

MARCH 2004

UPLOOK

• ASSESS THE NEED • CATCH THE VISION • TAKE THE CHALLENGE •

The
ONE
who is
BETTER
by far!

THE CAUSE • ANOTHER LOOK AT HEBREWS 6 • GIBSON'S STATIONS OF THE CROSS

THE CAUSE

We need some Davids to rally the troops.

It was a stalemate. The older sons of Jesse, along with the rest of Saul's army, had been "*dismayed, and greatly afraid*" (1 Sam. 17:11) at the brazen boast of the Philistine champion. And little wonder, for Goliath was an imposing mountain of a man. Common sense made it clear that no one on the Israelite side of the valley was a match for him. The Jews covered in their tents.

The Wadi Elah drains the water from the hills on the west flank of Bethlehem, David's hometown. Twisting its way through the Shephela or foothills that form a buffer between the Judean highlands and the Plain of Philistia, the Elah valley linked the Judean towns of Bethlehem and Socoh (Shochoh) with Gath and the Mediterranean coast. It was near Socoh that the two armies had found the rolling hills an ideal grandstand to view the contest. But the camp of Israel found no one willing or able to silence the Philistine's defiance of them and their God.

Enter David. He had been sent with fresh provender for his big brothers, for it had been forty days that Goliath had taunted in the valley and Israel had trembled in their tents. Arriving just as the troops gathered for the next round, "*as the host was going forth to the fight*" (v. 20), David discovered that it was a mere war of words. He heard Goliath's blasphemous challenge and, turning to some bystanders, asked, "*Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?*" (v. 26).

This was too much for big brother Eliab, who had overheard. Furious, he spat out the words: "*Why did you come down here?...I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle*" (v. 28, NKJV).

David might have responded, "What battle? Who's fighting, Eliab?" Instead, he asked: "*Is there not a cause?*"

There was indeed—just as there is today. And yet again the people of God seem to be hiding in their tents, quivering at the thought of those big men out there who defy the living God and His people. Where are the young champions who will risk life and limb for this cause? Who will set aside Saul's vaunted armor and go into battle instead "*...in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel*" (v. 45)?

At time of writing the Democratic caucuses are in full swing. I saw a couple interviewed who had gone to Iowa to knock on doors in -5 degree weather. They had driven 1300 wintery miles from Massachusetts. At their own expense. And it was their wedding anniversary! They had joined three thousand other volunteers to do whatever they could to help the cause they held dear. When asked if they thought their sacrifice made any difference, the husband replied, "If we each can change the minds of two voters, that will make the difference."

Would we travel at our own expense in winter across the continent, setting aside personal plans and comforts to confront people with the only candidate who qualifies as Saviour? Would we think it worthwhile if only two responded? What was it that drove David—and will drive us—into the line of fire? It is the two-fold secret that "*the battle is the Lord's, and He will give [the enemy] into our hands*" (v. 47). The Lord's presence is guaranteed and victory is assured to those willing to prove God in the great conflict for the souls of men.

Is there not a cause? What would happen if each believer in the coming year would see just two people come to Christ? Each assembly would *treble* in size. We would regain the gospel offensive. The enemy would be on the run. And the world would "*report that God is truly among you*" (1 Cor. 14:25).



J. B. NICHOLSON, JR.



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UPLOOK magazine is intended to encourage the people of God in fidelity to His Word, fervency in intercessory prayer, labors more abundant, and love to the Lord. Believing in the practical Headship of Christ and the local autonomy of each assembly, this is not intended to be an official organ of any group or federation of local churches. The editor and authors take responsibility for materials published. For any blessing which accrues, to God be the glory.

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 - 3) by contacting our office at any time, by phone, fax, mail or e-mail.
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KEY ISSUES

THINKING IT THROUGH • BUILDING IT IN • LIVING IT OUT

LO-AMMI

Has God planned a future for Israel?

Donald L. Norbie

There is a strong controversy going on between Christians concerning the Millennium and the future of Israel. Are all of the promises to Israel fulfilled in the Church or does Israel have a future as a part of God's people in the Millennium? Is Israel still in a covenant relationship with God or is she set aside for the present because of unbelief?

The Amillennial position states that Israel as a nation will never again be restored to the land by God and become the center of Messiah's reign. God is finished with Israel as a nation. If Israel is back in the land it is her doing, not God's. Brian Godawa writes:

So none of the promise to Abraham can possibly refer to physical Israel in the current national sense because it was all fulfilled in Christ. The physical nation of Israel is not God's Chosen People; the Church of Jesus Christ is God's Chosen People from every nation on earth.

Another point they would make is that most returning today are Gentile converts.

What does this imply? That most of the Jews returning to Palestine never came from Palestine in the first place; that they are not even of the lineage of Shem. They are Gentile converts....In reality, upwards of 85% of today's Jews are descended from the Khazars according to the respected *Encyclopedia Judaica*.

The Emperor of Khazaria in the steppes of Russia converted to Judaism in AD 740. He then declared his subjects Jewish, brought in Jewish rabbis from Babylonia and indoctrinated his people. They have been called by some the thirteenth tribe. It is an interesting aside.

Israel as a nation entered into a covenant relationship with God at Mount Sinai: "Now therefore, if you will indeed



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obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me, above all people, for all the earth is Mine...Then all the people answered together and said, All that the Lord has spoken we will do" (Ex. 19:5, 8, NKJV). Both God and Israel agreed to the covenant.

THE CURSE OF A BROKEN COVENANT

Now this covenant was conditional. God said, "If you will indeed obey My voice..." Moses at the end of his life reviewed the covenant with Israel and reminded them: "Therefore keep the words of this covenant and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do" (Deut. 29:9). If they turned away from God and worshiped other gods, God would reject them and cast them out of the land. This warning was repeated by the prophets time and again.

Has Israel ever broken the covenant? The answer is "Yes," many times. Hosea was instructed by God in the naming of a son: "Call his name Lo-Ammi. For you are not My people and I will not be your God" (Hos. 1:9). Lo-Ammi, "not My people." Strong words, these. The covenant was

conditional. Israel is described as married to Jehovah, His wife. Because of her unfaithfulness in going after other gods, God speaks of divorcing her:

*Bring charges against your mother; bring charges;
For she is not my wife, nor am I her Husband!* (Hos. 2:2).

Isaiah, speaking for the Lord, proclaimed, *“Where is the certificate of your mother’s divorce, whom I have put away?”* (Isa. 50:1). Jeremiah, years later, speaks for the Lord, *“Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also”* (Jer. 3:8). Ezekiel gives a most powerful picture of unfaithful Israel in chapter 16, a passage filled with the emotion of a grieving God.

To give Israel hope of a reconciliation Hosea is commanded to take his wife back. *“Then the Lord said to me, Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, like the love of the Lord for the children of Israel who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans”* (Hos. 3:1). When there is repentance, God is willing to take His people back. He took them back after the seventy years of exile in Babylon. He can do it again.

HEAR WHAT THE MESSIAH SAYS

Christ told several powerful parables predicting His rejection by Israel. He told of a man with a vineyard that he had rented out to farmers. At the time of harvest he sent servants to receive his portion of the fruit. They mistreated, abused and killed his servants. Finally he sent his son, hoping they would respect him. But they rejected and killed the son. In view of this Jesus said, *“Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it”* (Mt. 21:43). If they break the covenant, their relationship with God is broken. When Pilate brought Jesus out before the mob, he asked, *“What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ? They all said to him, Let Him be crucified!”* (Mt. 27:22) They also said, *“His blood be on us and on our children”* (Mt. 27:25).

The antagonism against Christ did not cease with His death. Persecution raged against the Christians by the Jewish leaders. In Acts, the Roman government is pictured as defending the Christians from the Jews. Paul could write strong words to the Thessalonians: *“For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans, who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets and have persecuted us, and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gen-*

tiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins, but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost” (1 Thess. 2:14-16).

BROKEN OLIVE BRANCHES

What then is Israel’s relationship to God at present? Paul describes the witness for God, the people of God, as a great tree with trunk and roots reaching back into antiquity, including all the saints of old. Unbelieving Israel is pictured as being branches which have been broken off and now believing Gentiles are being grafted in. *“Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty but fear”* (Rom. 11:20). In fact John describes the gatherings of unbelieving Jews now as *“a synagogue of Satan”* (Rev. 2:9), hardly viewing them as God’s people at present.

Peter states that in this age the Church has taken the place of Israel as the people of God: *“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light, who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy”* (1 Pet. 2:9-10). Similar language is used of Israel at Mount Sinai when the covenant was made with Jehovah (Ex. 19:5-6).

“But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant which was established on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second” (Heb. 8:6-7). Jesus said as He instituted the remembrance of the Lord’s Supper, *“For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins”* (Mt. 26:28). *“In that He says, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away”* (Heb. 8:13). Shortly after this was written, Titus, with the Roman armies, ruthlessly destroyed Jerusalem and their glorious temple. God was through with the old covenant and its sacrificial system.

GOOD NEWS FOR JEWS

Now the gospel goes out freely to all, Jew and Gentile. God shows no partiality to the Jew; James plainly states that partiality is sin (Jas. 2:9). God taught Peter that vital lesson in a vision on the housetop of Simon the tanner. When Peter later entered the house of Cornelius, the Roman centurion in Caesarea, he testified, *“You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not*



call any man common or unclean” (Acts 10:28). Only God could have convinced Peter of this truth.

Today the gospel has a universal message: “*God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...*” (Jn. 3:16). God’s love has no limits but embraces all of mankind. The death of Christ on the cross for sinners has universal efficacy: “*And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world*” (1 Jn. 2:2). Jews and Gentiles are equally precious to God and offered salvation.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

But does Israel have any future with God as a nation? Before His ascension the disciples questioned our Lord Jesus, “*Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*” (Acts 1:6). This would have been the perfect opportunity for Christ to clarify their thinking. He could have said, “There is no future kingdom for Israel. The Church will be My kingdom from now on.” But Jesus said, “*It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority*” (v. 7). He implied the kingdom will be restored to Israel but they could not know the time.

Earlier Jesus had promised them, “*Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel*” (Mt. 19:28). How else can this be interpreted but to mean that there would be a future for Israel and that the apostles would have positions of authority under His kingship? If Jesus did not mean that, He surely misled His apostles—and Matthew was an eyewitness of the event.

Israel is back in the land as a nation after 2,000 years of


dispersion. But they are back in unbelief, still as a nation rejecting their Lord and Saviour. If you say you are a Christian you cannot immigrate to Israel, regardless of your physical lineage. The Talmud still blasphemous the name of Jesus and reeks with hostility toward Christ. There is a move by a group in Israel to rebuild the temple and to re-institute the sacrificial system. If this is done it will be a further repudiation of Christ and His sacrificial death on the cross. “*But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God...For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified*” (Heb. 10:12, 14).

But is there any hope for Israel in the future? Certainly today Jews who turn to Christ can be saved and become members of the Church, where there

is neither Jew nor Greek (Gal. 3:28). But will there ever be a national turning to Christ? Paul speaks of them as branches broken off, but he also states, “*And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again*” (Rom. 11:23). He also promises “*that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written*” (Rom. 11:25-26). Paul believed in a future for Israel but it was conditioned on repentance and faith.

ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED?

An amazing prophecy was written 2,500 years ago: “*In that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son and grieve for Him, as one grieves for a firstborn...*” (Zech. 12:9-11).

When Christ returns in glory, they are smitten with the realization that the One they rejected long ago as their Messiah truly is King of kings and Lord of lords. At His trial, Jesus testified to the high priest, “*Hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven*” (Mt. 26:64). After this time of brokenness and intense repentance there is cleansing from sin (Zech. 13:1). The adulterous wife is restored to her Husband. And the earth will know the blessing of Christ’s perfect reign on earth. “*And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years*” (Rev. 20:4). All of the redeemed will share in that glorious time and the earth will blossom like a rose under the perfect reign of Christ. 

FRONTLINES

PRAY AROUND THE WORLD • PRAISE AROUND THE CLOCK

IRELAND TnT TEAMS 2004

Teach and Testify (TnT) Teams Ireland is a cross-cultural missions opportunity that doesn't require knowing another language to be effective. After three days of cross-cultural orientation and evangelism training, team members are hosted by assemblies in Ireland and involved in a concentrated 17-day program of evangelism and ministering to Irish believers. Various methods of evangelism. The program (May 25-Jun 17) concludes with a 3-day sightseeing tour. Must be 18 or older, in good health, believe that the Lord would have you get involved in this work, and someone whom your home assembly would recommend for this. Contact Ron Hampton at:

874 London St, Winnipeg, MB R2K 3P7

phone: 204-669-6026

email: Ron.Hampton@TnTTeams.org



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VANCOUVER EASTER CONF.

The Vancouver area conference, planned for Apr 9-11, is to be held at Granville Chapel, 5091 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC. Speakers: Dr. Boushra Mikhael (ON) and Dr. Joe Mikhael (ON). Sponsored by seven local assemblies. There will be children's programs Friday and Saturday. Contact Norman Chandler at: 604-271-1083

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS

Stanstead (QC) Assembly spring conference is planned for Apr 16-18. Speakers: Randy Amos (NY) and Sandy McEachern (NS). The local brethren would enjoy providing accommodation for visitors. Call: Walter Scott at 819-838-4260

MILWAUKEE CONF.

Wauwatosa Bible Chapel, 2200 N.

67th Street, Wauwatosa (greater Milwaukee), WI, invites you join them for their annual spring conference, Saturday, Apr 17, 2004. Speaker: J. B. Nicholson Jr. Theme: How Jesus Preached the Gospel. Meetings are from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Contact Joanne before Monday, Apr 12 at Wauwatosa Bible Chapel between 8 AM and 12 noon Monday-Friday if you plan to attend.

phone: 414-771-9150

fax: 414-771-9150

wauwatosachapel@juno.com

CONFERENCE IN INDIANA

The annual spring conference at the Gospel Chapel, 321 Cliff Dr., Logansport, IN, is to be on Apr 17. Expected speaker: Rob Kerr (KS). Refreshments at 9:30 AM with sessions at 10 and 11 AM. Lunch provided. Brother Kerr will also speak at

the Sunday morning meeting.

Ralph Garver at 574-722-1012

e-mail: Leegar@Lneti.com

WEEKEND AFTER EASTER

An open platform, multiple speakers conference is planned for Apr 17-18 to be held at the Gospel Chapel, Third and Chapel Sts, Baldwin City, KS. Sessions on Saturday at 2:00, 3:45, and 7:00. On Sunday, Breaking of Bread at 9:30; ministry at 11:00 and 2:00. Contact Ray M. Jones at 785-594-3374.

819 Indiana St

Baldwin City, KS 66006

email: rmjones@idir.net

YOUNG ADULT RETREAT

The second annual Believers' Challenge Young Adult Retreat will be held at the Country Lake Christian Retreat Center, 20 miles north of

Louisville, KY, Apr 23-25. The speaker will be Craig Shakarji (MD). Conference begins Friday night and ends Sunday afternoon. Registration closes Apr 2. Contact:

Tim Benson at 502-477-0077
email: kysredmtn@cs.com.

CHICAGO CONFERENCE

The Chicago area spring conference will be held, God willing, Apr 23-25 at Palos Hills Christian Assembly, 10600 South 88th Av, Palos Hills, IL. Speakers expected: Doug Kazen (WA); Alan Gambel (UK), and William Burnett (ON). Special children's meetings. For more details or accommodations, contact:

Robert Fiebig at 708-448-2552

GR WOMEN'S CONF.

The Southern Michigan Ladies' Missionary Conference is scheduled to be held at Forest Hills Bible Chapel, 4637 Ada Drive NE, Grand Rapids, MI on Saturday, Apr 24 from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Theme: "Beauty for Ashes." Speakers expect-

ed: Brook Ford (D.R. of Congo) and Melodie Bissel (CEF, ON). Contact: Ruth Graether at 616-365-9032

LIMON CO CONFERENCE

Limon Bible Chapel, 385 J Ave, Limon, CO, has its annual conference Apr 24-25. Speakers: Dan Smith (IA), and Tom Wilson (NJ). Accommodations and meals.

Limon Bible Chapel
PO Box 1208
Limon, CO 80828
719-775-9788 or 346-8547

WEEKEND IN THE WORD

Rex Trogdon (NC) is to be the speaker at the annual Weekend in the Word conference Apr 30-May 2, Lord willing. Topic: "Crowns Worth Winning," a study of the believer's rewards. To be held at the Bird-in-Hand Inn, Lancaster, PA beginning on Friday at 7 PM and concludes with dinner on the Lord's Day with the Monterey assembly. Cost for weekend: \$150 (deluxe accommodations and conference meals). Contact:

Mark Kolchin
PO Box 305
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734
mkolchin@att.net
732-506-6798

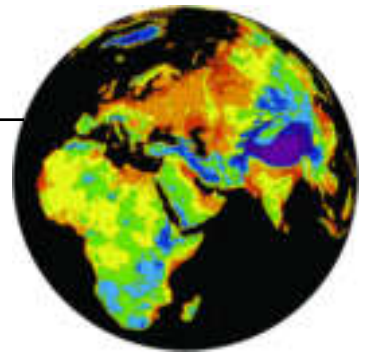
LADIES' WINDSOR CONF.

The 27th Annual Ladies' Spring Missionary Conference will be held May 1 at Oakwood Bible Chapel, 2514 Cabana Road W, Windsor, ON. Speakers: Priscilla Masuello (Columbia) and Dr. Vimala John (India). There will also be a presentation of the Ezekiel Project. Registration at 9:30 AM. Conference from 10 AM to 3 PM. Lunch provided. A nursery for children under two years old.

NEW ORLEANS CONF.

Lake Park Chapel, 201 Schlieff Dr., Belle Chasse, LA holds its 60th annual conference May 1-2. Speakers, DV: Kevin Engle (TX) and Bob Brown (LA). Meetings begin May 1 at 3:30 PM. Contact Ray Cummings:
103 Dickson Dr.
Belle Chasse, LA 70037

WORLD NEWS ROUNDUP



MACEDONIA CALLING

Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski, a former Methodist preacher credited with keeping his country from the full-blown wars seen elsewhere in the region, died in a plane crash on Feb 26. The 47-year-old was on his way to talks on economic reconstruction of the Balkans, after a decade of ethnic conflict in which 250,000 people have died. Trajkovski leaves a wife and two children.

Trajkovski studied theology in the US, where he converted from the Orthodox Church, the dominant reli-

gious influence in Macedonia. There is little religious freedom there as a result, but the beginning of an assembly testimony. The first Macedonian Bible in two millennia has recently been published. —MCNS

FRANCE UNDER ATTACK?

Alan Kyle (UK) advises that an article entitled "Evangelicals: The Cult that Wants to Conquer the World" has appeared on the front page of a national French magazine. Pray that this will not hinder the struggling evangelical witness there,

and that believers asked to comment on this will be given wisdom in formulating a response. —Echoes

ZAMBIAN REFUGEE AID

Gordon Hanna writes about the refugee camp at Nangweshi, Zambia: "We were able to load three shipping containers of supplies on our

504-394-3087 or 504-393-7083
 ibelievgodslove@juno.com

UPWARD BOUND ATLANTIC

Upward Bound Atlantic at Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, May 7-14. A week of intensive Bible study seminars including a how to study the Bible project focusing on 2 Timothy. Extensive meetings on the initial weekend for those who can't stay for the week. Speakers: J. B. Nicholson (MI), Roy Houghton (ON), and Sandy McEachern (NS).

Paul DeJager at 902-435-9132
 upwardboundatlantic@yahoo.ca

NC SPRING CONF.

Ramseur (NC) Gospel Chapel is hosting their annual spring conference May 16-19. Steve Hulshizer is the scheduled speaker. For more information, call:

Mike Moody at 336-824-5525

CLAREMONT CA CONF.

Claremont (CA) Bible Chapel will host its 13th Annual Conference

May 14-16. Speakers: Doug Kazen (WA) and Willie Burnett (ON). First meeting on Friday at 7:30 PM, Saturday at 10:00 and 1:30, concluding on Sunday. Info/accommodations:

J. Harry Elliott at 909-621-1064
 email: jhdelliott@aol.com

UPWARD BOUND ONTARIO

Upward Bound Ontario will be held at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON Aug 15-27. The first week consists of numerous Bible study seminars on various doctrinal and practical topics. A canoe trip in Algonquin Park is planned Aug 22-27. Speakers: Rex Trogdon (NC), Brian Russell (UK), Brian Cretney (ON), Craig Beattie (ON), Joe Mikhael (ON), Charlie Tempest (ON), Sandy McEachern (NS).

S. McEachern at 902-420-9489
 sandymceachern@hotmail.com.

CORRECTION

The Feb *Uplook* gave an incorrect phone number and email address for a Bible study on the Tabernacle in


Galax, VA. Here is the correct info. Contact Scott Campbell:
 camalot@psknet.com
 276-236-3242 or 276-773-2259
 Bob Phipps: 276-773-2116

TAPE MINISTRY

Recently *Uplook* mentioned brother Harold Preston's tape ministry. That ministry has been handed over to brother James Sparks. Here is their address:

N.T. Assembly Tape Ministry
 PO Box 1232
 Mt. Washington, KY 40047

MEMPHIS WORK CLOSES

On Jan 25, Grace Gospel Chapel, an assembly of believers in Memphis TN, decided to discontinue meeting. They were the only NT assembly in Memphis and over the past three years have experienced a decline in numbers due to transfers. They plan to keep their legal status in TN until their future is made clear. They ask for prayer regarding the future of the Lord's work in Memphis. 

truck, then transport them 1100 kms to Senanga. That was the easy part! There we found that the UNHCR trucks were either broken down or not available, so had to look for entrepreneurs willing to risk their trucks to cross the Barotse Plains. We found three...There were some anxious incidents, but we managed to get everything to the camp.

While at the camp we distributed to 1863 families (there are 26,000 in the camp) before supplies ran out. There is a lot of hunger in the camp; the last two distributions through the UN contained rotten food.

The best times were the evening gospel meetings with between 250 and 1,000 present. Some admitted


that they were hearing for the first time that God loved them. May the seed sown produce eternal results.

When we left camp it had been raining for almost 30 hours. We managed to get to the pontoon and cross the Zambezi, but on the other side the non-existent road was devastating. We managed about 4 kms when we had to go down into a deep gully. Unfortunately the clutch gave out so we had to be towed the last 15 kms. Eventually we made it back to Chitokoloki and are very thankful for the Lord's help along the way."

INDIAN PRESSURE MOUNTS

The *Tehelka* Indian national newspaper have written a 10-page inflam-

matory report claiming evangelical missions are US spies or CIA agents. Southern Baptists, Wycliffe, World Vision, Campus Crusade and OM are shown in an extremely bad light, along with 60 other mission groups (Workers Together and Brethren are mentioned). The article states: "Missionary-run operations have put in place a system which enables the US government to access ethnographic information on any location virtually at the click of a button."

Linking President Bush, the CIA, Billy Graham and evangelical missions in India, the report challenges the government to act. Conversion is portrayed as unpatriotic and subversive to the national interest. 

Q&A

WHO WROTE HEBREWS? The question has been debated for centuries. So is it even worth asking: Who was it that first felt the blowing of the Spirit's inspirational wind across his spirit and so eloquently contemplated the surpassing glories of the New Covenant and its blessed Mediator?

I KNOW THE ANSWER—and so do you. It could not be more obvious because it is found in the first sentence of the book. *“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son...”* (Heb. 1:1-2). That is the definitive answer. However He worked and whomever He used, ultimately *“God spake all these words”* (Ex. 20:1).

Of course the question is appropriate to ask. The God who has spoken chose to do it through holy men, utilizing them not as secretaries to whom He dictated word for word, but by supernaturally illuminating them. Each chosen instrument had a distinct writing style, vocabulary, life experience and personality which often shows itself in his writing, making the Bible at the same time a collaborative work yet wholly the pure Word of God.

Suggestions are legion as to the human authorship of the book: Timothy or Barnabas (a back-handed appeal to Pauline influence); Apollos (*“mighty in the scriptures,”* Acts 18:24); Priscilla (a female candidate who, with her husband, instructed Apollos); Clement or one of the “second generation” of believers. God alone knows.

Of course, the all-time favorite is Paul himself. Objections are heard that the style is different from his other writings, but so it should be. One would expect a different treatment when he is writing as *“the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles”* (Rom. 15:16) or to his *“brethren, [his] kinsmen according to the flesh”* (Rom. 9:3). Yet William Kelly, a renowned Greek scholar, saw no stylistic difficulty in attributing the book to Pauline authorship:

The epistle to the Hebrews differs in some important respects from all the other epistles of Paul, so much so that many have questioned whether it be the writing of the Apostle Paul...Of this my mind has no doubt. I believe that Paul, and no other, was the author, and that it bears the strongest intrinsic traits of his doctrine (*Introductory Lectures*, p. 3).

Kelly goes on to discuss the logical reasons for the differing style.

WHY PAUL? Let me give five reasons.

1. Because Paul was the most highly qualified author of such a letter. As he would write: *“If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more”* (Phil. 3:4), being expert in the Jewish language and idiom, law and ceremony—*“taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers”* (Acts 22:3).

2. Peter tells us that Paul had written an epistle to the Hebrews (2 Pet. 3:15-16; with 1 Pet. 1:1 to see to whom Peter refers when he says “you”) and links it with *“all his epistles”* which he then includes with *“the rest of the Scriptures.”* Certainly Hebrews contains *“things hard to be understood”* (see Heb. 5:11-14, for example).

3. *“Grace be with you all. Amen,”* concludes the epistle (13:25), Paul's trademark seal of authenticity, as he would himself say: *“The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen”* (2 Thess. 3:17-18; see the warning re pseudo-Pauline letters, 2 Thess. 2:2).

4. Hebrews is the third link in a chain of divine commentary on Habakkuk 2:4. Paul wrote the other two (Rom. 1:17, where he emphasizes *“the just”*; Gal. 3:11, with stress on *“shall live”*). It makes good sense that he wrote the third also—Hebrews 10:38—where the theme is *“by faith.”* Dare I apply *“a threefold cord is not quickly broken”*?

5. Practically, it makes sense that Paul should mask his authorship from yet undecided Jews who might otherwise prejudice the case. And doctrinally, a book presenting the superiority of God's Son above all others could hardly begin with the word *“Paul”*! Instead it's lofty theme blazes from the first sentence: *“God...hath...spoken unto us by His Son...the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person...when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down...being made so much better...as He hath...obtained a more excellent name than they”* (1:1-3). —J. B. N., JR.

THE FRAMING OF GOD'S WORLD

"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God" (Heb. 11:3).

P. R. Morford

Hebrews 11 brings before us the subject of the framing of God's world. The prophet Habakkuk comes to help us as being the source of the quotation in the end of Hebrews 10, *"Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith."* In Habakkuk we get a vision; here we have the reality.

Hebrews 11:3 is unique in that while all the other verses (from v. 4 onward) speak of men, verse 3 speaks of an act of power on the part of God, and no doubt refers primarily to the creation itself, when by His utterance the worlds sprang into being from nothing. Here, however, it is stated in a moral context. It is the framing, not of this world, but of God's world. It is not simply creation; it is putting it together piece by piece according to a particular intention. The mighty Architect who frames that world has the whole blueprint before He starts.

We see from the passage that the framing of God's world is a living thing. It is not a material idea; it is built up in the hearts of men through the ages from Abel onward. It is a living structure, a putting together of the character of Christ. It is building Christ into men's souls.

Christ has been written down the ages. The exquisite beauty of this chapter is that somewhere in the life of every person of faith who is brought forward in it—sometimes quite at the end—some trait of Christ came out under God's eye. And God, so to speak, put His finger on that trait and said, That is Christ; that is part of My world and will never pass away. It is not perhaps what we should have picked out, but it is selected by the divine Architect as forming part of the world which He is framing by His utterance. How living it makes it all! God's ways with us will be to link our affections to that order of things which is all centered in Christ.

There is no knowledge outside of Christ (Col. 2:3). Christ is the one theme, object and source of all divine knowledge. Although in this chapter we are directed to men of like passions with ourselves, it is not to occupy us with them but

with the traits of Christ in them.

Note Ecclesiastes 3:11, *"He hath made everything beautiful in His time: also He hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."* That is the framing of God's world. It views things outside the question of sin and the fall. I know Ecclesiastes deals with things on earth; so does Hebrews, but it brings into view the work of God, the worlds which sprang into being under His touch.

It shows how God set eternity in the hearts of men—not this world of sin and death, but His beautiful world which was ever before Him in Christ. It was the world of which Christ was already in purpose the center, which was to take all its character from Him. It was the world He set in the hearts of the men of faith. He drove the present world out of their hearts so that there was no place for it. And what was the consequence? There was in their hearts, as there might be in ours, the portrait of Christ by grace on these *"living tables"* so that we may read Christ there.

We find when God's world comes into view that all its bases must be laid in redemption silver. Abel shows us that. The old order was to pass away, already superseded for faith by that simple offering—the recognition of the moral excellence of God's Lamb coming out in its fullness through death. *"And by it he being dead yet speaketh."*

"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." Enoch is the seventh from Adam. Until Enoch the death knell sounded for every man—*"and he died."* But God gave witness to the fact that He would not allow death to run its full course without breaking in upon it in power. He showed His sovereign right to take the seventh man straight into His presence apart from death if He saw fit. It is wonderful to know that God has seen fit to interrupt death's course, and will do it again.

The saints are a heavenly, not an earthly, people. Translation is proper to them. We see it inherent in Christ Himself when He was here: *"What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before?"* He told Mary, *"Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God"* (Jn. 20:17). Ascen-



sion was inherent in His Person, and now it is the proper hope of the Christian. In Enoch, then, the great fact of God's sovereign right to set aside death is portrayed. So shall we triumph over death through Christ.

Then Noah comes on the scene: "*By faith Noah, being warned of God...prepared an ark to the saving of his house.*" It was Noah's faith in the Word that saved his house. The saints of God like Enoch have no roots here, and with them translation will not be a tearing up of roots, for Christianity means that we live in the light of heavenly things. So Noah, a preacher of righteousness in a world of corruption, built an ark, which by its very nature has no earthly foundations. His building was a subject of scoffing to all who saw it; but it was Noah's conception of Christ and it brought all his house into safety. In fact Peter declares that it was Christ Himself who did the preaching by His Spirit through Noah (1 Pet. 3:18-20).

Next we get Abraham, who looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. God said to Abraham when Lot left him, choosing this world, "*Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art,*" and He appeared to him with the promise of a son. God gave the name, Isaac, "*He will laugh.*"

The point with Abraham was this, that he fell on his face and laughed. It was not the laugh of unbelief as it was with Sarah. His faith looked forward into God's world, and he saw there Christ, the true Isaac, the true Son of laughter, and he entered there in spirit into the faith of Christ. "*Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad*" (Jn. 8:56). He looked for a city which had foundations, foundations that could not be shaken or overthrown like the cities of the plain—foundations to be laid on Christ (see 1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20).

Sarah is next: "*Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed.*" The woman in Scripture presents the subjective side of faith. In a man we get objective faith, but with the woman there is the conception of Christ in the mind and affections. Our hearts are absolutely incapable of embracing and receiving the character of Christ naturally (see 1 Cor. 2:7-16), but as we come under the touch of the work of God, Christ is formed in us (Gal. 4:19). "*When she was past age*" she conceived; it is all outside nature. Christ is outside the natural mind, however trained and theological it may be; but to the heart that loves Him, Christ is formed there in the affections.

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises,

but...embraced [saluted] them." They saluted them, that is, they welcomed the promises anticipatively in Christ. By this they declare that they seek a fatherland. Do we seek a fatherland? That is what we take our character from. These worthies, who had not yet come to Christianity, but in whose hearts Christ was written by faith, sought a fatherland, and what was the effect? "*Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God.*" That is God's great answer to faith. He is not ashamed of them. The blessed God vindicates the heart of faith which in simple dependence on Him takes a path that terminates outside this world. "*He hath prepared for them a city.*"

We have had the birth of Isaac, but now Abraham and Isaac come on the scene in a new way. "*By faith Abraham...offered up Isaac.*" That gives us in figure Christ risen from the dead. Isaac, in whom all the promises centered, was to pass into death, but Abraham's faith accounted that God was able to raise him up from the dead. No doubt Abraham had faith regarding a general resurrection, but he had more than that. He accounted "*that God was able to raise him [Isaac] up, even from the dead.*" So Christ has been raised from the dead—He Himself the blessed firstfruits of a mighty harvest to come.

Isaac was the "*only begotten*" son. That expression is always applied to Christ except in this one instance. It has the force of the one darling of the heart. He received him, in figure, from the dead, which showed that he was the true son of laughter. He received him back to be the father of millions of millions. We see how everything in God's world is to center in Christ risen from the dead. His character continues in everyone that follows.

"*By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.*" The blessings of Jacob and Esau are very comprehensive in character. Jacob came in and stole the blessing, but that is not spoken of here. It is not Jacob's faith or Esau's that is in question, but that of Isaac.

Then we read, "*By faith Jacob...blessed both the sons of Joseph.*" The blessing that Jacob gave to the sons of Joseph did not please Joseph at all. He brought his two sons, born in the foreign land—their names Forgetting and Fruitful—he brought them to Jacob, just about to die, who crossed his hands and conferred the prime blessing on the younger. It is the action of Jacob in guiding his hands wittingly that is emphasized.

That dying man of faith had the full purpose of God before him, so that he could overstep the rules of nature and could guide his



hands, as he leaned there on the top of his staff, crippled as to this world, but his heart entering into all the purposes of God regarding His people. In the light of God's counsel and purpose he saw Christ portrayed in the "Fruitful" and "Forgetting," and refused to uncross his hands.

"By faith Joseph, when he died...gave commandment concerning his bones." Joseph was a wonderful reminder of Christ in one way. He could say: *"Go and tell my father of all my glory"*; but there is not a word about that here. Joseph's life is left out, and it is his end that is brought before us. The glory of Egypt had no part in God's world; it was all tinsel. Human glory disappears, and his faith is concerned with his desire that his remains should be identified, not with the glory of Egypt, but with the testimony of God.

Time would fail us to dwell in any fuller detail on these traits of Christ, but Moses calls for comment. *"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper [beautiful] child."* It is the faith of Moses' parents that is brought out here. Did they in faith catch some gleams of Christ in the face of that child? That face itself was afterward to catch the very glory of the covenant he was to usher in. When Moses came out from the presence of the Lord his face shone; in faith his parents saw the child beautiful to God, marked out by Him as part of the building of His world.

"By faith he...was hid three months of his parents." That child was placed in the very last spot that you and I would have chosen for him—in the river of death. They might have carried him as far as possible from the river, but the faith of his parents put him in the place which signified death, where every other boy was placed to die.

Moses, when he was come to years, took up the faith of his parents. He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He put the two worlds in the balances; this world had no attraction for him. Instead of the *"pleasures of sin for a season"* he chose reproach with the people of God. God wrote all that in His book, and built it into His great world which is going to endure forever.

"By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned." All imitation of faith must inevitably fail, but the Red Sea was passed by faith, that is, the appropriation of Christ's death for them, and they entered the land.

"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days." Jericho was in the land, and yet it

was in possession of the enemy, who had no right or title to it; God was going to raze it to the ground and make it part of His inheritance. The priests preceded the people blowing rams' horns, which speak of the beauty and power of the Victim; this was the testimony that felled all the powers of this world. The moment for the saints of God to shout has not yet come. In silence God's witness goes on; but that moment will come when He will say: "Shout!" We are here in the intense expectation of that moment of final victory.

Rahab received the spies in faith, by which she was justified (Jas. 2:25); God's counsel and purpose were presented to her faith, and she received that testimony in peace.

"What more shall I say?" The author had brought them in detail to that point, and then he pours out in broad strokes more of what God has built into His world, without dwelling on details.

There were those tortured. They might have recanted and had a resurrection back into this life, but they refused it that they might obtain a better resurrection. They could afford torture and death in order that they might get a resurrection to God's world. We have the Spirit's epitaph on them: *"Of whom the world was not worthy."*

Then we come to the topstone: *"Jesus the author and finisher of faith"* (Heb. 12:2). That is the completion of it all; all His character came down, covering the whole framing of God's world. Christ known in the affections and heart will mark that world through the ages.

In Ecclesiastes 3 we read that there is a time for everything. Faith always acted in a timely way and it would be instructive to trace in Hebrews 11 how these principles were acted out: *"a time to be born and a time to die"; "a time to weep and a time to laugh"; "a time to get and a time to lose"; "a time of war and a time of peace."* May they also find an answer in our ways down here.

To Habakkuk it was said, *"Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it."* We have seen here not merely the vision but the reality written and made plain upon the tables of every heart that appreciated Christ. What do we read? Christ—nothing else! In so doing, *"Let us run"* (Heb. 12:2), the response to Habakkuk's words, *"that he may run that readeth it."*

May Christ so lay hold of our affections, as we see Him giving His character to the framing of God's world, that we may *"run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of faith."*

THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST

“But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry...” (Heb. 8:6).

“ **In the heavenly glory He is ours, and His love, sympathy, faithfulness and power give to us in our need and difficulties all things which pertain to life and godliness. It is with us that the glorified Saviour is now constantly occupied. We are His thought, His care, His work, and His joy. In the ocean of His love we can rejoice. The God with whom we have to do is our God, our Father. His throne is a throne of grace. Our very life is hid with Christ in God. We are in the bosom of Jesus, who is in the bosom of the Father.** ”

—Adolph Saphir ”

THE TOUCH *“And He touched her hand, and the fever left her...” (Mt. 8:15).*

“He touched her hand, and the fever left her.”
 He touched her hand as He only can,
 With the wondrous skill of the Great Physician,
 With the tender touch of the Son of man,
 And the fever-pain in the throbbing temples
 Died out with the flush on brow and cheek,
 And the lips that had been so parched and burning
 Trembled with thanks that she could not speak,
 And the eyes where the fever light had faded
 Looked up, by her grateful tears made dim,
 And she rose and ministered in her household;
 She rose and ministered unto Him.

“He touched her hand, and the fever left her.”
 O blessed touch of the Man divine!
 So beautiful to arise and serve Him
 When the fever is gone from your life and mine.
 It may be the fever of restless serving
 With heart all thirsty for love and praise,
 And eyes all aching and strained with yearning
 Toward self-set goals in the future days.

Or it may be a fever of spirit anguish,
 Some tempest of sorrow that calms not down,
 Till the cross at last is in meekness lifted
 And the head stoops low for the thorny crown.
 Or it may be a fever of pain and anger,
 When the wounded spirit is hard to bear,
 And only the Lord can draw forth the arrows
 Left carelessly, cruelly rankling there.

Whatever the fever, His touch can heal it;
 Whatever the tempest, His voice can still.
 There is only rest as we seek His pleasure,
 There is only rest as we choose His will.
 And some day, after life’s fitful fever,
 I think we shall say, in the home on high,
 “If the hands that He touched but did His bidding,
 How little it matters what else went by!”
 Ah, Lord, Thou knowest us altogether,
 Each heart’s sore sickness, whatever it be;
 Touch Thou our hands! Let the fever leave us,
 And so shall we minister unto Thee! —ANON.

WORLDVIEW

THE CHURCH • THE CULTURE • THE CONFLICT

PRESERVING OR PERVERTING MARRIAGE?

The rapacious and virulent nature of homosexuality is showing itself in the demand for full legal protection both in the US and Canada. Those who believe the Bible have long ago recognized that some sins grow like an aggressive cancer. If not excised, they will soon dominate and kill their host.

In the 1980s and 1990s sodomy laws were being struck down, and perverted activity was either ignored by law enforcement or altogether decriminalized. Now the simple logic is being forced on American and Canadian people: If sodomy is legitimized, why should it not also be blessed?

Triumphalist declarations about the inevitability of full social acceptance of these unnatural activities are a tool in this media campaign. Meanwhile there are many places where homosexual activity is still illegal; the legal battles are very much ongoing. But in the public mindset there is a perception that homosexual behavior is no longer against the law. This perception is due to propaganda being force-fed by assertive pro-homosexual media.

Notice the tactics: i) studious avoidance of moral terms such as “unnatural,” “perverted,” “sodomy,” in favor of terms like “gay” or “same-sex”; ii) constantly characterizing the ability to perform perverted acts as the new frontier of the “civil rights” movement and not as a moral issue; iii) turning this generation’s loudest warning against perversion—HIV and AIDS—into a selling point for homosexuality by inferring that a hatred of perversion somehow makes people ill, and by using government monies to educate the populace about sodomy in a non-moral context. Thus they make homophobia the dread scourge, but HIV a badge of honor.

In addition, they disarm fears of proselytizing to this “lifestyle” among the general public by convincing them that those who commit sodomy are born that way. All the while perverted celebrities, and university and high school student organizations like the “Gay/Straight Alliance” aggressively recruit the naive, vulnerable youth who would have otherwise never gone into such perversion. It is also key to neutralize the moral voice of Roman Catholicism by exposing their hypocrisy. The Vatican has vowed to oppose legalizing same-sex unions. But the Roman Catholic priesthood itself is so dominated by perverted priests that their voice sounds altogether like Lot saying, “*Do not so wickedly, my brethren.*” The Cardinal of Boston goes to rallies to oppose “same-sex marriage” in Massachusetts while his own diocese has offered \$85 million to its own abuse victims. The Vatican is facing the fact that, since 1950, 4,239 of its American priests have abused others sexually, many of the abusers being pedophiles.

The tactics show three things: Perversion is irrational. “*There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord*” (Prov. 21:30). Is there any logic in rebelling against God and bringing down His eventual judgment? Second, perversion is dishonest. “*Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord*” (Prov. 12:22). The necessary duplicity employed to promote the cause of perversion proves that it is of the darkness and under God’s condemnation. Third, perversion is a ravenous beast. “*Better to meet a bear robbed of it’s whelps than a fool in his folly*” (Prov. 17:12). The sodomite movement is like a wild animal who is robbed—of dignity, of innocence, of any prospect of a normal and happy future. Robbed and angry about it, they want their whelps back. Those who suppose that the sodomy issue can be ignored or placated simply don’t know how desperate this enemy is. —JOHN A. BJORLIE



The PRIESTHOOD

QUALIFICATIONS FOR HIS PRIESTHOOD

1. His Incarnation: He was *“in all things...made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest....”* (Heb. 2:17).

2. His Call: *“Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec”* (5:6, 10).
“Those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by Him that said unto Him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (7:21).

3. His Experience: *“We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin”* (4:15; see 2:18).
“Who in the days of His flesh...He... offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears...” (5:7).
“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered” (5:8; see 5:9; 7:28).

4. His Work: *“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption... How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”* (9:12, 14).

THE TYPE OF HIS AARONIC PRIESTHOOD

The nature of His priesthood

1. Taken from among men: *“For every high priest taken from among men...”* (5:1; see also 2:17).

2. Acting as a representative for men: *“...ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins”* (5:1).

3. Was called by God: *“And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an high priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, to day have I begotten Thee”* (5:4-5).

4. Was a minister of the sanctuary and could enter within the veil: *“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast...within the veil; where the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec”* (6:19-20; see 8:1-2; 9:7, 12).

5. Was appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices: *“For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer”* (8:3).
“And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (10:11-12).

THE ORDER OF HIS MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD

The rank or class in which He was included

1. In Melchizedek's order (7:1-3):
 - a) He was a King-Priest
 - b) He was without [human] father or [heavenly] mother
 - c) He has no beginning of days or end of life
 - d) He abides a priest forever.
2. A different rank than Aaron's:
 - a) not of the tribe of Levi (7:12-14)
 - b) has a different tenure of office (7:15-19)
 - c) received His appointment in a different manner (7:20-21).
3. Superior to Aaron's:
 - a) Aaron blessed by Melchizedek and *“the lesser blessed by the greater”* (7:6-7)
 - b) Aaron [in Abram] gave tithes to Melchizedek (vv. 6, 9)
 - c) Christ is the surety [guarantee] of a better covenant (vv. 22-28).
 - d) Aaron's order died; He ever lives
 - e) they were sinful; He is sinless
 - f) they had infirmities; He is forever perfected
 - g) they were earthly, serving in an earthly, temporary tabernacle; He was made *“higher than the heavens”*
 - h) they never led the people into the holiest; He is our Forerunner there (6:20).

“Now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator

of the **BETTER MAN**

THE FUNCTION AND MINISTRY OF HIS PRIESTHOOD

1. His past ministry:
 - a) appeared to put away sin (9:26)
 - b) made propitiation for the sins of the people (2:17; 7:27)
 - c) tasted death for everyone (2:9)
 - d) destroyed him that had the power of death (2:14)
 - e) released us from the fear and bondage of death (2:15)
 - f) was made surety of a new and better covenant (7:22)
 - g) offered one sacrifice for sins for ever (10:12)
 - h) perfected the sanctified (10:14)
 - i) entered heaven as Forerunner (6:20); Redeemer (9:12); and Purifier (9:23-24).
2. His present ministry (in the true tabernacle):
 - a) succors the tempted (2:18)
 - b) encourages us to draw near (4:16; 10:22)
 - c) brightens our hope of heaven (6:20; 10:23)
 - d) saves to the uttermost all that come to God by Him (7:25). His salvation is initial, continual, eternal
 - e) makes intercession for the saints (7:25)
 - f) is the mediator of the new covenant (8:6)
 - g) advocates before God for us (9:24)
 - h) presents our sacrifices of praise to God (13:15)
3. His future ministry
 - a) will appear a second time for the consummation of our salvation (and doubtless for the salvation of the remnant of Israel).

THE CHARACTER OF THE PRIEST

1. merciful and faithful (2:17; 3:2; 10:23)
2. sympathetic (4:15)
3. experienced (4:15)
4. unchanging and unchangeable (7:16, 24)
5. holy, guileless, undefiled, separate from sinners (7:26)
6. perfect (7:28)



THE HIGH PRIEST

THE EXCELLENCIES OF HIS PRIESTHOOD

1. excellence of the Priest Himself:
 - a) without sin (4:15; 7:27)
 - b) undying (7:16, 24)
 - c) perfect (5:9; 7:28)
2. excellence of His ministry:
 - a) a perfect sacrifice (7:27; 9:14, 23, 26)
 - b) a perfect salvation (7:25)
 - c) a perfect covenant (7:22; 8:6)
 - d) a perfect approach through Him (10:20)
3. the sphere of His work:
 - a) inside the veil (6:19)
 - b) in the "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (8:2).
 - c) in heaven itself (9:24)
 - d) appearing "in the presence of God for us" (9:24).

PRAYS FOR HIS OWN (Jn. 17)

"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine. And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them" (vv. 9-10).

1. that they might be kept in the knowledge of God's will (v. 11)
2. that they might have His joy in full measure (v. 13)
3. that they might be kept from the evil in the world (v. 15)
4. that they might be sanctified by, and separated to, the ministry of the Word of God (vv. 17, 19)
5. that they might be one with all believers (v. 21)
6. that they might be where He is (v. 24)
7. that they might behold His glory and know Him as they have come to know the Father through Christ glorifying of Him on earth (v. 24).

of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Hebrews 8:6).

DIGGING IN

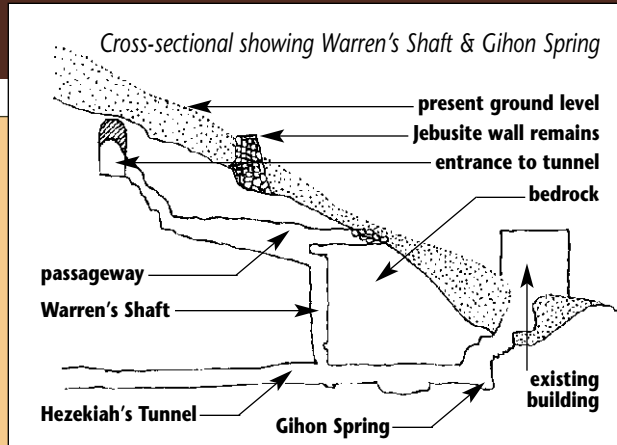
ARCHEOLOGY & THE BOOK

Actually used for drawing water!

We read in 2 Sam. 5:8, “David said on that day, Whoever climbs up by way of the water shaft and defeats the Jebusites...he shall be chief and captain.” The town of Jebus straddled the highland road through the heart of Israel. David wanted Jebus for his capital; it was “the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to place His name there” (Deut. 16:11).

It was so strongly fortified, however, that the Jebusites boasted it could be held by their lame and blind. But the soon-to-be-renamed Jerusalem had one weak spot in its defense—the water source outside the city wall. The Gihon spring (only fresh water supply to the city) had been disguised, the water redirected back under the hill, and a shaft dropped from an underground walkway so the people could draw water safely in time of siege (see diagram). But Joab found its hidden entry, “went up first, and became chief” (1 Chron. 11:6).

Debate has swirled about Warren’s Shaft—named for the British engineer who discovered it in 1867—as to whether it is the water shaft of David’s day or not. In recent years, Biblical minimalists have even denied that the shaft was ever used to draw water. But recently that has changed. Archeologist Avraham Faust presents his case in an article in the Sep/Oct 2003 *Biblical Archeology Review*. Although he denies it was in use in David’s time, the article is still worth the read. Who know? They may change their minds again. After all, there are only so many ways through solid rock to the water. In any case, the serpentine tunnel attached to it that links the spring to the Pool of Siloam is verifiably Hezekiah’s tunnel, an engineering marvel if ever there was one.



ONLY 100 YEARS?

Even though people have been digging around the hill for thousands of years, the archeological world celebrated the centennial of excavation work at Megiddo just this past April. Digging began there in 1903 by Gottlieb Schumacher, somewhat disdainfully described by *Biblical Archeology Review* (BAR) magazine as “a religious Christian whose excavations at Megiddo were motivated by a yearning to prove the

veracity of the Bible.” Tut-tut.

Some discussion broke out at the festivities over the reference to Megiddo in the book of Revelation, citing its link to Zechariah 12, “*And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem...In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon*” (vv. 9, 11). So, editorializes BAR, “while the apocalyptic battle was prophesied to occur in Jerusalem, its location has become attached to Tel Megiddo via the reference to ‘Megiddon.’”

Ironically, the news item goes on

to tell us that a letter was read from Lord Allenby of Megiddo, whose grand-uncle, Field Marshall Edmund Allenby, first led British troops to take Jerusalem from the Turks and then routed the rest of the enemy at Megiddo. Sound familiar? Seems that is how the Last Battle will play out, just across the valley from Nazareth when the final line of Isaiah 61:1-2 will come to pass—“*the day of vengeance of our God.*”

When Edmund Allenby, a believer, was given the title “Lord of Megiddo” he was reported to have said that he expected to be back to Megiddo, but on that occasion he wouldn’t be the Commander.



Photo: Wolf Schubach

HEBREWS 6

The standard view is well-known. A respected student of the Word asks us to reconsider.

E. W. Rogers

Melchizedek having been mentioned in 5:6ff, the writer finds himself somewhat embarrassed to proceed with his exposition because of the state of the believers to whom he writes. He, therefore, breaks off into a parenthesis which occupies the remainder of ch. 5 and most of ch. 6. It seems that this section is not so much a warning against apostasy as it is against immaturity.

It appears to the writer that the application of this section, specially 6:4-6, to mere professors, who lack reality, fails altogether to do justice to what is actually written. The whole section affords, it would seem, the strongest proof of the eternal security of the believer and the impossibility of repeating the initial work of God's grace in the soul. The passage assumes this eternal security. It is not written to affirm or to prove it.

On the supposition that those contemplated in verses 4-6 have never really been saved, and do not really belong to the people of God, but are spurious, the following points should be considered. They must not be avoided, but should be fairly construed, if we are to be satisfied that our interpretation of the section is sound. It is all too easy blindly to follow what others have said; we must satisfy ourselves.

1. They have been once for all enlightened. Note the word "*once*" (a~rat): it is not once upon a time, or at some time or other, but once for all. We have earlier discussed this word in relation to the work of Christ: it speaks of finality and unrepeatability. Moreover, the word 'enlightened' is used elsewhere of true believers who have received 'inward light' (Eph. 1:18; Heb. 10:32). How can this be true of a mere professor?

2. How can the words "made partakers of the Holy Ghost" be true of any but genuine believers? The phrase

cannot, it is submitted, be fairly construed to mean that those referred to have only come under the influence of the Holy Spirit and His works. In this epistle the word 'partakers' is used in other connections but only in the sense of a real and not a nominal partaking or sharing. There is an actual partaking of "blood and flesh" (Heb. 2:14); an actual partaking of milk (Heb. 5:13, Gk.); and so it is in every other use of the word in this epistle; there is an actual participation in the thing concerned. Why, then, should it be necessary to modify the sense in this passage and regard it, not to mean an actual partaking of the Holy Spirit, but merely a coming under His influence? Besides, the words "were made" (v.4) implies a change which was experienced—a becoming something which they were not before.

3. "The powers of the world to come" are spoken of separately which seems to disprove the interpretation given by some that this is the same as partaking of the Holy Spirit. This undoubtedly refers to the miracles that characterized early Christianity.

4. It seems too much to say that "fall away" (v.6) is equivalent to apostasy. The word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament and so we have no guide save the context and the etymology of the word, though this latter is insufficient to determine the significance of its use. It means to "fall alongside" as one might fall out of the ranks of a regiment of soldiers, not by way of desertion but because of inability to maintain the pace. This seems to accord with the sense here where there has been decline and a need of milk has recurred: strength has waned and strong meat can no longer be digested.

5. Nor must the force of "taste" be reduced to merely that of sipping. The word is used of the Lord who "tasted" death for everything. He actually experienced it.

6. The constant repetition of the word "again" is a key, we suggest, to the true meaning of the section. They need to be "*taught again*"; they need milk "*again*"; but no one lays the foundation "*again*"; it is impossible to "*renew again*" for that would entail "*crucifying again*": the force of all which is, that the work in the soul, once done, cannot be done again.



If the section is made to apply to false professors, then the interpretation creates a class for whom there is no hope of repentance whatsoever. It may be answered that this is so only “while they are crucifying afresh the Son of God,” but the writer of the epistle did not use the word “while” unless it be claimed that, in English, it is required to give the sense, and cannot be properly translated without it. Grammarians may affirm or deny this. We must be careful not to make our grammatical rules according to our theological views.

What then, does the section mean? We suggest as follows: The writer of the letter says that he has many things to say touching Melchizedek, which are difficult to express, not because of the complexity of the subject but because of the low spiritual condition of the Hebrews. They ought by the time then present to have been able to teach others, but they had gone back and had become themselves in need of teaching: teaching of the first oracles of God, or “the beginning of the oracles of God.” They needed to start all afresh, right from the very beginning. They had reverted to babyhood and needed milk, not strong meat. They were without spiritual teeth.

We should carefully note the twice repeated “ye have become.” “Ye have become dull of hearing”; “ye have become such as have need of milk.” Their spiritual health was bad. They were going back to the beginning of things such as those set out in 6:1-2. These were common both to

Judaism and Christianity, elementary but basic. The things peculiar to Christianity these Hebrews, or some of them, were not at that time able to digest.

But the writer is desirous of going on. “Let us go on unto full growth.” It is pointless to remain on the foundation without advancing further. No builder ever does that; he proceeds with the edifice. The foundation cannot be laid again: once laid the building should proceed. How, then, is it they need to be taught again? How is it they need milk again? It is impossible to renew to repentance again. The initial work cannot be repeated. “Repentance” headed the list of six items of basic things and this is selected, it would seem, as representative of the other five. “It is impossible to renew again to repentance.” Therefore, seeing this is so, we will go on: “this will we do if God permit.”

It is as though he would say: Consider brethren what is involved. If the work has to be repeated, then you cannot stop at the initial work of repentance, you must go farther back to the furthest possible point. It will entail crucifying again the Son of God, and that would put Him to an open shame in that, manifestly, His first death was insufficient. But this could not be, as he proceeds to show incontrovertibly in the later part of his epistle.

No one can do without the foundation any more than a Christian can dispense with the six cardinal items of vv. 1-2. But he should not remain there. To linger is pointless; the foundation is firm; let us go on....

God’s Longing for a Harvest

Does burning a field destroy it—or prepare it for another chance?

There are passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews where the dividing line is drawn between professors and real Christians, but I feel that chapter 6 is not one of those passages. The content of the chapter, it seems to me, clearly indicates the eternal security of the Christian. We are urged in verse 1 to consider the strength of the foundation and to *go on* to build unto perfection. In verse 19, we are reminded that the Christian’s anchor of hope is not dropped in any earthly sea but soars through the aerial oceans, mooring us to the very throne of God.

Notice the verb to “renew” (v. 6). There are two words for “new” in the NT—*neos* and *kainos*. The first indicates new at a point in time; whereas the second indicates newness in character and nature. It is the second word that is used here with the prefix *ana*, again. It is therefore saying that it is impossible to experience this newness of character and nature again. This interpretation seems logical particularly in the light of the latter part of chapter 5 where the injunction to “grow up” is clearly to Christians.

—Robert McClurkin



The experiences, then, of v. 4 are, for the purposes of the argument, supposed to be real. The persons were, in fact, once for all enlightened; they had actually tasted of the heavenly gift; they had actually partaken of the Holy Spirit; they had tasted the good word of God: and the powers of the world to come. They are, the writer of this commentary supposes, genuine believers but weak ones at that. Their hands hang down; their knees are feeble; they have fallen out of the ranks due to weakness, but they have not deserted.

The illustration which follows depicts two classes, each of whom has been privileged but with different results. When the rain falls on the earth good fruit results in some places, thorns and thistles in others. Verse 8 is similar to 1 Corinthians 3:15. The product is burned up. Where there are worthless results of all the labor expended on these Christians, such “results” will be consumed. Yet the writer is persuaded better things of these to whom he writes, for he cannot but recall their work and labor of love which they have shown towards the name of Christ, in that they have ministered to the saints and were, in fact, then doing so. But he earnestly desired that this should continue and that they should not be sluggish (the same word as is translated “dull” in 5:11).

If the results in the one case would be burned, in the other they would be rewarded. God would not forget.

He desired them to continue as they had begun. They had shown love to His name, and he desired them to show the same diligence right on to the end, and not to become slothful or sluggish. Consider Abraham. He, with others, was marked by faith and patience and they inherit the promises: they should imitate him. He patiently endured and he obtained the promise; Isaac was born. God promised to Abraham and he ratified it by an oath; the immutability of God’s counsel was demonstrated in that He not only made verbal promise, but did so by a sworn oath. The promise and the oath made the blessing sure.

We are the children of Abraham because of our faith: therefore the promise and the oath give us “*strong encouragement*” who have fled from the abrogated and judged system of Judaism to lay hold of the hope set before us.

The figure is taken, we are told, from the practice that prevailed in olden times in the harbors of the Mediterranean sea. There may be seen in every harbor to this very day a great stone, immovably embedded in the ground near to the water. That rock was called the Anchoria, and

sometimes the ship could not by means of its sails make its way to the secure mooring of the harbor. In such a case the forerunner would go ashore in a little boat with a line which he would make fast to the Anchoria. This was sure and steadfast, and therefore, those on the ship had but to work on the line, hand over hand, and by this means would draw into the shore.



In our passage the “anchor” is out of sight, but it is our “hope.” Our forerunner is Christ and He has gone within the veil. Therefore, though the sea of life may, through persecution, be very stormy, there is no need to abandon ourselves to it or to revert to our former way of life. ‘Let us go on.’

Such seems to be the gist of the chapter. But one or two remarks on its details may be made.

The third person used in v. 6 and the second person used in v. 9 would seem to be in keeping with the view here set forth, though it has been urged in sup-

port of the view that v. 6 envisages empty professors. But surely, the third person is essential for the general argument working out the logical issue of a certain course: and the second person is essential when the writer expresses his hope of the state of the Hebrews. It is true that a “mixed multitude” came out of Egypt but it must not be forgotten that all save two fell in the wilderness.

The “principles” referred to in vv. 1-2 are, as we have said, common to both Judaism and Christianity. Repentance was found in David and faith in Abraham, to say nothing of others. The “doctrine of washings” is that which is taught by the ceremonial washings of OT times, such as the washing of regeneration. The teaching of “laying on of hands” is that of identification and substitution, such as is seen when the hands were laid on the scapegoat. The “resurrection of the dead” and “eternal judgment” are things found in the OT, although it be in a dim light.

The day of Atonement is still before the mind of the writer. The High Priest has gone inside the veil. He is there as our Forerunner. Outside, the people are expecting Him to appear. Much stood to the credit of these Hebrews, and God would not forget how they had occupied the waiting time. Their work and labor of love would not go unrewarded, but they must not lose heart; they must show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, and not give up before.



APOLOGETICS

What role does it have in witnessing?

J. B. N., Jr.

A *pologia*, the Greek word that is the root of Apologetics, does not in this case imply an admission of guilt or regret but a desire to make clear one's belief or position (WEBSTER). In gospel work it is the utilizing of *explanation* along with *proclamation* in an effort to "convince the gain-sayers" (Titus 1:9), that is, those who disagree.

Yet the apostle Paul appears at first to reject the use of the apologetic approach to evangelism:

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom...For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified...And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom...that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God (see 1 Cor. 2:1-5).

However, this cannot be a blanket rejection of a wise and reasoned approach to biblical truth because we read that he "reasoned" with both Jews and Gentiles (Acts 18:4).



Now it may be argued that he only reasoned "out of the scriptures" (17:2). Certainly this was his primary source and authority, but we know that he also referred to literary sources (17:28), commonly accepted moral standards (24:25), and personal experience (26:4-23). Of course one of the most effective lines of argument used by early Christians was fulfilled Messianic prophecies (2:17-28). And we know the Lord Jesus used current events (Lk. 13:1-4) and homespun stories (parables) to deliver His message.

No one involved in witnessing should be so foolish as to think that a lost soul can be convinced to follow Christ merely by intellectual arguments. Nor should we despise the clear, simple proclamation of the gospel from the Word. But the New Testament has many examples of the wise use of other evidence—textual, prophetic, experiential, logical, and historical to name a few—to call people to "reason together, saith the Lord" in a sincere effort to show them that "though [their] sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1:18). Let us then be "ready always to give an answer...a reason of the hope" within us (1 Pet. 3:15).

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We are pleased to introduce to you *Christian Evidences Ministries*, a web-based ministry, whose main purpose is to provide reasons for believing the Bible. Make no mistake about it, the Christian Faith stands or falls on the reliability of the Bible. Thankfully, much evidence exists which demonstrates the Scriptures are a thoroughly trustworthy source of truth. Much of this information has been collected and displayed with college or high-school students in view. However, everyone will find the material very useful.

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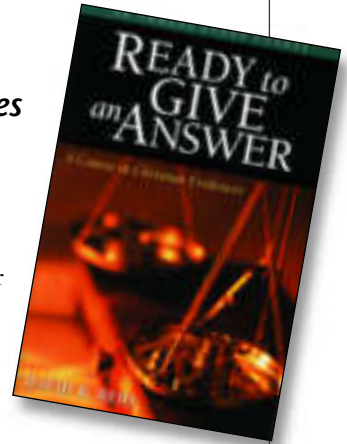
BOOKSHELF

TREND SETTERS • LIFE CHANGERS • TIMELESS CLASSICS

READY TO GIVE AN ANSWER: A Course in Christian Evidences

by David R. Reid

Publisher: ECS Ministries, PO Box 1028, Dubuque, IA 52004-1028
ISBN 0-940293-77-3 Paper, 144 pp. \$5.95 US (includes *Exam Booklet*)



Emmaus Correspondence School's newest course, written by Dr. David Reid, provides the reader with an introduction to Christian Evidences through twelve well-constructed chapters. Each of the chapters is titled with one of the major questions people ask about Christianity. The course is written in an easy-to-understood style, but neither that nor its brevity should lead anyone to assume that it does not cover a lot of ground. The author has fit an impressive amount of material into this relatively small space.

In addition to his work as the founder of Growing Christians Ministries (www.growingchristians.org), Reid has been a faculty member at Emmaus Bible College for 28 years where he has taught many courses, including several on Christian Evidences. From these courses and his work with saved and unsaved of different ages, he has produced a tool that will be especially useful to those without a great deal of exposure to apologetics.

Reid does not ask too much of his topic, that is, he does not remove the need for faith by claiming that logic, reason, and evidence are sufficient in themselves to bring someone to Salvation. In his introduction he writes, "When all is said and done, you cannot prove Christianity to the point where no faith is needed (see Heb. 11:6). Becoming a Christian requires faith, no matter how much you know about the evidence for Christianity." Some are still going to say that he gives evidence too much credit. However, his approach strikes a healthy balance, one that seems to send the message that Christianity is not without compelling answers for the most difficult questions and that rejecting Scripture involves rejecting weightier things than mere personal opinion.

Reid has not reinvented the wheel with this book, but neither has he broken new ground. This work's greatest strengths seem to be its concise presentation of an array of sources and its format as a course with a separate exam book. Chapters 1 through 3 may be appropriately lumped together. The first deals with the question of the reliability of Scripture, the second with archeology's support of the Bible, and the third with Scripture's built-in evidence—the accuracy of its prophecies. The next two chapters deal with evidence for the existence of God and the objections to that evidence. Chapter 6 concerns itself with the divinity of Jesus. Chapters 7 and 8 deal with miracles and resurrection respectively. And chapters 9 through 11 all speak to Genesis questions, including the evidence for creation, the "date" of creation, whether God used evolution or progressive creation, and finally whether or not there really was a worldwide flood. Where useful, the student finds help with the more difficult questions in the form of charts and diagrams.

Christians interested in finding answers to their own questions or those of their friends will find this book an ideal place to begin. It is a book that requires thinking and stimulates it. What it does say is good. The depths it does not reach can be found in the books on the reading list at the back. The Lord grant that this book may remove intellectual stumbling blocks from the paths of many, force important questions into the minds of others, and strengthen His people's understanding.

—JOSH FITZHUGH

YOUR MISSION

KNOW & PRAY • GO & SERVE • SOW & REAP

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Interest + Information = Intercession

Missionaries will tell you that the best thing you can do to help is to pray. But in order to pray effectively, we need to be informed. There are general information sources like *Operation World* and helpful materials from OM and Voice of the Martyrs. But if you want to be a strategic aid to those looking alone to the Lord for provision and seeking to establish New Testament assemblies, there are some excellent sources of current information. If you think you already have too much reading material, get rid of something else (not *Uplook*, of course!). After all, the information you use on your knees will make an impact forever. —*ed.*

NA MISSIONS

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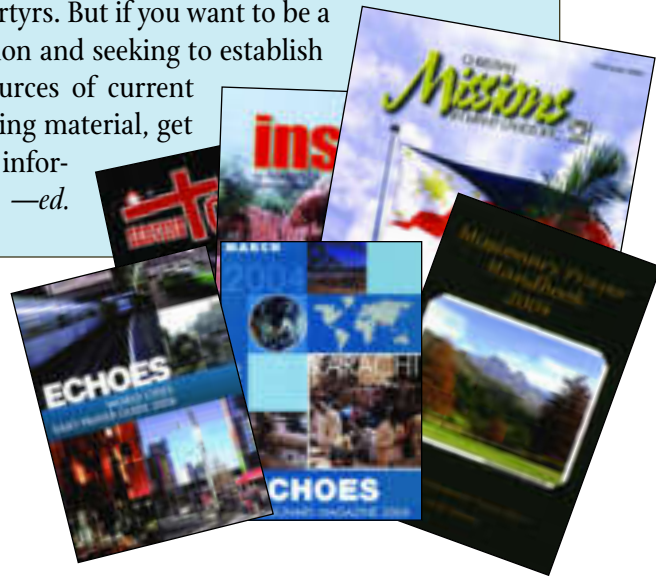
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SALVATION!

The Hebrews' author obviously loves the subject. Do we?

A. H. Stewart



Salvation as found in the Epistle to the Hebrews is a comprehensive word, meaning more than the salvation of our souls. It does mean that, but there is more. The word is used in the epistle seven times (one of which is implied). Let us look at this wondrous salvation as given in the first nine chapters of Hebrews.

HEIRS OF GOD'S COMPLETE SALVATION

This we are by sovereign grace. This is not true of the Christless, in fact who are *"children of wrath, even as others...without God and having no hope in the world"* (Eph. 2:3, 12). But we have heard the blessed news of the Person and work of our Lord, and by faith *"are children of God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ"* (Rom. 8:16-17). So we may be quite sure of one day entering into the *"inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you..."* (1 Pet. 1:4).

Now that we are on the way, our God has holy angels as our guards. *"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out for service on account of those who shall inherit salvation?"* (Heb. 1:14, NEW TRANS.). We really do not realize how much we owe to God's angels! *"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them."*

We have examples of this in the lives of both Peter and Paul. Paul is on the storm-tossed ship, where all had given up hope of ever seeing the shore, when an angel descends through the raging storm and stands beside Paul, saying, *"Fear not, Paul, thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."* In faith he told his shipmates, *"Be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me"* (Acts 27: 24-25).

In Peter's case, we are again afforded an example of God's care wrought by an angel. Herod had killed James with the sword, and because he saw it pleased the Jews, he took Peter also. But through the prayers of the saints the angel of the Lord came to Peter's rescue. Herod had to learn that, until Peter's testimony was finished, all the hosts of evil were powerless. Peter had two letters to write for the lambs and sheep of the flock, and a bodyguard of

angels was his until the time came when he must *"put off his tabernacle,"* as the Lord had shown him long before.

SO GREAT SALVATION

In 2:3 we have the next mention of salvation. Surely that is the word that fits God's salvation—the word *"great."* The *cost* would tell its greatness, if nothing else did. What currency expended to bring us back to God—*"His own blood"* (Rev. 1:5). This shall be our endless song when time shall be no more. Surely it is *"precious blood!"* When His blood is compared with silver and gold, they are merely corruptible things (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

Then when we think of the greatness of the *Person* who wrought salvation for us, we are baffled like Paul who was never at a loss to describe other persons and things, but when he wrote of the *"Lord of glory,"* he could only say, *"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift"* (2 Cor. 9:15).

How will it be possible for any to escape if they neglect so great salvation? No answer has ever been given to that question in twenty centuries, from devils, angels, or men. Theories have been propounded—and exploded—by the Word of God. *"They shall not escape"* (1 Thess. 5:3)!

Cry up to heaven, if you will; ask the ransomed host if there is a way of escape from God's judgment other than through His great salvation. You might well hear the reply:

I stand upon His merits,
I know no other stand;
Not e'en where glory dwelleth,
In Immanuel's land. —ANN ROSS COUSINS

Call to those in the regions of despair, *"Is there another way of escape from that awful place other than through God's great salvation?"* The answer is the same. There is no escape for those who reject the only way of escape.

THE CAPTAIN OF OUR SALVATION

We discover the next citation in Hebrews 2:10. What a leader is ours! There is no foe that He fears or flees. Every enemy that could hinder entrance to our destined place

has been overcome. Our Captain will indeed bring many sons to glory. No danger of losing one on the way; they cost Him too much, and are too precious to Him.

His own word to us is, *“Because I live, ye shall live also.”* *“I am the Living One, who was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death”* (Rev. 1:18). What a Captain! No staying behind the firing line! No, He goes before the sheep, leading on to glory. Some day the many sons will arrive, then with joy He will say, *“Behold I and the children which God hath given Me”* (v.13).

THE AUTHOR OF ETERNAL SALVATION

Salvation is again mentioned in 5:9. *“And being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.”* Our blessed Lord was ever holy, harmless, and undefiled, but as a Leader for the flock of God He was put to every test. Every other leader had to bow before Satan and death. Their sepulchres are with us to this day. Not so with our Captain. An empty tomb tells us of His victory over death and the grave, and though we see not yet all things put under Him, we do see Jesus crowned with glory and honor at God’s right hand.

Some would degrade our Saviour’s work by teaching we may be lost after accepting His salvation! This can never be, or else it is not the salvation of which our Jesus is the Author. He is the Author of *eternal* salvation, and no one can make eternal mean temporal. *“I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man (one) pluck them out of My hand. My Father which gave them Me, is greater than all, and no man (one) is able to pluck them out of His hand”* (Jn. 10:28-29). We are *“Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed”* (1 Pet. 1:5).

Believe the good news! *“Jesus paid it all!”* No works of merit need we plead, neither before nor after salvation. Our sins are all forgiven for His name’s sake, not because of our good behavior. That we should behave as suits the children of God is true, but we shall exclaim in His presence, *“Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thy name be all the glory!”* I am sure we would have it thus, *“That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus”* (Eph. 2:7).

THINGS THAT ACCOMPANY SALVATION

Chapter 6 explains where we have our part. *“But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation”* (v. 9). This is the chapter Satan has used to harass so many of God’s dear people. While it certainly does not teach that our salvation can be lost, it does

teach that fruit should accompany this salvation. The figure is of two fields, both receiving blessing from God; one brings forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, while the other brings forth thorns. The fruit will finally be garnered; the thorns and briers will be burned. God expects certain things to accompany salvation.


UTTERMOST SALVATION

“Whence also He is able to save completely those who approach by Him to God, always living to intercede for them” (Heb. 7:25, NEW TRANS.). I believe this gives the true meaning. I want you to notice the little word *“also.”* It is an important little word. It does not mean that we must be saved from the *“guttermost to the uttermost,”* as someone has said. No, it points us back to the eternal salvation of which our Lord is the Author, and which the apostle was persuaded they had received through the death of Christ. Now, if that is true, the same Saviour ever lives for us at God’s right hand, and is able to save us completely, all the way Home, not only because He died for us, but because He makes intercession for us. He is a living Saviour, a Priest who shall never die, in the power of an endless life.

This reminds us of Romans 5:10, *“Much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”* Satan would have us believe much less, but the Spirit of God thunders out, *“Much more we shall be saved by His life.”* Whom shall we believe—God or Satan? Surely we will believe Him who cannot lie, rather than the one who is the *“father of lies.”*

ULTIMATE SALVATION

Last, we come to our final salvation at the Second Coming of Christ (9:28). The finished product of all God’s ways and dealings with us—conformed to the image of His Son! No mutilated Bride will be there, as some would teach. No, all the children will reach home! Rebecca will reach her Isaac at last. Not a stone will be missing in the temple which is being built of living stones. The whole creation is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, whether they know it or not. Intelligence is not the price we pay to be taken up when He comes, nor is it devotion. *“They that are Christ’s at His coming”* settles that (1 Cor. 15:23).

Enoch must go before the flood comes. Lot must be taken out of Sodom ere the fire and brimstone falls, and every member of Christ’s Bride must go before the *“hour of trial”* comes to try the earth-dwellers (Rev. 3:10). *“For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.”* (Heb. 10:36) 

THE MESSAGE OF HEBREWS TODAY

Does the Book of Hebrews speak to the twenty-first century?

William MacDonald

Although Judaism is not the dominating religion today that it was in the early days of the Church, yet the spirit of Judaism has permeated Christendom. In his well-known booklet, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, Dr. C. I. Scofield wrote:

It may be safely said that the Judaizing of the Church has done more to hinder her progress, pervert her mission, and destroy her spirituality, than all other causes combined. Instead of pursuing her appointed path of separation from the world and following the Lord in her heavenly calling, she has used Jewish Scriptures to justify herself in lowering her purpose to the civilization of the world, the acquisition of wealth, the use of an imposing ritual, the erection of magnificent churches...and the division of an equal brotherhood into "clergy" and "laity."

The letter calls on us to separate ourselves from all religious systems in which Christ is not honored as the only Lord and Saviour and in which His work is not recognized as the once-for-all offering for sin.

The Epistle teaches us that the types and shadows of the Old Testament system found their fulfillment in our Lord. He is our great High Priest. He is our Sacrifice. He is our Altar. He serves in the heavenly sanctuary and His priesthood will never end.

It teaches that all believers are priests, and that they have instant access into the presence of God by faith at any time. They offer the sacrifices of their person, their praise, and their possessions.

In *The New Order of Priesthood*, David Baron writes:

To adopt the model of the Levitical priesthood in the Christian Church, which ritualism endeavors to do, is nothing else but an attempt, with unholy hands, to sew together again the veil which the blessed, reconciled God had Himself rent in twain; and like saying, "Stand aside, come not nigh to God" to those who are "made nigh by the blood of Christ."

The book of Hebrews teaches us that we have a better covenant, a better Mediator, a better hope, better promis-



es, a better homeland, a better priesthood, and better possessions—better than the best that Judaism could offer. It assures us that we have eternal redemption, eternal salvation, an eternal covenant, and an eternal inheritance.

It warns solemnly against the sin of apostasy. If a person professes to be a Christian, associates with a Christian assembly, then turns away from Christ and joins those who are enemies of the Lord, it is impossible for such a one to be renewed to repentance.

The Hebrew Epistle encourages true Christians to walk by faith and not by sight because this is the life that pleases Christ. It also encourages us to bear up steadfastly under sufferings, trials, and persecutions in order that we might receive the promised reward.

The Epistle teaches that because of their many privileges, Christians have a very special responsibility.

The superiorities of Christ make them the most highly favored people in the world. If such privileges are neglected, they will suffer loss accordingly at the judgment seat of Christ. More is expected of them than of those who lived under the law; and more will be required in a coming day.

"Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. 13:13, NKJV).

—excerpted from *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, pp. 239-241

EPISTLE OF THE OPENED HEAVENS

On the desert journey, heaven's glory cheers our hearts and brightens our pathway Home.

Peter J. Pell

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, “we see Jesus” crowned with glory and honor seated at the right hand of the majesty on high. He is there for us, our Great High Priest. It is good for us to look up and see Him there, and have our gaze fixed on Him; for in this way our hearts are weaned from this world. We follow where He has gone before and His strength is ours on the road as we pass through this weary scene to where He is in the glory.

The word *Hebrew* means “one who goes,” that is a pilgrim. Abraham was the first Hebrew (see Gen. 14:13) and the father of the faithful. It was a word from heaven that made him a pilgrim and a stranger in the earth. “*The God of glory*” (Acts 7:2) appeared to him. If we have heard the voice of God calling us and have followed the heavenly vision, we too are children of Abraham, the “*father of them that believe*” (Rom. 4:11). As those who “go on,” we qualify to receive the message of this book to the Hebrews, those who go on (see Heb. 4:1, 11, 14, 16; 6:1; 10:22, 23, 24; 12:1, 28; 13:13, 15 for the “*let us*” exhortations in the epistle).

That is why this letter begins with God speaking to us. He is calling us apart from earth. He would have us view the glory of the unseen world. He would have us walk in separation unto Himself and with Himself. For this reason the human author is out of sight altogether. Hebrews is the book of the sanctuary, and in the sanctuary God’s voice alone is heard. With unshod feet we enter and listen.

The book of the sanctuary in the Old Testament, Leviticus, begins as does our epistle with the voice of God, “*And the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation*” (Lev. 1:1). We read that—

*“God who at sundry times, in olden days
Spoke through prophetic lips, made known His ways,
In the incarnate Son, to whom all knees must bow
Spoke to make known Himself, is speaking now.”*


The simple fact that God does speak to us is amazing.

Why should He condescend to do so? But He *does* speak and the heart rejoices in hearing His voice. To some the speech of God is simply the accepted fact of a creed and has become commonplace. To others it is the most wonderful of all facts for God has told out all His heart. He speaks directly to us. He speaks fully, revealing all His counsel. He speaks finally; there is no need for further speech once He has spoken. His words are words of love, words of salvation and words of hope.

God spoke in times past. Adam heard His voice in the garden, but He could not say all He wanted to say in those early days. God was giving the various clues to the message then, but now we have the entire alphabet in His Son. He is Alpha and Omega, the sum total of all that God has to say to us. The river of God’s revelation, beginning in the Garden and running through the ages, has widened into a majestic ocean of the fullness of revelation in His Son.

A young man lay on the operating table of a hospital. A skilled surgeon stood nearby with a group of students observing. Presently, bending over the patient, the surgeon said, “My friend, as you know, the removal of this cancer will also end your ability to speak. Is there anything you would like to say before the anesthetic?”

The young man, apparently lost in thought, waited for a long moment. The onlookers wondered what he would choose for such an occasion. Then the lips parted, and in a barely audible whisper he said: “Thank God, Jesus Christ.”

God’s last words to man are summed up in Jesus Christ. He too gave long pause before He uttered His final Word. Four hundred years of silence elapsed between the last of the prophets and the Son. Then came those wonderful three-and-a-half years of glory upon earth, the final great heartthrob of God to man. After them God could say nothing more. All His wisdom and power, all the depths of His fathomless love, had been poured out in the Person of Christ our Lord. God had fully and finally spoken. 

—excerpted from *Hebrews: Bible Class Notes*, pp. 9-11

**WE SEE JESUS
who was made a
little lower than
the angels for
the suffering of
death, crowned
with glory and
honor (Heb 2:9).**

TRUESTORY

“Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee” (Mk. 5:19).

THE GOSPEL COMES TO THE DARWINS

An incident in the life of James W. C. Fegan

James W. C. Fegan, the Boys’ Friend, was born April 17, 1852, and brought up in a Christian home in Southampton, England. In 1865 the family moved to London, and on his thirtieth birthday James entered the City of London School, where he won high approval. In 1869, on leaving school, he entered a commercial office in the city, but did not care for city life. His intention was to finish with the smoke and din of London as early as possible, and retire to the country, where he could go in for outdoor life and healthful sports which he loved. But God had a nobler future in store for him.

Destined to rescue others, he must first be rescued *“from the power of Satan to God”* and this is how it took place, given in his own words:

I opened my Bible at the Epistle to the Romans, and...read on...till I came to the twenty-first verse of the third chapter. There God revealed to me how the supreme need of my life that night—fitness for His holy presence—was met in a righteousness of His own providing, apart from the law, *“unto all,”* and *“upon all them that believe.”* That moment the light of God’s salvation flashed into my heart. I looked to His dear Son as my Sin-bearer. I trusted God’s Word that His righteousness was upon me, a believing sinner. I knew it, because I saw God said it. I lay down that night in *“peace with God.”*

He found his life work in the rescue of poor boys. In 1872, he opened his first Boys’ Home with one boy, and by the year 1874 the work had so grown that he was obliged to leave business altogether to devote himself entirely to rescue and evangelistic work. Here is a personal account of one night’s adventure.

After rescuing a street urchin named Willie, he confided to me that in two large yards, in which a number of railway vans were drawn up for the night, a lot of boys used to sleep; but they had been frightened out of one yard through a ferocious yard-dog, and had been disturbed, and kicked, and cuffed by a fresh watchman, who had not yet fallen into the easygoing *laissez-faire* habits of his class in the other yard, so that the most venturesome only had just begun to make it their sleeping place again.

The next night, in company with one of my boys in uniform, I was surveying this latter yard with its boarded fence, perhaps eight feet high, when a policeman on his beat sauntered up and asked if he could be of any service.

When I told him my quest, he pooh-poohed the idea that any boys could be sleeping there. “Watchman always about, sir. Besides, fence too high. Couldn’t get in, sir.”

However, I felt confidence in my young informant’s word, so I said, “Well, we can soon settle the point. If you don’t mind stooping down, constable, I’ll put my handkerchief on your coat not to dirty it, step on your back, and be over the fence in a jiffy.”

He smiled good-humoredly, and, bending down, said, “All right, sir. Over you go!”

From the top of the fence I could step easily to the floor of one of the vans, which almost filled the yard. Presently I could hear the heavy breathing of some boys sleeping under a tarpaulin, and every now and then the convulsive gasping



James W. C. Fegan

for breath of others not so well protected, as they shuddered with cold in their slumbers.

I carefully woke up the first boy I discovered, so as not to disturb the others and, gently assuring him of my friendly intentions, led him...to the...fence. I had to whistle to the constable, and whisper, "Halloa! Look out, constable, here's one," as I gently dropped my quarry into his hands.

I was soon back with another, and another—till the constable was guarding eleven, ranged with official precision, when I dropped over the fence—without having caught a glimpse of the zealous watchman.

"Eleven of 'em, sir," said the constable. "Well, I'm blowed! What next?"....

Very soon I had chartered a four-wheeler—eight boys inside, three on the roof. My boy and I sat with the driver. It was a raw night, and I was cold and weary after having had a busy day's work, followed by a preaching engagement afterwards—but I preferred the outside!

This was a most encouraging haul, and after I had got eight of these boys settled down in the Home, and had restored three of them to their relations, I fixed upon a night to explore the other yard, and took with me my superintendent, and, at his urgent request, my protege, Willie.

Looking around for suitable country premises, a building was suggested at Stony Stratford. It had been designed as a school for the sons of gentlemen, and built at a cost of £40,000. The school was a failure, the insurance company had foreclosed on the estate, and the buildings were derelict. A offer of £4500 was made, and against all expectation, it was accepted, the purchase being made in 1900.

In this orphanage, boys from the age of eight to fourteen were housed and educated. They would go on to a training farm at Goudhurst. There they were trained in every branch of agriculture and then sent to the Receiving Home in Toronto to be placed on farms in Canada.

Mr. Fegan's work was not only philanthropic, it was evangelistic. He always had before him, not only the care of the body, but the salvation of the soul, and many will bless God for having been brought in touch with the gospel of Jesus Christ by the efforts of James W. C. Fegan.

During the summer of 1880, Mr. Fegan took some of his boys for a camping holiday. During that outing, before returning to London, they visited the estate of Charles Darwin, who lived nearby, and sang hymns in front of the house. Mr. Darwin expressed his sympathy with the philanthropic work being done, and gave each of the boys sixpence, evoking ringing cheers as they departed.

Services were also held in the district in a tent, and

when it became too late for tent services, Mr. Fegan asked Mr. Darwin if he would lend him the Reading Room which he had established for the villagers, but was rarely used.

Darwin lent it with pleasure, and, emboldened by his first success, Fegan wrote again, asking if he might have it for a week's gospel mission. He received the following answer from the naturalist:

Dear Mr. Fegan, You ought not to have to write to me for permission to use the Reading Room. You have far more right to it than we have, for your services have done more for the village in a few months than all our efforts for many years. *We have never been able to reclaim a drunkard but through your services I do not know that there is a drunkard left in the village.* Now may I have the pleasure of handing the Reading Room over to you? Perhaps, if we should want it some night for a special purpose, you will be good enough to let us use it. Yours sincerely, CHARLES DARWIN

The transfer was made, and in that Reading Room, renamed "The Gospel Room," services were held continuously for more than half a century.

Mr. Fegan has left the following memoranda:

The services I held were attended sometimes by members of the Darwin family, and regularly by members of their household. Indeed, when I had a Mission in Downe, the Darwin family were considerate enough to alter their dinner hour so that their household might attend—but this was characteristic of all who served them. At the services, Parslow, the old family butler, whose name is mentioned both by Huxley and Wallace, was converted to God and brought into church membership, also Mrs. Sales, the housekeeper, was brought into the light, and others.

In *Emma Darwin: a Century of Family Letters, 1792-1896*, edited by her daughter, Mrs. Litchfield, there is a letter written to her daughter from Downe in February, 1881, in which there is a sentence and a footnote referring to the village blacksmith, a great character.

Hurrah for Mr. Fegan! Old M. was a notable old drunkard, in the village of Downe, converted through Mr. Fegan, 1881.

Fegan passed away on December 9, 1925, at his home in Blantyre Lodge, Kent, at the age of 73. But for his strength of character and determination of will, he never could have accomplished what he did. Yet he had a heart full of kindness and sympathy which won for him not only the esteem but the affection of the thousand of boys to whom he acted the part of guide, counselor, and friend.

—T. R., from *Chief Men Among the Brethren*, pp. 187-192 

GIBSON'S STATIONS OF THE CROSS

A hi-tech passion play comes to a theater near you.



The Middle Ages featured “mystery plays” that reenacted Bible stories in theaters or public squares. The Reformation replaced theatrics with biblical exposition. The difference was that mystery plays appealed to the senses, while the preaching of the Word of God made its appeal to faith, “*the evidence of things not seen.*” About the Lord Jesus, Peter wrote, “*Whom having not seen you love, in whom though now you see Him not, yet believing you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*” While the Bible is vivid in its imagery, and lends itself to story-telling, the things it says (and the things it leaves unsaid) are designed to make real the invisible realities of the spiritual realm.

Through the years since, Christians have sensed this rivalry between theater and pulpit, and generally have held the theater in suspicion. One chief reason for this was the concern that the physical senses might smother the higher senses of thought and volition, and worse still do away with the appetite for a faith relationship.

In my library I have books about actors’ conversions, telling how newborn Christians immediately renounced the theater, or the testimony of opera singers who refused to perform anything but Christian music. Of course these books are more than a hundred years old. Today’s evangelical has long since shed these ideas, and seems ignorant of the thinking behind these longstanding attitudes. But perhaps the old thinking is not all wrong.

When the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association began to promote gospel films, A. W. Tozer wrote a stinging rebuke, “The Menace of the Modern Religious Movie” in which he warned against this very danger of the senses being acted upon to move the crowd, all the while never eliciting real faith in God.

Mel Gibson’s controversial movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, graphically displays the betrayal, torture, crucifixion and then resurrection of Christ. Gibson is a Roman Catholic, and therefore is insensible to this danger. Roman Catholicism promoted the mystery plays of the Dark Ages. They erected crucifixes, images and stained glass windows for the maximum effect on the physical senses. The Vatican has actively promoted a religious experience that can be felt and seen and heard. When John Henry Newman published his Roman Catholic views in his *Apolo-gia Pro Vita Sua*, John Darby’s answered in a 103-page review. On the first page, Darby writes, “The secret of the course of Dr. Newman’s mind is this: it is sensuous; and so is Romanism.” Darby’s use of the word “sensuous” is not to mean lustful. He meant that Newman was caught up in the outward senses that the Roman system encouraged, with its appeal to formulas, rituals, architecture, artwork, vestments, mystical sounds, candles, and the rest. Newman’s infatuation with sensual religion kept him from a settled faith in the unseen and eternal realities.

Of course, God speaks today as well through His creation which necessarily involves our senses. The danger is not that we might become emotional and actually feel something; would to God that we would all have more emotion toward Him. The danger is that we would mistake a sensuous experience for faith in God. A viewer can weep as well for the sufferings of William Wallace in *Braveheart* as shed tears for the Man on the middle cross. Are the tears any different? We cannot expect Hollywood to do in the soul what only the Spirit can accomplish.

God’s Word is not bound. To the degree that the Scripture is accurately conveyed in films like *The Passion*, people will have reason to seek God. But this is a mixed medium and sends a mixed message. Souls may have been saved while looking at the “stations of the cross” in a Roman Catholic chapel, and we can expect to see souls coming to God while watching Mel Gibson’s film, but let no one imagine that being overcome by emotionally charged special effects is synonymous with faith through the Word of God. “*For we walk by faith, not by sight...Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer*” (2 Cor. 5:7, 16).

JOHN A. BJORLIE

THESE THREE

Life outside the stifling cocoon of self, time, and this Lilliputian world

FAITH

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”

Hebrews 10:22

HOPE

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”

Hebrews 10:23

LOVE

“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:24-25

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