



“Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.” -Prov. 23:23

A Christadelphian publication devoted to gleaning and heralding the Truth concerning the problem of life, here and hereafter, the restoration of the Jews to the holyland, the return of Christ as King of all the earth, and the signs of the approaching end of Gentile times.

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Introduction to Volume Two **Keeping the Old Paths in Front of Us**

Thus saith Yahweh, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. . . Jer. 6:16

Dear Reader:

With this issue of *The Truth Gleaner* we begin Volume Two. We will, God willing, be publishing this volume on a quarterly basis. As mentioned in the first issue of *The Truth Gleaner* our purpose and intent in publishing is to reaffirm and defend the foundations of our faith in both the Berean and pioneer spirit of study, rightly dividing the word of Truth, as enumerated in the *Christadelphian Unamended Statement of Faith*. We seek to encourage readers to search the scriptures for themselves, utilizing the pioneer expositional works as guide books for sifting out the “deep things of God” (1 Cor. 2:10) for the mutual benefit of us all. We intend to continue publishing study works consistent with our recent “Statement of Position” and we hope the material will benefit and assist the reader in remaining grounded and settled until the coming of the Lord.

These last days before the return of our Master are full of strife and controversy, with the Ecclesial body tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. It is regrettable that some fundamental principles, that were once enthusiastically embraced, are now questioned and even changed for watered down statements that seek to accommodate any view extant. The “Old Paths” are fading fast and it is our belief that an individual’s antidote to this trend is a return to vigorous Bible study in the manner of our pioneer brethren. With respect to the writings of our pioneers we share the conviction of the late Bro. H. P. Mansfield who once wrote: *The Truth’s literature is not to be despised. From a literary standpoint, the writings of brethren Thomas and Roberts are outstanding: from the standpoint of Scriptural exegesis they are incomparable. However, it is becoming popular to deride these writings today; much the same as the college educated descendant of a pioneer might ridicule and be contemptuous of his uneducated forefathers who, by self denial and long hours of hard work, laid the foundation of the family-fortune he has inherited. Let not the reader imitate such an attitude! Rather let him “search out the old paths and walk therein,” and despite all circumstances “he shall have rest for his soul.”*

The reader, therefore, will find in the quarterly visits of *The Truth Gleaner* a heavy reliance on the expositions of those that have gone before, thankful that Yahweh has provided them for our benefit (Rom. 10:14).

In the Hope of Israel,

The Brethren of the Truth Gleaner Committee:

Mike Jasionowski
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Editorial Alienation

In our September/October issue of last year we set forth a "Statement of Position" on a number of issues. Therein we made the following statement: *We believe the positions set forth herein are fully consistent with where the Unamended community has stood for over 100 years.* On this point a correspondent writes: *A question that has arisen in relation to the Truth Gleaner may need to be addressed if you wish to convince brethren that you are "fully consistent with where the Unamended community has stood for over 100 years:" What is the position of the T.G. in relation to whether or not Christ was ever "alienated" from the Father?*

First, we would like to state plainly that we are not concerned with labels, but with the Biblical Truth of a matter. Our "Statement of Position," in fact, mentions "alienation" no less than three times and applies the same to our Lord Jesus Christ by pointing out that "He inherited **all the effects** of Adam's sin." This is consistent with the language of the Statement of Faith as will be discussed later in this article.

In any event, we are happy to set forth our understanding of "alienation" in more detail and answer our correspondent's question, *what is the position of the T.G. in relation to whether or not Christ was ever "alienated" from the Father?* We believe our understanding of the subject is not only consistent with Biblical Truth (which should always be the primary concern), but is also consistent with the writings of Bro. John Thomas who was the **first Christadelphian** before there was "Amended" and "Unamended." If we all returned to his clear scriptural exposition there would be no contention surrounding this subject.

The subject of alienation can be explored by asking two questions. First, is the subject of alienation something that is confined in meaning to a moral concept or does it also involve a concept having to do with how a man is constituted under law? Second, what is the factor, or factors, in man which alienates him from Deity?

The First Question

There is no question that the word "alienation," both in Greek and English, contains the concept of *morality* or *personal sin*. We read in Col. 1:21: *And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.* Ignorance and blindness of the heart can also alienate from God as we read in Eph. 4:18: *Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.* The question then becomes: Are wicked works and ignorance the sole and only cause for a man to be alienated from the Almighty?

It is the understanding of this writer that the original Christadelphian understanding (and Biblical Truth) is that all mankind is alienated, estranged or separated from the life of God at birth as a direct consequence of Adam's sin. We cannot

express this concept any better than was done by Bro. Thomas over one hundred and fifty years ago:

*"By Adam's disobedience the many were **made sinners**" Rom 5:19; that is, they were endowed with a nature like his, which had become unclean, as the result of disobedience; and by the constitution of the economy into which they were introduced by the will of the flesh, they were constituted transgressors before they were able to discern between right and wrong. **Upon this principle, he that is born of sinful flesh is a sinner.** (Elpis Israel p. 132 Logos Edition)*

*Men are not only made, or **constituted, sinners by the disobedience of Adam**, but they become sinners even as he, by actual transgression (Elpis Israel p. 133)*

*Thus men are sinners in a **twofold sense**; first, **by natural birth**; and next, by transgression. (Elpis Israel p.133)*

It is when these principles are applied to the Lord Jesus Christ that some brethren stumble. Some fail to discern what Jesus was by *constitution* with, by contrast, what he was as the perfect *moral* manifestation of Deity in flesh. By constitution he was born with a sin-nature and **anything** connected to sin is not nigh, in the complete sense, to God. It is for this reason that the sin-nature of Jesus **required** atonement and purging before it could be reconciled to God (Heb. 5: 1-10; 9:12).

It is a theological inconsistency that some brethren find no difficulty in believing that Jesus came under the Mosaic *curse* in the manner of his death, but then stumble on allowing that Jesus came under the Adamic *curse* in the manner of his birth. Both are based on the principle of **Law** or **Constitution**.

The Second Question

The second question is easily answered from the foregoing. The concept of alienation or estrangement can come about by two routes: (1) a man's constitution at birth, and (2) personal transgression.

Are We Guilty of Adam's Sin?

The English word "guilty" has two usages which are not the same. One meaning is that a man is justly *responsible* for a delinquency, crime or sin. The other meaning is that a man is justly *chargeable* with the fault or sin. While mankind is not *responsible* for the sin of Adam, we have been *charged* with the consequences of Adam's sin. "This is a misfortune, not a crime," as Brother Thomas observes.

Again, we can do no better than quote Brother Thomas: *"Levi, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham". Upon the same federal principle, all mankind ate of the forbidden fruit, being in the loins of Adam when he transgressed. This is the only way man can by any possibility be guilty [chargeable] of*

the original sin. Because they sinned in Adam, therefore they return to the dust from which Adam came- says the apostle," in whom (KJV, margin) all sinned" (Elpis Israel p. 131).

All Christadelphians are agreed that the sin of Adam formed a breach of relationship (alienation) between himself and The Almighty. The question is, "Was this breach of relationship transmitted to **all** his posterity?" Both Statements of Faith declare that it was: "Jesus...was...a sufferer, in the days of his flesh, from **all the effects** (emphasis added) that came by Adam's transgression..." (Article 10).

The position of some is that no breach occurs between God and man except by the commission of personal sin. In other words, "all the effects" of Adam's transgression do not pertain to Adam's posterity.

The truth of the matter is that **all the effects** of Adam's sin do pertain to Adam's posterity, including the breach between God and man and including the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

Conclusion

The question then becomes, "Is it fair and just for God to hold men chargeable with the consequences of Adam's sin?" The answer is to be found in Deuteronomy 23:2-4: *A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord.* While the progeny of the bastard were not *responsible* for the sin of the bastard's parents, they were *chargeable* unto the tenth generation. A similar stricture was charged against the Moabite and Ammonite. It was not their fault, but it was their misfortune.

We hope this answers our correspondent's question concerning our understanding of "alienation." We believe our position is consistent with Biblical Truth. Whether it is consistent with that represented by the term "Unamended" we will let our readers judge for themselves.

Michael T. Jasionowski

Dating the Revelation

A Defense of the Continuous Historical Interpretation of the Apocalypse

Introduction

The study of prophecy for many looms as an advanced, complicated and elevated mental engagement. It is viewed as an intellectual realm left for elders, or for those who have had many years in the Truth. It is seen as a study that only appeals to the few, the few who have the time and the means, the few who possess the intellect, the few who have the appetite, the few who have the desire. Such are the misconceptions, or rather the misunderstandings, when approaching the topic of prophecy. While it is true that prophecy is not for the novice or the newly baptized, it is not a subject to shy away from and remain in ignorance. More importantly it should not be an area of our faith that is intentionally shackled because of our ignorance and apprehension. This article will seek to explain the purpose of prophecy as a critical component to our faith building and demonstrate how vital the act of research is when formulating conclusions regarding prophetic exegesis. Finally, this article will establish the principle that "scripture must be rightly divided" and that "no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation." The author will prove these points by discussing the topic of "The Dating of the Revelation" as a case in point.

The Scriptural Purpose of Prophecy

To begin let us assert the purpose of prophecy. Bible prophecy represents well over 50% of scripture and it is given to the saints for a specific purpose. The scriptural purpose is defined in John 14:29: "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it comes to pass, you may believe." In breaking down this Divine definition we identify three critical components of prophecy: (1) predictions are made in advance

of the event, (2) the predictions (prophecy) will occur, and (3) the common purpose behind all prophetic fulfillment. . . that you might believe! If ever there was a singular mantra attached to the study of prophecy it is this: "that we might believe." Encompassed in this phrase is all a believer could hope for: proof, evidence, confirmation and miraculous demonstration. To witness an event or events, as they come to fruition, prophetically foretold years in advance, could have no other effect than to convince and fully persuade the believer that God is who He says He is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Can a faith that lacks this persuasion, this conviction, this confidence, ever be truly pleasing to the Almighty? No other form of scripture, whether historical chronology, divine principles of morality and right and wrong, "undesigned coincidences," or miraculous accounts, affect today's believer more than the culmination of fulfilled prophecy. Prophecy fulfilled, verified and substantiated, stands as a testimony that God does indeed "rule in the kingdoms of men." Considering this, we have no other way to surmise the miraculous re-gathering of Israel, prophesied about so long ago, witnessed in this generation. A principle therefore emerges: Prophetic fulfillment, understood and witnessed, is that which persuades and convinces one fully, resulting in faith. So then we begin to see the importance of prophetic study: that we might believe.

There Is One Correct Interpretation

As we mentioned in the beginning of this article one of the primary goals of the author is to demonstrate the importance of research when formulating prophetic interpretation. Apocalyptic schemes and conclusions demand careful study and thorough research to substantiate claims, and cannot be left to mere conjecture. Scripture provides extreme clarity to us in

this matter and spells out yet another principle to prevent us from becoming “led astray” or, worse yet, “leading others astray.” It is found in 2 Pet. 1:19-21, specifically verse 20: “But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation.” With this divine principle in place, all prophetic exegesis must be able to publicly withstand scrutiny. No interpretation can be developed and utilized to persuade people deceptively or manipulate people unknowingly. And furthermore, conclusions must not be hidden or disguised only to surprise students after they have been “appropriately” educated to the author’s position (a specious argument). Prophecy is so that we might believe. The question is then begged: believe what? Believe the truth or have our faith based upon truths. Truth must be tested and confirmed that faith might be the end result (a state of being convinced), it must be presented with much research and evidence and able to withstand the necessary scrutiny. Tested principles and conclusions are then eligible to be labeled as sound doctrine.

Yet another unacceptable position for the bible student to hold is that “all arguments are valid” and that “multiple interpretations are possible.” There is one correct interpretation of the Apocalypse, not multiple. Faith is useless and void if it is based upon a neutral, non-committal, inconclusive set of beliefs. How can the believer ever be fully convinced or persuaded while choosing to equivocate on key tenants of faith, i.e. prophetic interpretation? The duty of all Bible students, specifically those trying to build and develop their personal convictions (faith), is to search out the matter with much study (the honor of Kings) and establish a sound doctrinal position. We will now demonstrate how such a doctrine passed the necessary scrutiny to become an accepted and validated truth in our community.

The Dating of the Revelation: 94-96 A.D.

As the title of this section clearly states, the argument presented here concludes that the Apocalypse was written at the time of 94-96 A.D. With that stated there are no surprises, no slippery slope reasoning (a fallacy in logical reasoning), no manipulative or creative scriptural arguments, or hidden agendas. The author has clearly identified the conclusion (and the position of the author) of the argument and will now seek to prove such argument. The reader is obliged to scrutinize and critique the author’s evidence and either agree or disagree with the stated conclusion.

The dating of the Apocalypse has strangely evolved into an issue of debate. Only recently in Christadelphia (specifically with the introduction of H.A. Whittaker’s publication “Revelation: A Biblical Approach”) has the date of the Apocalypse (meaning when it was given to John) been questioned. In general Christianity, this idea is manifest in the false doctrine identified as Preterism or Praeterism, of which there are two views: full preterist and partial preterist. Though the intention of this paper is to discuss the dating of the Apocalypse, a brief discussion will be dedicated to the topic of Preterism later on. A Preterist is defined as “a theologian who believes that the prophecies of the Apocalypse have already been fulfilled” and Praeterism is defined as “an eschatological viewpoint that places many or all eschatological events in the past, especially the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.” This

belief found its roots in the sixth century; a unique time period where many distortions of the truth were created. Namely, the creation of Mohamedism/Islam and the Jesuit counter doctrines or counter schemes (interpretations of Revelation) designed to divert attention away from the Roman Catholic Church. Prior to the sixth century A.D. the universally agreed upon date of the Apocalypse was 94-96 A.D. (the one dissenting “theologian” being Epiphanius saying that the giving of the Revelation was during the time of Cladius-emperor of Rome 41-54 A.D.). There are four main areas that one must consider when deciphering the date.

1. An exegesis regarding historians and their writings,
2. An understanding of history, its time periods and its characters,
3. A thorough understanding of symbols and signs as used in the Apocalypse and throughout the entire bible, and,
4. An understanding of the core principles founded in the plan and purpose of God.

It is interesting to note that Dr. Thomas states in his writings on the Apocalypse that to him the date is not significant, although he agrees with the late date of 94-96 A.D. The date only becomes critical when trying to present a Preterist or Futurist interpretation such as A.D. Norris’s futuristic scheme or Whittaker’s preterist scheme. If almost all of the Apocalypse relates to natural Israel then it is imperative that it was written prior to 70 A.D., even though Daniel’s 70 weeks prophecy, Moses’ prophecy in Deuteronomy, and the Olivet prophecy give ample discourse on the events of 70 A.D.

The two dates that stand at odds are 66 A.D. and 94-96 A.D. It is generally agreed upon by all parties that the book could only have been written during the reigns of either Nero or Domitian. References in the book of Revelation require a time of persecution, and only under those two Caesars was there any significant harassment of the followers of Christ in the first Century. Nero’s persecution flared up as a result of his own caprice and affected Christians primarily in the city of Rome and its immediate suburbs, without being severely felt in the Asian provinces. It is important to remember that the seven ecclesias mentioned in the Apocalypse were located within these Asian provinces. They are representative in that there were more than seven ecclesias in actual existence. It is likely that there were ecclesias in Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Antioch, Hierpolis, Pontus, Cappadocia, Bythinia, Cilicia, Galatia, and Colosse. It is also important to note that these were Gentile ecclesias not Jewish, and furthermore, were removed from any Jewish-centralized control or influence in Jerusalem. The later persecution under Domitian, on the other hand, directly and oppressively affected the Brethren in Asia minor; in fact his (Domitian’s) persecution affected the very ecclesias to whom the Apocalypse was addressed. Neither the prophet John nor those to whom he was writing were in Rome, where the Nero persecution raged for a short time, nor were they in Palestine, where the Jewish War occurred. The Apocalypse was not given to Jews in Israel, nor was it written to the ecclesia in Jerusalem. It was addressed to Gentile ecclesias. The real circumstances under which the Revelation was written were (1) a time when there was severe persecution throughout Asia Minor-some 30 years after Nero’s reign, and (2) a threatened falling away from

the true faith on the part of the ecclesias. These were the prominent issues which the Spirit, through the apostle John, had to address. The opening chapters of the Revelation testify to both of these real crises: severe persecution from Gentile sources and a growing apostasy (Gnosticism being perhaps one of the greatest evils the disciples had to face). The Asiarchs (Roman province rulers/governors) under Domitian enforced Caesar worship and carried out the imperial edict against Christians of this area with some zeal.

“The Neronian persecution was confined to Rome and was not due to any sense of deep ideological conflict between Church and State; it was simply that the emperor had to blame somebody for the fire. Nevertheless, it was a precedent that magistrates had condemned Christians to death because they were Christians and on no other charge. Under Domitian (81-96 A.D.) the situation seems to have become grave...Domitian styling himself “Master and God” was inclined to suspect of treachery those who looked contrary to his cult. Domitian had a penchant for banishing his antagonists” (Chadwick, *The Early Church*, pp.26-27).

All references to the dating of Revelation from the first three centuries support the Domitian period. The first mention of the Nero dating appears in the sixth century and is found in some later writings (Grotius who agrees with Epiphanius-Cladius period, and much later Sir Isaac Newton who agrees with Grotius). Alford, author of “How to study the New Testament” says this in regards to the early dating motive, “It has no foundation in the evidence of Christian antiquity and originated in a desire to interpret part of the prophecy (the Apocalypse) as referring to the reign and fate of the Emperor Nero.”

The Early Chapters of the Apocalypse Support the 94-96 A.D. Date

The Apocalypse itself supports the later date. It describes an advanced state of ecclesial demise and deterioration such as the deeds of the Nicolaitans, “Which I hate,” the doctrine of Balaam and the immoral teachings of “that woman Jezebel.” The reader is invited to compare Rev. 2:4 (letter to Ephesus): “Thou hast left thy first love” with Eph. 1:5 (Paul’s letter to Ephesus with much commendation of the Brethren there) and Col. 4:15. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians was written from Rome during his first imprisonment in 61-62 A.D.. The passing of some years would have been required to explain the great decline which had taken place in the Ephesian ecclesia and all the ecclesias in Asia minor. The time of Domitian allows for such a passage of time. In regards to Laodacia, it is generally accepted that the city/ecclesia was destroyed by earthquake around 60 A.D. It is difficult to believe that by 66 A.D. the city was rebuilt and the brethren so prosperous and “settled after such trial and loss” that they could be described as “rich, and increased in goods, and in need of nothing.” A date around 96 A.D. would give the appropriate time for this state of things to develop. We will look at this area in greater detail later. Now, let us look at the most widely cited historian for the dating of the Apocalypse and evaluate his credibility.

Iranaeus

He is the earliest known witness for the date of the Apocalypse who wrote in about 170 A.D. He was born and educated in Asia minor where he was acquainted with those who had been contemporary with the Apostle John. Iranaeus went in later years as missionary to Gaul where he became bishop of Lyon and where he was eventually martyred. He was adamant in upholding the apostolic teachings insofar as he understood them. He insisted upon retaining the millennial teaching of the Revelation, while others were apparently wavering in their acceptance of this truth. Two major works by Iranaeus survive: *Heresies* (five books written to counteract the Gnostic ideas of his day) and *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, an effort to relate Christian teaching with the Old Testament (see Eerdman’s *Handbook to the History of Christianity*, “Iranaeus” pg. 26.) According to Hort “Iranaeus was himself a native of Asia minor; he was a hearer of Polycarp of Smyrna, who was a personal disciple of John; and he used the treatise of Papias of Hierapolis, another disciple of John (The Apostle). Thus he had “quite a credible” means of knowing the Truth” (Hort, *The Apocalypse of St. John*, Intro pp. xiv-xv).

The book of Iranaeus titled “Against Heresies” includes several references to John and the Apocalypse, one of which places the apocalyptic visions on Patmos toward the end of the reign of Domitian (81-96 A.D.). Taken in context this statement of Iranaeus appears in a discussion regarding the identity of Antichrist. He writes:

“We, you see, do not venture anything as concerning the name of Antichrist, in the way of positive affirmation. For if it were meet that at this time his name should be expressly proclaimed, it would have been spoken by him who saw the Apocalypse. For at no long time ago was it seen, but almost in our generation, at the end of Domitian’s reign” (Iranaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book V, ch 30.3).

Thus Iranaeus (a contemporary of Polycarp—a personal disciple of John the Apostle) states the early tradition that the Apocalypse itself (the vision of the Revelation) was seen by the Apostle John on Patmos during the last years of the reign of Domitian, thereby dating it to approximately 95 A.D. This tradition remained the undisputed or universally accepted truth for almost six centuries (except for Epiphanius who places the writing of the Apocalypse to the reign of Cladius, a conclusion that is rejected by all credible historians and theologians). This testimony of Iranaeus stands independently as irrefutable evidence. Evidence the Preterist position still struggles to discredit.

Victorinus of Pettan

The earliest Latin commentator on the Apocalypse, Victorinus of Pettan (305 A.D.) states that John was exiled by Domitian to Patmos. In his commentary, *On the Apocalypse of John*, Victorinus writes as a comment on Rev. 10:11: “When John said these things he was in the island of Patmos condemned to the labor mines by Caesar Domitian. There, he saw the Apocalypse and John being dismissed from the mines, thus subsequently delivered the same Apocalypse which he had received from God” (Victorinus of Pettau-Pettan, *On the Apocalypse of John*, Ante-Nicene Christian Library, vol XVIII,

p. 416).

Eusebius

Eusebius, bishop of Caesar in Palestine (262-340 A.D.) in his Ecclesiastical History affirms that the Revelation was written during Domitian's reign. He states: "In this persecution, it was handed down by tradition, that the apostle and evangelist John, who was yet living, in consequence of his testimony to the divine word, was condemned to dwell on the island of Patmos...Even historians that are very far from befriending our religion, have not hesitated to record this persecution (Domitian's), and its martyrdoms in their histories. These have accurately noted the time for it happened, according to them, in the fifteenth year of Domitian" (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book III, ch xviii).

The statement of Eusebius is unequivocal, and he cites sources other than Iranaeus. Eusebius "not only discovered annotated history but also preserved for posterity masses of prime sources" (Great Events from History-ancient and medieval series, ed. F.N. Magill, vol II 1-950, p. 841). Neither Eusebius nor Iranaeus give any indication that the tradition of dating the Revelation to 95 A.D. was disputed. And no evidence of an alternative dating has come to us from that period. From the information available to him, Eusebius relates the historical background of the Apocalypse.

"...But after Domitian had reigned fifteen years and Nerva succeeded to the government, the Roman Senate decreed, that the honours of Domitian should be revoked, and that those who had been unjustly expelled, should return to their homes, and have goods restored. This is the statement of the historians of the day. It was then also, that the apostle John returned from the banishment in Patmos and took up his abode at Ephesus, according to an ancient tradition."

Elliot in his book *Horae Apocalypticae* in 1844 comments that Eusebius "distinctly intimates more than once his agreement with the traditions of the ancients, that referred it (the date of writing) to Domitian's persecution: and indeed implies, as if it were perfectly evident, that he knew of no other tradition." Elliot then points out that there was not extant any contrary tradition respecting the date, which surely would have been noted if it existed. He then says, "As to any contrary statement on the point in question, there appears to have been none whatsoever until the time of Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis in the later half of the fourth century" (Pearce, G., citing Elliot, *Revelation: Which Interpretation*, 2nd Ed. 1991).

Additional Support for the 94-96 A.D. Date

The historian Moheim (1694-1755) states "In the year 93 or 94 a new assault was made upon the Christians by Domitian...the persecution was undoubtedly severe: but it was of short continuance as the emperor was soon after murdered. In the midst of this persecution, John the apostle was banished to the isle of Patmos" (Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol I, pp. 55-59).

Clement of Alexandria (202-232 A.D.) states: "And all the

presbyters of Asia, that had conferred with John, the disciples of our Lord, testify that John had delivered it (the Apocalypse) to them; for he continued with them until the times of Trajan, (Trajan ruled 98-117 A.D.). Clement's testimony agrees with that of Iranaeus who had written that the apostle John lived in Ephesus for several years after his return from exile. Most all historians concur that John died as the first century ended when he was almost 100 years old.

The Abingdon Bible Commentary has this background information in support of the Domitian date:

"That the book (Revelation) belongs to a later than the Pauline era is evident from the condition of the churches, the presence of Nicolaitanism and widespread persecution. Ancient tradition was almost unanimous in assigning the book to the later years of Domitian's reign, when the emperor's demand for divine honours, his widespread use of informers, and his special enmity against the Christian church established a reign of terror from which there was no relief till his death in 96 A.D. With this most modern scholars agree. It was not till Domitian's edict that Asia became the scene of persecution against Christians." Note: Nero's persecution was limited to Rome.

Jerom, in his book of *Illustrious Men* says: "Domitian in the fourteenth year of his reign raising the second persecution after Nero, John was banished into the Island of Patmos, where he wrote the Revelation." Jerom in another work states that John was a prophet, and "he saw the Revelation in the island of Patmos, where he was banished by Domitian."

Sulpicius Severus says that "John the apostle and evangelist, was banished by Domitian into the island of Patmos where he had visions, and where he wrote the book of Revelation."

Arethas in his commentary upon the Revelation (supposed to be written in the sixth century) upon the authority of Eusebius, states that John was banished into Patmos by Domitian.

Isidore of Seville, near the end of the sixth century, says, "Domitian raised a persecution against the Christians. In his time the apostle John having been banished into the island of Patmos saw the Revelation."

The 66 A.D. Date

Proponents of the early date (66 A.D.), including Whittaker, cite the Syriac version of the bible as "especially strong evidence" in support of the 66 A.D. writing of the Apocalypse. But with minimal research the student quickly discovers the lack of credibility this argument possesses. The earliest Syriac version did not include the Revelation. There was some question in the eastern church as to whether the Apocalypse should be included in the canon. The Syriac version which dates the Revelation to the time of Nero is itself dated to the sixth century A.D.

Lenski writes in *The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation*: "Nevertheless, Revelation was not universally

accepted. The Pishito, the oldest Syriac version of the New Testament, dated in the second century, contained neither Revelation nor II Peter, II John, III John, Jude.” Barnes in his Notes on the New Testament-Revelation p. xlvi states: “Thus, in the later Syriac version, the title page declares that it was written in Patmos, whither John was sent by Nero Caesar. This version however, was made in the beginning of the sixth century and can have little authority in determining the question. It is not known by whom the version was made, or on what authority the author relied, when he said that John was banished to Patmos in the time of Nero.”

The Ramifications of Accepting the 66 A.D. Date

With such evidence amassed in support of the late date 94-96 A.D., the bible student might inquire: “why so much time dedicated to establishing the date?” The ramifications of accepting the false premise (the early writing of Revelation, 66 A.D.) leaves the student subject to the subsequent false conclusions put forth by the Preterist community, namely, all prophecies of the Apocalypse are fulfilled (70 A.D.), Israel is the Harlot, the seals and trumpet judgments belong exclusively to the nation of Israel (70 A.D.). According to a “Full Preterist” perspective Christ has already returned and the Kingdom “is now,” the Rapture remains for the future believers (see www.preteristarchive.com for a complete and thorough discussion on the Preterist doctrine). The acceptance of the early date leaves the student unable to explain, understand or comment on the events that have occurred over the centuries from 70 A.D. to present day in the context of the Plan and Purpose of God. They are unable to understand and link critical symbols such as the Harlot System and the Babylonian System, discussed at length in the Apocalypse, to real world players (systems and organizations that we must not be deceived by and come out of). The great enemy of the early ecclesias was the Pagan Roman system. Looking forward as the apostle John was able to do, the greatest enemy of the Truth would be the Roman Catholic system. This is a fact (understood through correct interpretation) that persisted for at least a thousand years. Jerusalem, as a persecutor, was replaced by Pagan Rome which would in turn give way to an apostate Christendom. The later became the most formidable foe the people of God have had to face. Missing these connections is more than simply misunderstanding Revelation it is to base a faith on non-truths and as Dr. Thomas comments in Elpis Israel: “If we have an understanding faith in the truth, we shall inherit the truth; but if we believe in what is not true, and therefore visionary, we shall inherit nothing but the whirlwind” (Elpis Israel pg. 258). The Preterist “void” presupposes that God has been intentionally “absent” from ruling in the kingdoms of men and from calling out a people from among the Gentiles for His name (Amos 9:12, Acts 15:17, Rom. 11:25 and as promised to Abraham “in thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed”) for almost 2,000 years. From our earlier discussion on prophecy it is pertinent to ask here, “How did faith survive?”, especially when holding and confessing such faith cost many their very lives. The answer is articulated by Bro. Alan Eyre (author of “The Protestors”) presenting his research and support of the correct interpretation of Revelation: The Continuous Historical. He states:

“There is no question that an enormous amount of material is available to demonstrate that a substantial body of Bible scholars and believers held to the general historical school of prophetic understanding...I certainly would say that the true witnesses through the ages right from apostolic times have almost solidly followed this scheme and interpretation. Alternative schemes of interpretation have generally been promoted by those false churches which wished to avoid the teaching of Scripture” i.e. the Catholic Church (Editor’s note).

Correctly understanding the Apocalypse is just as important to us in this day and age for faith building, as it was for early Brethren hundreds of years ago: that we might believe.

Joseph Mede in the 17th Century in his “Keys of the Revelation-published about 1640” demonstrates the knowledge and the faith developed through the correct interpretation of Revelation. “He understood the fulfillment of the Seals and Trumpets on the historical basis. This may not be thought to prove very much, but what is of significance is that he could correctly outline ‘things which must shortly come to pass’ before they came to pass; surely evidence that in broad terms his understanding was the correct one. Bro. I. Collyer in his book Vox Dei, chapter 16, gives detailed quotations from Mede. Writing some 150 years before the events, Mede predicted many of the historical events described by the vials. He correctly understood the 4th Vial to be poured out on the Austrian empire, the sun; the 5th Vial to be poured out on Rome, the seat of the beast; the 6th Vial on the Turkish empire, “drying up the river Euphrates.” None of these events looked at all likely in the 17th century. Mede also understood that after the drying up of the river Euphrates, the “preparing of the way of the kings of the east” involved the restoration of the Jews to their land. When such forecasts come to pass it surely means the forecasts were made on the basis of a right understanding of the apocalyptic scheme” (adapted from G. Pearce, Revelation-Which Interpretation p. 19). For more historical examples of those that understood the Continuous Historical Approach to Revelation see “Revelation Which Interpretation,” Graham Pearce, 2nd Ed., pp 20-23.

Jesuit Schemes

The Preterist scheme of interpreting the Revelation was officially created and promoted by the Jesuit Priest Alcasar (later adopted by Grotius who influenced Sir Isaac Newton’s interpretation). Jesuits Hammond and Bosseut (known as the “great Papal champion”) also adopted this scheme with a view to rescue Popery from the blasting visions and denunciations of the Apocalypse. It is important to understand the Modus Operandi of the Jesuit branch of the Catholic Church. In a nutshell, this “division” was created as the “educational/institutional” arm of the Church. In actuality, it served (serves) a very effective role as the propaganda/instruction division of the Catholic Church. How appropriate for this branch to create and foster alternative schemes in an attempt to alter the eschatological events of the Apocalypse so as to divert attention away from the Church. Other Jesuits responsible for this diversionary tactic were Lacunza (a Spanish Jesuit 1731-1801, known for his generally futurist scheme, the inspiration of his

first work “The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty” being the French Revolution). He is better known by his pen name Ben Ezra (changing his name in an attempt to pass as a Jewish convert to Christianity). Also responsible for this futurist scheme was a Jesuit by the name of Riberia. Other Jesuits include Pierre Lambert (French Jesuit who died in 1813) and Bellarmine. Through their orchestrated writings and publications these Jesuits, commissioned by the Catholic Hierarchy, flooded universities, institutions and religious discourse with these “alternative” schemes; whose sole purpose was to “rescue Popery from the denunciations of the Apocalypse.”

These schemes have been incorporated and adopted by the Rationalists of Germany. Such schemes have recently found favor with a class of interpreters in England and now the U.S., namely, Dr. Moses Stuart. The Rationalists of Germany are an interesting group. They are all alumni of specific theological schools in Germany that adopted the Preterist scheme. It is particularly interesting to note that three of their most prominent scholars (Hernnschneider, Eichhorn and Heinrichs) believe the Apocalypse to be merely the poetic and dramatic writings of John, meaning, it was not inspired by God.

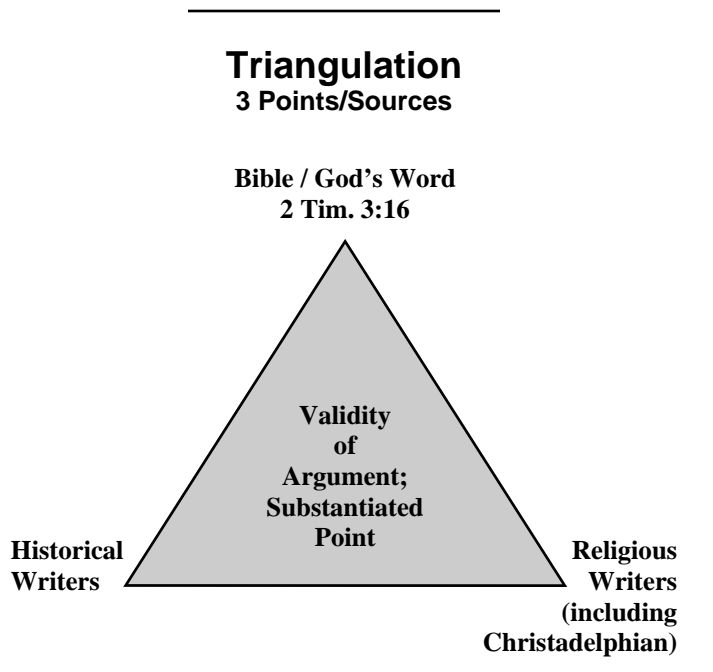
Summary

We have shown through much research, sound argument and solid evidence the validity of the date of the Revelation: 94-96 A.D. We have discussed at length the importance of basing one’s faith on sound doctrine in order that it might inspire and motivate the bible student to believe. Faith cannot stand, it cannot develop and grow into a convincing mindset, able to “fully persuade,” if it is based on equivocal sets of beliefs (doctrines). Not all arguments or opinions for that matter, are valid. We must discover truth. This is the crux of the matter: that Scripture might be tested and God’s word proved so that we as believers are “left with the evidence of things hoped for” and convinced of things that will shortly come to pass. The final piece is that it stimulates a behavioral change in us (faith and works). To not believe God is more than simply taking a position of doubt or disbelief. To reject what God has promised, prophesied and foretold is in essence to “make God a liar.” God cannot lie. If we reject what He has promised it is more than mere disbelief, it is taking a position that says: “I

don’t believe that God can (will) do what He has promised to do.”

There is a methodology which facilitates the discovery of “substantiated truths” and valid arguments. It is called Triangulation and is a valuable tool for the bible student to utilize. Triangulation utilizes three points, three sources, or three opinions to substantiate a premise or argument. It reduces and minimizes the tendency to rely upon one person’s research, one person’s interpretation, one person’s opinion or agenda and forces the argument to withstand the necessary scrutiny. By using multiple, unrelated and diverse sources (illustrated in the diagram) the student can validate or invalidate a premise. The result is a conclusion that is sound. And a sound conclusion is one that properly convinces and persuades one’s faith. Collectively these sound conclusions become a set of doctrines or better said a “Statement of Faith.” A convincing set of beliefs that overcomes doubt and disbelief and manifests itself as the “joy set before us.”

Tom Northey



The Altar Parable - Hebrews 13:10
an Exhortation on the Principles of Atonement

As Bible students we are all acutely aware of the sacrificial approach that Yahweh has established for fallen man. From the very outset, it has been clearly demonstrated how mankind will and will not approach our Heavenly Father. From the Edenic scene and onward, the method of approach has been shown. Hebrews 9:22 records the formula: *Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission.* This is taught even more clearly by the Mosaic institution. We think of the Mosaic tabernacle, the priestly order, the offerings, the ordinances, the special feasts and holy days - all these specifics were enacted to prescribe in detail the way back to our Creator through his Son. But, there’s another key element of the sacrificial approach that

we haven’t mentioned and one that we sometimes neglect to consider - the altar. Let’s appreciate together some of the lessons it was designed to teach.

As you may have noted, we’ve called this study a “parable” and as we begin, we need to think of it as just that. Some may wonder about the use of this term in reference to the altar. Hopefully, as we proceed, the usage will become more meaningful to us as students together attempting to more fully appreciate the intent of Yahweh’s message. Bro. Thomas wrote in reference to the altar: *The things commanded were “a parabolā for the time then present” – a riddle, the meaning of*

which would be found in the realities developed in the Christ. Our hope is that we will agree that this is indeed a beautiful parable: **a parable of the atoning work of Messiah** with reference to his nature and his past, present and future work. In this parable, we come face to face with another of many instances where it is made abundantly clear that our Heavenly Father truly desires that we understand his plan of God-Manifestation through his Son. He gives us all the information we need but he often conceals it in parabolic form for our spiritual exercise. This is the honor of kings, is it not? See Prov. 25: 2.

Another value of this type of study is the compliment of the Old and New Testaments. What do we mean? When we read in the New Testament, in Heb. 13: 10, *that we have an altar* (Christ) and we see all the specifics of the Old Testament concerning the altar, we cannot help but see the intrinsic connection between the two. Therefore, true brethren are eagerly inclined to maintain their emphasis on the Old Testament scriptures in a world where pseudo-Christianity around us has no regard for them whatsoever. Sadly, this may become a challenge for our community as well.

A Closer Look at the Altar-Parable

As we begin to look closely at the altar-parable, one of first things we notice was the custom to build altars on special occasions. Sometimes, altars were given very meaningful names. In either case, the design was to draw attention to the purpose of God and demonstrate that his purpose was always on the minds of the faithful. Two occasions where this occurred are recorded in Gen. 33:20 and Ex. 17:15. In the Genesis account, Jacob erected an altar at Shalem, and called it *AIL ELOHAI ISRAAIL – the Strength of the Mighty Ones of Power’s Prince*. In Exodus, Moses built an altar after the battle with Amalek and named it *Yahweh-nissi*, meaning *He shall be my Banner*. Both of these examples demonstrate the mind of the faithful in associating the altars with the circumstances. We encourage you to reference *Eureka* Vol. 2, p. 235 where Bro. Thomas gives further insight.

By now, you may be thinking of the first mention of altars within the pages of scripture. Was it in the Edenic account where we find altars first mentioned? Was it in the account of Cain and Abel in Gen. 4? We may find it interesting that while sacrifice was employed in both these passages, there is no mention of altars. The first record of altars is found in Gen. 8:20 at the time of Noah. As we know, this was some 1500 hundred years from creation. No doubt, altars would have been used before this time but, nevertheless, they are not written of. We might suggest the absence in the Spirit record is to emphasize the void of Divine approach that encompassed the earth in that time of great evil and moral depravity. See Gen. 6:5.

Altars are next mentioned in Gen. 12:8 at the time of Abram. Another meaningful element is taught here. We read that Abraham built an altar and *called upon the Name of Yahweh*. So, we see that the altar was used for more than the offering of animal sacrifice. It was also a place of communication with Yahweh where prayer was offered and answered. This, of course, points perfectly to whom the altar

foreshadowed, our Lord Jesus. The Hebrew word used here in Genesis – ‘thusiasterion’ is strikingly similar to the Greek equivalent ‘hiliasterion’ translated ‘propitiation’ (mercy-seat) in Rom. 3:25 in reference to the Messiah.

Building the Altar

It is well documented that many of the ancient worthies from Noah, Abram, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David, and Solomon all took part in the altar-parable. What do we mean? If we check our concordances, we will find that all these men personally “built” altars. But, you may say, doesn’t that just mean, for example, that David would have assigned his hired servants this task? Well, apparently not. The word “build” implies action taken by the party mentioned. It may seem odd that these men, some wealthy, some powerful, some royalty, would have taken the time to engage in such a menial chore, but this seems to be the meaning. We cannot miss the powerful lesson. No one is exempt from the labor of the altar. To labor is to get involved with the process. To get involved with the process, in our case, intellectually, not physically, is to understand the particulars; and to understand the particulars of the Christ-Altar is the duty of all laborers and the intention of our Creator. And here is the value of the lesson. We today must also labor to understand the altar-parable as they did, not allowing someone else to do the work or thought for us. Spiritually speaking, we must all “roll up our sleeves”, as it were, in the study of the word and labor of the truth. This is the only way to fully participate in the work of building (knowing) the altar.

As to the specific instructions pertaining to the construction of the altar, the point seems hardly necessary to mention. Would we expect anything other than very specific and meaningful instructions as to the design and materials used? After all, fellow students, we remember the goal is to teach of Christ. Certainly we would expect every aspect to be important. As we consider two passages that give us the instructions, we see precisely that. The reader is referred to Ex. 20: 24 and Deut. 27: 5-6.

Bro. H.P. Mansfield writes: *Specific instructions were given as to the making of an altar...no one would think of approaching an earthly monarch without some instruction or etiquette, and a greater measure of circumspection is required if we would approach Almighty God. An altar of earth or stone could be built. If the latter were selected, unhewn stones only were to be used and they were not to be shaped or trimmed in accordance with human ideas...earth or stone, points to that which is “earthy” or human nature (1 Cor. 15:47). Thus far, the altar is a fit symbol of Jesus who was made “in all points like unto his brethren,” in “the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom. 8:3). Though he came in the flesh that “profiteth nothing”, he never succumbed to human ideas or ideals that ran counter to his Father, but ever revealed characteristics that were divine. An altar of stone, but unhewn stone: in other words, God manifest in the flesh. To set up an altar of hewn stones or bricks would be to pollute the purpose of Yahweh; as though flesh boasted that it could provide the way of salvation. These are excellent summary thoughts our brother offers us on this subject. The altar, therefore, was the “Word made flesh” in sacrificial manifestation, pointing forward to the time when*

God would give his only begotten Son, *that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life* (Jn. 3:16). One final thought on the construction. We note in Ex. 27:1, the altar materials differed during Mosaic times. The altar was to be made of wood overlaid with brass. This change, no doubt, was for portability but taught the same lesson – approach would be through the human family divinely provided.

The Altar Required Atonement

We see another important aspect taught in Ex. 29: 37 and Ex. 30:29. These passages speak of the altar requiring atonement or cleansing. This is clear testimony to the involvement of our Lord in his own sacrifice due to the sin-nature he bore during the days of his flesh. For the altar to be exempt from this cleansing would be to negate principles so clearly taught throughout the pages of scripture and create confusion as to the relationship of Christ to his sacrifice. But the altar was not exempt! The fact that the altar, an inanimate object, required this covering emphasizes the truth that atonement is required for more than personal wrongdoing, our Lord, of course, being personally “without sin”. Bro. Thomas writes: *The Word made Flesh was at once the victim, the altar and the priest. The Eternal Spirit-Word was the High Priestly Offerer of his own Flesh, whose character was without spot – “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners;” “who knew no sin;” yet whose nature was in all points like ours – “sin’s flesh,” in which dwells no good thing – Heb. 9:14; 7:26; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 8:3; 7:18; Heb. 2:14-17. The Flesh made by the spirit out of Mary’s substance, and rightly claimed therefore in Psa. 16:8; Acts 2:31, as his flesh, is the Spirit’s Anointed Altar, cleansed by the blood of that flesh when poured out unto death “on the tree.”* Our community is certainly well served by the clear exposition of Bro. Thomas.

How Well Do We Understand the Altar-Parable?

An exhortational question comes to mind as we begin to conclude our thoughts. Was the altar-parable understood by Israel? Did the lesson have the intended effect? We know that Israel after the flesh corrupted this important parable by violating its instructions, by using materials more pleasing to the flesh, by copying the nations around them in their practices until finally, the altar became synonymous with idolatry. One example is Hosea’s words to Israel where the altar is referred to as the place of apostasy. See Ch. 8:11, 10:1-8, and 12:11. This apostasy worsened until the time of Christ when we read in Matt. 23:19 that Jewish tradition had relegated the importance of the altar-parable to a debate of which was greater, the altar or the thing offered on the altar. This brought the stern rebuke of the Master upon the Pharisees. Is there a warning for us in this scene? Bro. Mansfield addresses this question: *This attitude of the Jews is perpetuated by Christendom, and sometimes by Christadelphia, when it claims that motive can override Truth. So long as our hearts are right, some preachers claim, it does not matter much what we believe. The Law of the Altar will correct all such specious reasoning, and cause us to realize that God will have us approach Him in the way that He, alone, has determined.*

To believers in Christ, this parable contains a wealth of spiritual understanding, some of which has been only touched

in this consideration. For further detail, the reader is referred to the section in *Eureka*, Vol. 2, page 234, entitled *The Altar*. What a high and holy calling we have received to be constitutionally, “in Christ,” in other words, in “the altar” and “partakers with it” (1 Cor. 9:13). As we contemplate the altar of earth or stone, we elevate our minds to the greater altar, even our Lord. It is upon this altar that we present our offerings – *our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service* (Rom. 12:1). The more we look into such considerations, the more our appreciation grows for the beauty of Yahweh’s bounty he has stored up for us in his Word. Let us continue to feed and nourish the “spiritual man” by feasting on the Spirit-Word and growing in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior. May it be our lot to be found so doing when our Master returns.

Jim Canady

Gleanings . . . God’s Altar of Sacrifice

Comment: This poem, taken from the May 1879 *Christadelphian* magazine, was selected as an epilogue to the previous article on the Altar Parable. The references to *Eureka* at the end are from the three-volume edition.

~~~~~

Thine altar, Lord, unhewn by man,  
Set up on earth by Thee,  
Defiled by our first parents’ sin,  
Must, like its type, cleansed be.

That altar Thou hast purified  
Through blood of Thine own Lamb,  
When shed to free from power of death  
The seed of Abraham.

Upon that altar Thou didst lay,  
Like Abram, Thy dear Son,  
To show Thy love and clearly prove  
The evil man hath done.

Most holy is that altar now,  
In nature as in name,  
And they who touch it by Thy truth  
Lose all their guilt and shame.

Beneath thine altar some now rest,  
By seed of serpent slain,  
When holding its protecting horns  
Whose power to save seemed vain.

Continued on next page...

Their blood, like Abel's, from the ground  
 Hath cried for judgment true  
 On those who tried, but tried in vain,  
 Thine altar down to hew.

And others 'neath Thine altar's base  
 Lie sleeping in the dust,  
 Who calmly ended this life's toil  
 With Christ – their only trust.

Within Thine altar's perfect square  
 A few may still be found  
 Who, in these latter days, have heard  
 The Gospel's truthful sound.

Upon Thine altar they're required  
 Their all to freely place,  
 In token of their love to Thee  
 For gift of Thy pure grace.

Around Thine altar many stand –  
 Thy truth's designing foes –  
 Not knowing Thou wilt soon pour out  
 Thy vials' final woes.

How long, O Lord, ere Thy true sheep,  
 Beneath or yet within  
 Thine altar's pale shall, like their head,  
 Be freed from all that's sin?

How long, O Lord, ere Thou send down  
 Accepting spirit-fire,  
 Consuming all Thine altar bears  
 Of fallen man's desire?

Anointed though Thine altar's been  
 With sorrow's oil of love,  
 O Lord! Anoint it soon with joy  
 By Spirit from above.

We wait, O Lord, that joyous day,  
 When sacrifice shall end,  
 And all who've eaten altar meat  
 Their time with Thee shall spend.

~~~~~

For exposition of the typical significance of the altar, see
Eureka vol. 1, p. 177; vol. II pp. 222-226, 354-357, 479-483,
 596-597, 599-602; vol. III pp. 434, 501.

J.J.A.

Light a Word Study

*The words of Yahweh are pure words: as silver tried in a
 furnace of earth, purified seven times. Psa. 12:6*

Verse under consideration. **Isaiah 26:19**, *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.*

A vital part of spiritual growth for all Christadelphians, our mental progression as we grow from "milk to meat", involves the close and microscopic study of the Word of Yahweh. Word studies will reveal the hidden beauty and underlying lessons of the Scriptures, which **cannot be discerned otherwise**. This is clear apostolic teaching (Heb. 5:13-14). The scriptural doctrine concerning "light" is a first principle and also a subject that contains the "deep things" of God. Paul instructs us *Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual* (1 Cor. 15:46). So it is with light, first we must understand it in the natural and physical sense. A few simple facts on light:

- 1) Organic life is impossible without light
- 2) Light displaces darkness
- 3) Light illuminates that which may not have been visible previously
- 4) Light may be derived (or reflected) or underived

The Mosaic account informs us that at some point after the creation of the heavens and the earth that the globe had lapsed into a chaotic state styled in the Hebrew by the words "tohuw" and "bohuw", signifying waste and empty. It was also a place covered with darkness (Gen. 1:2). Next in the account we are informed, *And God said, **Let there be light: and there was light.** And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness* (Gen. 1:3-4). It is a most significant lesson for us that the first act to bring order out of chaos was the introduction of light. Next a contrast is made between light and darkness - *God divided the light and the darkness*. So immediately the thoughtful Bible student is taught two important principles concerning light: 1) that light is used to bring order out of chaos and 2) that light provides separation from the darkness. The Hebrew word translated light in Genesis 1:2 is **owr**. This is a word used frequently in the Old Testament that is many times translated light. Much profitable time can be spent studying the various ways the Spirit has used this word and other closely related words.

A most interesting use of a form of this word occurs in Isaiah 26:19. We read there: *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of **herbs**, and the earth shall cast out the dead.* The word rendered herbs in this verse is from the Hebrew word **owrah**. This is a feminine form of the Hebrew word **owr**. Now this feminine form of **owr** is used sparingly and only occurs elsewhere in 4 places: 2 Kings 4:39, Esther 8:16, Psalms 139:12, and Isaiah 26:19, all of which are

most significant. The prophet Isaiah, whose name signifies, "Yah has saved", proclaims a great song of praise in the chapter before us. He writes of the reality proclaimed in his name, when truly salvation has come to those whose "mind is stayed on thee" (vs.3). We are left in no doubt as to the time that this song is sung. Isaiah declares in the first verse: *"In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."* The "strong city" appointed for the salvation of Yahweh's people, is none other than that seen by John in vision. *"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."* (Rev. 21:2) This same "strong city" David had prophesied of before in the Songs of Zion (Psa. 31:21). Isaiah presents the end picture of glory first, as is common in the prophets. A vital component of this picture of glory is presented to us in the verse under consideration. It is the resurrection of the dead, sleeping in the dust of the earth. The apostle Paul writes, *"For in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order. Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."* This awakening from the dust and the elevation to divine nature of the worthy, will provide the foundation materials and walls for the holy city to be used by the wise Master Builder. (Rev 21:19-20; Mal. 3:17). The dead (of Isa. 26:19) awake to sing the song of salvation, they are also likened to dew. What is the significance of the dew in this verse? For a complete exposition of the symbology contained in the dew, we heartily refer our readers to a portion of Eureka, by Brother John Thomas (See section "He is coming with clouds", Vol. 1, pg. 139, Logos Ed.).

In summary, we will quote a sentence from the aforementioned passage in Eureka; "The appearance of the dew from the womb of the dawn, as representative of the resurrection of the saints, **is the most beautiful of the Scriptural similitudes.**" (End quote - our emphasis) The action of the Sun of Righteousness as he appears in the eastern sky, and the bright glory that is to emanate from him as he breaches the horizon is now reflected in the saints. They were once "dwelling in the dust", but are now aglow with the glory of the Sun who has risen upon them. The reflected glory is seen by Isaiah as the "dew of herbs" (owrah). The use of the feminine form of ovr now becomes readily apparent. The glorious dew makes up the bride of Christ, soon to ascend into a cloud of witness by the action of the Sun upon them. As the apostle Paul writes, "they two shall become one flesh" (Eph 5:31). The bride is adorned in all her full resurrection glory prepared for her husband (Rev. 21:2). O glorious morning! As this day draws and is sure to soon be upon us, let us be found as workmen, immersed in the study of the Word, rightly dividing the word of truth! For it is only through this washing will our minds be prepared and cleansed, *"That he might present it to himself a glorious ecclesia, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."* (Eph. 5:27)

Scott Huie

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