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EDITORIAL

A Plea For Unity

The Lord's church is young in India, being only a few years old. This is not to say that the church did not exist in other parts of the world before this time or that it could not have existed here through the hundreds of years since its original beginning in Jerusalem. (Acts 2). But the fact is that for one reason or another, as far as we know, in modern times, the church has become known and widespread throughout the country only during the past dozen years or so. How long the church will live from this point onward will depend primarily on the faithfulness of the present members and their willingness to take the gospel to their own people, and it will depend also on those others who will read and study their Bible and determine to obey God and to abide by his teachings.

Preachers of the Lord's church have come from Canada, America, Australia, England, and perhaps other countries, to help preach the gospel to the people of India. Most of the work has been done in South India since it seems that the people are more receptive to the gospel there than in other areas of the country. As a result of these efforts hundreds and thousands have been converted, with scores of congregations being established. But herein we have some problems.

With more and more foreign preachers coming and thus spreading out to work in different cities and villages, each one or each group of these has made his own particular contacts and has baptized his hundreds, leaving various ones behind with support to carry on the work. This often times leaves one group in one area working with one or more foreigners and another group in another area working with other foreigners. Because these local brethren may be getting their support from different ones then they may begin to compete with one another, refusing to cooperate and to have any thing to do with each other in spite of the fact that they are brethren and members of the same church. This is not good and therefore we must put forth an effort to rid ourselves of such frictions and divisions.

I am writing about these matters because various foreign brethren have told me that the church in many different places in India is divided into different camps, with some feeling loyal to one foreigner and others feeling loyal to another foreigner. Sometimes the workers of a certain area are said to be Bro. So—and—So's men and workers in another place are said to belong to another Bro. So—and—So. Others have nothing to do with these since they are getting support direct from an individual or a congregation of a foreign country. Brethren in India, I cannot believe that these foreign brethren could or would knowingly encourage such things. Rather, I know that they would and do condemn such petty and unscriptural practices, even as I do and as all Christians do. Such attitudes are not according to God's will. We must therefore wipe out petty differences and loyalties before they destroy the work that we are trying to do.

Different brethren may be coming to help with the work in India and various local brethren may be getting their support from different individuals and congregations, but what we must realize is that we are all brethren, members of the same church, and therefore we should be working together, cooperating with each other, and doing all we can to help one

another in furthering the cause of Christ.

If you are a faithful Christian, a member of the church of Christ, the church that we read about in the Bible, then it doesn't make any difference where you are, what color your skin, whether you are educated or uneducated, whether you get your support from some foreign Christian or congregation, or whether a local congregation supports you or you make your living at some honest profession...regardless, you are my brother and I want to have fellowship with you. You should feel the same about me. Likewise all of the members of the church in India should feel the same way. If we are in the same village, in the same city, in the same State, or separated by hundreds of miles, we should cooperate and work together in every way possible to promote the cause of Christ.

Brethren, when we are divided and refuse to work together this suggests that we have our own self interest at heart. We are therefore limiting ourselves and the Lord himself in what he might be able to do through his people in our area and in India itself. But we are already few in number, and the enemy is all around us, and surely we need all of the help we can get. This is why we must stand as one and work together so that we may accomplish more.

Do you remember the Corinthians? They were the Lord's people too but they divided themselves into different camps, being loyal to various preachers. Listen to what Paul says to them: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloë, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? (I Corinthians 1:10-23). Paul went on to say that he was happy that he had not baptized more of them lest they too claim that he had baptized

them in his own name. In other words, Paul strongly condemned this division that had come in among them. Would he not do so today if he were visiting with us and found us divided up and following the preacher who baptized us or the one who supports us? Does he not condemn such practices in us through the things that he said to the Corinthians? Surely he does.

Again, Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause division and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (Romans 16:17-18). Paul warned the Elders of the church at Ephesus, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:29,30). Christ prayed that we might all be one. He said, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 17:21). We are always condemning division in the religious world, and rightly so, but division can take place among the Lord's people too and this is where more damage is done than any where else. As long as the Lord's people are united then all the forces of the devil cannot destroy them, but once division takes place among God's people then not only are they hurt but this becomes a stumbling-block to the world itself.

As the Lord's people we must love God and we must love one another. The Hebrew writer said, "Let brotherly love continue." (Hebrews 13:1). Peter said, "Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the King." (1 Peter 2:17). Listen now to Paul: "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:32). He goes on to say, "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given

himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." (Ephesians 5:1,2). All of this is to say that we be brethren. There is a tie that binds us together that is stronger than any earthly thing. We are all members of the Lord's family and this should be expressed in our dealings with one another.

Listen, brethren; did we not obey the same gospel? Are we not members of the same church? Do we not all wear the same name, the name of Christ, and are therefore Christians only? Don't we worship the same way? Don't we preach the same truths? Aren't we brethren? If this be true, then let unity exist among us. This is my plea for the church in India. With this unity we can all work together and grow and spread to every part of this country.

Let me remind you that we are not competing with one another. If so then we are opposed to one another and therefore working against each other. When we refuse to cooperate with each other, to help one another with meetings, to share our blessings and responsibilities, or when we fail to pray for one another or refuse to visit each other, or feel better than others, or will not fellowship our own brethren, then we are in error and therefore we need to be corrected. I don't believe we want to be like this and I believe that when we grow more in the Lord a lot of these little petty selfish un-Christian things will disappear from our lives and practices.

Please think about these matters. Pray about them, and let us strive to be the Christians and the church that we claim to be. Only then can God be honored and that will be because we are at last united and working together to do His will. Remember, united we stand but divided we fall.

ASSOCIATE EDITORIAL

DID JESUS LIVE ?

Down through the ages the question is frequently asked, "Who was Jesus?" Was he a mere man? Was he one of the Prophets? Or was he a good teacher? And someone may

even go to the extreme, and ask, Did he actually live? People have always had different opinions about the person of Christ. Once Jesus himself asked the question to his disciples, saying, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:13-16).

No doubt Christ came down upon earth from heaven, and took upon him the form of a man, and in the scriptures he is often called the Son of man. Also Moses, speaking about him, referred to him as a prophet. (Deuteronomy 18:15). And once a man came to Jesus and recognized him as a good teacher. (Matthew 19:16). But above all, he is the Son of God. Jesus is the Son of God, in the sense that he was conceived by a virgin named Mary by the power of God and Holy Spirit, and not by the will of man. If he was a mere good man, or a prophet, or a teacher, then there have been upon the earth many other good men, and prophets, and teachers, and therefore it would make Jesus equal to them, or one of them. But in fact, the whole world has never been so affected by the life of any man or the whole of man put together, as by the perfect life of Jesus Christ. And it is the strongest evidence that Jesus was truly the Son of God as the Bible teaches.

But it would not be appropriate, at all, to ask, Did Jesus ever live? Since all the people and all the governments upon the earth recognize this fact that Jesus lived by counting the time from the birth of Christ. Yes, we all count time in accordance to the birth of Jesus. Today we live in the year 1974 A. D. That means, Jesus was born 1974 years before. A. D. means Anno-Domini, that is, year of our Lord. This also shows that when one writes A. D., whether he believes in Jesus or not, he confesses the fact that Jesus is the Lord! Moreover, all the time before Christ is counted as B. C., meaning before Christ. Thus, it is a remarkable fact

that all the governments all over the world count time according to B. C. and A. D. And therefore, this in itself proves that Christ did Actually live.

Besides this, there are a number of early historians, both Christians and non Christians, who tell of Christ that he, in fact, actually lived. Josephus, one of the historians, who lived in the first century, was born around 37 A. D., and was not a Christian himself, writes in his book "Jewish Antiquities", about a particular time and events and says, "Now there was, about this time, Jesus, a wise man, if it be law-ful to call him a man; for he performed many wonderful works. He was a teacher of such men as received the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many of the Jews and also of the Gentiles. This was the Christ. And when Pilate, at the instigation of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those who had loved him from the first did not cease to adhere to him. For he appeared to them alive the third day, the divine prophets having foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians so named for him subsist to this time."

But a more obvious and strongest of all proofs of the fact that Jesus Christ actually lived, and that he was divine, the Son of God, is when in the powerful testimonies of the early disciples of Jesus Christ, who gladly suffered all persecutions and even gave their lives for their immovable faith in Jesus Christ. It should be pointed out that a friend may tell a lie to protect the claims of his good friend, but to the extent that his own life would be spared. But yet all of these disciples threw away their lives gladly, just because they believed that Jesus was the Son of God. Had Christ been an imposter or a liar, who would have even tried to preserve or protect his claims to their own destruction? But yet all of the Apostles of Christ, except John and even he spent several years in exile before he died, suffered most tragic deaths at different times and places. Here is the account:

1. James, one of the Apostles of Christ, was killed by Herod Agrippa in A. D. 44, because he was telling

about the resurrection of Jesus. Clement Alexandrinus, an early writer, says, James was led to the place of martyrdom, but his accuser was brought to repent of his conduct by the Apostle's extraordinary courage and undauntedness, and fell down at his feet to request his pardon, professing himself a Christian, and resolving that James should not receive the crown of martyrdom alone. Therefore they were both beheaded at the same time.

2. Peter, the Apostle, was imprisoned, and then he was crucified with his head being down and his feet upward. Jerome, another early time historian, says that Peter had requested his executioners so to be hanged, saying he was unworthy to be crucified after the same form and manner as the Lord Jesus was.
3. Paul, the illustrious Apostle of Christ, was beheaded with a sword at Rome. Besides this, we have a thrilling account of the Apostle's frequent suffering for the sake of Christ, before he was put to death, which include imprisonments, beatings, stoning, etc.
4. Matthias was mercilessly stoned, and then beheaded.
5. Simon Zelotes was crucified in Persia, in A. D. 74.
6. Jude (Thaddeus) was either crucified or was shot to death with arrows, in 72 A. D.
7. Thomas, the Apostle came to India in first century A. D., was killed while he was thrust through with a spear, in South India.
8. Andrew, was also crucified.
9. James, the brother of the Lord, was mercilessly beaten and stoned, then finally had his brains dashed out with a fuller's club.
10. Matthew was slain with a sword in Ethiopia, in A. D. 60.
11. Philip was scourged, then thrown into prison, and finally in A. D. 54 was crucified.

12. Bartholomew was cruelly beaten, then was flayed alive, and finally crucified in Armenia.

The Bible in Acts chapter 12 tells us how James (the first one) died. However, secular history provides us information about the fate of the rest of the Apostles.

But the question once again arises, why did they choose to give their lives for preaching and proclaiming Jesus, his death, burial, and resurrection, when they could have easily lived and enjoyed life as simply not preaching Jesus? The only answer that could be cited comes from the hearts of the Apostle Peter and Apostle John, "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20). These men, the Apostles, were sure, and they knew, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, the resurrected Saviour. Their conviction was not empty, vain, or blind. But as John again in 1 John 1:1-4 declares, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you that our joy may be full."

How could they deny him whom they had seen, with whom they had walked and travelled, whom they had seen working great wonders and miracles? How could they deny Jesus whose hands and feet were nailed to the cross before their eyes? They had also seen him dying on the cross. They were also there when he was buried in a tomb (grave) and then a heavy stone was put on the mouth of the tomb and it was sealed. But then on the third day, after this shocking event, they had once again seen him alive! Yes, the same Jesus Christ who had died on the cross and was buried in the tomb before their eyes!

Apostle John, in John chapter 20: 25-29, tells us that after his resurrection Jesus appeared at one place to all of his

disciples, except Thomas, who was not present there at that time. The record says, "The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." John continues to say, "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Dear reader, my friend, Do you believe in Jesus, the Son of God? Are you ready to confess him, as Thomas did saying, My Lord, My God? Jesus says, to you, be not faithless but believing.

Will The Majority Be Saved?

K. Matthew

Many would answer this question very easily, yes. But now I am going to contradict your answer in the spiritual sense. Many people today will say bravely that all the people, those who will not repent and be baptized, will be lost. In this connection I want to draw your attention to the time of Noah.

God saw that the world was full of wickedness. He chose a person, namely Noah, the righteous person, to build an Ark. He (God) gave the plan and measurement and the kind of wood to make the Ark. Noah did accordingly as God had commanded. Meanwhile Noah preached 120 years to the people, to repent and turn to the Ark, to enter into the Ark because

the world was going to be destroyed by the flood (water). The multitudes thought, how could this be possible? The majority did not listen to Noah and his preaching except Noah and his family (His wife, three sons and their wives, 8 souls).

When the appointed day came, the rains started, and the water increased, no doubt the people remembered the preaching of Noah. But they were too late. They all died in the flood. God will not change his will. They called Noah but the door of the Ark was already closed by the Lord. All the disobedient were lost.

The Lord Jesus will core and judge each person according to their deeds. Preaching is foolishness to the present day youngsters. They are shouting and rejoicing in their hearts. They are saying there is no God. They ask, how will the judgment come upon us?

The promise will not fail. It will come on the appointed day. Dear reader, are you saying you are in the majority, so nothing will happened to you?

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of your sins, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be immersed in water for the remission of your sins. (Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38; Matt. 28:19,20). You can be on the right path only through your obedience to the Lord. If you have a question or need any assistance, please let us know.

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9. Follow the above instructions carefully and send your answers to the Quizmaster, P. O. Box 3815, New Delhi 110049.

QUIZ NO. 13:

1. Where are the Ten Commandments found?
2. Quote the Golden Rule and give the reference.
3. Where can you find the Great Commission?
4. In which book and chapter can you find the story of the handwriting on the wall?
5. Find "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine."

ANSWERS TO QUIZ NO. 12:

1. No, no number is mentioned. Matthew 2:1. 2. Bought a piece of ground, bought five yoke of oxen, married a wife, Luke 14:16-21. 3. Peter, Acts 10:9-16. 4. Elisha, 2 Kings 2:15; 3:11. 5. The cities of refuge, Numbers 35:13.

Who Touched Me?

Barbara Oliver

One of the greatest stories of faith in the New Testament is about a woman. It is recorded in Matthew 9:20-22, Mark 5:25-34 and Luke 8:43-48. All we really know about this woman is that she had had a hemorrhage for twelve years. She had gone from one doctor to another trying to find a cure, but no one could cure her. In fact, as the years passed, her condition became worse instead of better. And the scripture says that, "after **hearing** about Jesus, (she) came up in the crowd behind Him, and touched His cloak. For she thought, 'If I just touch His garments, I shall get well, (it should be;)" Mark 5:27-28. How did she know that touching Jesus would heal her? She had not seen Him before; she had only heard about Him. But what she heard produced faith. She **knew** that Christ could heal her. And she believed it strongly enough to act on that knowledge. She reached out and touched Him, and was healed.

"And immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, 'Who touched My garments?'" Mark 5:30 (NASV) what a strange question. He had people all around Him, pushing and jostling for a position close enough to see His miracles. But one person in that crowd had touched Him believing completely in His great power. How terrible that in all that multitude, only one reached out to Him.

We have so many cares and worries today. The washing, the cooking, the housework, the children, the husband; all must be taken care of, and we try to carry the burden alone. The knowledge that we aren't Christians, that we are sinners, or that as Christians we are still so far from Him; the wrong thoughts, the bad attitude toward the neighbors, the unjust words to the husband and children; and still we try to carry the burden of guilt and sin alone. How terrible. How terrible that Christ is so close, and we, like that foolish crowd, don't realize the power of Christ, the opportunities we have to be saved and to have Him share our burdens. We have so many

opportunities to hear about Him and read about His love and concern for us and His plan for our salvation, and the blessings He gives to His children. Do you have the faith to touch Him? Only then can He heal you. Do you have the faith?

Often People Say

By Francis David

Often people say that the Christian religion came to India through Europe or England, but that is not true. The Christian religion did **not** come from Europe or England. The founder of Christianity, in other words, Jesus Christ, was not born in Europe, but in Bethlehem which is in Asia. In India the Christian religion was first preached by an Asian person, whose name was Thomas. So, it is completely wrong that the Christian religion was brought to India through European countries or England. The Christian religion is a special caste for no particular country or people, but for all the world. Jesus Christ says of himself in the Holy Bible, "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12) Jesus Christ sacrificed his life for all the world (John 3:16); so that people could turn from their sins, and could gain eternal life by obeying His commandments (Mark 16:16). Jesus did not say that I am the light of Europe, Asia or England. Today in about all the countries of the world where Christianity has been taken, do the Christians become English? Never, no! One writer in the Bible, the Apostle Paul, says, "No you are neither Jew nor Greek; bond or free; male or female; but you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28).

It is often, even in this country, that when someone leaves Hinduism, Mohammedism, or some other religion to become a Christian, they say that they want to change their name. When some person wants to become a Christian, it is enough for him to have only the name Christian. But people imagine that by only taking an English name they become Christians. This is not so.

Suppose I have a monkey. I give this monkey a very fine suit to wear. With the suit I even give a necktie. When it is

time to eat, he sits on a chair with me to eat the food. And a special thing is that I give him the name Mr. John Snow. Did that make the monkey a Christian? No. Changing the name or having an English name cannot make a Christian. The monkey to whom I gave the name John Snow was not made a Christian. Again, to become a Christian, it is not necessary to change names. I would like to say one important thing here, and that is that in the sight of God and Jesus Christ our earthly names are of no value. God wants us to be true Christians only. Our only name—Christian.

Often people ask us "Are you Christians?" We give the answer, "Yes, sir." But at once they ask us another question. It is this; "Which kind of Christian are you? Catholic, Protestant, or some other." We tell them that we are neither Catholic, nor Protestant. We are Christians only, because in the Bible we read only about the name Christian. (Acts 11:16, 26:28, and I Peter 4:16). Many times people hearing this are surprised. But this is true. Whenever the Bible said that one would be a Christian by obeying the commandments of Jesus Christ and following him, then he would be a Christian only, not Catholic or Protestant.

If in fact, one would like to be a Christian then he must turn to the Holy Bible, study it and take God's help. Often men do not go to God for help, but rather go to men. But what man can say that he can give eternal life? Let's see what God's word (the Bible) says about this. "Do not trust in princes, in mortal men, in whom there is not salvation." (Psalms 146:3) So man must take help from God, or, in other words, we must look in his word and see what it says. To become a Christian, or to be given eternal life, first it is necessary to believe in Jesus Christ (John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6) repent of your sins (Acts 17:30 and 2:38) confess the name of the Lord Jesus (Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32) and be baptized into the name of Jesus Christ. (Mark 16:16).

These are some true things that I wanted to tell you about. If you have any thing you would like to say, or anything you would like to know, please correspond with us today.

Translated by B. Oliver

The Preacher Needs to Know The Old Testament

Jack P. Lewis

A church cut loose from the Old Testament is a tree with its top root cut. God's revelation is a revelation through the means of history; it is not a revelation of timeless truths alone. In the Old Testament the problems are set which are resolved in the New Testament; namely, the fall of man, sin, and redemption. Only in terms of the Old Testament can it be understood what God accomplished in the sending of his son into the world. Were the echoes and allusions to the Old Testament cut out of the New Testament, the blanks would leave the remainder too spotty to read. The New Testament writers assumed that the reader would have sufficient knowledge of the Old Testament to grasp immediately the allusions made to it. Concepts like covenant, messiah, atonement, Son of Man, Son of David, chosen race, pastor, and others, have no clear meaning apart from their Old Testament background. An abundance of lesser concepts also have their roots there.

The moral lessons of the Old Testament are eternal in their value. There one can see clothed in human form the warnings and the precepts elsewhere taught. He meets Cain asking, "Am I my brother's keeper?", Lot pitching his tent toward Sodom, Potipher's wife chasing Joseph, Baalam loving the hire of wrongdoing, David committing adultery with his neighbor's wife, Solomon climbing the ladder of success until his heart is turned from God, and Ahab coveting Naboth's vineyard. But he also meets Abraham leaving his father's house to walk by faith. Moses turning his back on Egypt's riches, Elijah defying Jezebel, Micaiah ben Imlah choosing bread and water as fare in preference to reward for flattering the king, and Daniel's refusing the king's dainties. The man who does not regularly draw from the riches of the Old Testament has impoverished his preaching. How much richer are the treasures here to be found than are the platitudes of psychology and sociology! Let us not forsake the fountain of living

waters and turn to broken cisterns that can hold no water (cf. Jer. 2:13).

In the Old Testament one sees how God in order to save the world chose one family, nurtured, protected, and favored it in order that he might finally save those of faith of the entire human race. The Stoics thought of history moving in circles; Shakespeare speaks of life as being a stage full of sound and fury, but meaning nothing; but history in the Old Testament has meaning. God is working out a plan. The world is moving steadily and inevitably to a goal—its destiny with God.

The outpouring of the religious impulse revealed in the Psalms is priceless. Here in lyric poetry is laid bare the longings of the soul. Man has never more forcefully stated the torment or the guilty conscience and the relief brought by genuine repentance than is done in Psalms 51 and 32; awareness of the brevity of life than in Psalm 110; and the beauty of harmony than in Psalm 133. The mold broke when the Psalmist expressed trust in God in the words of Psalm 23. None has even been able to express it that way again. As long as men wander like sheep and find in God their shepherd it will have an appeal. Compared with these and other Old Testament treasures rock poetry and music are poor indeed! Long after they have been forgotten as passing human curiosities, men who put forth the effort to know them will still be thrilling to the themes of the Psalms.

The Hebrew prophets when persistently studied contain rich veins of ore out of which the diligent preacher can mine gold week after week, year after year. Where in all literature could you surpass the convicting power of Nathan's story of the one lamb; Isaiah's song of the vineyard, or Jeremiah's story of the potter re-making the broken clay into another vessel? Who has surpassed Amos' description of opportunity and responsibility (Amos 3:1); Micah's summary of the essence of God's demands (Micah 6:8); Hosea's picture of the love of God (Hosea 11:1ff); Zephaniah's picture of the Day of the Lord (Zeph. 1:14ff); or Habakkuk's statement of unconditional faith (Hab. 3:17)? The prophets do not yield gold easily. It takes diligent digging, but the

reward is high. I have listened to men try to preach who took their themes from children's books or from current magazines. My heart saddened for it seemed to me that they had traded their birthright for a mess of pottage.

Like in the study of all literature, the richest treasures are to be reaped by those who study the Old Testament in its original languages. Words in one language are not one hundred per cent equivalents of words in another language. Shifts in meaning do take place. We have the unique situation that the Old Testament is available in Hebrew and Aramaic, in Greek, in Latin, and in English. Each of these stages has exercised an influence on the current English Bible. Each has contributed significantly to the developing vocabulary which is now used. A knowledge of each of them would be helpful to the Bible student. He needs to go behind the contaminations of accumulated tradition to the pure springs of the truth. Who but the linguist can appreciate the puns on Hebrew words with which the prophets expressed themselves? How often have you heard it said that Samuel means "he was asked of the Lord?" Actually the point Hannah is making is not that she asked. The point is that she asked and God heard. Even the elementary linguist knows that Samuel is from the verb "to hear." The linguist can see at a glance that Shibboleth and Sibboleth are merely small variations in the Hebrew alphabet. Who but the linguist can see that Daniel likely turned the nouns written on the wall into corresponding verbs to give the interpretation of the writing to the king? Who but he can get through the problem of pronunciation of the Old Testament names?

Many words have several possible meanings and English translations, especially the KJV, use synonyms where no difference in meaning is really intended. One Hebrew word may be rendered by a multitude of English words. Other than by his dependence upon his favorite expert, how is the non-linguist to know with which possible concept he is to operate?

A popular concept in the study of Old Testament theology is that of recital. The Old Testament is not merely the narration of stories or the narration of ancient history. Its narratives are a recital or a confession of faith. Perhaps we meet this concept in action in the frequent Old Testament introduction, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." I believe in the God who created man, brought the flood, chose Israel and gave her the land of Palestine. I believe in the God who raised David to the throne, took Israel to Babylon, and then in a unique act restored her to her land. He is the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the God I serve.

Continuing Christian Education

(Bible Correspondence Extension Courses for Home Study)

Beginning with this issue we will be running a special series of Bible Courses in the Bible Teacher. The lessons will be for all—the Christian and the Non-Christian. There will be no diploma or certificate issued since the lessons are being offered solely for the benefit of our reading audience who want either to learn about Christianity or as a Christian to grow and develop in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. Please read and study the material carefully, along with your Bible, and then take a separate piece of paper and write the answers to the questions and mail them to The Bible Teacher for grading. Your graded lessons will then be returned to you so you may know how you are progressing in your studies. So if you really want to study the Bible so that you may know God's will for you then here is your opportunity.

What is Your Concept of God ?

Most people here in India believe in God or a supreme divine being. The question arises, however, as to who He is. To the majority he takes many forms. He is the god of destruction, the god of life, the god or goddess of love, and on and on the list goes according to man's needs and his fears. There are hundreds and thousands and perhaps millions of these gods and goddesses and deities. One merely chooses the one that he wants to worship, and to him that one becomes god.

Because this is the predominate belief, and inasmuch as this teaching and philosophy has been handed down from generation to generation, then to the untaught believer in Christ, this may still be his concept of God. Such people picture God as being one who rewards them physically when they please Him, but they fear that He may strike down from heaven to physically punish them when He is displeased with them. For example, if a child in the family dies they may take this to mean that God is punishing them for some failure. If there is a cyclone, a famine, an accident, or some other type of loss,

they feel that this may be the result of God's anger being poured out on them. Therefore, they reason that if God's anger is to be turned from them they must somehow atone for their deeds. This attitude grows out of ignorance, fear, and superstition, out of following the traditions and customs that have been handed down, and from the influence of other religious practices and philosophies upon their lives.

What is your concept of God? That is, how do you picture God? Is He one or many? Is He made up of many gods and goddesses? What do you believe about Him? How much do you believe in Him? How does He deal with you? How do you deal with Him?

The Bible tells us over and over that there is but one God. (Galatians 3:20; Ephesians 4:6). He is a spirit (John 4:24), living (1 Thessalonians 1:9), everlasting (Romans 16:26), and Holy. (Psalms 99:9). He is mighty (Isaiah 9:6) merciful (Psalms 116:5), and loving. (1 John 4:8). There is no end to the traits of perfection that we could list of him. The Bible describes him as a Spirit, person, who works and who deals with man. It is therefore possible to know him, to obey him, and to be rewarded by him.

God is the creator of all things. (Genesis 1:1). The Bible tells us how he dealt with his creation from the beginning and of his dealing with man down through the ages. It tells us how he deals with us today, how He speaks to us, what He expects of us, and how we will finally stand before him in the day of judgment.

Paul wrote to the Romans, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them: for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to

be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen." (Romans 1:19-25). Please note that it was possible for them to know God even by the things that they saw around them. That is, they could know that there was a Creator by seeing that which He had created. But they turned away from God and began to worship that which had been created rather than to worship the one who had created it. This displeased God very much.

God has said that man should have no other gods before Him. (Exodus 20:3). In Exodus 20:4,5 He forbids man to make any graven image of anything in heaven or on earth and to bow down to it. We do not know what God looks like and therefore we cannot picture him or make a resemblance of Him. He likewise knows that if we should make an image of some kind to represent Him then that would become our god and He Himself would be rejected. He is jealous over us with a godly jealousy and wants us to worship Him only.

In Acts 17:22-31 we have this record: "Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, & beheld your devotions, I found an alter with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face to the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us : for in him we

live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; where of he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

Among mankind in general, God does not send blessings and punishment directly on any man, woman, or child today because of his goodness or as a result of his evil deeds. One may suffer in various ways, and even as a result of his sins, but not necessarily because God sees the individual doing wrong & sends intentional suffering upon him. Likewise, because of one's good moral living, being kind, honest, hard working, etc., one may receive benefits, and this because of following the principles of God's teachings, but not that God directly rewards such people with his blessings. Among His children, those who have obeyed Him and have become a part of his family, God deals with them as a Father.

God does not want men to serve Him merely out of ignorance and fear, but He wants us to know Him, to come to believe in Him, and based on this to obey His will. We may know him through a study of the Bible, and we may know his will for man today especially through a study of the New Testament. There we will see his love, grace, and mercy in giving Christ to die for us that we might be saved. We may learn of the church, how to worship God, and how to live for Him. We may also learn what he has in store for us if we are faithful to him, but of the punishment that awaits those who fail to believe in him and to obey him. Read and learn. Study and believe. Obey God. God has spoken through his Son Jesus and his message for man has been recorded in the Bible so that we might be saved eternally.

What is your concept of God ? Do you believe in the true

and living God ? This can make all the difference in the kind of life here and where you spend eternity.

Questions For Study

1. Do most people believe in God ?
2. How do the majority look on God ?
3. Has the Hindu concept of God influenced the Christians belief ?
4. In what ways do some people picture God's dealing with them ?
5. What is responsible for these beliefs ?
6. What does the Bible tell us about God ? How many gods are there ? Who is He ? What are some of His characteristics ?
7. Why did God give the Romans up ?
8. Does God allow man to make graven images to represent Him ? If not, why not ?
9. Why is God jealous ?
10. What did Paul find at Mars Hill ? What did He say about idolatrous worship ? To whom did He point them ?
11. Does God send blessings and punishment directly upon man ?
12. How does God deal with man today ?
13. Is it possible to know God ? How ?
14. Can we obey God and serve him today ?
15. How will God finally deal with each one of us ?
16. What is your concept of God ?

Bible Questions And Bible Answers

The set of questions for this study comes from a friend in Eluru, A. P.

QUESTION : Is Adam the father of all mankind ?

The Genesis account of creation proclaims that Adam was the first man created by God. So all men must be his descendants. But in the subsequent genealogies mentioned in Genesis, only the "Israelites" or "Jews" can be traced to Adam.

Besides in Genesis and Exodus several races are mentioned

who are the native dwellers of the lands through which the Jews had to travel.

So it appears that Adam is only the Father of Jews and not of all mankind.

ANSWER: Yes, Adam is the father of all mankind. Out of him came not only the Jews but the many other races as well. It might be that a particular genealogy mentioned in the Bible would have to do with the Jews, but regardless of which race or people one might be tracing, their genealogy would eventually have to return to Adam. Before him there were no other human beings and neither at his creation were others created.

QUESTION: Is polygamy justified?

The Jews in the Old Testament were polygamous, that is, Abraham, Jacob, etc.

Muslims and Jews are racially very near. (cousins?) It is often put forward that this polygamy was because the women outnumbered men in those days, as men were often lost in the fighting of battles. So morality is the result of many social factors.

If so we can justify the Sodomites and Lot's daughters also. The former could be due to a greater male, female ratio. Even in the gospels polygamy was not attacked. So can a Christian be polygamous if he can afford it?

ANSWER: No, polygamy is not permissible today. It is true that before Christianity God overlooked some things but now requires all to repent and turn away from all such things. (Acts 17:30).

Jesus said, "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery (Matthew 5: 31, 32). Again, we read concerning Jesus, "The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not

read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female. And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put assunder. They say unto him, why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away this wife, except, it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. (Matthew 19:3-9).

Paul wrote, "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man." (Romans 7:1-3).

A state of polygamy exists when a man takes more than one living wife. This was done before Christ, and the Muslims continue to do it, since they follow the Old Testament law as well as the example and teachings of Mohammed, but Christ forbids such a practice. God intends for one man to have one wife. If a man, for instance, takes a second and third wife, and so on, then he becomes guilty of adultery. War or any other excuse would not and could not justify polygamy.

To be continue in the next issue.

Who Will Go ?

Who will go to Srinagar, Kashmir ? Most people know of Srinagar as being a place to go to get away from the heat of the summer. It is therefore a tourist paradise. It is also famous for its handicrafts. As to religion, most of the people are Muslims.

Kashmir itself is a land of mountains, valleys, and streams. It is a land of timber, fruit, and friendly people. In the winter it is very cold but during the summer months it has ideal weather. Srinagar, the capital of Jammu and Kashmir, is a thriving city of lakes, parks, and tourists.

Over the past few years we have had some Bible Correspondence students in Srinagar, Jammu, and various parts of Kashmir. As far as we know, however, none of them have obeyed the Lord and therefore the church is yet to be established there. If someone would go and contact these students, study with them, and settle down to work with them, no doubt the church of our Lord could be established.

We know of denominational people who have gone to Srinagar, and other places, to preach their beliefs. Why can't some member of the church go to preach the pure gospel of Christ ?

Where Have You Gone ?

As a Christian, have you gone to any particular place to work for the Lord ? Have you gone into some village, city, area, or State to begin the church for the first time ? If so, we would appreciate it if you would write us about it so we might share the information with our readers. Perhaps this would inspire others to go.

When you write, tell us when you went, where you went, how you were supported, and what you were able to do.

बंटी हुई मसीहीयत

लेखक—एफ० डेविड

हमारा भारत देश बहुत बड़ा देश है। क्षेत्रफल में भी यह बहुत बड़ा है। कुछ वर्ष पहले, क्षेत्रफल में यह और भी बड़ा तथा विस्तृत था। जब इसमें बर्मा तथा पाकिस्तान शामिल थे। आप अन्दाजा लगा सकते हैं कि यदि भारत के टुकड़े न होते तो यह और भी कितना बड़ा होता ! हमारे देश के बंटवारे में बहुत से भारतीय लोगों का भी हाथ था। क्या ही अच्छा होता यदि हमारे देश का बंटवारा न होता। परन्तु क्या कभी आपने सोचा है कि मसीहीयत का भी बहुत से लोगों ने बंटवारा कर दिया है।

जब प्रभु यीशु मसीह अपने जी उठने के पश्चात् इस संसार से वापस स्वर्ग में अपने पिता के पास चला गया उसके पश्चात् पिनतेकुस्त के दिन मसीहीयत की नींव पड़ी (प्रेरितों २ अध्याय)। जिस प्रकार से यीशु मसीह ने कहा था कि वह अपनी कलीसिया बनाएगा अतः पिनतेकुस्त के दिन उसकी कलीसिया की स्थापना हुई तथा उसी दिन पतरस तथा अन्य चेलों के प्रचार द्वारा लगभग ३००० लोग प्रभु यीशु की कलीसिया में मिलाए गए। कलीसिया (चर्च) को क्योंकि यीशु मसीह ने बनाया अतः ये उसका नाम अपने ऊपर रखती है अर्थात् यीशु मसीह की कलीसिया। आरम्भ में मसीही लोग केवल 'मसीही' नाम से ही जाने जाते थे। वे केवल 'मसीही' थे। परन्तु बड़े दुख की बात है कि कुछ समय पश्चात् मसीहीयों में से ही कुछ ऐसे सदस्य उठ खड़े हुए, जिन्होंने मसीहीयत का बंटवारा कर दिया। आज सारे संसार में बंटी हुई मसीहीयत हम देख सकते हैं।

बाइबल के एक लेखक प्रेरित पौलुस ने पहले से ही यह बात लोगों को बता दी थी कि "मेरे जाने के बाद फाड़नेवाले भेड़िए तुम में आएंगे जो भ्रुण्ड को न छोड़ेंगे। तुम्हारे ही बीच में से भी ऐसे-ऐसे मनुष्य उठेंगे जो चेलों को अपने पीछे खींच लेने को टेढ़ी-मेढ़ी बातें कहेंगे" (प्रेरितों २०:२९-३०)। किस प्रकार की टेढ़ी-मेढ़ी बातें? हम अनेक प्रकार की ऐसी टेढ़ी-मेढ़ी बातें देख सकते हैं। जैसे परमेश्वर के अनुसार केवल बाइबल ही हमारा धर्मसार होना चाहिए परन्तु बहुत से मनुष्यों ने अपने-अपने धर्मसार (क्रीड) बना रखे हैं तथा दूसरों को भी उसका अनुकरण करने को कहते हैं। बाइबल के अनुसार केवल एक कलीसिया, एक विश्वास, एक अंगीकार, एक बपतिस्मा होना चाहिए परन्तु टेढ़ी-मेढ़ी बातें करनेवालों के अनुसार, अनेक कलीसियाएं, विश्वास, अंगीकार तथा अनेक बपतिस्म होने चाहिए। और भी ऐसी बहुत सी टेढ़ी-मेढ़ी बातें आज हम धार्मिक संसार में देख सकते हैं। बहुत से लोग

आज भी हैं जो टेढ़ी-मेढ़ी बातें करके लोगों को बहकाते हैं। जितनी भी टेढ़ी-मेढ़ी बातें हैं वे परमेश्वर के वचन के विरुद्ध हैं।

कुरिन्थुस की कलीसिया में जब फूट पड़ गई थी तो पौलुस ने वहां की कलीसिया के सदस्यों को लिखा 'हे भाईयो, मैं तुम से यीशु मसीह जो हमारा प्रभु है उसके नाम के द्वारा बिनती करता हूँ कि तुम सब एक ही बात कहो; और तुम में फूट न हो, परन्तु एक ही मन और एक ही मत होकर मिले रहो। मेरा यह कहना है कि तुम में से कोई तो अपने आप को पौलुस का कोई अपुल्लोस का कोई कैफ़ा का, कोई मसीह का कहता है। क्या मसीह बंट गया? क्या पौलुस तुम्हारे लिए क्रूस पर चढ़ाया गया? या तुम्हें पौलुस के नाम पर बपतिस्मा मिला? (१ कुरिन्थियों १:१०, १२, १३)। आज मसीही धर्म में फूट है। मसीहीयत बुरी तरह से बंटी हुई है। आज मनुष्य ने बाइबल को त्याग दिया है। इस फूट की विशेष जड़ मनुष्य के धर्मसार हैं। आज सब एक मन और एक मत होकर नहीं मिले हुए हैं। कोई अपने को जॉन वेज़ली का, कोई जॉन स्मिथ का, कोई जोज़फ़ स्मिथ का, कोई जॉन कैलविन का कहता है अर्थात् मैथोडिस्ट, बैपटिस्ट, मोरमन, प्रिस्बिटीरियन जैसे सम्प्रदायों का। आज मैं इन सम्प्रदायों के सदस्यों से पूछना चाहूंगा कि क्या मसीह बंट गया? क्या जॉन वेज़ली आपके लिए क्रूस पर चढ़ाया गया? यदि नहीं तो आप क्यों ऐसे नाम अपने ऊपर रखते हैं जो मनुष्यों के द्वारा दिये गए हैं। यदि आप यह विश्वास करते हैं कि प्रभु यीशु आपके लिए क्रूस पर चढ़ाया गया तो क्यों नहीं उसका दिया हुआ नाम 'मसीही' नाम अपने ऊपर रखते? क्यों नहीं उसके द्वारा बनाई हुई कलीसिया के सदस्य बनते? यदि सब लोग, मनुष्यों के धर्मसार तथा नामों को त्याग कर केवल प्रभु यीशु की कलीसिया के सदस्य हों तो कितना ही अच्छा हो।

क्या ही अच्छा होता यदि आज संसार में मसीही लोग एक होते। एक नाम को अपने ऊपर रखते तथा एक ही कलीसिया के सदस्य होते। प्रभु यीशु ने अपने चेलों की एकता के लिए प्रार्थना की, "मैं केवल इन्हीं के लिए बिनती नहीं करता, परन्तु उनके लिए भी जो इनके वचन के द्वारा मुझ पर विश्वास करेंगे कि वे सब एक हों। जैसा तू हे पिता मुझ में है और मैं तुझ में हूँ वैसे ही वे भी हम में हो इसलिए कि जगत प्रतीति करे कि तू ही ने मुझे भेजा है। और वह महिमा जो तू ने मुझे दी, मैंने उन्हें दी है कि वे वैसे ही एक हों, जैसे कि हम एक हैं। मैं उन में और तू मुझ में कि वे सिद्ध होकर एक हो जाएं और जगत जाने कि तू ही ने मुझे भेजा है। (यूहन्ना १७:२०-२३)। क्या प्रभु यीशु ने किसी असम्भव कार्य के लिए प्रार्थना की? नहीं, उसने एक ऐसे कार्य के लिए प्रार्थना की जो सम्भव है। बशर्ते कि हम मनुष्यों के नामों व धर्मसारों को त्याग कर, बाइबल का अनुकरण करें।

प्यारे मित्रो मेरा आप सब से निवेदन है कि आप मनुष्यों के धर्मसारों, भिन्न-भिन्न नामों व संगठनों को त्यागकर पूर्ण रूप से बाइबल की ओर फिरें। यदि हम एक होना चाहते हैं तो हमें एकता के सूत्र में बंधना होगा।

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