last few days in this earthly life in blessing God’s people!

THE “SECOND” LAW: COVENANT RENEWED

The Israelites were at the end of their forty years’ journey in the wilderness and were now about to enter into their promised land. Many of them had witnessed but little of the different experiences in the wilderness, because the former generation, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, had died in the wilderness, as God had foretold (Num. 14: 29-35; Deut. 1: 35-39). To impress them with the importance of keeping their covenant with God, and to further prepare them for the inheritance which God was about to give them, Moses *repeated* the principal occurrences of the forty years and emphasized to them the necessity of reverencing, loving, and obeying their covenant God. He repeated the Ten Commandments, with explanations, and certain ordinances belonging to the Law, adding others not previously given. He confirmed the whole Law in a most solemn manner, emphasizing the precious promises to those who keep it and the severe chastenings that would come upon those who would disobey it. He renewed the covenant between God and His people, prophesied of things which would come to pass in the latter days, and blessed each of the tribes prophetically with choice spiritual and temporal blessings; and then, having viewed the promised land from the summit of Mt. Nebo, the top or head of the hill Pisgah (Deut. 34: 1, margin), Moses entered into the sleep of death.



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- The defense of the Parousia Truth, given by the Lord through “that Servant,” as basic for all further development of the Truth;
- The defense of the arrangements, charter and will given by the Lord through “that Servant,” as binding on controlling corporations and associations among Truth people; and for
- The exposition and defense of the unfolding Epiphany-Basileia Truth, as meat in due season for the Lord’s people, as He is pleased to provide it.

Deuteronomy has three main divisions, which with their subdivisions may be listed as follows:

- A. Moses' three long addresses (Chaps. 1-30).
1. The history of the wanderings generally (1-4).
 2. The history of the early part of the wilderness sojourn, especially the circumstances under which the Law was given at Mt. Sinai, with some modifications and additional particulars in regard to the Ten Commandments, especially those on the first table, having to do with man's relationship with God (5-11), in regard to laws concerning festivals and similar religious matters (12-16: 17), and in regard to laws concerning judicial matters and private and social rights and duties (16: 18-chap. 26).
 3. The blessings and the curses that would follow upon the obedience or disobedience of the people (27-30).
- B. The appointment of Joshua to be Israel's leader into Canaan, and the committal of the Law to the priests, with a charge to them and a song (31-32: 47).
- C. An appendix (32: 48-34: 12) containing:
1. The announcement of God's arrangement for Moses' death (32: 48-52).
 2. Moses' parting blessing upon Israel (Chap. 33).
 3. The account of Moses' death (Chap. 34).

SPIRITUAL ANTITYPES

As already indicated, in Deut. 1-4 Moses reviewed and set forth for Israel the significance of the events of their forty years' journey through the wilderness. This types, as respects Spiritual Israel and their Gospel-Age journey, Jesus' reviewing and setting forth during the Parousia and the Epiphany the significance of their Gospel-Age experiences leading up to the time of the Harvest. He has been giving us this wonderful unfolding of Truth during the Harvest time. Moses' first address (1: 6 – 4: 40) was intended to prepare the way for the exposition of the Law that followed. In 1: 9-18 he reviewed his appointment of special assistants for himself in his work toward God's people. From the Gospel-Age standpoint, this types Jesus explaining the organization of the Church and His appointment of its star members, their special helpers, the general elders and the local elders, their office functions, *etc.* (see, *e.g.*, F 195-347). This matter was fully explained in treating Ex. 18: 13-26 in E 11, pp. 330-333, so nothing need be added here. The same applies to Deut. 1: 19-46, dealing with the twelve spies searching Canaan and reporting, *etc.*, which has been fully expounded in connection with Num. 13 and 14 as applying antitypically to spirit-begotten leaders of God's people studying the sphere of the Truth and its spirit and giving their findings in print, by word, *etc.* (Matt. 13: 52; E 9, pp. 179-235).

Esau was a descendant of Isaac, and Moab and Ammon were descendants of Lot and his daughters. As such, they were more nearly related to the Israelites than most others

*Spiritual Israel in coming into the sphere of
the Truth and its spirit were not to deal
unfairly with or persecute Fleshly Israel, nor
to seek to dispossess them of the portion God
had given them.*

of the neighboring nations. Antotypically, according to Deut. 2, Spiritual Israel in coming into the sphere of the Truth and its spirit were not to deal unfairly with or persecute Fleshly Israel, nor to seek to dispossess them of the portion God had given them (vs. 1-8; Rom. 11: 29). Likewise, they were not to deal unfairly with or persecute, nor seek to take over as such the sphere of Romanist autocracy, as embodied in its hierarchy and priesthood (Moab, *from father*, vs. 9-18), nor to do similarly with the sphere of clericalism as found in the Protestant clergy (Ammon, *from [my] people*; vs. 19-23). But the matter was different in the case of Satan (Sihon, *rooting out*, v. 24), the errorist (Amorite), the ruler of this evil world as a plotter (king of Heshbon, *device*), and the portion of the sphere of the Truth and its spirit that he held in sin and error (his land). God promised to give this into the power of His people; they were not to hesitate to go up against it in His strength and to wage warfare with Satan (I have given into thine hand . . . begin to possess . . . contend with him in battle). The Gospel-Age enemies of the Truth and its spirit have always trembled and fled in defeat before the well-equipped and loyal soldiers of the cross, under Jesus, the Captain of their salvation (v. 25; Luke 21: 15; Heb. 2: 10; Eph. 6: 10-17).

OPPOSITION FROM SATAN

Early in the Gospel Age our Lord sent forth loyal Truth servants into this present evil world, and thus to Satan, in a harmless manner (sent messengers out of . . . Kedemoth [*beginnings*] unto Sihon . . . with words of peace, v. 26). By their discourses, writings, conversations, actions, and general attitude of good will toward all (Gal. 6: 10), they in effect requested the god of this present evil world to let them pass peacefully through his domain (v. 27; 2 Cor. 4: 4; Gal. 1: 4), with the assurance that they in their dealings with worldlings would do justly (v. 28), continuing in this to the end, when they would come into their eternal inheritance (v. 29). But Satan would not let them pass through his domain unopposed; for God's leniency and longsuffering toward him had hardened his disposition and made his heart obstinate, thereby preparing him for his defeat (v. 30; comp. Ex. 7: 13, 14, 22). God promised to deliver Satan and his domain, infested with sin, error,

Throughout Satan's entire sphere there was not one group of his subjects that was strong enough to refute the Truth — God delivered them all into the hands of His people.

selfishness, and worldliness, into the hand of Spiritual Israel; and by His Word, spirit, and providential leadings He encouraged them to begin to drive out these evil qualities and to possess Satan's domain (v. 31).

Wherever and whenever God's loyal people presented the Truth and its spirit against Satan's domain, he mustered his forces to oppose them and bring tribulation upon them (Sihon came . . . to fight at Jahaz [*trampled-down* place, *i.e.*, a threshing floor], v. 32). In each conflict God gave His faithful people the victory over their enemies (v. 33); they conquered and possessed their strongholds and utterly refuted them, great and small, in every quarter (v. 34; comp. Gen. 22: 17; 2 Cor. 10: 4, 5). As a consequence they won many converts and gained many other advantages (v. 35). Throughout Satan's entire sphere there was not one group of his subjects that was strong enough to refute the Truth — God delivered them all into the hands of His people (v. 36). However, in harmony with God's injunction (v. 19), they did not invade and seek to take over as such the sphere of the advocates of clericalism (land of . . . Ammon, v. 37), including the most prominent groups among them (cities in the mountains), nor anything else forbidden by God (whatsoever the LORD . . . forbad us).

SATAN'S ERRORS OVERCOME

Not only did God's faithful people overcome Satan in his general errors, but in harmony with God's assurance to them they thoroughly refuted him and his underlings in the particular errors of eternal torment and human immortality (Og [*giant*] also, the king of Bashan [*fruitful* — as errors], and all his people, 3: 3; see E 10, p. 187). In vs. 8-11 Moses takes a retrospective view of the whole of the land that had been conquered on the east of Jordan, first (v. 8) in its whole extent from the river Arnon, a rushing stream, to Mt. Hermon, and then (v. 10) in its separate parts, to bring out in all its grandeur what Jehovah had done for Israel. This whole land types the entire sphere of the Truth and its spirit conquered by the elect, and emphasizes the grandeur of what God has done for them. The embryo Kingdom is typed by the Anti-Lebanon mountains (including Mt. Hermon), to the east of the Jordan, whereas the glorified Kingdom is represented by the Lebanon mountains west of the Jordan, which are comparatively more lofty (E 11, pp. 700, 701; E 12, p. 518).

God enabled the Christ class to gain complete victory over Satan, sin, error, selfishness, and worldliness (we took . . . the land, v. 8) and thus to enjoy to the fullest the

sphere of the Truth and its spirit in the Gospel Age, from the members in the tumultuous Jewish Harvest (Arnon, *noisy*), to those in the Gospel Harvest, the last members (the feet) of the Body, in the embryonic Kingdom (Hermon, *prominent, sacred mountain*). These as the light of the world (Shenir, *peak of light*, v. 9) were privileged to herald world-wide the glorious Harvest message of the Parousia and Epiphany Truth, and in God's strength (Sirion, *Jehovah has prevailed*) to gain complete victory even over the eternal torment and human immortality doctrines. The Little Flock are "more than conquerors" through Christ (Rom. 8: 35-37). But the prospective Great Company members also have been overcomers eventually and have enjoyed greatly antitypical Canaan east of Jordan. In the end of the Age the prospective Youthful Worthies have done likewise. God's loyal people overcame all the denominational strongholds of Christendom's errors (cities of the plain, v. 10) that infested the Gospel-Age sphere of the Truth and its spirit, and all their voluminous erroneous arguments (Gilead, *heap of witness*). They refuted all of Satan's flourishing errors (Bashan *fruitful*), even his progressive (Salchah, *walking*) and most powerful (Edrei, *mighty*) ones — the great strongholds of his kingdom (cities).

GOSPEL-AGE INHERITANCES

Vs. 12-20 review the distribution of the conquered land east of the Jordan. Jesus as God's Executive arranged for the prospective Little Flock (Reubenites, v. 12) and Great Company members (Gad; see E 4, pp. 450, 451; E 12, p. 517) to have as their inheritance the sphere of the Truth and its spirit that during the Gospel Age they conquered, from what they fought for and gained early in the Age amid the destruction of the Jewish polity (Aroer, *ruin*) in tumultuous times (Arnon, *noisy*) to and including what they gained in controversies in the end of the Age (Gilead, *heap of witness*). But the remaining portion of the sphere of the Truth and its spirit that was gained here in the end of the Age (Gilead, v. 13), including parts of that sphere in which there had been flourishing errors in Satan's empire (Bashan) and some not so prosperous (Argob, *stony*), was given to the Youthful Worthies (half tribe of Manasseh, *causing to forget*). Those Youthful Worthies who had less of the Truth and the graces, especially the nominal-church section (*Jair, enlightener*, v. 14), gained the less desirable portion of this sphere (Argob), including the part which borders on higher radical teachings (Geshuri, *bridge*) and lower ones (Maachathi, *depression*). Nevertheless, they considered their acquisitions as an honor to themselves (called them after his own name), as fruitful, vital, and enlightening (Bashan [*fruitful*]-havoth [*life-giving*]-jair [*enlightener*]). But our Lord gave the more desirable portion of this sphere (Gilead, v. 15) to those Youthful Worthies who had more of the Truth and the graces, who were more capable of dealing in spiritual wares (Machir, *trader* — Manasseh's firstborn; Josh. 17: 1).

To the prospective Little Flock (Reubenites, v. 16) and Great Company members (Gadites) Jesus gave as their Gospel-Age portion of the sphere of the Truth and its spirit the spirit-begotten condition and experiences (half the valley), from those in the Jewish Harvest (Arnon) to those of the Gospel Harvest inclusive (Gilead). This portion is bordered by pertinent Truth and its supporters (Jabbok, *pouring forth*) that helped to keep them separate from the sphere of clericalism (Ammon), and the race under the curse (Jordan, v. 17) in the present evil world (Chinnereth, *barp*), even to the destruction of the present order in the great Time of Trouble (salt sea), in connection with the beginning of the Kingdom (Ashdoth-pisgah, *springs of Pisgab* [the *hill*, see margin]; comp. 4: 49; Josh. 12: 3, margin).

HELPING THEIR BRETHREN

Vs. 18-20 treat of the final inheritance of the 2½ tribes, which was to be theirs after they helped the 9½ tribes to obtain their inheritance west of the Jordan. Antotypically, these verses refer to the final, post-Millennial, inheritance of the Little Flock, Great Company, and Ancient and Youthful Worthies in the spirit realm, which will be theirs after they help the restitution class to obtain their inheritance (Num. 32; Josh. 1: 12-15; E 4, pp. 450, 451; E 12, p. 517; P '60, p. 45). Vs. 21, 22 refer to Moses assuring Joshua that God would give him the victory over all his enemies. Antotypically, Jesus as God's Executive assured Himself as the Leader of God's people into their antitypical Canaan (see 1: 38; 31: 7, 23) that God would give Him the victory (see Dan. 7: 13, 14; Matt. 28: 18; Eph. 1: 18-23; 1 Pet. 3: 22; Rev. 17: 14; E 12, p. 516). In vs. 23-27 Moses tells of his reverence for Jehovah and of his earnest request to enter the promised land. This request was denied because he and Aaron in smiting the rock twice did not properly sanctify God in the eyes of Israel (Num. 20: 7-13). Antotypically, in this experience they do not represent Jesus and the Church, as they usually do, but rather the Parousia and Epiphany Ransom and Church-sin-offering deniers (Heb. 6: 6; 10: 29; 1 Cor. 10: 4; E 11, pp. 115, 116) who, after once having the light and then rebelling against it, are excluded from the Kingdom and everlasting life (Heb. 3: 16 – 4: 3, 6-11). The "goodly mountain" and "Lebanon [*white*]" (v. 25) refer to the Kingdom and its righteousness.

MOSES' EXHORTATION TO OBEDIENCE

After thus briefly reviewing what God had done for Israel, Moses proceeded in Deut. 4 to lovingly exhort them to keep the Law Covenant. God had done great things for them, both in mercies and in chastisements. Their duty and their interest therefore were plain — to abide firmly in the covenant into which they had solemnly entered with Him (v. 1). Antotypically, during the Parousia and Epiphany our Lord reviews for Spiritual Israel the wonders that God has accomplished for them and encourages them to diligently take heed to and obey the ethical (statutes) and doctrinal

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(judgments) teachings of His Word, that they might enter into the rest that God has provided for His obedient children. They were not to add to or take away from His Word (v. 2; comp. 12: 32; Prov. 30: 6; Matt. 15: 9; Rev. 22: 18, 19). Our Lord reminds His people (*a*) of the disastrous results that came upon apostate antitypical Israelites who were combined in an illicit union — symbolic fornication — with certain false doctrines and wrong practices, and (*b*) of the preservation of those who were faithful to God (vs. 3, 4; for details on antitypical Baal-peor please see E 9, pp. 394-405). Our Lord shows us that the ethical and doctrinal teachings that He has given us during the Gospel Age (v. 5) constitute the true wisdom that comes from above, and that the world in due time will in the Kingdom come to recognize it and confess the Lord's people as a wise and understanding people (v. 6). "For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that has statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day?" (vs. 7, 8, *R.S.V.*; Matt. 21: 43; 1 Pet. 2: 9).

Moses' exhortation continues with a warning not to forget the great events at Horeb (vs. 9-14) and a warning not to fall into idolatry (vs. 15-24); and it closes with a threat of dispersion among the heathen as the punishment of apostasy, and with a promise of restoration "in the latter days" if then they repent and turn back to their covenant God (vs. 25-31), and also with a reason for this threat and promise drawn from the history of God's unprecedented marvelous dealings with them (vs. 32-34), for the purpose of fortifying them in their fidelity to Him, the sole author of their salvation (vs. 35-40). This is indeed a wonderful prophecy pertaining to Fleshly Israel.

Antotypically, Jesus here in the end of the Gospel Age, especially through His Parousia and Epiphany Messengers, warns His people not to forget God's marvelous dealings with them in Kingdom matters (vs. 9-14). He charges them and by them prospectively His Millennial people not to render supreme devotion to any person on earth or in heaven, or to any work or theory of man pertaining either to things of earth or things of heaven, but ever to be mindful of the covenant of Jehovah their God (vs. 15-24). But after they have become established in the sphere of the Truth and

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its spirit, if they become unfaithful to God and corrupt themselves with idols (1 John 5: 21) He will send them strong delusion (2 Thes. 2: 10-12) and amid siftings, *etc.*, will scatter them among those who serve other gods (vs. 25-28). However, if they repent and turn back to God, they will find Him merciful and forgiving, even as He has promised (vs. 29-31); for never since God created man upon the earth has there been such a wonder as the New Creation, a holy nation, taken out from among the people, to whom God has spoken with such enlightenment, though amid severe trials, and has delivered by Christ Jesus in such marvelous ways (vs. 32-34). Jesus reminded His Gospel-Age people that God's revelation to them and His mighty deliverance of them from all their foes is for the purpose of convincing them that He is the Almighty, the only true God, worthy of their worship and full devotion, and that they should therefore give to Him their full allegiance and live in harmony with the Truth and its spirit (vs. 35-40).

THE CITIES OF REFUGE

Thus ends the first of Moses' three farewell addresses. The account of his appointment of three cities of refuge for unintentional manslaughter in the conquered land on the east side of the Jordan is inserted between his first and second addresses probably because these cities were selected at that time according to God's command in Num. 35: 14. The

cities of refuge represent Christ (see Berean Comments on vs. 11, 12), in whom alone forgiveness can be found for the Adamic sinner, represented by the unintentional manslayer. By his sin he slays the principle of righteousness, because of which Divine justice pursues him. He finds his refuge in Christ, where he must remain until Christ's High-priestly work on his behalf has come to an end, when he will be safe forever (after the death of the high priest, Num. 35: 28).

A GLORIOUS PERMANENT INHERITANCE

Deut. 4: 41-43 mentions three cities appointed on the east side of the Jordan. Antotypically, these are for the three elect classes, who will eventually have their inheritance in the spirit nature. They find in Christ an escape from the demands of Justice and forgiveness of their Adamic sins — the Ancient Worthies anticipatorily and the rest after Jesus' sacrifice was completed. Bezer (*strong*) fittingly pictures God's pertinent arrangement for the Little Flock, who develop the strongest characters and attain to heights of the Divine nature (Reubenites — Reuben being the firstborn). Ramoth (*heights*) was provided for the Gadites (*troop*), typing the arrangement for the Great Company, who will be favored with a high spirit nature, though less than the Divine. Golan (*exile*) was provided for the Manassites (*causing to forget*), the half tribe east of Jordan, typing the arrangement for the Worthies, represented here in the Youthful Worthies, who are exiles, being developed along with the spirit-begotten ones, but not of them. These three classes make their escape from death at the hands of Justice in their flight by faith and consecration to Christ as their Savior (Hymns 137; 251).

* * *

WINGS AGAINST THE WIND



*Today the wind is wild and high,
Yet etched against the stormy sky
A bright bird takes its certain way
Across the tumult of the day;
And strange, no harsh complaining note
Issues from its out-thrust throat,
As trustingly, its wings out-spread,
It forges valiantly ahead.*

*So would I set my spirit free —
My wings against the wind, and be
Upheld by faith as is the bird
That utters no protesting word.
Though storms be rife, and high winds blow,
My wings will bear me up, I know,
Out of the darkness into light,
After a long and arduous flight.*

DO YOU LOVE GOD?

“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and practice his commandments” (1 John 5: 2, Diaglott).

This article is taken from Watch Tower Reprints, pp. 244, 245 (July-August, 1881). Minor changes have been made to match our current style.

THIS DOES NOT READ as is generally supposed; it does not say we know that we love God because we love His children, but almost the reverse: We love the children because we love the Father. In a word, it is through our relationship and union with our Head, Jesus, that we are permitted to partake of the spirit or mind of the Father, and that spirit is the spirit of Love — love toward all that is good and noble and pure and just, and consequently, hatred of all that is impure, sinful, and opposed to the things loved — “hating iniquity” — loving righteousness.

If then you love God and have become a partaker of His spirit, (“Let the same mind [spirit] be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, our Lord”) — “if the spirit of Christ dwell in you,” you will love all things in which there is any good and hate all evil, because it is opposed to good. And not only so, but as John expresses it, if we are entirely surrendered to God and to obedience to His will, those to whom we will be especially drawn and whom we will especially love will be those who are begotten of the same spirit — who also love righteousness and hate iniquity.

How you have proved this in your own experience: You met a stranger and before you were aware you were acquainted; you recognized in each other the spirit of Christ and not the spirit of the world, and this was the basis of fellowship. But how shall we know whether the ones you love are the children of God or not? Perhaps you love worldly people, or perhaps you love moral people who are not new creatures, best. How can you tell? By the Apostle’s rule: “By this we know that we love the children of God” — if we love God supremely.

LOVING GOD SUPREME

But does some one say: “How can I know that I love God supremely?” We have heard dear Christians pray: “Oh, Lord help me to love Thee,” and we remember a sweet hymn which says: “Let me love thee.” And we wish that all who are the Lord’s might realize that love to Him is not a gift to be prayed for, and not a thing which is given to us, but a thing which we ourselves must develop. The basis of all love for any person or thing is knowledge. You can only learn to love good and hate evil by becoming acquainted with them; so the way by which we come to love God is by becoming acquainted with Him. We cannot become personally acquainted with Him, for no man hath seen God, but we can and do become acquainted with His spirit — His mind — as we see it manifested in Christ Jesus, our Lord, and through the Apostles, and through those who are entirely consecrated to Him now living in the world. And the more we see of His spirit — its meekness, patience, long-

suffering, charity — love, the more we come to love Him who is the fount or source of all this — for we realize that God is love.

Nor is this the only way we can learn of God’s spirit, for as we look in His Word, (having come into harmony with Him and consecrated ourselves to Him) the spirit of God is more and more revealed to us as we come to see His great and loving plans therein recorded; and the more we see of perfection and beauty and love in the plan, the more we will admire and love the great planner — our Father. God desires all His creatures to become acquainted with Him (and in due time will cause “the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth,” in order that all may have an opportunity to love Him — “for his mercy endureth forever”) but now during this “present evil world,” or time while evil is allowed to reign, He is revealing himself only to those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, and who use them. If then we would love, we must know God; if we would know, we must make use of the instrumentality and search the Scriptures for His plan and will, and seek to know what is “that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

THE TRUE TEST

In the verse following the one above considered, the Apostle lays down a rule by which we may know whether we really love God or not, viz.: “For this is the love of God: that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not burdensome.”

Are you in the Lord’s hands — are you seeking to do His will? If so, what motives actuate you — love, or fear? If fear, your service will be a drudgery; you may perform, but it will be a burden and a continuous effort to render obedience to His wishes. If you serve God from love your experience will be different — it will be a pleasure to do His will; a

“Joy to find in every station

Something still to do or bear” —

a pleasure to sacrifice earthly comforts or pleasures whenever His will thus indicates.

How simple and yet how absolute is this test of whether and how much we love God or fear Him! If we fear we may obey and find it burdensome, but if we love Him we keep His commands and do not find them burdensome.

Oh, how often has this burdensome obedience to God been brought to our notice! Some one whom we had supposed was serving the Lord in loving obedience begins to tell us how much he suffers for Christ’s sake, and how much he bears of the burden and heat of the day laboring in the vineyard. No, if we have the spirit of Christ, we will not

feel the commands of our Father burdensome, but a pleasant service, and it will be true of us as of Him: "I delight to do thy will, O God."

If then the doing of the will of God be unpleasant to us, if it be not with us as with Paul, that the sacrifice of earthly things — earthly wealth, influence, pleasures — are a privilege and a joy, it must be because we lack the love of God, which constrained Paul and all the Apostles to reckon all these things and life itself but loss and dross, on account of the knowledge of the anointed Jesus, our Lord, on whose

account we suffer the loss of all things and consider them to be vile refuse, so that we may gain Christ (Phil. 3: 8).

Come then, you who labor, you who are burdened in the Lord's service, come to Him who speaks, saying: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11: 28). Come, receive of His spirit of entire consecration. Then you can with Him say: "I delight to do thy will, O God." Thus we will know that our obedience is from love of God — if His will is not burdensome, but a delight to us.

TIMEPIECE

DENOMINATIONAL UNION IS THE CRY

Zion's Watch Tower, June 1, 1904

The following from the Toronto (Canada) *News* well illustrates the trend of public opinion throughout Protestant Christendom. The spirit of union, or confederacy, is in the very air, as foretold by the prophet, who says: "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid." — Isa. 8: 12.

Fear, a realization of weakness, is at the bottom of this desire for union at the expense of the truth. A union would give prestige to doctrines which cannot be sustained either by reason or Scripture. A union would give greater political power, and lead ultimately to the suppression of the truth as *unsettling* and antagonistic to the *peace* of error and errorists. But the truth has naught to fear, and the truth people see clearly that only the truth can produce that real heart-union which the Lord referred to in his prayer for his people — "that they all may be one." Another part of our Lord's petition was, "Sanctify them through thy truth." Wherever the sanctifying of the truth goes, there true union goes, proportionately. Not worldly union, however; not denominational union, for the truth separates from the world and from denominationalism and unites all developed children of the truth to each other, by uniting each to the head — our Lord. Such are taught of God; such hear their head; such are thus made one in Him and in His truth.

We quote the popular and erroneous view of the question, as follows:—

"One of the most encouraging features of the present religious condition of the world is the increasing prevalence of a desire for Christian union. The arguments in favor of union are numerous and weighty. But the most powerful of them all — the consideration that should be kept in the forefront of the whole discussion — is that the object aimed at is very dear to the heart of Christ himself.

"The union that most Christians desire is not a vague, unsubstantial thing, but a solid, practical reality — not a mere spiritual unity of aim and motive, but an external, visible union, which will remove the reproach of unseemly rivalry that Protestant Christianity has too long been compelled to bear. Such

an organic union constitutes the only real answer to the great intercessory prayer of our blessed Lord — the solemnly suggestive petition offered up amid the deepening shadows of the last night of his earthly ministry: 'That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.' How much conviction of the divine mission of Christ is likely to be aroused in the heart of the world by the sight of the scores of rival sects into which the Church of Christ has been split up?

"Of course, the situation is improving. In our own country, nearly thirty years ago, Presbyterians led the way in the matter of closing up their denominational ranks, and consolidating their forces for the performance of their common work; and the example thus set was followed a few years later by the Methodists. The last quarter of a century has witnessed, too, a most gratifying advance in inter-denominational fellowship. Ancient asperities are being softened; denominational bigotry is slowly disappearing; in Christian utterances the irenic is being substituted for the polemic; mutual misunderstandings and recriminations are giving place to mutual appreciations and commendations, and from almost every branch of the divided Church of Christ many a 'God speed you' is heard, addressed to Christian brethren of other communions. All this the world can see, and the force of all this the world can hardly fail to feel.

"But how immeasurably more impressive would be the spectacle of one magnificent united Church! How irresistible would be the appeal to the world's conscience, if all the scattered companies of the Lord's army were united in one grand battalion, 'endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace!'

"In so far as the Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches are concerned, this desirable consummation seems to be within measurable distance, the question of their corporate union having now come to be a question of practical church politics."

The 153 “Great Fishes” of John 21: 11

This article, taken from the May-June 1966 Present Truth, pp. 42-44, was written by one of our former editors, Bro. Raymond Jolly. It is a fine explanation of John 21: 1-11, especially v. 11. Minor changes have been made to match our current style, otherwise, it is presented as written.

AS IS WELL KNOWN to most of our readers, various numbers in the Bible are carefully chosen and are very significant. Many Bible students are well acquainted with the symbolic significations of frequently used numbers, such as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 40, *etc.*, and their multiples. And it is interesting also to learn of the symbolic meanings locked up in numbers that are not frequently used, either as such or in their component parts. Note, *e.g.*, what is signified in the number 127 in Esther 1: 1 (E 10, p. 275), in the various numbers in Num. 31: 32-46 (E 9, pp. 286-291), in Abraham's 318 warriors (Gen. 14: 14; P '58 p. 86), in the 350 years of Noah's life after the Flood and his total lifetime of 950 years (Gen. 9: 28, 29; P '44, p. 29; '54, pp. 24, 25), and in the 420 talents of gold of Solomon and Hiram (1 Kg. 9: 28; P '54, p. 24).

However, the significance of the number 153, found in John 21: 11, has long remained a mystery. Why should special mention be made that there were just 153 large-size fish in the net on this occasion and that nevertheless the net was not broken? Evidently there is some special significance in these things. The number 153 is not found anywhere else in the Bible; therefore we cannot derive any conclusions as respects its significance from any analogous use of it.

The number 153 can be factored as being $3 \times 3 \times 17$. This suggests the Little Flock, as follows: The 3 used twice suggests that which is *very good* (E 4, p. 103, top). The 17 may be divided as $10 + 7$, which suggests the perfection reckoned to them in the flesh (10) through Jesus' ransom merit and their final actual perfection in the Divine nature (7). It seems, also, that our Lord has given us a remarkable verification of the 153 as representing the Little Flock. This becomes evident from a careful comparison of the account of the miracle in John 21: 1-11 with His parable of the dragnet in Matt. 13: 47-50 and with the former similar miraculous draught of fish recorded in Luke 5: 1-11.

In each of these three cases the fish represent men (Matt. 4: 19), and the net the Gospel message — the call of the Gospel Age. This call went forth at the hands of the Lord's servants, the fishermen. The Gospel net was not intended to catch *all* the symbolic fish in the sea (the world). Only a particular number (144,000) of a particular kind was the object in view.

It will be noticed that in the parable of the dragnet (Matt. 13: 47-50) fish “of every kind” (representing real Christians, half-deceived and deluded Christians, and multitudes of unconsecrated Christians, imitation Christians, hypocrites, *etc.* — those that together constitute the great nominal church) were gathered (comp. Matt. 22:

10). The time of bringing the net to shore and of sorting the fish represents the Gospel-Age Harvest, the reckoning time, at “the end of the world [Greek, *aiōnos*, age],” when the figurative catching was concluded and the separating, by means of testings, siftings, *etc.*, took place.

The good were gathered into vessels (various groups of the spiritual elect — the non-spirit-begotten consecrated are evidently not brought into the picture here). But the bad, the unsuitable, were cast away, evidently back into the sea. The bad here represent the unconsecrated (professed Christians) in general — those, the unsuitable, not real Christians — who during the Harvest reaping time were not fit to be of the spiritual elective classes in the Kingdom, whatever else they may eventually be fit for. They are represented here as cast back into the world. They got into the Gospel net, but were not desired nor fit to be of the spiritual elect, to serve either in the throne or before the throne. They will be blessed with the rest of the world in the next Age, when the symbolic fishing will be different, for a different purpose, and on a much larger scale.

In Matt. 13: 49, 50 (as in the parable of the wheat and the tares) the furnace of fire, in which there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (vs. 30, 41, 42, 50), symbolizes the great Time of Trouble; and the angels (messengers) — the reapers — in separating the wheat from the tares (vs. 30, 41, 49) correspond to the fishermen in sitting down and separating the good fish from the bad (v. 48). The “wicked” (rather, *depraved*, in nature; for the Greek word used here is not *kakos*, which word is not used at all in this parable, and which indicates a condition that is *intrinsically* bad or worthless in character, but *poneros*, which refers to *effects*, indicating that which is *ill*, *diseased*, *derelict*) are here contrasted with the “just” (the “righteous” — Diaglott; the same Greek word is used also in Rev. 22: 11, where the Great Company is represented in the “righteous” — see E 10, p. 114; P '51, p. 90; '54, p. 57).

The account in Luke 5: 1-11 gives a somewhat more restricted viewpoint, in that no sorting, discarding, or casting back into the sea is indicated. In the parable of Matt. 13: 47-50 the separation of the good fish from the unsuitable ones (corresponding to the separation of the wheat from the tares) and the casting back of the unsuitable fish into the sea (the world), harmonizes with the prophecy in Zech. 13: 8, 9. There the two parts that are “cut off” from the world are the Little Flock and the Great Company, and the third part, brought through the refining fire of the Millennial Age, is the non-elect world of mankind who will become God's people in restitution (Z 3634; E 6, pp. 218,

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219). But in Luke 5: 1-11 this "third part" is not indicated, but only the "two parts" — the Little Flock and the Great Company. Here the net "inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake"; and they "filled both the ships, so that they began to sink"; and they were astonished "at the draught of the fishes which they had taken" (vs. 6, 7, 9). The Gospel message during the Gospel Age gathered a great multitude of truly consecrated Christians, New Creatures, far more than the foreordained number that would constitute the Bride of Christ.

In John 21: 1-11 a still more restricted viewpoint is given; for here it was not "a great multitude of fishes"; nevertheless, they "were no longer able to draw it [the net], from [because of] the multitude of [*the*, so the Greek] fishes" (see Diaglott). Only "the very elect," the Little Flock (very small in number compared to the Great Company or to the world of mankind, but yet by itself rather large in number — 144,000), is here indicated. The Little Flock was full and complete in its final membership by the Fall of 1914, the end of the 40-year Harvest reaping period (for proofs see E 5, pp. 143-177; P '37, pp. 182-192). Then the plowman — the Time of Trouble began to overtake the reaper (Amos 9: 13), and it did so fully by the Spring of 1916, when the sealing of the 144,000 in their foreheads was finished (Rev. 7: 1-4; E 5, pp. 147-150), though many of them remained on earth for years thereafter. But by Oct. 1914 God had begotten by His spirit the full number of those who He knew would finally make up "*the* fishes," the "many brethren" predestinated "to be conformed to the image of his Son [as members of His Body]" (Rom. 8: 29; Eph. 1: 5). Accordingly, in the Fall of 1914 the door of entrance into the High Calling closed — the net was full, they "were no longer able to draw it" — no more of "*the* fishes," those who would be of the Little Flock, were to be caught, and therefore no more spirit-begettals were to be made for Gospel-Age purposes.

This time the net did not break (v. 11), for it was not overloaded — it contained only the foreordained number, 12,000 of each of the twelve symbolic tribes, thus totaling 144,000 (represented by the 153 "great fishes"); the Gospel net was designed and fully prepared to accomplish their catching. In the parable (Matt. 13: 47-50) the dragnet caught fish "of every kind" — good and bad, large and small. In Luke 5: 1-11 the "great multitude of fishes"

caused the rending of the meshes of the net due to the overload, and the fish filled the two ships to their capacity. No indication is given there as to the size of the fish; they were probably both great and small, thus providing nicely for the greater and the lesser development respectively of the Little Flock and the Great Company. But in John 21: 1-11 the net was "full of *great* fishes," thus fitly pointing to the Little Flock; all of them were highly and fully developed and thus were fitted for the highest attainment and glory, that of the Divine nature. Here again there is no record that any were discarded. Obviously, therefore, the 153 "great fishes" represent the Little Flock, the foreordained sons of God of the Divine nature. In 2 Cor. 6: 18 the Little Flock are called God's "sons," in contrast to the Great Company, who are called His "daughters."

"HUIOS" AND "TEKNON"

The Greek word translated "sons" in 2 Cor. 6: 18 is a plural form of *huios*, which usually indicates a mature son, or one having strength. *Huios* is applied to Jesus as the Son of man, the Son of God, *etc.*, and to adults, as in Matt. 1: 20; 20: 20, 21; 21: 37, 38; 22: 2; Luke 7: 12; 12: 53; 15: 13, 19, 21, 24, 25, 30; 19: 9, *etc.* *Huios* is used in Mark 3: 17; Luke 10: 6; John 17: 12; Acts 13: 10 [translated "son" instead of "child" in the R.V.] and 2 Thes. 2: 3, to indicate fully developed, or strong qualities. The thought of superiority, maturity, strength, or advanced development is shown by the use of *huios* in Matt. 1: 21, 23, 25; 2: 15; Luke 6: 35 [sons — R.V.]; Acts 2: 17; Rom. 8: 14, 19; Gal. 4: 6, 7; Heb. 2: 10; 12: 7, 8 and Rev. 21: 7.

The Greek word *teknon*, on the contrary, which means a *child* (*as produced*), gives the thought of immaturity, or of a child in training; it is used also in general address, and sometimes as a term of endearment. It is frequently translated by the word "child," or in the plural "children," as, *e.g.*, in Matt. 2: 18; 7: 11; 10: 21; 19: 29; 23: 37; 27: 25; Luke 1: 7, 17; 3: 8; 7: 35; Acts 2: 39; 7: 5; 21: 5, 21; Rom. 9: 7, 8; Eph. 5: 1, 8; 6: 1, 4; 1 Pet. 1: 14; 1 John 3: 10; 5: 2; 2 John 1, 4, 13 and 3 John 4. In Matt. 9: 2; Mark 2: 5; 10: 24, *teknon* is used as a customary and polite form of address; and in Luke 2: 48; 16: 25; 1 Cor. 4: 14, 17; 1 Tim. 1: 2, 18; 2 Tim. 1: 2; 2: 1; Titus 1: 4 and Phile. 10 it is used to express endearment, with possibly at times immaturity also.

Thus we see that certain distinctions are made in the Greek that are not always made in our translations. In this connection, it is interesting to note that in the parable of the prodigal son the younger one, being an adult, is in Luke 15: 13, 19, 21, 24 and 30 referred to by the term *huios*; and so is the older son in v. 25, but in v. 31 the father addresses him as *teknon*. And in Luke 20: 31 *teknon* (in the plural form) is used for children by marriage, but in v. 34 *huios* (in the plural form) is used for the children (*sons* — R.V.) of this Age who

marry, and in v. 36 it is used for the fully developed, mature children (*sons* — R.V.) of God, and of the resurrection.

And what is it that the world is waiting for? Is it the immature or the mature, fully developed sons of God? Surely not the former, but the latter. This is very nicely brought out in Rom. 8: 14, 19: “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons [plural of *buios*] of God”; and “the creature [the creation] waiteth for the manifestation of the sons [plural of *buios*] of God.” But meanwhile, the Apostle explains, before this sonship (*buios*-ship, v. 23) is fully attained, the Church first received the “*Spirit* of sonship [*buios*-ship]” (v. 15), and “the Spirit itself beareth witness with our [the Church’s] spirit, that we are the children [plural of *teknon* — in process of development, still immature] of God: and if children [plural of *teknon*], then heirs” (vs. 16, 17). Also “the creature [the creation] itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (v. 21). The plural of *teknon* is used here, for many in their training in restitution will fail to attain to full and final sonship, but will be destroyed in the Second Death, hence the term *buios* would not apply to them. Similarly, the Apostle John, in 1 John 3: 1, 2, speaks of the Church in the flesh as “children,” rather than as fully developed sons: They are called “sons [*tekna*, the plural of *teknon*, *i.e.*, children — R.V., ones still in process of development] of God . . . now are we the sons [*tekna*, children] of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be [when the term *buios* will be fully applicable].”

THE ADDED SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NUMBER 153
With these prefatory remarks, we are better enabled to understand how the number 153, as the number of the “*great fishes*,” indicates the Little Flock, the predestinated 144,000 members of the Body of Christ, whom God chose in Him before the foundation of the world “for Sonship [*buios*-ship] through Christ Jesus for himself” (Eph. 1: 4, 5 — Diaglott).

Jesus “came into [Greek, *eis*] his own [*domain*], and yet his own [people] received him not” (John 1: 11 — Diaglott). If they had received Him, the 144,000 (12,000 of each tribe) would have consisted only of Fleshly Israel; but many of them were broken off because of unbelief (Rom. 11: 20), and consequently the Gospel was sent to the Gentiles, to make up the lacking number (Acts 13: 46, 47; 15: 14; 28: 25-28). Jesus offered sonship first to the Jews, and “as many as received him, to them gave he power [authority] to become the sons [*tekna*, children, as newly produced, immature sons, to be developed into mature Divine sons — *buios*] of God” (John 1: 12).

If, now, we take into account the numeric values of the Hebrew letters for the expression “sons of God,” namely, *Beni-Ha Elobim*, we find that they total exactly 153, as representing the Divinely ordained number, the 144,000

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who under training would attain unto sonship as Divine beings (2 Pet. 1: 4). It is significant that this number 153 should first be found hidden in the phrase “Sons of God” in the Old Testament, in the Hebrew language; for the call to sonship in Christ went out first only to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. 10: 6), who were of the Hebrew race, of the sons of Abraham. The full 144,000 “sons of God” (for which the 153 stands symbolically) would have been found in Abraham’s natural seed, if some had not been broken off because of unbelief.

During the Gospel Age God has visited the Gentiles, the nations, to take out of them a people, the remainder of the predestinated 144,000, for His name. Together with those from among the Jews, these are the “called, and chosen, and faithful” (Rev. 17: 14), the Little Flock, those who are faithful unto death as a part of Christ’s Sin-offering. Having suffered with Christ as members of His Body, they are glorified together with Him in the First Resurrection, as His joint-heirs in the Divine nature (Rom. 8: 17). The Greek word for “joint-heirs” is very significant also in this connection; it is *sugkleronomoi*, and its total numeric value is 1071, which is 153 x 7. Thus the 153 “great fishes” in the unbroken net stand for the full number of 144,000 *joint-heirs* with Christ, members of His Body, who were caught by the call to the Divine nature and share with Him in it.

And that the 144,000 as the New Creation, the Creation of God, are associated with Jesus in the First Resurrection, is shown in the Greek for “Creation of God,” which is *Ktisis Theou*, the total numeric value of which is 1224, which is 153 x 8. As noted in B.S. ’65, p. 71, the Greek word for “Jesus” is *Iesous*, the numeric value of which is 888. The number 8 stands not only for Jesus, but also for the resurrection — the eighth day (the one after the seventh thousand-year day) is the time when mankind’s resurrection to perfection will be full and complete. The Church in her justification was reckoned as living on the eighth day (E 11, pp. 392, 393; E 15, p. 710), and her resurrection is complete when she is joined to her Lord in the First Resurrection.

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” (Rom. 11: 33).

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QUESTION BOX

1. *How can we harmonize the claim that we are engaged in Millennial seed-sowing with Amos 9: 13, which seems to state that this work has been suspended?*

The premise of the question is correct: we do claim to be engaged in Millennial seed-sowing, though first we need to clarify the meaning of this term. Bro. Russell referred to Millennial seed-sowing in several places in Vol. 3, *Thy Kingdom Come*. He compared it to the Gospel Age seed-sowing that began at the beginning of the Age and continued until its Harvest in 1874 (Matt. 13: 24-30).

He used this term on p. 216, para. 2: "It will not be long before the plowman of the next dispensation (the great time of trouble foretold, which will prepare the world for the Millennial seed-sowing) shall overtake the reaper of this dispensation. — Amos 9: 13."

He referred to this work on p. 136, para. 1: "Another and a larger sowing, under the more favorable conditions of the Millennial age and Kingdom, will soon be commenced: indeed, the seeds of truth on restitution, etc., which will produce that coming crop, are even now being dropped here and there into longing, truth-hungry hearts."

Bro. Russell even indicated when this work began. When discussing the close of the general call to the High Calling, he referred to another call that began opening up to the world at that time. This is on p. 218, para. 2: "The stopping of the call here in 1881 is followed, or rather lapped upon, by the general call of the whole world to the Millennial blessings and favors upon conditions of faith and willing obedience."

To summarize: Millennial seed-sowing is the work that the Lord's people engage in, of witnessing various truths (especially that of Restitution) to the world. It began in 1881 and will likely continue throughout the Millennial Age. Its purpose is to prepare the world for the work and arrangements of the coming Kingdom and, subsequently, its Little Season of testing.

Amos 9: 13 Examined

Amos 9: 13: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt."

The "plowman" is the great Time of Trouble, the first feature of which was World War I. The "reaper" consists of God's servants from 1874 to 1914, who gathered the Lord's saints into the Truth. The plowman overtaking the reaper reveals that the beginning of World War I, in the Fall of 1914, was the sign that the reaping had ended. The gleaning, however, continued until the Passover of 1916, when the sealing in the forehead —

with enough Truth to come out of Babylon — of every Little Flock member was achieved (Rev. 7: 3; 18: 4).

The "treader of grapes" also refers to the Time of Trouble. The seed-sower is the Little Flock as the reprover for sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16: 8), and as the gatherer of the remaining members of the Little Flock. Again, the treader of grapes overtaking "him that soweth seed" points to the Time of Trouble as putting an end to that particular sowing work of the Little Flock.

The "mountains" dropping sweet wine beautifully expresses the blessings of Truth that God's Kingdom will provide for the world of mankind during the Mediatorial Reign — something that has in certain respects already begun. The "hills" melting describes the progressive levelling of society as the Time of Trouble advances to a completion (*comp.*, Psa. 97: 5).

Seeming Contradiction Harmonized

After reading Amos 9: 13, one could gather the impression that the Time of Trouble put an end to any seed-sowing until the Mediatorial Reign begins. However, when we recognize that the Time of Trouble put an end to the reaping and *seed-sowing of the Little Flock*, the picture changes. This verse does not indicate that other classes (Great Company, Youthful Worthies, Consecrated Epiphany Campers, and the rest of the *quasi*-elect) could not participate in Millennial seed-sowing. Facts prove that this work has continued since the Time of Trouble began.

Let us ask some related questions:

- Are Epiphany-enlightened brethren the only ones engaged in Millennial seed-sowing? The answer is *no*. Our Parousia-enlightened brethren from the Truth groups are also participating in this work. Even our brethren in and out of the denominations, sects, and other Christian groups are doing this work, *to the extent that they are preaching the message of Christ as Savior and King*.

- Is Millennial seed-sowing our most important work? Again, we answer *no*. Though it is important, there are two other spheres of service even more essential: (1) developing our own characters in Christlikeness, and (2) helping our brethren to do likewise.

- Will this Millennial seed-sowing be fruitful? The perplexing experiences of the Time of Trouble first must prepare the world for the more fruitful Millennial seed-sowing that will transpire during the Mediatorial Reign. Also, the seeds of Truth are likely being planted in the hearts and minds of many, and await the more favorable conditions of the Kingdom to grow. This thought should encourage us to keep up this good work despite disappointing results.

2. *How does the holy spirit work in God's non-spirit-begotten people at the present time?*

The word “spirit” is used in the Scriptures in many different senses, two of which we will discuss now:

- (1) God's power, and
- (2) God's disposition in Himself, in Jesus, in the Church, and in all the consecrated.

Though the operation of the holy spirit upon every consecrated class of God's people includes both of the above meanings, it works somewhat differently in some classes than in others. Jesus and His Gospel-Age followers received both the *begetting* and the *anointing* of the holy spirit.

What does it mean for present-day consecrators to receive the holy spirit in sense (1) — God's power? It means that God gives them the power to:

- *know what* His will is for them to do in His service.
- *know how* to perform His will in His service.
- *possess the ability* to do His will in His service.

Each of us, if we have been diligently observing God's workings in our lives, should be able to recognize His power upon us, especially how, since our consecration, He through His Word, spirit, and providences, has granted us the knowledge, the directions, and the ability to perform His will.

God's Disposition in His People Today

Before discussing what it means for present-day consecrators to receive the holy spirit in sense (2) — God's disposition — let us first define *disposition*. It is: *the natural or acquired mental, moral, and religious character of a person*:

- *mental* character is one's thinking: perceiving, remembering, and reasoning.
- *moral* character means one's feelings and will toward his fellows.
- *religious* character refers to one's feelings and will toward God, Christ, and good principles (the Truth and its spirit).

Such character may be good, bad, or indifferent, though we use it here in the sense of a good disposition.

The good disposition in God's people has its beginning immediately after justification and before consecration. Because *justice* is the main motivating principle in the justified life, we could rightly say that the justified are *consecrated to righteousness*. God, through their experiences, seeks especially to develop them in *faith* and *righteousness* (justice). As they make progress, they grow in faith and in the two features of justice: *piety* (duty love toward God and Christ) and *brotherly love* (duty love toward one's neighbor). And through these three virtues, they begin developing all the other virtues of a Christian character, such as hope, self-control, patience, and others — all qualities of Christian character controlled by justice.

Each of us, if we have been diligently observing God's workings in our lives, should be able to recognize His power upon us, especially how, since our consecration, He through His Word, spirit, and providences, has granted us the knowledge, the directions, and the ability to perform His will.

Additionally, they cultivate an ever-increasing hatred of sin and error, and an ever-increasing love for truth and righteousness.

Even after consecration to God, progress in the kind of faith and righteousness just described needs to continue.

The Main Motivating Principle in Consecration

God's disposition in His people rises to a higher level after consecration, for the main motivating principle in consecration is *love*. Consecration to God, or the *consecration of sanctification* can be defined as the unselfish good will that seeks to do God's will sacrificially. This implies deadness to self and the world and aliveness to God — in the study, spread, and practice of God's Word, and in watchfulness and prayer in harmony with His Word. In consecration the Christian character graces are developed along the lines of unselfish good will. (Qualities of Christian character controlled by love are called *graces*.)

3. *1 Cor. 2: 13 reads: "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." What is meant by "comparing spiritual things with spiritual"?*

Before examining the phrase in question, we will consider the context, which includes verses 10-16. In these verses, the word “Spirit” means God's disposition in the sense of one's intellectual faculties of perceiving, remembering, and reasoning. Following is a brief explanation of each verse:

Verse 10: God grants His consecrated people a knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the deep things of His Word through their using their intellectual powers (God's spirit) to study His Word.

Verse 11: Everyone knows what is in his own mind (his thoughts, will, and plans) — things that no one else can know unless the person chooses to reveal them. The same thing applies to God. No one can know His thoughts, will, and plan except as God reveals them, something He does only for His consecrated people, who have His spirit, and are in harmony with Him.

Verse 12: God has not given His people the spirit (disposition, mind) of the world, but His spirit, and that for the purpose of comprehending and appreciating the deep things of His character and Plan.

Verse 13: God, through His spirit, not only gives His people a knowledge and appreciation of His deep things, but also the ability to explain these deep things to others who have His spirit. This verse also presents the thought that the Apostles spoke and wrote in words given them by God's spirit — implying verbal and written inspiration.

Verse 14: The unconsecrated, worldly-minded person cannot comprehend and appreciate the deep things of God, in fact, they seem silly to him. The reason for this is because he does not possess God's spirit.

Verse 15: Those who have received God's spirit are able to understand both the things of this world and the deep things of God. Yet their motives — such as their desire to deny to themselves those things deemed valuable by the worldly mind — cannot be understood or judged by the unconsecrated.

Verse 16: No worldly minded person can reason correctly on the deep things of God. Only those who have the mind of Christ can do so, because they have Christ's spirit of wisdom and consecration.

“Comparing Spiritual Things With Spiritual”

The above text is from the *King James Version*, but other translations shed further light on the meaning:

- combining spiritual things with spiritual words” (*American Standard Version*).
- “explaining spiritual things to spiritual men” (*W. J. Conybeare*).
- “interpreting spiritual things to spiritual men” (*John A. Broadus*).
- “matching what is spiritual with what is spiritual” (*Knox*).
- “unfolding spiritual things to spiritual persons” (*Diaglott*).

To summarize, the Apostle Paul, in the above phrase, teaches that those who possess God's spirit and have a knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of His truths are enabled to explain these truths to others who also have His spirit. We speak of this as “rightly dividing the word of truth,” a process we should follow in personal and group study and when explaining the Truth to those with a hearing ear (2 Tim. 2: 15).

Regardless of dispensation, the rule that applies is the following: *only the consecrated can understand the deep things of God, or see the Truth as due*. The difference between the spirit-begotten and the non-spirit-begotten is that the former class had heavenly hopes and aspirations, whereas the latter have earthly hopes and aspirations. This fact limits the understanding of the non-spirit-begotten to some extent, but the general principle remains intact.

4. *The Scriptures teach that there are three ways: the broad way, the narrow way, and the high way. As consecrated Christians, which of these ways are we travelling on at the present time?*

As noted in the question, the three ways are:

- The *broad way*, spoken of in the second part of Matt. 7: 13: “For wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.” This way is appropriately named because it is the easiest one on which to travel. Adam started on it when he sinned and his progeny have travelled on it for over 6,000 years until they reached its inevitable end — death.

- The *narrow way* is spoken of in Matt. 7: 13, 14: “Enter ye in at the strait gate . . . because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” This way was only open to consecrated Christians during the time when the High Calling was in force. The only ones who entered this way, traversed it faithfully to its end, and gained the reward of the Divine nature were the Christ, Head and Body (2 Pet. 1: 4). Consecrated Christians do not now travel this way, for it has been closed for many years.

- The *high way* is spoken of in Isa. 35: 8: “And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.” This is the way which will open up for the world of mankind during Christ's coming Kingdom, and those who progress faithfully to its end will gain its reward — restitution to human perfection. This way will not be as difficult as the narrow way, nor will it require the sacrifice of one's natural human rights and privileges. Consecrated Christians at the present time do not travel this way, for it has not yet been opened up.

Those who have consecrated their lives to God now, though not begotten of the spirit, have laid down their own wills selfward and worldward and accepted God's will as their own. This has not led them into *the* narrow way that leads to life and immortality, though it has led them into a rather difficult way, one of self-denial and strewn with temptations and oppositions from the world, the flesh, and the devil, together with trials, afflictions, persecutions, and sufferings for righteousness' sake. (We sometimes refer to their course as *a* narrow way, in contrast to the world's course.) Though not on trial for life, they are on trial for faith and obedience.

REFERENCES

- (1) Vol. 3, 136, 216, 218; E6, 385; E7, 348; E17, 244; P'71, 66-75, and numerous other P.T. references (see *P.T. Scriptural Index*)
- (2) E15, 528-534
- (3) E12, 599; E15, 426, 652, 653; P'43, 60; P'48, 121; Expanded Biblical Comments for 1 Cor. 2: 10-16
- (4) Vol. 1, 205-218; P'55, 58

“Thou crownest the year with thy goodness”

— PSALM 65: 11 —

AS WE REVIEW the leadings of Divine providence in our lives during the year that is past, let God’s goodness and mercy stimulate our faith and confidence in Him as respects the incoming year.

A proper retrospect on our part must surely prompt heartfelt thanks for past blessings, and also stir us to greater trust as to the future, realizing that our deliverance is nearer than when we first believed.

Reflection . . .

It is appropriate to make a personal assessment of our relationship with God at the turn of the year, and ask oneself: How do I stand, Lord? Did the past year draw me closer to you? Was I diligent in studying your Word?

Did I keep your holy will paramount in my life? Above all, did I seek your presence as often as I should — did I commit each day to your charge, and remember to thank you for every blessing at each day’s close? Is my love for you greater than a year ago? Do I love my companions in the faith more than I did a year ago? Are we closer? More understand-

ing? Less critical? Have I grown more sympathetic and loving even towards those in the world, remembering that Jesus died for them all? Have I been always simple and sincere toward all?

. . . and Renewal

Probably most of us have some cause for regret and feel we should have done better, but a new year is a new opportunity to walk in newness of life. “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Rom. 12: 2).

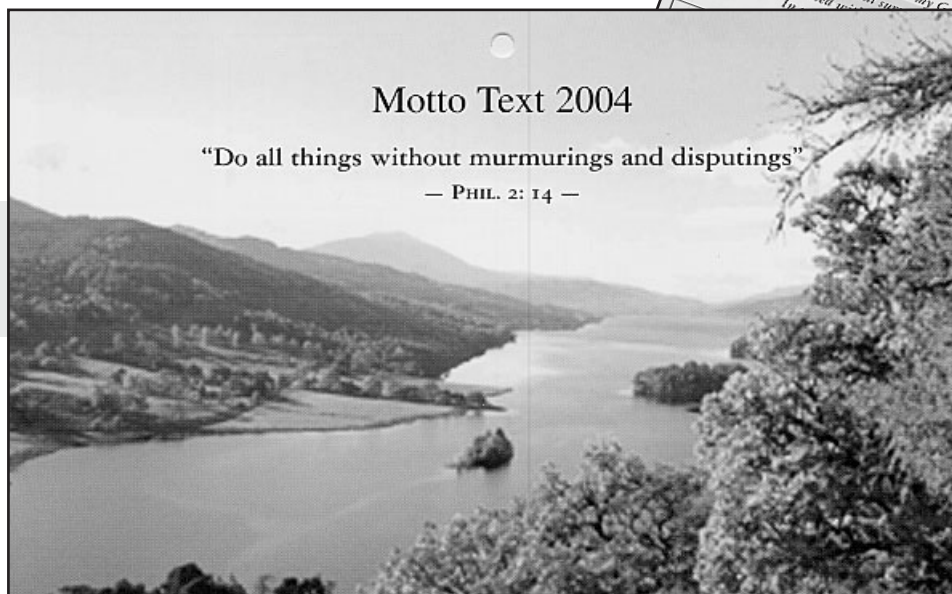
As we wait for the establishment of the new heavens and new earth, let us resolve at the beginning of this new year to make it the best year thus far of our lives — the year of largest hopes, of greatest endeavors and, by the Lord’s grace, of largest successes in overcoming the world and its spirit, in conquering self, in glorifying God, and in blessing His people. May God bless us, one and all!

* * *

Motto Card for 2004

The Motto Card (shown here) is now available. The photograph on the card is in full-color; on the reverse is a 12-month calendar; the size is 8½” x 5½”, and includes a hole for hanging. The cost is 50 cents for one, \$5.00 for 12.

The article based on the Motto text, Phil. 2: 14, “Do all things without murmurings and disputings,” appears in the January 2004 issue of *The Bible Standard*.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

MOTTO TEXT FOR 2004

For 2004 our annual Motto Text will be Phil. 2: 14: "Do all things without murmurings and disputings." The hymn for the year is 324, "When all thy mercies, O my God."

We wish all of our readers a blessed and happy new year, rich in the joys of faith and growth in grace.

INCREASE IN SUBSCRIPTION

Due to the rising costs of production of *The Present Truth*, the cost of year's subscription will go from \$8.00 to \$12.00, effective with the next issue (Winter 2004); subsequent single copies will be \$3.50. New or renewing subscriptions received before January 31, 2004 will be entered at the current rate of \$8.00. Any who cannot afford to pay will receive their subscription free, but please put your request in writing.

OUR ADDRESS

When writing to us, please do not include our old box number, as this may cause your correspondence to go astray. Our address is 1156 St. Matthew's Road, Chester Springs, PA 19425-2700.

BIBLE STANDARD CYCLOPEDIA

This compact-disk library is the culmination of a three-year-long effort, supervised by the (joint) U.S. Webmaster, Bro. Dan and Sr. Sue Herzig, under the auspices of the Bible House. Several dozen brethren throughout the U.S. and the U.K. lent their time and talents to this project. The disk contains the full 17-volume *Epiphany* set of Bro. Paul S.L. Johnson, and other publications of interest to Bible Students, including the *Studies in the Scriptures*.

The disk is supplied with instructions for installation and costs \$12.00, plus \$1.00 for postage. *System Requirements:* Windows 95, 98, 2000, ME, XP. (*Mac users, please contact us for installation instructions.*) To order, please send check or money order to: BSCyclopedia, 1156 St. Matthew's Road, Chester Springs, PA 19425-2700. For technical or other information relating to this product, please telephone 610.827.1586 or contact us at editorial@biblestandard.com.

BACK ISSUES OF OUR MAGAZINE

The study of earlier issues of these magazines is helpful to a proper understanding and appreciation of subsequent issues. Therefore we earnestly advise all to order the back numbers. (Published from July 15, 1920 through December 1951 as *The Herald of the Epiphany*.) We offer these at 10 cents per single copy. Up to the year 2001 single

issues are 20 cents; for 2001, \$1.00; thereafter \$1.50. We also offer bound volumes (stiff black cloth binding) as follows:

1920-29, 1930-39 or 1940-51 *Herald*,
1952-56, 1957-61, 1962-66, 1967-71, 1972-76, 1977-81,
1982-86, 1987-91, or 1992-96 *Bible Standard*.

We have available bound volumes for the years 1997-1999; some are available on back order at \$27.50 each volume, though we do not guarantee that every past issue is available.

PRESENT TRUTH BACK ISSUES

Now is the time to complete files or order special issues, before our supply of many issues is exhausted; 35 cents per copy in quantity for issues prior to 2002; thereafter, \$1.00 in quantity, \$2.50 for a single issue. The latest topical index to back issues is in the November-December 1995 issue.

We furnish 48 issues of *The Present Truth* in a stiff black cloth binding (one volume) for \$35.00. We group them so as to have an index in the back of each volume as follows: 1932-35, 1936-39, 1940-43, 1944-47, 1948-51, 1952-59, 1960-67, 1968-75, 1976-83, 1984-1991. We now have also the years from 1992-1999. Thus the 11 volumes for the years 1932-99 cost \$35.00 each, or a total of \$385.00.

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REPRINTS OF PASTOR RUSSELL'S WRITING

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(Cloth binding; please add \$2.00 to the price of each of these books to cover postage and handling.)

HYMNS FOR 2004

On the first of each month, the day's hymn is our hymn for the year, 324, "When all thy mercies, O my God"; on other days, please use the fourth in each Manna listing.

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