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(Inside front cover)

Lift up your eyes on high,

And see Who hath created these

That bringeth out their host by number:

He calleth them all by NAME; --

Isa. 50:26 (R.V.)

He telleth the NUMBER of the stars;

He giveth them all NAMES

Psa. 147:4 (R.V.)

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CONTENTS

THE SHINING WATERS 1-40

by Russell H.Schaefer

GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE ,etc41-50

by Russell H. Schaefer

**THE HIGH-BALLING EFFECT
OF THE MYSTERY.. 50-52**

by Damon J. White

**THE SERPENT OF GENESIS
THREE 52-59**

by Dr. E .W . Bullinger

**VARIED PEOPLES OF THE
BOOK OF ACTS MINISTRIES 60-68**

by Dr. A.J. Roddy

**EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER
REGARDING THE CANOPY 69-73**

Doug Falk

**IS THE DEITY OF CHRIST
A THEOLOGICAL ERROR? 74-86**

by Dr. Harold P. Morgan

STUDY ON Phil. 3:11. Inside Back Cover

by Russell H. Schaefer

**TO COMPLETE THE WORD OF GOD Outside
Back Cover**

by Russell H. Schaefer

**I hope anyone following after me will go further than I
have gone in the search for truth, will see more in the
Word of God than I have seen, and will explore where I
never dreamt treasures were to be found.**

Russ

THE SHINING WATERS

The Earth's Canopy

By

Russell H. Schaefer

These are

THE GENERATIONS OF THE HEAVENS

AND THE EARTH

when they were created, in the day that

The LORD God made the earth and the heavens

Genesis 2:4

1

THE SHINING WATERS

The Earth's Canopy

In conjunction with recent space probes photo-image enhancement .has produced thousands of spectatular pictures of Jupiter's thick cloud belts as well as the Cassini Division of Saturn's canopy rings. Saturn's canopy rings are thought to be composed of space debris and ice crystals. Saturn's rings and the belts of Jupiter are illustrative of what transpired around the earth in its earliest ages. Earth's vast canopy formed from oceans of water and planet debris and hoisted aloft a thousand or so miles above the earth is the concept this study seeks to explore in the Word of God. The multitude of texts found in the Scriptures that give testimony to this concept may draw aside for a moment the curtain hiding the picture of how the earth looked before the breaking up of a large portion of the canopy at the time of the flood, and being the cause of the glaciation and the higher present shoreline levels all over the earth.

The first mention of the canopy is found in Genesis 1:6-8. The whole needs to be read, but to quote a fragment:

Let there be an EXPANSE

IN THE MIDST OF THE WATERS . . .

2

This would have resulted in a huge ring belt canopy formed of the earth's liquid mass being thrust far above the earth. The earth's energy force-fields would carry these constantly moving belts toward the polar regions, and each ring as it reached the end of its cycle would fall to earth in almost literally a golden stream. It is likely that the movement of these rings poleward was the earth's first clock, marking off ages with the moving rings being the sweep-hand of the clock. It is likely that the present axis tilt did not exist and that the rotation of the earth in relationship to the sun was at a single point and without its present variation. Also, a canopied earth would rotate much more rapidly than at the present in order to produce an Eden hot-house effect with its prolific growth of vegetation and all other forms of life. The seemingly "swift-moving sun" would cause a constant temperature that would preclude the storms now experienced all over the earth. Rain, as we know it, was unknown then, according to Gen. 2:5b, 6a:

... for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, . . . but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the earth.

There is no "sun" or "moon" mentioned in Scripture until after the flood since the sun and moon would be seen only as a greater and lesser light, as mentioned in Gen. 1:16:

... and God made two great lights.

Above and beyond the canopy they would appear as luminaries and not distinct bodies. Looking up from the earth's surface, these moving, belted, rotating ice formations would look like backlighted "lattices" as the Hebrew text of Gen. 7:11 states:

3

. . . the windows [i.e., the lattices ('arubboth, windows, chimneys, lattices)]of heaven were opened.

These revolving gigantic ice crystals would appear to an observer as a bejewelled sky, or a floating revolving ocean of shining waters. "Lattices" could also be translated as "slue-gates," the word being built on a root meaning to "swing around," to "rotate," or to "pivot." The context of Gen. 7:11 speaks of this lattice's being broken up, at least in part:

. . . the windows [lattices] of heaven were opened.

"Opened" represents a root meaning divide, cleave, break up, gape. What physical means were used to cause these canopy rings to be broken up is not stated in Scripture. The "breaking up" was stopped short of a complete break-up of the whole canopy system according to Gen. 8:2:

. the windows of heaven were stopped.

Canopy effects or features were seen above the earth far into historical times. The movement of the canopy belts or rings and their constant collapsing at the north polar regions may be the basis for much of the mythology found in the world's histories.

While it may seem that a consideration of Genesis 1:1, 2 is far afield from this subject, it is essential, however, to the whole subject since it forms its foundation.

GENESIS 1:1, 2

The Primal Earth

(Following the format of the Hebrew text)

In the beginning:

4

IN. This preposition is translated as in, with, by, on , for, for the sake of, before, within, against (in various contexts).

BEGINNING. No article, just "in beginning" (Heb. *bere'shith*, pron. *b'raisheeth*). This means at first." Within varied contexts *re'shith* denotes head, top, first, foremost, high, supreme, a leader, beginning. The Jerusalem *Targum* translates *bere'shith* with the Aramaic *begadin*, before, in the east. The *en archei* of the Greek text is found also in John 1:1:

In (the) Beginning was The Word . . .

Later in the Genesis account The WORD is the communicating medium of God's power. In Col. 1:18 and Rev. 22:13 Christ is entitled, "The Beginning." In Rev. 3:14 He is called:

The Beginning of the Creation of God.

This takes the title back to the Genesis account where Christ is The Beginning of Everything. Both the Hebrew word *bere'shith* and the Greek *arche* mean "chief," "head," "fore-most," "supreme," and "leader." The text is not saying that Christ was first created and then successively all else was created, rather, He is The CREATIVE ORIGINAL whence all else is patterned and through Whom all proceeds from God, and to Whom all moves toward its ultimate purpose and goal.

(He had) CREATED, 3rd person, masc. sing., *bara'*. This usually indicates an action of an astounding nature such as is found here in Gen. 1:1 and in the 21st verse:

... and the long-necked creatures (A.V.)

whales, and every living soul that moveth.

... and God created man ...male and
female created He them ...

5

The triliteral root *b-r-ʿ* (*beth-resh-aleph*) translated "created" means to cut, carve, take out, separate from, bring forth profusely from either the minuteness of matter, or from the mind into a perceptible existence. Other terms used in this connection are *'asah* (*ayin-samech-he*), to do, to make, to develop; *yatsar* (*yodh-tsadhe-resh*), to form, fashion, purpose (fig.) (Example; *Kachomer beyadh hayyotser*, "as the clay in the hand of the one who forms); and *yaladh* (*yodh-lamedh-daleth*), to generate, to bear (children). Hence, *bara'* is creating and *'asah* the completing or developing. Genesis 2:3 uses both terms. Adam is said to have been created and made. (Literally, the Hebrew text states here, "created for making," "created for developing.") In none of the texts dealing with creation is there any suggestion that creation is "out of nothing." Col. 1:16 states clearly that all creation was IN (A.V., by) Him (Christ), and was THROUGH (A.V., by) Him and UNTO Him. The context is speaking of The One called Christ Jesus, The Lord. So all creation is IN Him, THROUGH Him, and UNTO Him. Creation originated IN Christ, came into existence THROUGH Christ, and in its fulfillment is UNTO Christ.

GOD. Substantive, masc., with a plural ending, *'elohim* (pron. *eloheem*). If this were translated literally and God were used as the translation of *Elohim*, then "Gods" would be the translation. Ecclesiastes 12:1 reads,

Remember thy Creators* ...

* Names of God may be plural, but as subjects they take sg. verbs; modifying adjectives are also sg. So, Gen. 1:1, "In beginning, God(s) HE created," and in all the verbs in Gen. 1 the subject is HE: "he said," "he saw," "he divided," "he collected," "he formed," etc. (but, "let us.").

6

Job 35:10 reads/

None saith, Where is God my Makers . . .

Psalm 149:2,

Let Israel rejoice in His Makers . . .

To literalize Deuteronomy 6:4,

Hear, O Israel: *Jehovah* is our Gods (*'elohim*),

***Jehovah* alone.**

Another possibility is,

Hear, O Israel: *Jehovah* our *Elohim*

(Gods) is One *Jehovah*.

Whether this uniplural noun can be pressed to express a unity within the Godhood is a matter of strict evaluation of all the evidence. Is it a plural of majesty? Is God speaking of Himself in the following, or is He speaking to other created beings?

(God, He said) Let US make man in

our image, after our likeness (Gen. 1:26).

The man is become like one of US (Gen. 3:22).

Go to, let US go down (Gen. 11:7) ... Who will go for US (Isa. 6:6)?

The meaning of the title *'elohim* having been a matter of debate, its root has been differently interpreted. To cite a few suggested meanings: wander about, go in circles, go hither and thither, strength, be strong. Lagrade and Ewald suggest "to stretch out, to stretch a line so as to reach a certain point in

7

this case, to stretch out so as to reach a Refuge, i.e., God." This suggests that God is the HUB of the Wheel of Life, the Center of the Circle toward which all things move.

It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth

(Isa. 40:22).

This text has no reference to a "circular earth" but rather to the north polar opening in the canopy. Job 26:7 refers to this:

He stretcheth out the north over the empty place ...

or

The North He stretches o'er empty space.

This portion of "empty space," as the *Companion Bible* translates it, is an opening in the canopy in the north polar regions. It is where the "rings" and "belts" finally plunged to earth as they completed their cycle of pole-ward movement. From Gr. *arche*, The Beginning, these cycling ring belts would be the dawn of time to a primeval culture. It would be "The Beginning" of each new day — and seemingly of creation itself; hence, "arctic." The rings of ice would be seen only as arches or domes by an observer looking northward toward the polar opening. The polar opening would be the only place where actual sunlight would come through to bathe the earth below. It would also be the only place from which the true outside universe would be seen. The view was limited, and the world of the ancients knew only five stars, those seen through the polar opening.

The handwriting of the heavens, God's story in the stars, was unknown because unseen by man until after the flood. More of this element later, but lest it be overlooked it

8

should not be thought strange that the name of God be likened to a mathematical equation, as this title *Elohim* could well be compared to the *pi* of the Greeks, i.e., the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter. It is no more unusual than the tetragrammaton *YHWH* related to the title "I AM" (*'ehyeh*) of Exodus 3:14, both of which are grammatical forms of the verb *hayah* (*he-yodh-he*), to be. *YHWH* may be *Qal* or *Hiph'il* imperfects (he ever is, he ever causes to be), while I AM THAT I AM may be interpreted as "I will ever be that which I have ever been." The corresponding Greek verb *eimi* is applied to Christ in a union of the present and past tenses, along with the verb *erchomai*, "come," in Revelation 1:4

Him WHO IS, WHO WAS, and WHO IS COMING:
(lit., The One Being, The One [Who] Was, and The One
Coming).

In Revelation 11:17 and 16:5 the participle "Who is coming" is omitted, as He is looked upon as having come. These epithets, as well as the Name I WILL EVER BE WHAT I HAVE EVER BEEN, imply that He will be whatever He needs to be to meet the needs of His people. The *Alpha* and *Omega* of the Greek alphabet are applied to Christ as well as His being called The First and The Last. Whoever is The Beginning and Ending of everything must be God, albeit in creation, communication, and manifestation. Any all-encompassing God must be beyond human comprehension since only another like Himself could comprehend such a Being, and human (or any other creature) ignorance must remain complete unless such a being seeks ways to communicate Himself. God's title *Elohim* might well express an object to be feared, as some authors feel, and might imply "The Circumference of His Holiness," if the circle concept has any merit; but God's very movement into creation might imply

9

that out of His eternal "aloneness" creation was a reaching forth of His love.

THE HEAVENS. The English word is the perfect participle of "heave" from its being "heaved" or "heaven" up as it was raised aloft from the earth's surface. Compare Anglo-Saxon *hus-heofon*, house-heaven, ceiling, so in the sense of a canopy. The Hebrew word *shamayim* may be derived from the root *shamah* (*shin-mem-he*), to be high. A popular etymology is seen in the ancient rabbis' interpretation of the word as being composed of 'esh (pron. *aysh*), fire, and *mayim*, water: *('e)shamayim, firewaters, THE SHINING WATERS"! The word *shamayim* is always dual in Hebrew, literally "two heavens." It is doubtful that the outer universe is meant, rather this earth's heaven with canopy characteristics. No other heaven could be heaved aloft, in keeping with the English meaning, and in accord with the Hebrew duality, i.e., the ice canopy heaven and the atmospheric. This corresponds with Genesis 1:8:

And God called the firmament HEAVEN. . .

This does not imply a limited creation, but it does stress here a geophysical relationship, not an extra-spatial one. John 1:3 is sufficient to show the extent of creation:

ALL THINGS were made (came into being) by Him. . .

The imprint of His power is upon the whole, the universes are His parchment scroll, the stars His written words. Psalm 19:1 expresses it so well:

The Heavens declare (from *saphar*,
write) the glory of God;

And the FIRMAMENT (the Ice Canopy)

10

sheweth His handiwork.

If the "all things" spoken of in John 1:3 are as extensive and inclusive as Ephesians 1:10 (i.e., to sum up all things in Christ), then as the one displays His power, the other will display His love in making all Christlike by summing up the whole in Him.

As to this Heaven, Job 37:18 describes its physical characteristics:

Wast thou with Him (when) He spread out the sky

And made it like a molten mirror (firm)?

Or Job 37:29,

Can any man explain the rain cloud's -

balancings,

The rumbling thunders of His CANOPY?

Companion Bible translation.

This last reminds one of the "heavens" that pass away with a great noise (2 Pet. 3:10), are dissolved, rolled together as a scroll, fall down as a leaf from the vine (Isa. 34:4 and Rev. 6:14); these must be the Canopy heavens, not the heavens of space. The ice canopy disappeared in historical times; remnants of it may well have reached into New Testament times. Within these prophetic statements of Isaiah, of Peter and of John in Revelation are figures of speech using natural events to denote the fall of nations, e.g., stars falling, etc., since the varied texts touching upon this subject have in mind nations then existing. But the planetary heavens could not be dissolved as could the canopy without all life everywhere also being dissolved. A canopy heaven could collapse in part or in its entirety and the earth and its life survive albeit with great climatic changes as those experienced after the flood, also in

those regions of the earth where descending streams of ice instantly froze vast herds of animal life and changed the whole climate of the earth. The "Molten Mirror" heaven of the Book of Job was an ice-canopy heaven then existing overhead or one within historical memory or tradition. The "Treasures of the Hail" (Job. 38:22) were the heavy minerals, gold for instance, once thrust aloft, later to be swept downward as canopy portions collapsed. These collapsing canopy streams would carry the debris into patterned paths upon the earth below to form the dreamed of "Rivers of Gold" that have haunted the fantasies of prospectors all over the earth.

THE EARTH, ha'arets. The Rabbis ascribe the term to the "running" of this globe, from a supposedly related root *ruts* (*resh-waw-tsa-dhe*), run. Correspondingly, some Greek scholars see in the Greek *ge*, earth, the meaning of "a going." The Chald. and Syr. = "that which is below." Might it not be that this earth was a stranger wandering in space until finally placed in a certain location in the solar system in view of what was to become the stage of all that was to follow? Even in its unformed state, the guiding hand of God thereupon was a promise of what it could and would yet be. This Genesis 1:1 was the beginning, an introduction of masterful proportions, and a summary of what was to follow.*

AND THE EARTH HAS.

WAS, 3rd person fern. sing. pret. *Qal* of *hayah*, to be: WAS, not BECAME (which would be *vattehi*) or the earth HAD BEEN (when created, as stated in verse one). That this should read WAS instead of BECAME is shown in the

*Compare Gen. 2:3, *melachto 'asher bara' 'elohim la'asoth*, lit., "all His work which *Elohim* He created for making (developing).

the connection with the words that follow:

... without form and void ...

No criticism is implied if God chose to use an unformed mass and out of it to bring order and beauty. At one time Adam was but a piece of red mud unshaped and unformed by the Divine Sculptor's hand (remember, *'adham* means "red

earth"; "ground" in Hebrew is '*adhamah*'). Then God caused a lifeless form to breathe and Adam became a living soul, a living being ("soul" is attributed to all living things in the Scriptures, including plants). Ellicott's commentary points out that WAS in Gen. 1:2 is not the copula, but rather the substantive verb "existed."** He states that after creation the earth existed as a "shapeless and empty waste." This is how the earth WAS at the time of which the narrative speaks. A very few authors seek to force this WAS into meaning BECAME, thinking thereby to force vast geological ages between Gen. 1:1 and Gen. 1:2 (the "gap" theory). Also/ between these two verses some suppose the reign and consequent fall of Satan, his fall supposedly bringing on the desolation of Gen. 1:2. The geological ages with their vast upheavals are not in keeping with a supposed perfect paradisaical earth over which Satan was supposed to have ruled. It cannot be both ways. Rather, the Genesis record is in correct sequence just as it stands written; more and more the geological ages are reaching into historical times, and historical times are reaching into the geological ages.

WITHOUT FORM, a wasteness, Heb. *tohu*. Rashi uses "stupefying," and Gesenius *tahav* (*taw-he-waw*). A root *tahah*

**What is called the copula in Indoeuropean languages is expressed in Semitic languages by the simple pronouns, e.g., The Lord He God = The Lord is God; flesh they = they are flesh, etc.

13

to astound, may describe a viewer's reaction to beholding this earth, unformed as yet in the Master's hand.

AND VOID, or, *AND A VOIDNESS*, *va-bhohu* (pron. *va-vo-hoo*). *Tohu vabhohu* sounds scary and well might it have been. The comment of 2 Pet. 3:7 does not apply to Gen. 1:2 since the earth of Gen. 1:2 was covered with water and not the world stated by Peter to be standing in and out of the water, so Peter must be speaking of the destruction of that civilization by Noah's flood. The Isa. 45:18 passage is self-explanatory, in that God did not create the earth to remain empty; rather, He formed it to be inhabited. There was as yet in the Genesis account no life to form the fossilization now everywhere found.

AND DARKNESS, *vechoshekh*, darkness covered this embryonic mass.

UPON, '*al* (*ayin-lamedh*), on, over, against.

THE FACE, *penei* (faces-of) from the root *panah* (*pe-nun-he*), to turn in various directions. The exterior. Face » presence, representing the whole. '*Al penei* is a prepositional phrase meaning "upon," "upon the surface of."

THE DEEP, *thohom*. From the root *hum* (*he-waw-mem*), agitate, set in motion, be noisy, or *hamah* (*he-mem-he*), to be noisy, rage, roar. The raging, roaring, tumultuous, and mountainous seas covering the whole earth. Shallow seas have this tendency. Kimchi sees it as an irregular conflux of many waters. Psalm 36:6 compares God's judgments to a great deep.

AND THE SPIRIT OF, *veruach*. The invisible commotion of air; hence, wind; the active principle of life: breath, and in its higher sense, spirit. Here, The SPIRIT OF GOD proper, not a mighty wind, since it is connected with BROODING so as to bring forth life. This is not applicable to wind.

GOD, same as earlier, *_Ve_lohim*.

BROODING, *merachepheth* (moving): to move and be

14

moved, to quiver or shake, to cherish and vivify. Compare Deuteronomy 32:11:

As an eagle stirreth up her nest,

Fluttereth over her young,

Spreadeth abroad her wings,

Taketh them, beareth them on her wings. . .

The thought is of The Spirit of God brooding over the waters so as to bring forth life.

UPON THE PACE, '*al penei*, as above.

THE WATERS, *hammayim*, dual, the waters (lit., two waters).

HE SAID, 3rd sing. *Qal* imperf. of '*amar* (*aleph-mem-resh*) with *waw*-consecutive, and then He said (note that the subject is the plural noun [as to form] *Elohim*.)

GOD, '*elohim*, as before.

LET THERE BE, Qal. jussive of *hayah*, expressing a wish or command; compare *yiheheh*, there shall be.

LIGHT, 'or, substantive masc., light. The verbal root-form, "to become light." **LXX phos**, "a luminous emanation, probably of force, from certain bodies which enables the eye to discern form and color." Vine. (Cf. Ger. *Feuer*, Eng. fire.) The Hebrew 'ur, related, may mean fire although usually 'esh is used. The concept is of light caused by" an explosive force out from the earth itself, not as light from an external luminous body. This was necessary to produce the canopy, the explosive force of the inner earth-core bursting forth to vaporize the shallow seas and send them skyward to form the CANOPY. This text has been a puzzle to those seeking to reconcile this supposed "light" with the greater and lesser lights of Gen. 1:14. In verse 14, the fourth day-period, lights (Heb. *me'o-roth*, lightholders or luminaries) are first mentioned. There is no conflict unless one seeks to change the internal fires bursting

15

forth from the earth into a luminary-light source. At this point in the record the "greater" and "lesser" lights of the sun and moon outside of the canopy have not been spoken of. Nor has the relationship of the earth to the solar system been initiated, nor the rotation of its moon-satellite to the earth, since that awaited the fourth record-day.

HE DIVIDED, 3rd pers. masc. sing, imperf. *vayyabhdel*. Distinction and separation.

BETWEEN, the root suggesting discerning between.

THE LIGHT, *ha'or* (cf. *ha'ur*, fire).

AND BETWEEN

THE DARKNESS. Instead of the darkness alone covering the earth, now distinguishing features could be seen in the towering flames of fire as over against the blackness.

HE CALLED, *vayyiqera'*, from the root meaning invite, summon, appoint.

THE LIGHT DAY. Day, *yom*, from *chamam*, to be hot, *chom*, heat (Gesenius); Targ., *sh'chum*, dark red, to make glow. *Yom*, as a time period, within this context must be of an indefinite period, since it is not linked with the solar time

schedule as now known, nor with the fourth record-day. Nor can the Sabbath of God's "cessation" (Gen. 2:2) be offered as a proof text since Hebrews 4:1-11 sees God's REST as being neither broken nor ever interrupted. Within these DAY-PERIODS was a foreshadowing of all that God was seeking to accomplish:

... the works were finished from

the foundation of the world (Heb. 4:3)

In Genesis 2:4 the whole six periods were collectively spoken of as a day within the Generations of the Heavens and Earth. Generations certainly seems to imply more than a mere twenty-four hour, six-day period.

16

... in the DAY that The LORD God made the earth and the heavens. . .

Later in history a commemorative day was appointed with a certain people within a certain climate and place. This "sabbath" was never given to other people, and since the calendar of that long-gone and far-away event was never kept, the two events cannot now be linked.

AND THE DARKNESS HE CALLED

NIGHT, layelahh. Root lul, hence, layil, yalal, to yell or from la'ah (lamedh-aleph-he), to be languid, exhausted, faint, weary; or from lalah, to become senseless with fatigue or thirst. The picture drawn is of an earth alternating between pulsating bursts of fire and periods of darkness. The darkness of night was but a pause in the birth-pangs of the earth.

AND IT (or, there) WAS, vayyehi.

EVENING, 'erebh (ayin-resh-beth), from the verb 'arabh (ayin-resh-beth), to be mixed, spiced, pleasant, i.e., a mixing of the fire from within the earth and the darkness upon the face of the deep. The English evening, to even out or cancel out the contrasts of brilliant flames and total darkness.

AND IT (or, there) WAS, as before.

MORNING, bhoger₂, from the verb *bagger₂* (*beth-goph-resh*, *Pi'el* stem), to look closely, to distinguish; clearness. Greek *aurion₂*, tomorrow. This is darkness, fire, an intermingling of light and shadow, and a "tomorrow."

DAY ONE, yom 'echadh. This term does not signify the first of many, or of more important days to follow; it is a unit complete in itself. Not a first-day period, rather a complete unit, *yom 'echadh₂*, ONE DAY, not the FIRST DAY, but a unit embodying all that is needed in the following *yamim* (pron. *yameem*), days.

AND GOD SAID

LET THERE BE AN EXPANSE, yehi raqui'a.

17

Reqam (pron. *ray-kahm*), adv./ empty, not tangible, from *rig* (pron. *reek*), want of substance; hence *raqa'* (*resh-qoph-ayin*), to spread out thin by beating, to make thin, to stretch out, to expand. The A.V. firmament. The A.V. presents the result for the cause instead of setting forth the formation of the canopy.

IH THE MIDST OF, bethokh, from a root meaning to cut through, the middle of anything, midst. Here, in the cutting through the waters.

THE WATER

AND THERE SHALL BE A DIVISION

BETWEEN WATERS AND WATERS.

AND GOD MADE THE EXPANSE

AND DIVIDED BETWEEN THE WATERS

FROM BENEATH THE EXPANSE

AND BETWEEN THE WATERS

WHICH (ARE) FROM ABOVE TO THE EXPANSE

AND GOD CALLED THE EXPANSE, HEAVENS.

Thus God separated waters from the shallow seas, raised them up to form an icy canopy. As the lowered seas washed on new-found shores, the drying land

formed the ancient shorelines evidenced throughout the earth. The continental shelves and the vast ocean rifts on the ocean floors all testify to the inner explosive forces that sent these primal waters upward to form the encircling, rings or belts of the bejewelled canopy.

CANOPY FEATURES

The canopy, with a constant equatorial rotation in relationship to the "greater light" of the fourth-day period (Gen. 1:14) would cause a tropical and richly productive earth.

18

The cosmic rays which might cause mutations would be mitigated. The constant temperature would preclude the storms and violent weather now known. Rain?

... for The LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth ... but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground (Gen. 2:5b, 6).

The "greater light" of Gen. 1:14 would seem to have been a swift sun speeding across the outer heavens as only a "light."

... and the firmament sheweth His handiwork (Psalm 19:1b).

In them hath He set a tabernacle (tent) for the sun (Psalm 19:4b).

The true sun was seen only as from within a "tent" or enclosure. More of this later.

WHICH IS AS A BRIDEGROOM COMING OUT OF HIS CHAMBER (Heb. *chuppah*, canopy, Psalm 19:5a; "closet*" in Joel 2:16).

The true sun was seen as coming out of a CANOPY. More of this later.

AND REJOICETH as a strong man to run a race (Psalm 19:5b).

The swiftly moving sun raced across the canopy and was seen as a "greater light" but not as the true sun except at one place at the end of the canopy:

His going forth is from the end of the heaven.

19

and his circuit unto the ends of it. and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof (Psalm 19:6).

The outer realm of space has no knowable end or ends, but the canopy heavens had a definite terminal point. The swift-moving sun, or to be more exact, a more swiftly revolving earth, was necessary to equalize the heat and not have "cold and heat" or "summer and winter" (Gen. 8:22) as after the flood when large portions of the canopy had collapsed. Before the flood no variation of seasons is mentioned. The *Companion Bible*, Appendix 12, has a long note on Gen. 1:14-16 wherein the author points out that the "stars, etc.: were for signs, and seasons, days, and years, not of seasonal plantings and harvest, but "OF THINGS TO COME," in the future. Compare Genesis 8:22, cold and heat, summer and winter. These are NOT mentioned in the earlier text. These were the writings on the tablets of the stars, hidden as yet from view in the account until the time of their revelation. The tree of knowledge, to know good and evil, all were written there as well as the course of human destiny and Divine redemption. At the time of earth's dawns the scroll was as yet silent. Satan showed Christ the kingdoms of the cosmos, and the kingdoms of the habitable earth, the outer and lesser worlds. Did this also enter into the temptation of Adam and Eve? See Gen. 2:-17; cf. 3:22. They had learned something hitherto known only to the *Nachash*, the Shining Serpent (not a snake), but the Dragon of the Skies constellation, embodied, and personified, but a superior being to the first parents). A knowledge of events in the future has no bearing upon bringing them to pass; knowledge is not causative, but a knowledge of events in the future can be used for good, or it can be used for evil, for obedience and faithfulness in spite of the coming events.

20

In process of time Adam without a stained record would have been redeemed from the man of the soil to the moral and spiritual image of the MAN FROM HEAVEN, but, sadly, he could not wait out the learning-period until such time as would be told all he needed to know of God's plans.

CANOPY FEATURES

THE POLAR OPENING

The book of Job is an unusual book. There are several sections within the book that treat of God's movement in this world: one section is addressed to deduction by observation, another section can be known only by Divine Revelation, or by the instrumentation and technology now available to science. The following text may perhaps be applied to the so-called "black holes" of outer space, they being, rather, polar openings in the canopy:

He it is Who stretches out the north over empty spaces
— Who suspends the earth from nothing . . . Who
taketh possession of the front of His throne and over it
spreadeth His cloud. His decree had drawn a circle on
the face of the water, at the confines of light and
darkness. The pillars of heaven flutter and are struck
with consternation at His rebuke (Charles Thomson,
Job 26:7, 9, 10, 11).

"*Tsaphon* bent over *Tohu*," a polar picture of the northern opening not now existing. From other Scriptures it will be seen that the polar opening was looked upon as the entrance to the throne of God.

... He closeth fast the entrance to His throne (Job 26:9).

21

The "pillars" of Job 26:11 may have canopy features, the descending avalanche of the "end of the line" canopy rings of ice would appear as "pillars" or "thighs" known in the ancient world as the "Thighs of Typhon" (cf. Hebrew *Tsaphon*). The "entrance" to His throne could be closed, whereupon the polar heavens could not then be seen. The "Polar" stars have changed over the eons, Dr. E.W. Bullinger suggesting the pole star at the time of the Genesis account to have been Alpha in the constellation of Draco, not the Alpha now found in Ursa Minor. This would place the center of the Tree of Knowledge, as viewed through the Polar opening, in Draco, the Dragon, the Coiled Serpent. This figure and the One crushing the Serpent's head in the constellation picture-drawing (Gen. 3:15) refer to this celestial serpent, the one crushing his head being thereby injured. Depending upon where the opening was viewed from the earth's surface, the imagery changed, the descending ice from one point on earth taking the form of an inverted "tree," and it truly, a TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, as the Canopy opening was a pathway to know all things. The Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9) was an effort to record this knowledge for all time by the building of a Temple to the

Sun, a place of worship within the structure and on top a representation of the constellations and, in all likelihood, an observatory of the heavens so that the knowledge then gained would not be lost should another flood sweep the earth. The Zodiac, the "path" of the sun (The Ecliptic) in relationship to the varied constellations by which their Divine Names were meant to tell a story, has been lost, and in its place a bastard astrology has been substituted. This original porthole into the true heavens must have been the wonder of the whole earth, all old civilizations bearing record of it in one form or another.

22

OUT OF THE NORTH A GOLDEN LIGHT

COMETH,

UPON GOD IS FEARFUL SPLENDOR.

(Rotherham, Job 37:22)

What a beautiful symbol of the might and majesty of God! Just as Christ was the true light Which lighteth every man that cometh into the world (John 1:9), even so this stream of golden solar light betokened the splendor of God's being. Is it any wonder that this opening seemed to the ancients the very eye of heaven, the gateway, the place of secrets and of knowledge? Perhaps Isaiah 25:6, 7 bears upon a time when the canopy covering existed:

**And HE WILL DESTROY IN THIS MOUNTAIN THE
FACE OF THE COVERING CAST OVER ALL
PEOPLE, AND THE VEIL THAT IS SPREAD OVER
ALL NATIONS.**

Was this veil removed for the nations so that they, too, could read the story of the heavens? Are these the "invisible things" of Romans 1:20 that became visible so that they might be clearly seen? Would they see, too, that the Tree of Life had been guarded faithfully for all mankind in Christ, the Crucified?

As earlier mentioned, the concentric circles or rings of the canopy would move along the path of the energy fields of the earth, this being pole-ward. As viewed from without, the descending spirals of ice and debris would form a circle or wheel. As viewed from within, the observer would behold a circle of color midst the cascading ice. The farther away one was from the opening, the greater would be the distortion of form. The top part of the rings would appear as arches, as

when a ship passes out of sight below the horizon, the last part to be seen is the top-mast or sails, due to the curvature of the earth; so, too, with the arches at the polar opening through

23

which the arctic stars could be seen. Diogenes Laertius wrote of the Arctic Stars revolving in a *tholos*, a vaulted chamber with an arched roof or dome. From certain other places on earth the observer would see different images formed in the polar opening, one of these being the inverted tree, looking like a spear point thrust into the earth. The golden glow bathing the tree would appear as an angel guarding the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge. A mind bereft of God's great truths would see in these figures a battle of mighty giants and cosmic forces, giving rise to myths of struggling demons and men. The spear figures largely in Japanese mythology, especially as it relates to the former practice of Emperor worship. Another figure is seen, as related by the prophet Isaiah in 14:12-14:

How hast thou fallen O Lucifer, Son of the

from heaven Morning, how art

O Shining One—Son of thou fallen from

the Dawn! Heaven!

Hewn down to earth, Art cut down to the

Earth, thou who

O crusher of nations! didst crush nations!

Yet thou didst say in Yet thou hast said in

thy heart— thine heart; I will

The heavens will I ascend up into the

ascend, heavens

Above the stars of God From above the Stars

will I lift up my of God will I erect

throne,— my throne;

That I may sit in the There will I sit upon

Mount of Assembly. the mount of the

Divine Presence

In the Recesses of the On the Sides of the

North: North.

I will mount on the I will ascend beyond

24

hills of the clouds, the heights of the clouds

I will match The Most I will be equivalent

High. to The Most High.

(Rotherham) (Helen Spurrell)

In the prophet's denouncement of the ruler of Babylon an earlier prototype was brought into the account, the Shining One for whom the Serpent constellation was named, in whose fall would be seen the fall of the Babylonian tyrant. Among the Babylonians a legend prevailed of a "MOUNT" or "MOUND" in the far north, where the gods of the nations assembled. The prophet goes beyond the local application and reaches far back into the earth's history to draw a vivid application. It is to this same issue that Psalm 82:1 applies:

God standeth in the Congregation of

the Mighty

He judgeth among the gods.

There is an association between Lucifer, Son of the Morning (Lucifer = Light-bearer) and the defeat of the nations in some past battle of the Titans and his desire to sit in the Mount of the Divine Presence in the "sides" (Heb. *yarkal*, thighs, pillars) of the North, the *sides" being the arched mounds, or recesses, or domes of the polar opening. The gods of the nations originating in Nimrod are to

be judged by God. The reference to Lucifer's ascending up into the heavens, and from above the stars of God erecting his throne, and finally being enthroned on the Mount or Mound of Assembly, there to become the ruler and judge of the whole earth — all this echoes and parallels the ascension, the seating, and the ruling of Christ. This parallel gives meaning to Satan's desire to have

25

Christ worship him, in return for which he, Satan, proffered Christ the kingdoms of the Cosmos (Matt. 4:8, world = *kosmos*; Luke 4:5, world = *oikoumene*, inhabited earth) and of this earth. Satan's claim to being the possessor of the kingdoms was not disputed, but there is a vast difference between one's being in a position of "trusteeship" and being in a position of "ownership." If the trustee or steward has been unfaithful to his trust, then he is removed, the deputized officer is removed, his title is restored to the original conferor, the title redeemed, cleared, and all properties returned to the rightful owner. This was the appointed role of Christ, to nullify the works of Satan and to extend His redemption and restoration unto whatever realms necessary.

Along these lines exists the essential conflict between Christ and Satan. For this reason Satan is called a "murderer from the beginning," i.e., the Slayer of the Man; there was ONE whom he sought to slay, in accord with the depiction of the writing in the stars and in The Scriptures. Satan was also the father of THE LIE, one LIE, a Lie of vast importance, i.e., that Christ WAS NOT, repeat, that Christ WAS NOT THE ANOINTED, the Savior of the world, the Promised SEED of the Woman, the Unique CHRIST OF GOD. John boldly writes:

WHO IS THE LIAR (not as in the A.V., a liar) except the one denying the Jesus is THE CHRIST? This is THE Antichrist (1 John 2:22, fr. the Greek text).

Unfortunately, the A.V. weakens the text by translating "a liar" rather than "THE LIAR," and "antichrist," instead of "He is THE Antichrist." To continue, if Christ were to assume a subservient role to that of Satan, then Satan would be equated with the Most High, but this position belongs only to

26

the One Who identified Himself with humanity through the crucible of Calvary, taking upon Himself, as the legal and rightful Heir and Firstborn of all creation, the responsibility of redemption, thereby securing the inheritance and sharing the blessing outflowing there from. He assumed the death-state allotted to those

missing the mark of divine excellence and provided a full and free return to the Father's favor for those who, whether meaningfully or ignorantly, had strayed from the holy standards of The Divine Presence.

Within Isaiah's account of Satan as "Son of the Dawn," the "Angel of Light" spoken of in 2 Corinthians 11:14 — for thus he comes to those who harken to his voice — the stars mentioned are those seen through the polar opening. There is no way to tell how large this opening was or whether its size varied from time to time, but during the period when the decline of the ice-belts was less, the visible stars must have appeared as a jeweled crown gracing the opening and betokening the very throne of God. These stars were generally five in number, corresponding to the five "golden Bees" of ancient lore. The seven stars of Revelation 2:1 in the right hand of the Holder correspond to the Pleiades constellation group. Falling stars, as mentioned earlier, depicted the fall of nations. The Arctic stars of antiquity should give an idea of what star group was polar. Seen as they were by the ancient world, they must have seemed a part of the solar wheel, beyond which was the true universe of space. It was from thence, the local world, that Satan sought to erect his throne. The heavens were looked upon as God's throne and the earth as His footstool. To combine both of these realms within his domain, not as the "Covering Anointed Cherub," i.e., the one anointed to overshadow and extend the Mercy-seated Throne of God (cf.

27

Eze. 28:14; Ex. 25:17-22; Heb. 9:5) but to be seated there as a usurper, seizing and holding the inheritance for himself, was the ambition of Satan.

In the Ezekiel account (Eze. 28:12-19) other canopy features are seen. The Prince of Tyrus is to be distinguished from the "King" of Tyrus. The Prince is a purely human figure. The things spoken of the "King" of Tyrus place Him in another category. In comparing Ezekiel 28:12-19 with Daniel 10:13-21; 12:1 (cf. Rev. 12:7), it may be readily seen that the supernatural beings stood behind earthly rulers or represented certain nations. This "King" of Tyrus therefore represents the power behind the throne. The writer reaches far back into the dawn of time, just as Isaiah does (Isa. 14) to recapture ancient history for a moment in order to rebuke the current rulers by its recitation. Isaiah rebukes the Babylonian rulers and Ezekiel rebukes the Prince of Tyrus. In citing the Ezekiel passages only those bearing upon the canopy will be given, but the whole should be read.

In Eden, the Garden of God, thou

wast,

Of every precious stone was thy covering —
Thou wast THE ANOINTED CHERUB that covered —
When I appointed thee,
In the Holy Mount thou wast.
So I cast thee as profane out of the
Mountain of God,
And destroyed thee, O COVERING
CHERUB,
From amid the stones of fire .
Excerpts from Ezekiel 28:12-19.

28

This being is said to have been in Eden, the Garden of God, thus placing him as the Shining One who conversed with Adam and Eve. He is the ANOINTED CHERUB, a title rightly belonging only to Christ (Anointed-Messiah), and a title redeemed by Him in His perfect person and completed work. CHERUB may possibly mean The Holder, The GUARDIAN. A commentary on this is found in one of the most beautiful types in the Old Testament, that of the golden throne where God was "Mercy-Seated"; out of the seat and an extension of it were the two golden Cherubim (*Cherubim*, pl. of *Cherub*) with their huge towering wings, overspreading, overshadowing the seat, and looking down upon it. They were depicted as the Guardians and Pro-claimers of The Divine Mercy there enthroned. Exodus 25:17-22, etc., gives an account of this. Of this order or class of beings was the Covering Cherub of Ezekiel's account. This being was appointed to his task in the Mountain of God, the Mount of the Congregation in the sides of the north, as Isaiah expresses it. Out of that same mountain he was cast as a profane person would be cast out. His original investiture was of delegated authority only and this being abused, his office was invalidated; later, the two golden figures were typically used to convey the concept of God being "Mercy-Seated," not only to Israel, but to all since the figure reaches back before the times of peoples and nations. There is a plaintive cry in the words, "O Covering Cherub," just as there is in the first recorded question, "Where art

thou?" Herein is expressed the awful dilemma: whether to "go it alone" or "to go on with God." Was God merely a footfall in Eden? And the Shining Cherub, "perfect in beauty" (Eze. 28:17), the real world? Was it to be faith in The Invisible One or in the world of sight, touch, and feeling? Trust in God against appearances? Trust that even seeming withholding is still His love expressed?

29

The Anointed Cherub appearing in Eden, the *Nachash* of Genesis 3:1, is not a snake but a being of glorious appointments, his garments of every precious stone, the "stones of fire" cast forth from the fiery innards of the earth being his adornments. So majestic was this being that Michael, the Archangel of God (The Chief Angel), dared not rebuke him (Jude 9). The *Nachash* is allied with the *Seraphim* in Numbers 21:8 in having a shining appearance. The comparison to a "beast" in Genesis 3:1, A.V. is misleading. The Hebrew word for "beast" is *chay*, a living creature. That is the only comparison. As to eating dust, snakes do not eat dust; rather the figure of speech denotes abject humiliation, and it is so used elsewhere in Scripture. The Greek *drake*, "the dragan," means "trodden on. The Hebrew *darakh* means "to tread." So Job 26:13 comments:

By His Spirit He hath garnished the heavens; His hand
hath formed the Crooked (fleeing) Serpent.

The *C.B.* translates: The Serpent (constellation) He hath formed. This has reference to the constellation in the heavens in which is depicted the crushing of the Serpent's head.

Before these cycles of ice-laden bands moved into their final helix before plunging to earth, the sunlight seen would be as when a round mirror casts its reflected light upon another surface. The dawn and sunset would seem to arise and set on the opposite sides of the polar opening. Maybe this would account for old world literature stating that the sun set in the east and rose in the west. The Hebrew word *bo'*, is used a dozen or so times of the sun's "going down" but more than a hundred times for the sun's "going in." The Hebrew word

30

yaradh means "to go down," but was never used of the sun. The "tent" made for the sun, the sun coming out of his chamber (chamber -canopy) and the ,sun "circuiting" the end of the heavens (Psalm 19:4, 5) would apply only to a canopied sky with a polar opening. In regard to this polar opening Ezekiel 8:7, 14 assumes a general knowledge then current as to what was -involved in the

worship of the sun-god *Tammuz*. The natural movement of the sun and moon outside the canopy cover-rings was not understood until more recent historical times, so it was thought that *Tammuz* died when the sunlight seen through the polar opening was hidden by an elipsis, and when later it reappeared, he was thought to have been resurrected.

And He brought me to the door of the

Court (of the Temple),

And when I looked, behold, a HOLE in

the wall (representing the Polar

Opening, Eze. 8:7).

Then He brought me to the door of

the Gate of The LORD'S House

which was toward the north,

And behold, there sat women weeping

for *Tammuz* (Eze. 8:14).

Tammuz was known as the Image of Jealousy associated with the hole in the wall, the worship of *Ba'al Pe'or*, the lord of the Opening. For the return of this "god of the light," the women wept. It was an annual ritual. That this and other pagan rituals should take place in the Temple foreseen by Ezekiel was the abomination to which his attention was called. *Tammuz* was looked upon as the guardian of the gate of heaven, the door-keeper, the gatekeeper. It is interesting that the Hebrew word for "sun" is *shemesh*, a "ministrant"

(Young's Concordance), not the real sun seen now, but the hidden sun, the diffused "greater light" of the Genesis account. The Greek word for sun is *helios*, whom the Greeks deified, from helix, a spiral. The belts of the canopy would assume the helix or spiral shape as the back lighted belts of ice revolved in their orbits. Sun-worshippers through the centuries had served ministrant-suns, regent-suns, substitute-suns, since the real sun was hidden behind the shining canopy. During the reign of *Amen-Ophis IV*, 18th Dynasty ruler of Egypt, remarkable

events took place. The ruler changed his name of *Amen-Ophis* (meaning "The Concealing Serpent") to *Kuen-Aten*, "The Light of the Solar Disk," or "The Light of the True Sun." His former name, along with the *Typhenic* images, was defaced and removed from all the monuments. The "Concealing Serpent Canopy" named after its coiled bands moving across the skies had been opened; a rift had been made, and the concealing serpent of the canopy sky had received a setback. A beautiful analogy of this exists in John's Gospel concerning Christ as the true light:

... in Him was Life,

And The Life was the LIGHT of men,

And The Light in the darkness

shineth;

And the darkness could not put it

out.

IT WAS THE REAL LIGHT

that enlighteneth every man coming

into the world (John 1:4b, 5, 9).

The Logos, the Living Word (Christ), the creating-communicating medium of God, was the REAL LIGHT as over against all substitutes. This is the meaning of this text. He is the reality behind the types, the substance behind the shadow. He is Eden's TREE of LIFE, The One in Whom life

32

from and in and with God is found, rather than in man himself. The TREE of LIFE was always Christ. IT was therefore fitting that Emblematic Cherubimic Swords of Flame should be seen as preserving the way to God for Adam and all others. The Genesis 3:24 texts should convey the sense of the Hebrew:

He caused Himself there to dwell

That is, God *Shekinah-ed* there, caused Himself to be manifest there midst the Cherubimic flames, these having been set to keep, to preserve the TREE of LIFE.

The Cherubim were an extension of the Mercy-seated God. This prefigured the timbered Tree of Calvary upon which The Lord was crucified. This Tree, of the Christ, was also a tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The evil enacted there is readily seen by all; beyond the evil, but not so frequently seen, is death through death, conquered; that in His dying the holy character of God is justified, and yet all claims against man that would thrust him apart from God are buried in His entombment; out of His resurrection the essential nature of God as a sentient being is seen to be that of redemption, love, and grace; through Christ God demonstratively proclaims that the true and living way both from and to God is wide open. In the light of the true sun the hiding canopy features flee away — so, too, with Christ, the TRUE LIGHT; all ministrants, regents, vicars," or any other claimant, all must give way to Him. Out of the perfections of His person and the completeness of His work the true light now shineth, all else is an unworthy representation of what God is and what God does.

Other canopy features are seen in Isaiah's vision:

It is He that sitteth upon (above)

the circle (circuit, vaulted chambers)

33

of the earth; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in (Isa. 40:22).

The circle or vaulted chamber mentioned in the text corresponds with the opening in the canopy with its vaulted domes. Beyond this was the throne of God. The text gives information as to general appearances, not dogmatic scientific facts. The same is done when the sun is said to rise or set. The heavens are viewed as curtains, keeping out the sunlight, streaming around the earth in their mistiness, and the canopy itself is looked upon as a tent beneath which the inhabitants dwell.

In Judges 5:28 several curious canopy features are implied:

They fought from heaven:

The Stars in their courses

Fought against Sisera.

Deborah, of the context here, is the ancient name for the Pole Star. The polar stars, the Golden Bees (Deborah) of the polar opening, fought in turn against Sisera; Sisera, not the local general by that name, but the Semitic-Assyrian *sasur*, i.e., the Star-Keeper or Guardian-Captor of the Stars. According to the ancient legend the Stars fought against him and sought to defeat him in order that their glory and splendor might be seen by all. This incident is used in Deborah's song to parade her victory over *Sisera*. In this same chapter the mother of *Sisera* "cried through the lattice" (Judges 5:28), lamenting the vanquished *Sisera's* long delay in returning from the battle. The parallel is obvious. Also, the "lattice" mentioned is the same word used in Genesis 7:11 of the "windows of Heaven." *Sisera* is again mentioned in Psalm 83:9, 10. The names mentioned have strange connotations. *Sisera* = Star Keeper;

34

Midian = World Center; *Jabin* = Possessor of Knowledge; *En-Dor* = The Fountain of *Dor*, or, Fountain of the Opening. The Polar Opening was both a Door of Knowledge and a Concealer of Knowledge. It opened to the outside universe, but its special features also hid it. The Hebrew for "generation" is *DOR*, meaning CIRCLE. The Witch of *En-Dor* professed to have special knowledge as being a member of the "CIRCLE" cult, the polar opening of those canopy days. The "generation" association evidently arose from the timing of the canopy rings or circles, as they moved from a certain point in the heavens to another point of reference. The Old Testament assumption was that a generation covered forty years. A swift-moving earth under the conditions of an overhead canopy may have had an influence on how time was registered from circle to circle movement. The canopy belts may have been very regular and precise in reaching a certain point regardless of how swiftly the earth itself may have moved.

Other canopy features are seen in the vision of Daniel:

... and the Ancient of Days did sit, Whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool: His Throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels (the wheels thereof — of the throne) as burning fire.

The Ancient of Days sat upon a "wheeled" throne of flame, in this vision. The turning, twisting, spiraling rings of the Canopy moving ever toward the polar goal were a fitting graphic picture of God's throne. As they wheeled into their final vortex and cascaded to earth, it was seen as streams of flame, like flame, as

Daniel relates it. It presents a picture of that greater throne of God that no man has seen nor can see

36

nor approach unto except he be "hidden" in The Christ (Col. 3:3), in union with whom one is given courage to speak freely with The Father and have complete freedom of access with confidence (Eph. 3:12), to the shining throne midst flames duplicating the "Sword of Flame" of Eden, pointing to and preserving the way to the Tree of Life. In symbol, the Gateway to the Stars had a story to tell for all creation, a story written as large as the universe in scope. Truly, The Ancient of Days, the Depository of ages, wisdom and power did sit enthroned in the "Circumference of His Holiness," for God must be perfect in His morality, pure in His holiness, just as He must be perfect in His love and His grace. Thus, in vision, the prophet sees something of the grandeur and glory of God, God Who is everywhere and yet present in every place, Who promised to dwell with one who is of a humble and contrite spirit (Isa. 57:15)r and Who is enshrined as in the Holiest of All in the hearts of His own (Eph. 2:22. Truly, "promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south" (Psalm 75:-6); so, as the *Companion Bible* so well states, it must come from the North, symbolically, the place of God's throne. Promotion, i.e., to be "lifted up," is of God alone, and there is no "lifting up" as fitting as that mentioned in Ephesians 2:6:

... jointly rouses us,
and jointly seats us
among the celestials,
in Christ Jesus.

36

THE RAINBOW

The massive breaking up of the canopy in the time of the flood from whatever cause God used is recorded in Genesis 7:11, 12, 19:

... all the fountains of the great deep were broken up,

and the windows (lattices) of heaven were opened ...

and there was rain upon the earth ...

and the water prevailed exceedingly.

Prior to this event it had not rained; a hothouse effect had been caused by the canopy (Gen. 2:5, 6). Land and sea distribution were different from that before this great upheaval, literally, the "falling skies." The canopy rings collapsed, mountains of ice falling, trapping millions upon millions of animals in an instant deep-freeze, the remains of which are still being explored. Climatic changes took place all over the globe; for the first time, it rained. With high and low pressure areas now operative, the first wind is recorded in Genesis 8:1. With a breaking up of the deep, a different world emerged, and for the first time a RAINBOW was seen.

I DO SET MY BOW IN THE CLOUD (Gen. 9:13).

The beautiful spectrum arched across the heavens, caused by sunlight refraction, reflection, and dispersion in raindrops falling through the air opposite to the sun itself, was to be the token that there would not be another world-wide flood. A flood would have to presume upon canopy features of the scale seen before it; and while this does not exist, a flood of that magnitude is impossible. God takes the original special rainbow and makes it a promise of hope for the future, a

37

covenant with the earth (Gen. 9:13). Thereafter, the lattices of heaven were stopped (Gen. 8:2); the canopy belts continued but never to their former degree. The changed earth had higher shorelines; the hothouse effect was gone. The last remnants of the canopy having finally disappeared, many of the very old civilizations, attest to their having existed. Now, the "greater and lesser" lights of Genesis 1:14 would take on a new brilliance, and with the shift in the axis of the earth there would now be cold and heat, summer and winter (Gen. 8:22). The present earth with its varied seasons, its hurricane winds, its cold and warmth, its storms and placid days has its blessings and its cursings. With the sweeping away of the full canopy the heavens were open to sight, and the handwriting there in the original meaning of the stars and constellations could be read by all. Truly, Luke 1:76-78 sees the fulfillment of the message of the stars and all the aspirations of the human hearts

From the height of the heavens

The Dayspring (Branch)

Had visited us.

The brightest star in VIRGO (composed of 110 stars) is called *AL ZIMACH* in Arabic and *TSE-MACH* in Hebrew, both meaning THE BRANCH. This name is used of the *Messiah* or Christ in Jeremiah 23:5, Zechariah 3:8; 6:12; Isaiah 4:2. The Greek *ANATOLE* of Luke 1:76-78, i.e., DAY-SPRING, was the brightest star of that cluster. He had come, not as a man claiming to be God, but God reaching forth out of His invisible spirit-being to communicate in and through Christ with humanity and His creation. Drawn in the heavens was the cross of redemption, the altar of completeness, the wounded victim and the one rising from the dead, all told in pictographs. The story of the heavens and Scripture blend

38

together in Christ as type and antitype meet in the perfect Christ and His complete work,.

There is one Secret God kept to Himself from before the founding of the cosmos. When revealed, it was the greatest love story ever conceived:

As He made choice of us in Him before the casting forth of the *cosmos*, that we should stand consecrate and spotless in His sight—in love He chose us: He claimed us 'for His own long ago, to give us the charter of Sonship to Himself, through Jesus Christ, so fulfilling the good pleasure of His will, that praise might be rendered to the glorious manifestation of His grace, the grace that He so freely gave us in the person of His Beloved (Eph. 1:4-6).

Before the worlds were sent forth from The Creator's power into space and time, God made a series of choices relating to Himself and to beings that were not yet in existence; He chose them to have and to hold fellowship with Himself, and that on the highest possible plane — as Sons in The Son to a Beloved Father. The sheer scope of this is seen in Ephesians 1:9, 10.

For He revealed to us the secret of His (heart's) desire, according to His determination which He had formed within Himself to carry out the dispensation that awaited but the fullness of the time. For His purpose

was to sum up all things under One Head, in Christ,
that which is in heaven, and that which is on earth, in
HIM.

39

All, all were to be made ONE in Him, summed up in Him. All were to be made Christ-like. Seeing Christ, God would see the objects of His love; seeing the objects of His love, God would see Christ. Henceforth the whole would be seen in the ONE, and the ONE in the whole. His beauty and grace had their object, His creative divisings had their purpose and their aims.

In giving of Himself in creation God knew what would come to pass. Foreknowledge does not cause a thing to be, any more than "after-knowledge" does; but knowing, as He did, He provided for every possibility and accepted the full responsibility for erring humanity in providing a full and free redemption and forgiveness where it involved a transgression against His revealed will. God was IN CHRIST reconciling the world to Himself, not apart from Calvary, not apart from pain, not apart from the nails, not apart from the thrust of spear or thirst — it was God's way of saying, "Let this death of Me in Christ be the death of all things that would separate Me from you — for I LOVE YOU."

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made;
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.

F. M. Lehman

RANDOM THOUGHTS ON GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE AND GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

by Russell H. Schaefer

This subject has been surrounded by controversy. It is unfortunately equated with a certain concept of God's sovereignty, a sovereignty of inflexible fate. It has been said, "God rules or is ruled." Rather, one should say, "God is totally free in His sovereignty to act as He wills or He is not free at all." The first dictum reflects total ruthlessness and does not allow any freedom to God to act or to rule as He sees fit under varied circumstances. This, of course, makes a mockery of "forgiveness," as in this case He initiates the sin and causes the sinner to sin; for who can resist His will under this type of sovereignty? Since "sin" would be the outworking of His sovereignty, there is no fault, hence nothing to be forgiven. This type of sovereignty, that of inflexible will or fate, is alien to another concept of sovereignty, a sovereignty in which God is free to act in whatever way it pleases Him in accord with varied circumstances, working out His purposes, conditioned only by His moral nature of infinite holiness and His essential nature of unchanging love. It is this last type of sovereignty that makes operative a RULE OF GRACE rather than of continual judgmental acts. The RULE OF GRACE for the peoples of the world is unequivocally set forth in Ephesians 3:1, 2; 8b, 9a:

For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you the NATIONS —

If at least ye have heard of the ADMINISTRATION OF THE FAVOR (GRACE) OF GOD, which hath been given unto me for you (Eph.3:1, 2).

41

Unto THE NATIONS to announce the GLAD MESSAGE OF THE UNTRACEABLE RICHES OF THE CHRIST, and to bring to light what is the ADMINISTRATION of The Sacred Secret— which had been hidden away from the ages in God (Eph. 3:8b, 9a, Rotherham text.).

The word "nations" in this context has a meaning much broader than the "saints and faithful" to whom the letter is addressed (Eph. 1:1), "nations" not in the sense of corporate separate entities but rather in the sense of the Greek word ethnos,

having to do with the varied peoples that make up the world in their racial, cultural, linguistic, political, and geographical distinctions. In a pluralistic world all varieties of people, races, and cultures are found, and it is to these that the administration of grace is addressed. In effect, it knows neither boundaries nor barriers. In its absoluteness it is as sure and as solid as when upon another occasion, for cause, God brought judgmental waters upon the earth.

Christ's historical death in behalf of mankind was a necessary monumental step that had to be enacted before the rule of grace could be announced as being the governing principle of God. Into this historical death all have been identified, thus making it the just and sufficient grounds upon which God extends His sovereignty of grace. Consider that out of that death the following emerges:

JUSTIFICATION

The Dikaiosis

The act of executing the *dikaioma*, i.e., the validation of the legal norm or standard in defense, punishment, or satisfaction of any requirement before God. All have missed the mark

42

of the glory or perfections of God as seen in Christ; all, therefore, require the *dikaiosis*, the justification.

The following verses set this forth in a beautiful way:

1. The one having died (in and with Christ's death) has been justified from sin (Rom. 6:7, see Greek text).
2. Being justified freely (gift-wise) by the grace of Him ... (Rom. 3:24).
3. Who are delivered up on account of our trespasses (we who are delivered up in Christ on account of our sins — in contrast to this —) (Christ) was raised because of His having justified us (Rom. 4:25).
4. God was IN CHRIST reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, that we might become the justified of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:19a, 21b).

In Christ's death, we died, and death lost its claim upon us. In Christ's death God justifies us freely as a gift. In the perfections of His work's HAVING ALREADY justified us. Christ arose from the dead as an attestation to this accomplished fact. In not having to impute a world's sin to it, God was thereupon free to reconcile the world to Himself and hold it in a state of justification.

Having done this, God, on a more personal basis, extended an unconditioned "grace-forgiveness":

... having forgiven (*charisamenos*)

43

all the trespasses (Col. 2:13b).

The formation of this verb "forgive" upon the substantive *charis*, "grace," indicates on God's part His delight in bestowing His favor upon the objects of His love, overlooking the trespasses, i.e., the false steps, the blunders, the falling aside from rectitude and truth. This type of forgiveness is pleasing to the Giver and makes happy the receiver. It is not tainted with legalism or reluctance, nor with compulsion or reserve. It is not a response to God's having been begged to forgive, nor is it given as a result of the enumerating of one's sins; it is God's free gift, "grace-forgiveness." This is in keeping with the "complete release" mentioned in Ephesians 1:7:

In Whom we have the redemption (*apolutrosin*) through the blood of Him ... according to the riches of His grace.

The prefix *apo*- takes the meaning of "redemption" beyond the ordinary one, *lutrosis*, and into that state of complete guiltlessness, transposing the receiver into a state of liberty with God. This is in accord with the riches of His grace, not out of a poverty of having to redeem because of an inherent obligation to do so, but out of the very richness of His grace which impels Him to do so happily. It was always God's intent to raise man up from the image of Adam, the man of the earth, to The Man of Glory, The Christ, just as Boaz exercised his right of redemption with respect to Ruth, raising her from the status of widowed Moabite into the lineage of The Saviour of the World. True, there may be claims against us and self-made chains that bind us, but these are not of God's devisings; His redemption is unreserved and unencumbered.

44

Christ was The Perfect Redeemer, and He accomplished a perfect redemption. Anything less than this is unworthy of the riches of His grace and implies that His grace is insufficient to accomplish the task given Him.

This type of sovereignty is drawn in bold strokes, framed by God's love and grace. Out-of-hand judgments have not engendered love toward God. He is worthy of love and service because He loves so very much. It is fitting, therefore, that He should have an administration of grace to all people. It would ill become Him not to have such an administration. Is it any wonder that His present kingdom is called by such an endearing title as:

THE KINGDOM OF HIS LOVE (Col. 1:13)?

or: The Kingdom of the Son Of His Love

This could be diagrammed thus:

Christ, The The Reign of His Love	The Recipients of His Love
The Son of His Love	The Character of His Love
The extent of His "Jointly" Love.	Seated with Him.

(Eph. 2:6)

Toward mankind God has an unqualified Administration of Grace. This is without conditions or restrictions, such as covenant-agreements on the one side or the other, as, for example, God's former covenants with the nation of Israel wherein Israel was paid in material blessings in direct proportion to her fulfilling her covenanted agreement of setting forth the glory of God in extolling His righteousness as well as being the vehicle of His goodness. How tragic are the words so frequently spoken to Israel, "You have broken My covenants"! With the physical needs supplied, and with the issues of war and peace resolved in the covenant provisions,

Israel was to have had the time to be an example nation of holy and just laws, of kindness and rest to the weary, and to have been a portraiture of redemption, holiness, mercy and grace to all via her rituals, types and shadows. With Israel's failure, the whole system of revealing God to the world might well have been closed down, and a universal judgment might easily have ensued; but, in the

darkness, as those eras ended, God in His sovereignty brought forth His formerly hidden plan, the dispensation of the grace of God. Judgment was not to be the last word from God, but GRACE. The failure to be alerted to this truth, The Sovereignty of Grace, is the cause of much of the confusion in the realm of so-called "Christianity" today. In those receiving this truth a close family relationship is wrought. Faith is one of the finest synonyms for "fellowship," since one must have faith — trust — in another before fellowship can be experienced.

God's Foreknowledge

If God knows the future, as assuredly He does, is this knowledge causative? Is it the cause of those events' taking place in the future? Is the knowledge of events, whether past, present or future, just that — knowledge? Knowledge that can be used for good or ill?

An excellent illustration of the use of foreknowledge on God's part is found in 1 Samuel 23:10-13, portions of which are quoted:

... and Saul said, "God hath delivered him (David) into my hand" ... Then said David, "O LORD God of Israel, Thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake. Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? Will Saul

46

come down as Thy servant hath heard? O LORD God of Israel, I beseech Thee, tell Thy servant." And The LORD said, "He will come down. Then said David, "Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?" And the LORD said, "They will deliver thee up." Then David and His men, which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forebare to go {to Keilah).

1. Saul knew he had David in a trap, he knew the fickleness of David's allies.
2. David was suspicious of his allies.

- 3. David inquired of The LORD (*Jehovah*) whether Saul would assault Keilah.**
- 4. God told him Saul would do so.**
- 5. David inquired of The LORD whether the men of Keilah would deliver him to Saul.**
- 6. God said they would do so.**
- 7. David withdrew his men from Keilah as a consequence of this "private" information from God.**
- 8. Saul changed his mind when he discovered David had escaped from Keilah.**
- 9. Due to the use by David of God's foreknowledge, the events that were to have taken place, did not take place.**

Another instance of this nature was Jonah's message to Nineveh:

**Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be over-thrown
(Jonah 3:4).**

The response of the people to this unconditional message of doom was beautiful:

47

**Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away
from His fierce anger, that we perish not? (Jonah 3:10).**

God's response?

**And God saw their works, that they turned from their
evil way; and God repented of the evil He had said He
would do unto them; and He did it not.**

Jonah's response?

**But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very
angry (Jonah 4:1).**

What did Jonah know about God that would possibly make Jonah out a liar and discredit him as a prophet?

And he prayed unto The LORD, and said, "I pray Thee, O LORD, was not this my saying when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish; for I KNEW that Thou art a gracious God, and merciful, and repentest Thee of the evil" (Jonah 4:2).

Few prophets were sent to Gentiles. Israel had a host of opportunities to repent as prophet after prophet was sent to them, and she refused. Jonah was, in effect, a test case: would Gentiles repent at even a direct word of impending doom without any offer of mercy and without pleadings or references to the "fathers," or mention of "covenants," or special inducements as Israel had over the long centuries? Jonah knew that any warning or actual pronouncement such as was given to Nineveh implied that God's basic character of graciousness

48

could surface and cancel out His prophecied "doom." It happened then — is it wrong to suppose the same principle applies in other areas of The Word of God, for instance, the Book of Revelation? May not the "Dispensation of the Grace of God" for everyone be the paramount revelation of God and a perfect sequence to the redemption effected by Christ's person and work? Also, could not the same grace and mercy be shown to Israel, or would they be too offended at a Jewish prophet's being sent to a Gentile city? Jonah felt so:

Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech Thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live (Jonah 4:3).

What is foreknown by God does not always come to pass; knowledge "looks" and "sees" and takes heed or is warned and takes another path. In fulfilling His purposes God:

- 1. Could ignore man completely**
- 2. Could force His will upon man**
- 3. Could work with man**
 - a. partially**
 - b. completely**

4. Could raise man to the stature of Christ

a. Seeing man, He would "see" Christ in him

b. Seeing Christ, He would "see" man in him

In regard to this last item, it needs to be added that this has always been what God has purposed; this was the apex of all His plans; this is the summation of the great truths found in the Ephesian and Colossian letters. What He has commenced in this, His ministry of grace, and its continuation and duration, is expressed so very well in Ephesians 4:13:

49

TILL WE ALL COME

In the Unity of the faith

and

Of the Knowledge of

THE SON OF GOD

unto

THE PERFECT MAN,

unto

THE MEASURE

Of

THE STATURE

Of

THE FULNESS

Of CHRIST.

Unlike man, God knows in His wisdom what is fixed and what is contingent. Unlike Jonah, let us always presume upon the love beyond limits and the grace beyond measure.

NOTES FROM A LETTER

Re: The Mystery

Dear Russ:

As I sit here in your home there is one thought I wish to express concerning the "highballing" effect of the Ephesian and Colossian truths on the rest of The New Testament Scriptures.

Without a doubt this happened via these two books, and in their truths all the intermittent steps toward the revelation of the Purpose of the Ages are now passe.

I also feel that in the Book of Hebrews we have another example of "highballing" at the close of the Acts

50

period.* This book sees Christ as remaining in the heavens until all is subjected to Him, the cleansing of the heavens as having already taken place, and the heavenly ministry of Christ as being the fulfillment of His High Priestly ministry.

The "Mystery" highballing would have a distinct bearing upon the Book of Revelation wherein judgment was the distinct theme then in the process of taking place within that historical time and place. The "Mystery" would by its very nature overleap any ensuing judgments following the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

It is like a mighty river that was to be crossed by stepping stones. The Ephesian and Colossian truths would represent the far shore toward which all was pointing. The "stones" are those things in Scripture represented by type, symbol, sign, and ritual, given as instruction aids — "stepping stones." Maybe "dispensation" is a better word? Now that we have reached the "distant shore," the stones we jumped over, or rather that God jumped over, are of no vital nature to our security because the plan is not to go back to the shore of

immaturity and imperfection. If some of the stones or steps are now hidden, or their order is difficult to figure out, we having been placed upon the other shore, the stones are of no great moment since their initial purpose was to guide us to this very shore. No matter how long we may have stood on the one

*** Your suggestion that these were of the Alexandrian-Jewish Synagogue of Rome, who had only heard of Paul (Acts 28:17-24) and were not opposed to him as were the Judean Jews who constantly sought his life. Hebrews then would be Paul's addresses to these type of Jews, recorded likely by Apollos, and would place Hebrews at the close of the Acts.**

51

shore looking across to some undefined goal, no matter what one or another stone would be (as the nation of Israel, for instance), the trouble was still the mighty river all about us. God saw that we were running out of stones upon which to place our trust and that the distant shore looked unattainable, so IN CHRIST God picked us up and placed us on the other side so that we no longer would need to trust in man or men but in His Christ alone, and in His grace alone. The "Other Shore" is that total completeness of all things in Christ, the Ultimate REALITY of which all else is but shadow. In Him we no longer need be concerned with the temporary stepping stones. We do need to be concerned in reflecting and living out the life of Christ within us and to give Him His rightful Headship.

Damon White

THE SERPENT OF GENESIS 3

Companion Bible, Appendix 19

by E.W. Bullinger

In Genesis 3 we have neither allegory, myth, legend, nor fable, but literal historical facts set forth, and emphasized by the use of certain Figures of speech.

All the confusion of thought and conflicting exegesis have arisen from taking literally what is expressed by Figures, or from taking figuratively what is literal.

A Figure of speech is never used except for the purpose of calling attention to, emphasizing, and intensifying, the reality of the literal sense, and the truth of the historical facts; so that, while the words employed may not be so strictly true to the letter, they are all

52

the more true to the truth conveyed by them, and to the historical events connected with them.

But for the figurative language of verses 14 and 15 no one would have thought of referring the third chapter of Genesis to a snake: no more than he does when reading the third chapter from the end of Revelation (ch. 20.2). Indeed, the explanation added there, that the "old serpent" is the Devil and Satan, would immediately lead one to connect the word "old" with the earlier and former mention of the serpent in Gen. 3:- and the fact that it was Satan himself who tempted "The Second Man," "The Last Adam," would force the conclusion that no other than the personal Satan could have been the tempter of "the first man, Adam."

The Heb. for "serpent" (Gen. 3.1) is *nachash* from *nachash*, to hiss, mutter, whisper, as do enchanters. Secondary senses are to divine, enchant, whence the frequent use of noun as "serpent." The allied Chald. word means brass, copper, from "an assumed root" meaning to be bright. Various passages tell us that Satan possesses a glorious appearance, and the Heb. term probably includes the sense of fascinate, enchant (see Deut. 18.10 et.al.). This element of fascination connects with the later use of *nachash* as "serpent."

The term *saraph* (Pl. *seraphim*) is derived from *saraph*, a Homonym meaning (1) to burn, (2) to be elevated. In Num. 21:8 "A fiery serpent" = *saraph*; in the following v. "a serpent" = *nachash*; while in v. 6 both words are given for "fiery serpents." The same word *saraph* (*seraphim*) is used of the heavenly ones of Is. 6:2, 6.

Thus *saraph* is used of a fiery serpent and of an exalted celestial being; *nachash* being similarly used to designate a serpent and a glorious spirit-being.

53

Indeed, a reference to the structure of Gen. 3 will show that the *Cherubim* (which are similar celestial or spirit-beings) of the last verse (Gen. 3.24) require a similar spirit-being to correspond with them in the first verse (for the structure of the

whole chapter is a great Introversion). The *Na-chash*, or serpent, who beguiled Eve (2 Cor. 11.3) is spoken of as "an angel of light" in v. 14. Have we not, in this, a clear intimation that it was not a snake, but a being of glorious aspect, apparently an angel, to whom Eve paid such great deference, acknowledging him as one who seemed to possess superior knowledge, and who was evidently a being of a superior (not of an inferior) order? Moreover, in the description of Satan as "the king of Tyre"* it is distinctly implied that the latter being was of a supernatural order when he is called "a cherub" (Ezek. 28.14, 16, read from vv. 11-19). His presence "in Eden, the garden of *'Elohim* (v. 13), is also clearly stated, as well as his being "perfect in beauty" (v. 12), his being "perfect in his ways from the day he was created till iniquity was found in him" (v. 15), and as being "lifted up because of his beauty" (v. 17).

These all compel the belief that Satan was the "old serpent" (*Nachash*) in Gen. 3, and especially because the following words could be addressed to him: — "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee" (v. 17).

Even supposing that these things were spoken to, and of, an exalted human being in later days (in Ezek. 28), still "the king of Tyre" is not compared to a being who was

* Ezek. 28.11-19, who is quite a different being from "the Prince of Tyre," in vv. 1-10, who is purely human.

non-existent; and facts and circumstances which never happened are not introduced in the comparison.

There is more about "the king of Tyre" in Ezek. 28.11-19 than was literally true of "the prince of Tyre" (vv. 1-10). The words can be understood only of the mightiest and most exalted supernatural being that God ever created; and this for the purpose of showing how great would be his fall. The history must be true to make the prophecy of any weight.

Again, the word rendered "subtle" in Gen. 3.1 (see note in *Companion Bible*) means wise, in a good sense as well as in a bad sense. In Ezek. 28.12 we have the good sense, "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom"; and the bad sense in v.

17, "thou has corrupted thy wisdom" (referring, of course, to his fall). So the word rendered "subtle" is rendered "prudent" in Prov. 1.4; 8.12; 12.23; 14.8; and in a bad sense in Job 15.5. 1 Sam. 23.22. Ps. 83.3.

The word "beast" also in Gen. 3.1, *chay*, denotes a living being, and it is as wrong to translate *zoa* "beasts" in Rev. 4, as it is to translate *chay* "beast" in Gen. 3. Both mean living creature. Satan is thus spoken of as being "more wise than any other living creature which *Jehovah Elohim* had made." Even if the word "beast" be retained, it does not say that either a serpent or Satan was a "beast," but only that he was "more wise" than any other living being.

We cannot conceive Eve as holding converse with a

* It is remarkable that the verb nachash is genenerally translated to enchant, fascinate, bewitch; or of one having and using occult knowledge. See Gen. 30.27; 44.5, 15. Lev. 19.26. Deut. 18.10. 1 Kings 20.33. 2 Kings 17.17; 21.6. 2 Chron. 33.6. So also is the noun used in Num. 23;23; 24.1.

55

snake, but we can understand her being fascinated by one, apparently "an angel of light" (i.e. a glorious angel), possessing superior and supernatural knowledge. When Satan is spoken of as a 'serpent,' it is the figure *Hypocatastasis* or Implication (an implied resemblance or representation); it no more means a snake than it does when Dan is so called in Gen. 49.17; or an animal when Nero is called a "lion" (2 Tim. 4.17), or when Herod is called a "fox" (Luke 13.32); or when Judah is called "a lion's whelp." It is the same figure when "doctrine" is called "leaven" (Matt. 16.6). It shows that something much more real and truer to truth is intended. If a Figure of speech is thus employed, it is for the purpose of expressing the truth more impressively; and is intended to be a figure of something much more real than the letter of the word.

Other Figures of speech are used in vv. 14, 15, but only for the same purpose of emphasizing the truth and the reality of what is said.

When it is said in v. 15, "thou shalt bruise His heel," it cannot mean His literal heel of flesh and blood, but suffering, more temporary in character. When it is said (v. 15), "He shall crush thy head," it means something more than a skull of bone, and brain, and hair. It means that all Satan's plans and plots, policy and purposes, will one day be finally crushed and ended, never more to mar or to

hinder the purposes of God. This will be effected when Satan shall be bruised under our feet (Rom. 16.20). This, again, will not be our literal feet, but something much more real.

The bruising of Christ's heel is the most eloquent and impressive way of foretelling the most solemn events; and to point out that the effort made by Satan to evade his doom, then threatened, would become the very means of insuring its accomplishment; for it was through the death of Christ that he who had the power of death would be destroyed; and all

56

ultimate humiliation; for prostration was ever the most eloquent sign of subjection. When it is said "our belly cleaveth to the ground" (Ps. 44.25), it denotes such a prolonged prostration and such a depth of submission as could never be conveyed or expressed in literal words.

So with the other prophecy, "Dust shalt thou eat." This is not true to the letter, or to fact, but it is all the more true to truth. It tells of constant, continuous disappointment, failure, and mortification; as when deceitful ways are spoken of as feeding on deceitful food, which is "sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth shall be filled with gravel" (Prov. 20.17). This does not mean literal "gravel," but something far more disagreeable. It means disappointment so great that it would gladly be exchanged for the literal "gravel." So when Christians are rebuked for "biting and devouring one another" (Gal. 5.14, 15), something more heart-breaking is meant than the literal words used in the Figure.

When "His enemies shall lick the dust" (Ps. 72.9) they will not do it on their knees with their literal tongues; but they will be so prostrated and so utterly defeated, that no words could literally depict their overthrow and subjugation.

If a serpent was afterward called a *nachash*, it was because it exercised fascination over other creatures, and if it became known as "wise," it was not because of its own innate positive knowledge, but of its wisdom in hiding away from all observation; and because of its association with one of the names of Satan (that old serpent) who "beguiled Eve" (2 Cor. 11.3, 14).

It is wonderful how a snake could ever be supposed to speak without the organs of speech, or that Satan should be supposed able to accomplish so great a miracle.** (See footnote on next page.) —

It only shows the power of tradition, which has, from the infancy of each one of us, put before our eyes and written on our minds the picture of a "snake: and an "apple": the former based on a wrong interpretation, and the latter being a pure invention, about which there is not one word said in Holy Scripture.

Never was Satan's wisdom so craftily used as when he secured universal acceptance of this traditional belief; for it has succeeded in fixing the attention of mankind on the letter and the means, and thus blinding the eyes to the solemn fact that the Fall of man had to do solely with The Word of God, and is centered in the sin of believing Satan's lie instead of *Jehovah's* truth.

The temptation of "the first man Adam" began with the question "Hath God said?" The temptation of "the second man, The Lord from heaven" began with the similar question "If Thou be The Son of God," when a voice of The Father had scarcely died away, which said, "This IS My beloved Son."

All turned on the truth of what *Jehovah* had said.

The Word of God being questioned, led Eve, in her reply, (1) to omit the word "freely" (3.2, cp. 2; 16); then (2) to add the words "neither shalt thou touch it" (3:3, cp. 2.17); and finally (3) to alter a certainty into a contingency by changing "thou SHALT SURELY die" (2.17) into "LEST ye die" (3.3).

It is not without significance that the first Ministerial words of "The Second Man" were "It is written," three times repeated; and that His last Ministerial words contained a similar threefold reference to the written Word of God (John 17.8, 14, 17).

**** Greater than that wrought by God Himself, who opened the mouth of Balaam's ass.**

The former temptation succeeded because The Word of God was three times misrepresented; the latter temptation was successfully defeated because The same Word was faithfully repeated.

The history of Gen. 3 is intended to teach us the fact that Satan's sphere of activities is in the religious sphere, and not the spheres of crime or immorality; that his battlefield is not the sins arising from human depravity, but the unbelief

of the human heart. We are not to look for Satan's activities today in the newspaper press, or the police courts; but in the pulpit, and in professors' chairs. Wherever The Word of God is called in question, there we see the trail of "that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan." This is why anything against the true interests of The Word of God (as being such) finds a ready admission into the newspapers of the world, and is treated as "general literature." This is why anything in favour of its inspiration and Divine origin and its spiritual truth is rigidly excluded as being "controversial."

This is why Satan is quite content that the letter of Scripture should be accepted in Gen. 3, as he himself accepted the letter of Ps. 91:11. He himself could say "It is written" (Matt. 4:6) as long as the letter of what is "written" could be put instead of The Truth that is conveyed by it; and so long as It is misquoted or misapplied.

This is his object in perpetuating the tradition of the "snake" and the "apple," because it ministers to the acceptance of this lie, the hiding of God's Truth, the support of tradition, the jeers of the infidel, the opposition of the critics, and the stumbling of the weak in faith.

59

HEBREWS, PROSELYTES, GRECIANS, GOD-FEARERS AND GREEKS (PAGANS) IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

by Dr. A.J. Roddy

The purpose of this brief paper is to identify several categories of people involved in the preaching and spread of the Gospel message during the period covered in the Book of Acts. These were Hebrews (Jewish people with an Aramaic and Hebrew orientation), proselytes to Judaism (pagans accepted into the Jewish nation and religion through circumcision, baptism, offerings, and other ritual), Hellenists or Grecians (Greek-speaking Jews), God-fearers (pagans attracted to Judaism and its synagogue for moral and ethical teachings), and Greeks (including all other members of the Roman empire). These groups will be studied as they appear in the representative passages from the narrative of Acts.

Men, Israelites brethren

In Acts 2 Peter directs his message to Jews exclusively: "Men, brethren, Israelites (2:-14, 22, 29)." There is no evidence that anything he says here envisions any mission other than to the people, the nation of Israel. Luke will

demonstrate that any such vision would come, not from Jews of Hebrew orientation, but from Grecian Jews, or Hellenists.

Hebrews and Grecians

This is seen following Acts 6:1-6. A new atmosphere is felt here as a Hellenistic (Grecian) element is distinguished from the Hebrews. The point has been debated, but the "Hellenists" were probably Greek-speaking Jews residing temporarily or permanently at Jerusalem and the "Hebrews" were Aramaic-speaking Jews.

Hebrew was still the language of the scholars, but Aramaic was

60

the spoken language of most Palestinian Jews. (Some of Jesus' Aramaic utterances are preserved in the Gospels.) Greek had become the language of many Jews outside of Palestine.

Hellenists supplied the keenest students of the gospel; they also supplied some of its bitterest opponents, men who were alert in seeing its far-reaching implications for Jewish institutions. Men like Stephen and Philip found it easier to see the spiritual character and universal outreach of the gospel than did the twelve, who had been brought up in a nationalistic atmosphere and tradition. But men like Saul of Tarsus and unnamed Hellenists were quickest to see that these emphases would undermine some of their cherished institutions and break down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. It is normal and understandable that these two conflicting attitudes should develop from one identical background. As some Jews moved about in the world beyond Palestine, they became less particular and more universal in their outreach, seeing the worth of people outside the Jewish nation. Other Jews, however, in the same situation, had a violent reaction in their encounter with Gentiles, and were determined to keep up the wall of separation at any cost.

The seven elected in Acts six all had Greek names; but we cannot perforce conclude that they all were Hellenists. Two of the Twelve (Philip and Andrew) also had Greek names but were not Hellenists. The likelihood is, however, that the seven were Hellenists, in deference to the offended group of believers. Luke's interest in the whole affair seems to be to show the impact of Stephen and Philip upon the Christian movement (Acts 8:26-40). The other five are merely named but not featured.

Stephen and Philip, Hellenists

There is no place here for an analysis of Stephen's sermon, but it clearly shows his rejection of the concept that God attached any particular or exclusive holiness to the land, the Temple, or the nation, charges earlier raised against Christ and later against Paul.

The Ethiopian Eunuch, a God-fearer

But in the work of Philip we do see a second and third area into which the gospel has reached: the work having been initially among Jews only, Philip now preaches first to Samaritans (Israelites who respected the *Torah* and thus not rank pagans by any means), and now to God-fearing "Greeks" (though the Eunuch is Ethiopian and Cornelius is Roman, actually). The Ethiopian and Cornelius are representatives of this third group — God-fearers, gentiles who were students Of Judaism but who had not actually become proselytes. (The fourth group, pagans with no training in Judaism, is yet to be reached. The Philippian jailer will be the first of this group to be presented).

The Ethiopian was a God-fearer. That he was not a Jew is not stated but is implied. He had gone to Jerusalem to worship (8:27) and was reading the Septuagint while returning to Ethiopia.

A large group of Gentiles were called "God-fearers." Attracted to Judaism because of its monotheism and its high moral and ethical teachings, many had lost faith in the gods of the empire and were disturbed by the immorality promoted by heathen cults. Great numbers came to the synagogues. Some came into Judaism as proselytes, but others stopped short of this step. To become a proselyte involved circumcision, Jewish baptism, and the offering of certain sacrifices. To become a proselyte was to become a part of the nation as well as of the

religion of the Jews. Christianity offered the same mono-theism, moral and ethical standard as Judaism, and more; yet it did not require one to identify himself with a particular national group.

In passing, compare Philip's eagerness in running to catch the Eunuch's chariot with Peter's long delay in getting to Cornelius and his apologetic entrance upon finally arriving.

There is pathos in Luke's account of the Ethiopian as it relates to all these matters, seen behind his question, "See! Here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Because of his physical mutilation as a eunuch, the poor man had probably been denied the privilege of becoming a proselyte to Judaism, in keeping with Deuteronomy 23:1, and in spite of Isaiah 56:3 ff. Understandably, he wonders what the hind-rance will be now. Philip, saying nothing about race, nationality, physical mutilation, or any other external consideration, awaited only the man's trust in Jesus Christ. Being assured of that, this Hellenistic Jewish believer baptized the God-fearer from Ethiopia.

Luke's concluding word at the end of Acts echoes this question. The Ethiopian asks, "What hinders (*koluei*) me?" and at the end of this book the Hellenistic Jewish apostle is preaching the message to the Gentiles unhinderedly (*akolutos*).

Cornelius, a God-Fearer

The case of Cornelius (Acts 10 and 11). Cornelius was a God-fearer — attracted to Judaism, but not a proselyte, not circumcised (cf. 11:3). It was probably in order to convince the hard-to-be-convinced Hebrew believer Peter that The Holy Spirit made this man, believing, speak in tongues prior to baptism. Had not Peter given the order "Repent ...

63

baptized for the remission of your sins ... receive the gift of holy spirit" — of which tongues had been the sign in his case? His report in Acts 11 indicates the surprise with which he witnessed this work of God on a pagan family.

"Can Anyone Forbid Water?"

At 10:47 Peter himself (probably turning to the Jewish friends he had conscripted to accompany him) asked "Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" The word forbid represents the same Greek word as hinder used by the Ethiopian. The Ethiopian was unhindered; so now these are not to be hindered. Nor is anything said about their being circumcised.

Acts 11 shows how such unprecedented happenings affected the Hebrew believers in Jerusalem and Peter himself had to prove that the conversion of these uncircumcised pagans was God's work and that at no point was the initiative his own (11:15-17). He indicated that he was not about to try to withstand God — using the same verb before translated "hinder" and "forbid." God-fearers were to be accepted without hindrance upon evidence of their trust in Christ.

Acts 11:18 does not indicate that the Hebrew believers accepted what happened at Cornelius' house as a pattern for future work. The verb-"did grant" (*edoken*) suggests that the experience in the home of Cornelius was exceptional not to be accepted as the norm. Missionary work among Gentiles was prompted by Hellenistic Jews not Hebrew Jews, as is evidenced in the Book of Acts record.

Peter did not open the door to the Gentiles. Rather, the Gentiles opened the door to Peter. There is no evidence that Peter was at this time committed to a mission outside

64

Palestine. He found it hard enough to work with God-fearers nearby. When Paul wrote the Romans, Peter certainly had not been in Rome. Peter was in Jerusalem during the conference of Acts 15. When Paul reached Rome, evidently no apostle had been there, for the Jews came to him for a dependable account of "this sect" everywhere spoken against (23:22). If Peter had been there for almost 20 years (as tradition has it) there would have been no need for seeking such information from Paul. We are simply told in Acts 12:17 that Peter "departed and went to another place." (Does "he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and remained there" refer to Peter or to Herod?)

The Situation Requiring a New Name

Manuscripts are divided between the readings Greeks and Grecians in Acts 11:20. Lake and Cadbury are probably correct in saying that the context is decisive for the reference being to non-Jews, whichever word is used, for these people were contrasted with Jews. Rackham states that these Greeks were God-fearers," the third class of the four distinguished in Acts: Hebrews (Jews), Hellenists (Jews), God-fearing Greeks (Gentiles influenced by Judaism, but not yet proselytes), and the pagans.

At Antioch the disciples were first called Christians. These Greeks, not required to be circumcised in becoming believers and therefore not proselytes to Judaism,

were distinguished from circumcised Jewish believers by this new name with its Jewish meaning cast in Greek form (Christ- for *Mashiah*), a Latin adjectival suffix (-ian-) and Greek ending (--os), *Christianos*. Thus "Greeks" would be subdivided into "God-fearers," "proselytes," and "Christians," while Jewish believers were "Hebrews" or "Hellenists."

65

Missionary Initiative at Antioch

At the outset the movement was exclusively Jewish and was dominated by the Hebrew element. In the second phase the Hellenists or Grecian Jews introduced far-reaching ideas and extended the gospel to Samaritans and God-fearing Greeks. In the last phase the gospel was carried directly to the pagans.

Hebrew believers (not called Christians in the book of Acts) were at home in the temple and synagogue, continued to live as Jews and were viewed as a sect of Judaism, all zealous for the Law, tens of thousands of them. The 12 who were their recognized leaders gave little evidence of a vision beyond the kingdom restored to Israel.

At the outset, Stephen and Philip were prominent among the Hellenists. These were followed by unnamed men of Cyprus and Cyrene, Saul, and others, who blazed new trails. The movement began to break through barriers of race and ritual. Many God-fearing Greeks were won.

Jews, Proselytes* and God-fearers

In Acts 13:42-43 Luke speaks of "Jews" and "devout converts to Judaism (proselytes)." These devout proselytes are not to be confused with the God-fearers of verses 16 and 26. The Greek words are different and distinct groups are meant. Thus Paul's audience included Jews (native-born), proselytes (Gentile converts to Judaism through circumcision, baptism, offerings and other ritual), and God-fearers (Gentile students of Judaism). Those within Judaism are singled out as responding favorably to Paul's message. The issue that was to divide them appeared the following sabbath, when "multitudes" unconditioned by Judaism now appear to "hear the word of God (Acts 13:44-52)." The Jews could not bear this.

66

These people were by-passing Judaism in coming to Jesus, which provoked the jealousy of the Jews. This would ultimately be the issue dividing Jewish believers from the movement. Paul cast his lot with those excluded. (How Paul regarded this attitude may be seen in Gal. 3:7, 28f.; Rom. 9:6ff.)

The Conference in Acts 15

Clearly, the problem in Acts 15 had to do with fellowship between circumcised Hebrew believers and uncircumcised Gentile believers. There were, in effect, two denominations of believers, the excluders still being the original Palestinian-centered members of The Way, the excluded being the Christians. The decision of the council did not solve the problem (21:17-26).

The Rank Pagan at Philippi

Samaritans were Israelites and loved the Torah. Proselyte converts had fully embraced Judaism. The Ethiopian and Cornelius were God-fearers who had been students of Judaism as were many other won to Christianity through the synagogues. Acts 16:30 now gives us the case of a pagan whose salvation is through faith in The Lord Jesus, and without previous conditioning by Judaism — representing the last group to be reached.

The instructions given him (16:31), if valid for this man, would be valid for anyone. As in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, so in the case of this pagan jailer, there was no barrier to salvation except the requirement of personal trust in the Lord Christ.

Devout Greeks

The "devout Greeks" led to Christ in Paul's services at Thessalonica were God-fearers,

67

Gentiles attracted to the synagogues.

Jews and God-fearing Greeks at Athens

At Athens, Paul reasoned in the synagogue with "Jews and God-fearing Greeks" but also made an approach to pagans of the city through the market place (17:17).

Recapitulation

We have seen how the message was directed first to Jews — Hebrews and Hellenists, the latter of which carried The Word to other Hellenists, Samaritans, and even Greeks (at Antioch). Stephen was killed for not fostering popular ideas about the uniqueness of the land, the place, and the nation. Philip baptized a God-fearing Ethiopian without the latter's being inducted into Judaism. The case of the household of Cornelius, when a God-fearer was received into Fellowship with Christ without any attachment to Judaism, was viewed as exceptional by the Jerusalem leaders. Divisions between Jew-ish believers and Gentile believers came when the Hellenist missionary Paul, with his troupe, kept receiving into fellowship with Christ God-fearers (devout Greeks) and rank pagans without requiring any attachment to Judaism as religion and nation.

These groups figure significantly in the painful struggle for an unshackled, unhindered Gospel as recorded in Acts. "The saddest cost of the victory," said Dr. Frank Stagg, "was the self-exclusion of the Jews; the glorious victory was a gospel preached 'unhinderedly.'"

68

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER

RE: THE CANOPY

... the beauty of the Canopy must have been tremendous. It is difficult to imagine what the primeval earth was like. I do wonder, though, would not a rain-bow be formed by the prismatic effect of sunlight upon the ice crystals?

The-massive ice shield would display such effects, but on the whole, the Canopy would appear as a jeweled ornament, the meaning of *cosmos*. It would be an orderly arrangement of moving bands of ice.

... was the story of redemption told to Abraham as it had been to Adam?

The typology, prefigured in the ancient star names, was re-enacted and re-enforced in the pictorial offering of Isaac. (Gen.22:1-14)

... the cosmic implications of the work of Christ becomes prominent when exploring the story in the stars, especially when considering Ephesians and

Colossians. No longer is it singularly, "Christ died for my sins," though that is very essential; but more so, "Christ redeeming all creation," that it might be brought into its rightful place. When Christ's work is thought of in cosmic terms, petty divisions, and the strife caused thereby, melt away. No longer is it "us" versus "them" but "together." There is a oneness in Christ greater than the diversity that would separate us.

... most of the activity of the world's religions, whether far out or subdued, should be able to trace their origins back to Canopy imagery. If this be the

69

case, then our message is not, "You are wrong," or "This is right," rather, that everything is fulfilled in Christ, and religion has been outdated. In the larger sense, Christ fulfilled the aspirations of all religions and of all systems of thought.

... you mention Polar openings (plural). Why was all the focus of the study on the North? Was the South a

fake?

In Scripture, no mention is made of a south polar opening; hence, the study ignores it.

... might Gen. 2:17 be translated: "Knowledge of the tree of good and evil," rather than as the A.V. translates it: "Tree of the knowledge of good and evil?"

Neither translation clarifies the meaning of the text. Several possibilities exist:

1. The figure of speech form in which the narrative is written. The figure would be in the "tree" element. Dropping that, the command would be a simple prohibition, "... do not experiment in either good or evil." Both good and evil are prohibited. Under such restrictions the couple would be considered morally and spiritually immature, and during this transitional learning period, they were enjoined to wait and not embark upon a series of learning experiments that, uncontrolled, might involve tragic consequences. A moral and spiritual nature is not ready-made, nor genetic, but is a result of choices made, hopefully, after correct instruction. Even Christ learned obedience through suffering (Heb.5:8). Also, Heb. 5:14 states that the knowledge of good and evil are products of maturity, not infancy.

70

2. A canopy association caused by the tree effect (an inverted tree) is seen at certain latitudes in the northern sky. At lower latitudes the canopy opening would appear more elongated. At Eden's supposed site, the opening, as seen from one side, would appear as a top, an inverted mountain, or an inverted tree. These would be the hiding and revealing symbolism behind which stood the open heavens with the star-titles foretelling the story of the good and evil to befall the race. The opening would vary in size and shape from time to time. It would also appear as a flaming sword or a turning spear point. All canopy features portended great events cast upon a vast and majestic backdrop, the star heavens.

...if Christ is the Tree of Life (Gen.3:22) what then does this mean in respect to Adam and to Christ?

The Scriptures use many figures to depict Christ as the true LIFE. He is the real expression of what the race was meant to be, morally and spiritually. Adam's Edenic state was to be but a step toward that goal. First, the Man of the Earth, then the Man of Glory; here, symbolism versus reality. Christ had not come in the flesh; this was to take place historically. Until then the symbolism was to be preserved and reserved until the figure was fulfilled in reality; i.e., the historical Christ of The Word of God. (Welch has well said, "... the keeping of the way of the tree of life is committed to the Cherubims and the flaming sword, and they fail not, for they speak, not of Adam, but of Christ." *Berean Expositor*, Vol. 15, P. 183).

71

... if 2 Pet. 3:5,6 speaks of the remains of the canopy, and if the world was to be destroyed at that time, then was the earth never meant to be inhabited as it is today?

2 Pet. 3:5 speaks of a world "standing out of the water and in the water," the world of Noah rather than the world of Gen. 1:2-8. The "dry" land first appears in Gen. 1:9. The world of Gen. 1:2, etc. was completely covered with water.

... was the whole earth, or the north polar region the Garden of Eden? Since it was in the middle.

The whole earth was not a garden; the Gen.2:8 text places the Garden east-ward of Eden. Its location would have been within canopy influence, but unlikely at the polar opening. The exact location and latitude of Eden cannot be ascertained. The geographic names given in Genesis are of recent origin. The four world rivers mentioned are Babylonian-Assyrian, and the *Gehon* and *Pishon* are

designations given to remote waters in general. The Armenian northland, *mysterious* and fearful, was looked upon as being the Paradise homeland. How the flood of Noah affected the earth's surface is conjectural; the division of the earth in the days of Peleg (Gen. 10:25) may have reference to vast continental land-mass drifts or shifts. Eden may have been in the far north, the doing away with the ebullition (mist) method of watering the land, the lengthened days, the summer and winter, the hot and cold, all speak of greatly changed conditions upon the earth. At one time the whole northland was populated by tropical and semi-tropical animals.

72

... what is meant by "Eve gave to Adam?" Was Eve's communication from Satan relayed to Adam?

No apple or any kind of fruit is mentioned. Scrolls are said to be "eaten" in Rev.10:10. Christ spoke of His disciples eating His flesh and drinking His blood -- both figures of speech. So too, Eve learned something that countermanded God's instructions. This was communicated to Adam. Both now knew good and evil, just as God did (Gen. 3:22), but on a different level. They were without the moral and spiritual ability to control the evil, nor did they know how to use the good. God immediately gave the promise of The Seed of The Woman to offset the defacing of Adam as a type of Christ. God did not reveal the histories of the world, nor the length of time involved until the Seed of The Woman (Christ) should appear among men, but He did accompany the pair out of Eden. Type and antitype met in Christ. His life, death ascension, and seatings fulfill the import of the star-stories. In Him the final issues of what is good and what is evil is resolved. In Him is seen all the good God expresses to the race; outside of Him, the evil that besets man's pathway.

... the O.T. contains very little direct reference to a broad redemption. We see this only as we look back. Perhaps God relied more upon the story contained in the stars than we had hitherto thought.

Letter by Doug Falk

**Is the Supreme Deity
of Christ
a Theological Error?**

by Dr. Harold P. Morgan

[This is the mind] which is also in Christ Jesus, Who has always been and at present continues to subsist in that mode of being in which He gives outward expression of His essential nature, that of absolute Deity, which expression comes from and is truly representative of His inner being [that of absolute Deity], and Who did not after weighing the facts, consider it a treasure to be clutched and retained at all hazards, this being on an equality with Deity [in the expression of the Divine essence], but Himself He emptied, Himself He made void, having taken the outward expression of a bondsman, which expression comes from and is truly representative of His nature [as Deity], entering into a new state of existence, that of mankind ... Phil. 2:6, 7 K.S. Wuest *Exp. Trans.*

ANSWER: In words the most comprehensive and emphatic, Christ appropriated to Himself all that belongs to The Father. He said. "I and The Father are One." *John 10:30*; "All things that The Father hath are mine." *John 16:15*; "All men should honor The Son, even as they honor The Father." *John 5:23*.

Here is a claim which, for greatness and glory, baffles all comprehension. It was repeatedly made, and persisted in till death. It was made, too, without any parade and pomp of words, but with matchless ease and grace. Christ's enemies who heard Him, evidently understood that, in every instance, He asserted His equality with The Father. Regarding this as blasphemy, they twice sought to kill Him, according to the direction

of their sacred law. He knew their understanding of what He said, and He was aware of the law which made blasphemy a capital offense, and yet He did not say a word to correct that understanding. When arraigned before Caiaphas, as the high priest inquired, "Art thou The Christ, The Son of The Blessed.?" Jesus said, "I am." *Mark 14:61,62*

74.

Is the supreme deity of Christ

Without any Hesitation, arrogance, or self-conceit, He had previously declared: "I am The Way, The Truth and The Life; no man cometh unto The Father but by Me." *John 14:6*; "I am The Light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." *John 8:12*; "I am The- Bread of Life." *John 6:48*; "I Am The Resurrection and The Life." *John 11:25*. Did the prophets or apostles ever put forth such claims? Who beside Christ ever claimed or possessed such attributes? Would it not be insufferable effrontery for any mere man to claim such superiority to all of his race? Would it not be an offense of the blackest dye for him to affirm such relation to God? Would not the mention of such pretensions be enough to brand the individual as an imposter or a maniac? Christ was either Supreme Deity or a deceiver and hypocrite. One of these conclusions is inevitable.

In our consideration of the claims of Christ we would first call attention to the declaration He made of His pre-existence.

In the gospel of John we read of Christ asking the question, "What, and if ye shall see The Son of man ascend up where he was before? *John 6:62*. In verse 38 of the same chapter, He declares, "I came down from heaven." Now, the Jewish leaders understood Christ as claiming a literal descent from a literal heaven. This they deemed incredible. That a man whose mother and reputed father dwelt in their midst could possibly have

descended from heaven seemed to them inconceivable. Hence, they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He saith, I came down from heaven?" *John 6:42*. Observe, if the Jewish leaders misunderstood Christ, if He did not mean to teach that He actually had lived in heaven before He came to earth, then He ought assuredly to have corrected their misunderstanding by explaining His exact meaning. He was certainly obligated to do this, because the natural meaning of His words would be that He had lived in heaven before He came to earth. But Christ does not intimate that they misunderstood Him. On the contrary, He rebukes them for murmuring at His words. If we place any value on Christ's words, we cannot escape the conviction that He claimed to have lived in heaven before He came to earth.

75

A theological error ?

Similar evidence of the pre-existence of Christ is seen in the same gospel record. Christ affirmed: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, thou art not fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I Am." *John 8:56-58*. Christ does not intimate that the Jewish leaders misunderstood Him. On the contrary, He affirms an existence before Abraham was. Mark the distinction, before Abraham was born, *I Am*. The *becoming* only can be rightly referred to the patriarch, the *being* is reserved for the eternal alone. "Was" points only to a human constitution, the "*I am*," to a divine substance. In passing, it will be recalled that Christ also placed Himself in advance of the most distinguished personage in Jewish history for wisdom and grandeur — "a greater than Solomon is here." *Matthew 12:42*.

Later, in this same gospel account, *John 17:5, 24*, we have recorded a prayer, signally free from any highly-wrought figurative language. The style is simplicity itself. Observe the following points: Christ asks The Father to glorify Him, He asks for the glory which He once possessed in union with The Father. He had possessed this glory before the world was. He declares that The Father loved Him before the foundation of the world Here, then, in the plainest possible manner, Christ sets for the truth of His pre-existence.

Any discussion of the subject which makes no reference to the words of Paul must be incomplete and unsatisfactory. What, then, does the apostle say of his Lord? It will be recollected that John, speaking of The Word who became flesh, declares that "All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made." *John 1:3*. Paul states the same truth. "All things have been created by him and for him." *Colossians 1:16*. Who of us has penetrated the mystery of these words? They baffle our deepest thought. They signify an unknown, incomprehensible force, doing that which to our reason seems utterly impossible. It is too wonderful for us, and our last resort is to pronounce it the work of the Almighty, and ascribe it to The Infinite God. But this power is assigned by the Apostle to

76

Is the supreme deity of Christ

Christ. Note the further statement, "All things were made for him." Thus we see that Christ is at once the origin and end of creation. All things were made by Him, as the supreme cause, and for Him as the highest end. They were created for His glory, and will be made to manifest it. The apostle goes on in the same passage to say that "in him all things consist." Thus He is the omnipotent One in whom the whole universe has its center and unity, and by whom all its rolling masses are kept in place. Supreme deity!

Besides all this, there is a passage in one of the letters of Paul which deserves particular attention, because it teaches in so many words, the pre-existence of Christ. In the *Second Letter to the Corinthians*, Paul says: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." 6:9.

Christ was rich and became poor. He was rich before He became poor. Yet all of our Lord's earthly life was one of poverty. Hence, His life of riches must have been before His earthly life. It must have been a pre-existent life. He did not lay aside wealth in this world after He had possessed it, for He had none. His parents were poor, He was poor all His life. This, then, must refer to a state of antecedent riches before He assumed human nature.

In support of the argument for the belief of Christ's supreme deity, let us turn to *Jeremiah 31:31*. In this passage note, if you please, the following points: There is a promise to Israel of a New Covenant. He who promises to make the covenant is called "The Lord." The author of this New Covenant, was The Author of the Old Covenant. Now, The Author of the New Covenant is Christ. See *Luke 22:20* and *1 Corinthians 11:25*. The writer of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* quotes Jeremiah's prophecy and refers it to Christ. In the same epistle we read, "Jesus, The Mediator of the new covenant" *Hebrews 12:24*. From the foregoing it follows that Jesus Christ, The Author of the New Covenant, is One and The Same Author of the Old Covenant at Sinai.

In the prophecy of *Malachi 3:1* the prediction is made of

77

A theological error?

the coming of a Divine Being, called "The Lord whom ye seek," — the expected, Messiah. He is also called,

"The Messenger of the Covenant," and "*Jehovah of Sabaoth*." This Divine Person is The Lord of the temple. The temple is called "His temple." The Lord of this temple is *Jehovah* God. He dwelt in that temple. *1 Kings 9:3*. It was dedicated to "The Lord God of Israel." *1 Kings 8:25-30*. He called it "my house." *Isaiah 56:7*. Mark in his narrative applies this prophecy to Christ *11:17*, and identifies "The Lord of hosts" with Christ. Christ comes to the temple in Jerusalem, exercises the authority of its Lord, and calls it "my house." Hence, Christ and The Lord of hosts are one and the same Person. In this prophecy of the *Messiah* three incontrovertible proofs are advanced for His Deity. First, He is identified with *Jehovah*. Second, He is represented as the proprietor of the temple. Third, he is characterized as "The Sovereign," *Ha Adoncu*, — a title nowhere given in this form to any except *Jehovah* God as supreme deity.

In *Psalm 68:16, 19, 29*, The Divine Person here spoken of is called "God," and "Lord." He is The God of the temple at Jerusalem. Christ claimed that temple as His. *Matthew 21:1-16*. He is also called "The God of our Salvation." According to *Matthew 1:21-23*, Christ "shall save his people from their sins." It is foretold that "*Jehovah* God" will "dwell among men." Christ dwelt among men. John writes, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." *John 1:14*. The writer of *Hebrews* states, He was made partaker of "flesh and blood." *Hebrews 2:14*. Now, *Jehovah* God, according to *Psalm 68:18*, was to ascend "on high," to receive "gifts for men." In *Ephesians 4:8*, Paul quotes this passage, and applies it to Christ's ascension to heaven. Thus, beyond all question, Jesus Christ was The *Jehovah* God spoken of in the older Scriptures.

Additional proof of Christ's supreme Deity is found in the following Scriptures and arguments. In *Matthew 1-22, 23* the evangelist, in speaking of Christ, designates The *Messiah* by the name *Emmanuel*, "God with us." It would seem that a text so plain and forcible ought to be

full and sufficient proof that Jesus Christ is God as well as man. But those who are opposed to the doctrine of the supreme Deity of Christ have bent all their

78

Is the supreme deity of Christ

energies to destroy the force of the text. But the prophecy of the birth of *Emmanuel* had its fulfillment in the birth of Christ. The promise of a Deliverer, made in the garden of Eden to Adam and Eve, contemplated the birth of a virgin's Son. The promised "seed" was to be "the seed of the woman". — the woman *alone*, the woman without connection with a man. Christ was "The Seed of The Woman," *Genesis 3:15, Galatians 4:4*, because He had a human mother but no human father. To this the words of Mary well agree, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man." *Luke 1:34*. Isaiah's prophecy, *7:14*, does not concern itself with any indefinite virgin, but a particular virgin, one already thought of as *the virgin*. In Hebrew, the article is subjectively prefixed to a common noun by way of emphasis, and to point it out as one which, although neither previously or subsequently described, is still viewed as definite in the mind of the writer.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the only person born into the world, The Son of a virgin. There never was one before Him, and there has been none since Him. *Emmanuel's* name is declarative of Christ's nature, as "God with us." Joseph was directed of God to call Christ *Emmanuel*. There could be no reason with God to select this name if it did not denote a reality. The person bears the name because He is what the name signifies.

Turn, now, to the *Second Epistle of Peter*. Here, in the latter clause of chapter one, verse one, the text should be rendered thus, "Through the righteousness of Jesus Christ our God and Saviour." In this connection we would call attention to a passage in Paul's *First Letter to Timothy*. True, there has been a great deal of

controversy about the exact meaning of verse 16 in the third chapter; whether it should read *God* was manifest, or *who* was manifest. We are prepared to follow the reading given in Wescott and Host, and in the *Revised Version*. But "who" is a relative pronoun, and refers to some antecedent, either expressed or implied. For the apostle to introduce a quotation, commencing with a relative pronoun, without any antecedent having been indicated by him, would be to involve the meaning of the quotation in hopeless uncertainty. We naturally expect to

79

A theological error?

find its antecedent in the passage immediately preceding the text. In verse fifteen there are three substantives, "the Church," "the living God," and "the truth." It is but reasonable to believe that one of these three substantives must be the antecedent to "*who*." Whatever the antecedent of "who" six predicates. In other words, the antecedent must have been is, it must agree in gender, and must be the subject of these "manifest in the flesh," "justified in the spirit," "seen of angels," "preached unto the Gentiles," "believed on in the world," and "received up into glory." The antecedent of "who" must be of the masculine gender, and must carry all six of these predicates. If the substantives of verse fifteen are not of the masculine gender, and fail to carry all six substantives then they are not the antecedents of "who." But if we find a substantive of the masculine gender, of which all six are true, then that substantive is the proper antecedent of "who."

At the risk of wearying the reader we shall examine the substantives in verse fifteen. The word "church" is of the feminine gender, and does not agree with "who," which is masculine, hence is not its antecedent. To say that the Church "was manifest in the flesh," was "justified in the spirit," was "seen of angels," and was

"preached unto the Gentiles," is utterly discordant with the New Testament, and is without any meaning that we can accept. "The Church" is not the subject of these predicates, and is not the antecedent of "who." The word "truth," is feminine, hence does not agree in gender. "The truth" is another name for the aggregate of doctrine, and has no existence separate from an intelligent being who believes or teaches it. "The truth" cannot be said to be "received up into glory," for it is - not the subject of reward. There is, however, no difficulty with the third substantive, "the living God." This agrees with "who" being in the masculine gender. God, in Christ, "was manifest in the flesh," "justified in the Spirit," "seen of angels," "preached unto the Gentiles," was "believed on in the world," and "received up into glory." Hence, Christ was "God manifest in the flesh."

**Writing to the Colossians, Paul affirms, "For in him dwelleth all The Fullness of the Godhead bodily."
*Colossians 2:9.***

80

Is the supreme deity of Christ

The entire plentitude of The Divine Essence (not a mere emanation of essence) dwells, permanently dwells in Christ — it is not a transient manifestation. The Godhead in its fullness is incarnate in Christ. He is, therefore, not merely *a God*, albeit "God's creative original," but *The God*, in the highest sense.

The death of Christ was a severe blow to His disciples. Thomas, in particular, was crushed with sorrow. In his distress he could not believe that Christ has risen from the dead. But when Thomas saw Christ standing before him, alive, and speaking to him, the proof of his resurrection and the supreme Deity of The Lord made so powerful an impression on his mind, that he could only utter his deepest thought, that he had before him his "Lord and his God." The fact that Christ did not

reprove Thomas is simple proof that his words were neither thoughtless nor profane. They were the expression of worship. This worship was paid directly to Christ. If Christ were not Supreme Deity He would have refused this worship as being idolatry; just as Peter did. *Acts 10:26*; see also *Revelation 19:10*. But Christ does not refuse it, but receives it with commendations. Hence the words of Thomas were not idolatrous, and Christ is Supreme Deity.

It is objected that Paul writing to Titus applies the title to Christ, "The Great God our Saviour," *2:13*, whereas he elsewhere applies the title to The Father. But there is nothing in the several cases where it is so applied that would restrict its use to The Father, or forbid its application to The Son.

It is further objected that Jesus Christ is nowhere else called "The Great God." But He is nowhere called The Word but in the writings of John. He is nowhere in the New Testament called *Emmanuel* but in Matthew. Single authorities must not be relinquished because they are single. There are several important single facts peculiar to each one of the sacred writers. Now, if our Lord is nowhere else expressly called "The Great God," can it be said that He is called nothing like it elsewhere in Scripture? Is not "The Mighty God" in Isaiah's prophecy of the *Messiah* very like it? *Isaiah 9:6*. For in what does God's greatness consist? Surely the attributes of omnipotence and omnipresence. Are not these asserted by Christ Himself?

A theological error?

Matthew 28:18, 20. And are they not ascribed to Him by Paul? *Philippians 3:21*; *Ephesians 5:14*. The act of creating the world is attributed to Christ by *John 1:3*, and of sustaining it by Paul, *Colossians 1:17*. These attributes are so identified with greatness that The Lord

and The Word who possess them, cannot be less than The Great God.

Now, the literal rendering of the Greek is, "The appearing of the glory of The Great God and Saviour of us, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us." As the words stand, if the two appellatives are to designate two different persons, some mark of separation should have been interposed between them. Paul ought certainly to have taken that precaution. The King James Version interposes "our" before "Saviour" — a scarcely justifiable method, for "of us" might just as properly take in both appellatives as one. Another method Paul could have used would have been to interpose an article — "The Great God and The Saviour." By the law of language the two appellatives without the interposed article designate one subject. Such a rule belongs not to any one language; it belongs to every language having a definite article. The natural reading of the words favors decidedly the reference of both appellatives to one subject. The words "Jesus Christ" tells us who is our "Great God and Saviour." This is confirmed by the following words, "*who gave-himself*," indicating that Paul had but a single Personality in his thought.

In the renowned passage in *Romans, 9:5*, some Person is styled "God blessed forever." This Person must be either The Father or Christ. It would be unnatural and forced to refer these words to The Father. The Father is not the subject of the discourse, while Christ is. The words have been construed as a doxology. But that makes the doxology forced. When "blessed" and "God" or "Christ" are used for the purpose of a doxology, then "blessed" invariably precedes "God" or "Christ," and invariably has the article.

Christ was worshipped by men during His earthly sojourn. It now becomes necessary to inquire into the nature of that worship. Our Lord did not receive the homage due to a civil

Is the supreme deity of Christ

ruler, for He denied being such, and refused all such homage. The same worship that Christ received during His ministry on earth was vehemently refused by apostles and angels as being due to God only. Moses, Christ, the apostles, and the angel of the Apocalypse all teach that God is the only proper subject of worship. Worship was paid to Christ, rendered under circumstances that proved it to be supremely divine. Two illustrations will be sufficient to prove this statement. First, when the man who had been cured of blindness later met The Lord, having defended his prophetic character before the council of the elders and was instructed by Christ that He was "The Son of God," the man born blind worshipped Him. Christ received the worship.

Second, Christ was worshipped by the disciples in the ship on the sea of Tiberias. *Matthew 14:22-33*. The nature of this worship is shown by the history of the case. On the preceding day they had seen Him feed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. That night they saw Him walk on the water. It was declared to be the act of God only, "which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waters of the waves of the sea." *Job 9:8*. They saw Him save drowning Peter. They saw the wind cease at His presence. These wonders impressed them with a conviction of His omnipotence, and, calling Him "The Son of God," they rendered Him the worship that was due to supreme Deity.

Divine worship was also rendered to Christ after His ascension to glory. That prayer was offered to Christ is evident from the following consideration of the passage in *Acts 1:24*. The title "Lord" is addressed to Christ. He had chosen the apostles, commissioned them, and fixed their number. He had been the companion of both the men whose names were cast in this lot. Furthermore, the Person spoken to is adduced as "Thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all." This power is attributed to

The Lord Jesus Christ, — "These things saith The Son of God ... I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts." *Revelation 2:18, 23*. All these points center upon Christ as The Person to whom this prayer was addressed. The offering of prayer was worship paid to Christ. The apostles ascribed to Him the omniscience of The Supreme Being.

83

A theological error?

Again in *Acts 7:59, 60*, Stephen knew that the time of his death had come. He was "full of the Holy Spirit." He also saw the glory of God and knew that he was in the Divine presence. Stephen commits his soul to The Lord Jesus Christ. In doing so he acknowledges Christ to be the disposer of the eternal state of man. He asks Jesus Christ to forgive the sins of his murderers; but God only can forgive sin.(1) Bear in mind that Stephen was tried on the charge of blasphemy, for he had attributed to Christ authority such as belonged to God only. Hence he offered supreme worship to Christ as God.

In the opening of Paul's *First Letter to the Corinthians*, the apostle designates believers as those who "call upon the name of Jesus Christ as Lord." To call upon the name of God is to worship God in prayer. This point is settled by its biblical usage. "Give thanks unto The Lord, call upon his name." *1 Chronicles 16:8*. "Praise ye The Lord, call upon his name." *Isaiah 12:4*. In *Joel 2:32*, we read, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of The Lord shall be delivered." In the New Testament it reads "shall be saved" *Acts 2:21, Romans 10:13*. Saul of Tarsus went to Damascus with authority "to bind all that call upon The Name of Jesus Christ." *Acts 9:14, 21*. Later he was exhorted to wash away his sins, "calling on The Name of The Lord." *Acts 22:16*. The preceding passages can not fail to convince the unbiased reader that "calling upon The Name of The Lord" denotes an act of supreme worship, and that Paul addressed his epistle to all who paid this supreme worship to Christ.

In further proof that prayer was offered to Christ, the apostle in his *Second Epistles to the Corinthians. 12:9*, says: "Most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." The "Lord" whom Paul addressed

(1) Of all Christ's manifestations of supreme deity, the forgiveness of sins was perhaps the highest. This declared, beyond all question. His equality with The Father, and so it was understood by the Jewish leaders at that time yet, notwithstanding their astonishment and opposition. Christ exercised this prerogative, and vindicated His right thereto. He said to the paralytic man, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," Matthew 9:2. To Mary Magdalene He said, "Thy sins are forgiven; thy faith hath saved thee; go In peace," Luke 7:48.

84

Is the supreme deity of Christ

promised "power" to sustain him. Observe, please, that Paul calls this power "the power of Christ," showing conclusively that it was Christ, the author of this power, to whom Paul addressed his prayer. Supreme deity!

In the prayer recorded in his *Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, 2:16, 17*, Paul offered such to Christ in unison with The Father. He would not offer to The Father any worship that was less than supreme, but he here offers the same worship to Christ. A similar prayer is to be found in his *First Letter to the Thessalonians, 3:11*. It is a striking fact that in both instances the verb is singular in the Greek, with God and Christ for the nominative — a striking proof of the apostle's assumption of their oneness.

The writer of the *Epistle to Hebrews*, says: "And again, when he bringeth in The First Begotten into the world,

he saith, "And let all the angels of Gooi worship him" 1:6.. The passage is a quotation from *Psalm 97:7*. That supreme worship is here intended is certain, it can not be resolved into mere obeisance. The writer of *Hebrews* asserts that worship was ordered to be paid to Christ, thus identifying Christ was The *Jehovah* of the Old Testament. Note, by the command of The Father supreme worship was paid to Christ.

In as much as all men are required to honor The Son as they honor The Father, *John 5:23*, and as they who do not honor The Son as they do The Father are regarded as not properly honoring The Father, it follows that equal honor is due The Son with The Father. Hence both Paul and John pay to Christ the same supreme worship that they pay to The Father. Christ is the proper object of supreme worship because He is God.

The difficulty in giving anything like an adequate presentation of the subject in the limited space at our disposal is oppressive. We are far from satisfied with what we have done. But consideration of the facts to which we have confined ourselves should compel the unprejudiced reader to ask himself the question, could claims more transcendent have been made than were made by Christ? Could deeds more illustrious have been performed? Could proof more decisive of the deity of Christ have

85

A theological error?

been given than are given in The Holy Scriptures? Surely from a candid and earnest examination of the words of Christ and His apostles, to which we have largely confined ourselves in this answer, no one can possibly deny, if he admits the historical truthfulness of the New Testament Scriptures, that Christ is supreme deity.

In conclusion, we affirm that the doctrine of the supreme deity lies at the foundation of the whole Christian system, and is vitally connected with all its parts. The fabric of Christianity is so constructed that if the teaching of Christ's equality with The Father in The Godhead is removed, the whole. edifice falls into ruins.

AGES INSTEAD OF 24 hr. DAYS?

Psalms 90:2

Lord, Thou a dwelling place for us

In age and age hast been;

**Before the mountains were brought forth,
and Thou begotten hadst the earth and world,**

with all therein,

Ev'n from age Thou art God, to age to come.

Before the mountains were brought forth, i.e.

the dry land of Gen. 1:9, "... let the dry land appear."

Or ever Thou hadst formed the earth, formed = *tacholei*, pain, labor pains, hence made

the earth fruitful, Gen. 1:9-12.

and the world , world = *tebel*, habitable world

of man, Gen. 1:26.

Even from *Olam* (age) to *Olam* (age) Thou art God. R.H.S.

To stand OUT and UPRIGHT from amongst

dead ones. Lit. Trans. Phil.3:11.

The third chapter of Philippians revolves about the walk of the believer, vs. 15-18. Perfection, i.e., maturity, loss, or gain, example, warnings, etc., all have to do with the daily life of one such as Paul (he uses his own history as an illustration), In spite of the account being cast in the form of a contest with its losses and gains, its marks and prizes, it has nothing whatever to do with the righteousness given to Paul as a gift of God, -- nor did Paul attain Christ or win Christ by giving up something. Paul denied and repudiated his status of birth, his circumcision in Judaism, his Hebrew among Hebrews standing in the nation, his "Pharisaic political and religious station in Israel, -- but none of these are of sufficient worth to barter for the redemption in Christ Jesus. Being in Christ, accepted in The Beloved, and being complete in Him, is outside of the range of barter or trade.

Within this context, Paul is expressing a desire to have The risen Christ's resurrection power operative in him. For Paul this meant a total breaking out of the last vestiges of Judaism. He does this by denying his natural heritage and all linkage to his past life. Paul wants to stand out and upright (playing on the words, resurrection & dead ones) from among the dead ones of the nation of Israel. With the rejection of the blood, of the New Covenant (Heb. 10:29) Israel was doomed. To break the chains of the past, to reach forth to a higher calling of God (whatever that may be), to this Paul had not yet attained. At the time Paul penned this letter he did not know what God had in store for him, but he reaches out, as of a mark or goal in a contest to gain a prize -- to whatever high calling God has in store for him in Christ Jesus.

Paul had a post and position that was unique, He was to be a bridge between that which was fading away and the new revelation of God's government of grace.

In Eph. 5:14 we are told to stand up-right (a play on death and resurrection) out of dead ones. The dead ones in our case being anything that would detract from our walk. In Philippians Paul did not know what God had in store for him, when he wrote Ephesians and Colossians, he knew.

R.H.Schaefer

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TO COMPLETE THE WORD OF GOD

Colossians 1:25

There is a post-Acts dispensational ministry given through the Apostle Paul that completes and fills full The Word of God.

This final ministry completes the whole canon of Scripture. This was done by an inspired apostle, not by an uninspired church council meeting centuries later. This many-faceted ministry of Paul (contained in Eph./Col.) brings forth and makes operational those hitherto secret purposes of God -- those that awaited the right and opportune time for their revelation. The purpose of the ages past as well as the substance of the on-coming ages was now made known. It is the cap-stone-of the revealed will of God, and the most sublime of all God's revelations in respect to Himself, The Lord Jesus Christ, and of all that is related to and in Christ.

The secret of The Father's heart's desire is to head-up, sum-up, comprehend under one Head, and gather together in the perfect Christ all things in the heavens, and upon the earth, in Him (Eph. 1:9,10). An adjunct to the Dispensation of Grace to all people, Eph. 3:2, is The Mystery of Christ, a setting forth of the perfections of Christ's person in relationship to His Body, and that as a projection of what is in store for all. Christ's various modes of being are developed in the Colossian Letter with Christ filling full the Body of Christ with Himself, Col. 1:27; cf.Eph.1:23. There is a revealing and a releasing of the untrackable riches of Christ, this having been heretofore hidden away from all ages of time, and from all generations, Col.1:26. This unprophecied and non-Jewish uncovenanted program is without temple, priestcraft, ritual, or ordinances. It exists within the frame-work of The Spirit's Unity in Eph.4, a oneness made by God -- and in which there is no excommunication, and in which all are made "complete in Christ," Col. 2:10. All are made "prepared" Col. 1:12, and are jointly-seated with Christ, Eph. 2:6.

The Mystery was God's original purpose, antedating Israel, Abraham, or the Old and New Covenants ... it reaches back before the dawn of time and stretches forth into all the on-coming ages and their generations. No hint is given of its interruption, termination, or any other program taking priority over it as to time, place or rank. There is no intimation anywhere in The Word of God that this Mystery ministry of Paul's is, was, or ever will be a parenthesis within the frame-work of Israel's hope. This grace, fullness, and Christ orientated dispensational program is not a substitute until something better is revealed. This is the very best that God has ever revealed.

R.H. Schaefer

