

# *new covenant* Voice

God shall choose my  
Inheritance for me:  
let Him appoint me my  
lot, and I will acquiesce  
in the appointment.  
He knows what is good  
for me, better than I  
do myself, and therefore  
I will have no will of  
my own but what is  
resolved into His.

Matthew Henry

**But ye are come unto mount  
Sion, and unto the city of the  
living God, the heavenly  
Jerusalem, and to an  
innumerable company of angels,  
To the general assembly and  
church of the firstborn, which are  
written in heaven, and to GOD  
the Judge of all, and to the  
spirits of just men made perfect.  
And to JESUS the mediator of the  
new covenant, and to the blood  
of sprinkling, that speaketh  
better things than that of Abel.  
See that ye refuse not him that  
speaketh.**

**HEBREWS 12:22-25**

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Dear Friends,

I would like to acknowledge my appreciation for the support and encouragement of many to publish this series of New Covenant Voice magazines.

My thanks especially to the contributors who are, with the exception of Ron Bailey, the current main speakers at the Annual Summer Fellowship Conference. As well as original material, some contributions are from a previous publication, 'Voice of Faith', and I would like to express my thanks to Mr Cecil Cousens for his kind permission to re-edit and update these articles.

Some of the publications are re-edited tapes of previous messages that have been given in various Church gatherings over the years. It is envisaged that the purpose of the magazine in the future will be to present such a mixture of past and present ministry. We also hope to be able to reproduce some of these articles in different languages in pamphlet and leaflet form. We will continue to inform from time to time when these are available.

Finally, in commending this presentation of the revelation of New Covenant Truth to you, I would like to offer my personal thanks to the printing team at the Warrington Fellowship, for their work in preparing this magazine.

Pastor John Norris / Editor

# THE KINGDOM WITHIN YOUR GRASP

GEORGE W. NORTH

TO READ THE OPENING CHAPTERS of the Bible is to be convinced of three things: The good heart of God intended this earth to be an ante-chamber of heaven, the devil intended to make it the ante-chamber of hell and man joined forces with satan and assisted him to accomplish it.

The result is that throughout the whole of scripture, and this post-scripture period, we witness the amazing conflict between the good and the evil that co-exists in this mysterious world. In His inscrutable will, God is satisfied to let both grow together till the harvest; thus it is to this day, and shall be to the end.

Yet there can be no doubt of God's intention: by provision, command, promise and plainest statement, He insists that earth should become heaven. Under God's direction and despite Adam's failure, Moses says that the lives of the children of Israel in the promised land were to be 'As the days of heaven on earth' (Deut. 11:21). This heavenly state was probably most nearly achieved during the reign of Solomon, but God's plainly stated conditions for such a heavenly existence were consistently being broken, and the nation found itself in division, dispersion and captivity, far removed from their earthly heaven, removed in fact into an earthly hell.

## Foretaste of Heaven or ...

God's original intention nevertheless remained unaltered and despite His heartbreak, He made many prophecies of restoration to blessing and glory. Even the heathen Nebuchadnezzar caught a glimpse of the truth that this earth ought to be a foretaste of heaven, not the forecourt of hell, yet at present, with all the light vouchsafed us since then, this truth is largely unknown. Men do not know of the kingdom of heaven, instead sin with its attendant train of evil and tragedy, foraging devils forever seeking their master's will, everything fallen and spoiled, the earth ripe for judgement - fills the scene.

But there is a voice that has never ceased to announce that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. It broke through as 'A voice crying in the wilderness ... repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'. Men turned to that voice; it re-echoed the voice of Moses and the prophets; it conjured up visions of the desert blossoming as the rose; it brought near the promises of God and articulated the longings of the heart of man. John was a true prophet; this was what men wanted - heaven on earth. They listened.

Hard on his heels came the King of heaven and in an amazing way lived literally in heaven on earth ... 'He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven' (John 3:13). Finding no stumbling block where men lay fallen all around Him, Jesus took up the prophet's true cry, 'the kingdom of heaven is at hand'. Where John did no miracle, He proceeded to demonstrate exactly what He meant by performing frequent miracles and breaking satan's grip over the bodies, minds and spirits of many thousands in His country.

## ... Forecourt of Hell?

A new era dawned in the cities and towns and hamlets and houses of the land. The kingdom of heaven indeed was at hand. Just one word from the Galilean's lips drove disease from the body, devils from the soul, tortures from the mind, and grief from the heart. The touch of His hand was heaven's balm, the sound of His voice was as the rising springs of eternal rivers, flowing from the heart of God. Freedom, fragrance, fertility sprang to birth in His steps.

Only the prejudiced and the twice-dead insisted on remaining in their hell. The rest stepped right into this heaven. 'The kingdom of God is come upon you', He said, but His opponents could see no-one but their own lord, Beelzebub. They were in hell, He was in heaven. It is the same to this very day: 'As a man thinketh in his heart so is he'.

The astonishing truth is that here and now, upon this earth, men and women may enjoy the heavenly state. Spiritually, mentally and physically, though perhaps not equally in each realm of human being, men may live heavenly lives.

Himself forever the example of all He taught, whether by word or deed, the Lord unfolded the truth and revealed the way to live in heaven while on earth. With this in mind and with an eye on the future He selected twelve men. One day He took these men into a ship, instructed them to sail for the other shore, and promptly went to sleep, leaving them to face the gathering storm. How long those brave men struggled against the elements without, and the terror within, we do not know. What we do know is that the storm that raged in Galilee that day struck that little ship as though all the fiends in hell had been let loose upon it. The nucleus of the kingdom of heaven on earth was almost floundering before it was properly launched. The devil's intention was that Galilee which saw its rise should see its fall.

What miracle kept the water-logged ship afloat or prevented its timbers being torn apart, those distracted men could not imagine. Jesus slept on, serene and peaceful, untroubled by anything.

Peter had left all to follow the Master; he had seen his mother-in-law enter into the kingdom of physical healing, he had rejoiced with the crowds rapturously singing the praises of the King. But that day, Peter's heaven was drowned in stark terror. This was no day of heaven on earth; where was the kingdom now?

### King of Heaven...

At hand. Heaven on earth, and in such a hell - it was in the heart of Jesus. The storm which struck such terror into the hearts of His disciples did not even affect Him. Their hearts corresponded exactly to earthly elements. His responded to the heavenly. He reposed as calmly as He intended His sleep to convey. In heart and belief they were at the bottom of the sea, responding exactly to the devil's intentions. They confessedly perished; He lived.

What a hell on earth. But watch Him in the midst of this hell. With a word He created a heaven out of that hell: 'Peace be still'. Immediately the King's heart asserted its tranquil joy over earth, sea and sky. In power more frightening to them than demon-driven nature at its worst, they were ushered into a great calm.

So this is it; heaven on earth. Their relief was intense. But hear Him now, 'Where is YOUR faith? How is it you have no FAITH?' Is heaven on earth to be entered by faith? He created it for them that day out from His own heart by faith. This kingdom of heaven is a faith kingdom and is at hand.

Jesus chose to work out the pattern of His kingdom in the lives of these men and placed on record that it is for all men for all time. It is to be doubted if they fully entered into the kingdom of heaven before Pentecost when they entered into the kingdom of God. To bask outwardly in the gracious manifestation of His love and power is to enter only into the coastlands of the kingdom; these are but royal roads into the hinterland. The power of God is but to lead us to the God of power. They said 'What manner of man is this?' They worshipped Him, but as yet, only afar off.

'The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, the violent take it by force', He said, but they had taken nothing, He suddenly brought it upon them. The tragedy is that they had nothing wherewith to take it. These men, wondering, amazed, worshipful, beneficiaries of His power though they were, even after the resurrection were reproved by their Lord for their unbelief. Gathered in an upper room, they 'yet believed not for joy', even though their eyes beheld the risen Lord. They had not yet entered the kingdom of God. The kingdom of heaven and of God in all its vast superiority of power, reaching down to and

extending beyond death and the grave, is still at hand. We must beware lest jubilation at the realisation of the facts becomes a substitute for faith, as the method of entering into or taking the kingdom.

### ... At home on earth.

The story of the healing of the palsied man is recorded to show us the kind of violence that is needed. That little band of men were utterly determined, they broke through everything, they had one purpose only, to bring the sick man to the Lord. Allowing no objections, countenancing no excuses; regarding no man's authority; bowing to no-one's opinions; sparing no effort and admitting no defeat; they achieved their purpose. The power of the Lord was present to heal them all, but only the palsied man arose, took up his bed and walked. The others were left sitting by. Violence was the only way. What was damaged in the process was not their concern, the kingdom of heaven was at hand and they intended to take it in both hands whilst the opportunity was theirs. That day consequently, was transformed into heaven on earth for them - especially for their sick friend. Imagine how he felt. Heavenly. As free from sickness as he was from the burden of guilt he walked out and home a new man; liberated from sin's dominion over his soul, and from the devil's grip on his body. Everything - the whole world - was changed.

... And he was but one of the thousands that came pressing in. Publicans, harlots, blind, maimed, halt, devil-possessed, mentally afflicted, lepers, outcasts, poor needy souls all, be-stirred themselves to activity; exerting God-given powers of choice and will, they discovered within themselves that necessary force of character required to take the kingdom of heaven.

We call it faith. He called it force. Wisdom and prudence can be a veritable hell if held as contrasted with such peace and joy those 'babes' knew. To sit in our market places in the fellowship of unbelief, piping or mourning our moods and ideas and theories one to another, seeking unsuccessfully to alleviate the pain of life whilst the kingdom of heaven is at hand for the taking, is childishness. We, too, even though we come down through the roof must get there.

Ensuring this glorious kingdom to succeeding generations ('Who shall declare His generation?' Is He not our contemporary?). The King gave the keys of this kingdom to one of His disciples following Pentecost and He used them whenever they were needed. God opened the kingdom of heaven to all mankind ... 'Till the end come' when He shall make new heavens and a new earth, the Lord wills that this gospel of the kingdom should be preached. Men and women ought to be given the opportunity to know the bliss of heaven on earth.

Let our Lord's sweet hand, square us and hammer us, and strike off the knots of pride, that He may make us stones and pillars in His Father's House. Samuel Rutherford.

## Forget your...

Paul, following later, says that whilst living this eternal life of heaven on earth in prison, he was the prisoner of Jesus Christ and was seated in heavenly places with Christ. We must dismiss from our minds the persistent notion, so destructive to the full enjoyment of the truth, that heaven and earth must only be thought of in terms of geographical relationship, mostly to be considered in connection with physical death. God has fully demonstrated the kingdom of heaven on earth. He exhorts us to 'take it', 'possess the kingdom', 'sit down' in it, become a child of it. Nothing could be plainer or more positive.

To the heathen at Athens, Paul declared that they were living, moving and having their being in God. But they were idolatrous heathen: how could that be so? John says the 'whole world lieth (asleep) in the wicked one'. That surely is right; it is so plain to be seen. Which do you see? Heaven or hell? Whose kingdom? God's or Satan's? Which one are you in?

'The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ ... should shine into them'. That is the truth. With minds blinded, hearts broken, souls burdened, bodies diseased and spirits be-devilled, mankind seeks imitation kingdoms of heaven in all

kinds of fiction; finding nothing so permanent as the kingdom of hell from which it vainly tries to escape.

## ... Geography!

We all should feel after and find the Lord who is not far from every one of us. God is not away in some distant heaven nor is the kingdom of heaven removed from this earth. Heaven is but His throne; not the place where He remotely lives, but where He sits; and this earth is His footstool. Obviously the two, though so different and opposite to each other, are so near to everyone and should be considered together. Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is a mystery, but it is given to us to understand it.

Only unbelief can keep men and women prisoners in an alien hell. The smoke from the bottomless pit be-fogs hearts and minds, but this gospel of the kingdom is powerful to the dispelling of the devil's lies and hell's fogs. All sin is crowned and covered by unbelief. Where unbelief and faith meet, run the frontiers of two kingdoms - maybe in your heart.

It is high time we all believed God, cast off the works of darkness, repented of every degree of unbelief, and came unto Jesus for all our present need. His power is to heal and to save and to bless; He cares that we perish and though we may not have the power to change the world around we can call upon Him who is able. By faith, the kingdom from being at hand, can be in our hearts today.

# WHAT A PRICE!

## EDGAR PARKYNS

### Prologue

'HE EXPOUNDED UNTO THEM IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES THE THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF'.

Did He open to their eager hearts, as they walked the Emmaus Road, the prophecy concerning the thirty pieces of silver, as recorded in Zechariah chapter eleven?

It seems that this was an enacted prophecy. Verse thirteen shows that the action of the prophet was involved. Like Ezekiel with the razor, Zechariah with his flock of sheep demonstrated the prophetic burden. Visual aids were used long ago!

THE PROPHET with a flock of sheep! The variegated crowd in the market place watched with interest. They loved the visionary Zechariah more, perhaps than the practical Haggai. These two happy prophets of the Restoration were counterpart and complement to Zerubbabel and Jeshua. These ministered life, those administered leadership. It was a new day. The temple was being rebuilt. Soon, it was said, Messiah would suddenly come to His temple; Judah and Israel would be re-united; the cursed Samaritans and Edomites would be overthrown; the wolf would lie down with the lamb.

The onlookers speculated as to the meaning of the silent performance. The shepherd-prophet stood for Jehovah, and the sheep, of course, meant Israel, the wise ones said - 'Even you, O poor of the flock', commented the prophet.

But what were the two staves? They crowded round the speaker to read the inscribed names. He was tending the flock with the staff called Beauty, or Graciousness (Grace R.S.V.), but the staff called Union was at rest, bound to his back, maybe, by his own girdle. The former may not have meant much to them, but the latter was an unmistakable symbol ... These pioneer Jews, recently returned from Babylon, were politically-minded. Discouraged at times by the smallness of their numbers and the aggravations of usurping Samaritans, they longed intensely for the return of all the tribes, and national resurgence. Union! They prayed for it daily. The twelve-fold offerings at the altar emphasized their hope. They followed the prophet eagerly as he led his flock daily through the market place, waiting for a word of revelation.

The prophet, having dismissed three shepherds, had undertaken the care of the flock, but the sheep soon began to show some resentment. Their soul loathed him; his soul was straightened in them; the staff of Graciousness could not fulfil its task. The sympathies of the crowd were with the flock; the enacted prophecy was taking shape. It was clear that Union, the national hope, was the hope of the sheep. When would the prophet lay aside the ineffective staff of Graciousness, and use instead the second staff of Union?

He stood in the market place, the staff called Beauty or Graciousness gripped in both hands. The sheep were scattering into the bazaars and byways.

'That that dieth, let it die', he cried, 'and let the rest eat everyone the flesh of another!'

And he took his staff, even Beauty, and broke it across his knee with a sudden gesture ... 'That I might break My covenant which I have made with all the people'. So the poor of the flock certainly knew it was the word of the Lord.

The crowd was waiting for him to use the second staff, and so re-gather the flock, but he paused, like a professional story-teller, to take a collection! Aware that they were taking part in a prophecy dear to their own hearts, the people responded. The money was weighed; it amounted to thirty pieces of silver. The voice of the Lord, like the sound of many waters, broke upon him with overwhelming authority, surging through him, sounding in his bowels like a harp, finding utterance through trembling lips: 'Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was priced at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord'.

The crowd followed him to the sacred courts and saw the money flung to the temple potter in his workshop under the shadow of the unfinished building. The prophet, on the steps, turned to face the crowd. There was a sigh of anticipation as he took the second staff, Union. The re-gathering of the scattered nations seemed about to be enacted before their eyes. With a sudden movement, however, he broke it, and left

them, to seek for the instruments of a foolish shepherd. They gazed, disconsolate, at the discarded, broken rod.

Peter explains that the prophets did not always understand their own burden, but enquired and searched diligently, when they prophesied of the grace that should come, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when He testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

Zechariah would have understood, that at a time long distant but before the full return of the dispersed nation to the land, Jehovah would shepherd the poor of the flock, setting aside those shepherds who had failed in the appointed task. His staff would, in some way, be Jehovah also. 'I was priced', the Lord had said. It would also be a covenant. The sheep, moreover, would resent and reject both staff and shepherd. The staff would be broken, and the nation suffer its second dispersion.

The price was at once the most perplexing and revealing feature in the prophecy. Was there irony in the divine approval? Everyone who had heard the ancient book of Exodus read would know that this was the compensation price for the life of a man (Exodus 21:32). It was the meanest, minimum price payable for the life of a poor slave. 'A goodly price I was priced at of them!'

The staff of Graciousness:- it was God: it was man: it was a holy covenant: it was a slave, rejected by men, broken by God. As the precious secrets were opened to Zechariah, he surely entered into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ and worshipped the Messiah he would never see in the flesh. He must have mourned at the coming blindness of his nation, and anticipated the distress of the apostle: 'I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh; who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory and the covenants ... They stumbled at the stumblingstone' (Romans 9:2,3 & 32). For the second staff called Union was broken also.

The prophetic voices were stilled. Through the silent years between the Old and New Testaments might be discerned the seventy sevens of Daniel, like a great clock ticking in an empty house, until the fulness of time, when the Sun of Righteousness, the Dawn from on high, visited Israel.

'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth'. Grace and truth in the Wedding and the Whip; to Nicodemus and the woman at the well; to the friendless, impotent man and the hungry, eager crowd. Did ever Jehovah shepherd Israel with such a staff as this? The lame man leaped as an hart, the tongue of the dumb sang for joy. 'He hath done all things well!' they declared.

'Their soul also abhorred me, and my soul was

Holiness is not austerity or gloom - it is the offspring of conscious, present peace.

straightened for them'. The incredible happened, the staff of Graciousness was rejected. The passover crowds shouted their 'Hosannas', but Jesus wept, for He knew that the glory of marble and gold before them concealed the bitter heart of a God-rejecting nation.

Ride on, ride on in majesty  
In lowly pomp ride on to die.  
Bow Thy meek head to mortal pain  
Then take O God Thy power and reign'

'Oh Jerusalem! If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace' but now they are hid from thine eyes' (Luke 19:41-2). Pride and guilt, resentment and criticism had brewed in the heart of priest, scribe and pharisee, and distilled to hate and murder. They tried to take Him but His hour had not yet come. During the feast of unleavened bread they would have seized Him but they feared the people. 'Not till after the feast' was the decision of the Sanhedrin. The Lord had ordained otherwise; had of old appointed the hour when the true passover Lamb should cause sacrifice and oblation to cease, and take away the sins of the world.

At an earlier conclave, strife and fear and the clamour of contending opinions had been silenced by a fiat from the acting high priest: 'Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not' ... It was like a voice of doom, a prophecy. They were in the grip of forces greater than they knew.

At a later gathering Judas was introduced with his offer of betrayal, during the feast, at night, in the absence of the multitude. The bag had been to him a symbol of the power he would hold in the kingdom, when the riches of the Gentiles would flow into his coffers. He could not let it go. His sacrifice would not be salted with salt or fire. He would serve Christ and Mammon too. He had been willing to suffer hardship in view of the coming kingdom. He would be an Ahithophel to a greater David; a familiar friend with gain as his god.

It was because Jesus had disappointed him that he lifted up his heel against him. The Master's attitude to Mammon and His plain words concerning His rejection, suffering and death, had penetrated the understanding of this astute man. The total antagonism of spirit revealed at the anointing by Mary, and the rejoinder, 'Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this' had shattered the last illusion. From that hour he had sought to betray Him. Hence his visit to the council.

Iscaiot left that secret session, his thoughts flowing like molten lava from the volcano of his passions, to harden into eternal fate ...

He ought to have made a better bargain. The priests were afraid of the power of Jesus; he could sense that. To have waited until after the feast would have been to lose their opportunity. To have Him in their power at night, to present the crowd with a 'fait accompli', to obtain authorization for execution from the Roman governor before His

supporters could rally: this was worth money. Judas may have disclosed that He had talked of death. He had been no match, however, for astute priestcraft. Their well-feigned disdain quickly reduced his price, and in the long bargaining which is still loved in the Levant they slowly approached and at last reached agreement for a paltry sum. Thirty pieces of silver.

Thirty pieces of silver. Was that all the Nazarene was worth? Judas had trusted that this had been the King-Messiah, but the betrayal price represented the life of the meanest slave. It was irony indeed. Jesus of Nazareth, bond-slave to the ignorant, the outcast, the children, the poor and the sick! His humility had irked the noblest of His disciples - that day when they would have made Him king, for instance; and the way He antagonised men of influence. In the midst of that triumphant procession He had wept, prophesying disaster.

The price of a slave. Judas would have that at least - and the bag, with security, while the rest were scattering like sheep. They thought they were following a king, but this despised Jesus of despised Nazareth was the slave of the common people, and His price was locked in Judas's heart. Concealing his agitation he returned to the eleven.

On Passover eve they were in the furnished upper room. Water pots, towel and basin were by the door, but there was no slave to wash the feet of the guests. Who, among the disciples, would stoop to the task? They were flushed with argument as to who should be the greatest in the Kingdom, which seemed so near. Judas was not competing; his soul was sneering at them from its dark, inner concealment: There would be no Kingdom!

Then Jesus took a towel, and laying aside His upper garments, girded Himself for the ministry, washing the dust from their feet and pride from their hearts. Peter could not bear it.

'Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?'

'What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter'.

'Thou shalt never wash my feet!'

'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me'.

'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!'

'He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all'.

Judas also submitted to the Master who was a slave, to be sold at a slave's price. How much did he know? ...

'But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table'. They had been reclining on low divans around the U-shaped table, one elbow and forearm on the board. They drew back horrified, protesting, but when Judas appended his own guilty question to the others: 'Lord, is it I?' he received the murmured answer: 'Thou hast said'.

There must have been a last, unspoken appeal when Jesus dipped bread in the great dish and handed it to the familiar friend. Did Judas hesitate, as the door of mercy stood ajar? He received the sop, enacting the lie of favoured friendship, and satan entered into

him. John, leaning against Jesus, identified the traitor, but dared say nothing. He heard the Master's brief instruction, watched Judas open the door and stand at the head of the steps leading to the courtyard. It was night. The door was shut. John never forgot it.

Harmony now prevailed among the twelve friends, love, revelation and promise. They sang one of the Hallel Psalms after the passover and the breaking of bread, and went out together through the shadowy streets, the postern gate, and the vineyards on the steep hill down to the brook, while their Master and Lord continued those deathless words of comfort and instruction recorded in John, chapters 14, 15 and 16. They stood close to Him by Kedron while He prayed for them such a prayer as they had never heard, so full of deep assurance and eternal love. A few minutes later He was alone in the garden, prostrate, in an agony and the sorrows of death; offering up 'prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared'. His disciples, unable to bear such sorrow, wrapped their cloaks around them and slept. Sometime before dawn, strengthened for the final conflict, He was standing with the eleven, when the temple soldiers and servants, with, it seems, the chief priests and elders, advancing under the guidance of the traitor, surrounded the garden. No garment of holy whiteness distinguished the Nazarene from His followers; in the uncertain light of many flares the kiss and embrace were needed to identify Him.

Six illegal trials were hurried through that morning under the expert guidance of the hierarchy. The disciples were scattered; it was the hour of evil and the power of darkness. The chief priests were directing the passions of the increasing crowd in waves of hatred which swamped the judgement of the Roman governor, when they were interrupted by a man in whose hands was a money bag, and on his features the torments of Gehenna.

'I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood'

'What is that to us? See thou to that', they answered.

He turned away through the teeming crowd to the deserted temple court, up the wide terraces, past the walls of partition, onto the sacred buildings and the court of the women, seeking to dispose of the cursed money in his guilty hands. Casting it down on the marble pavement, he reeled away to a suicide's death and the soul's eternal night.

On Golgotha they nailed the unresisting Galilean to His cross. The thieves had cursed, fought, screamed, whimpered, but this Man was as a lamb led to the slaughter. Gentle even in His agony were the words of pardon and love concerning those around the cross. After midday there was darkness, and in the darkness, a cry: 'Elo-i, Elo-i, lama sabach-thani? My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?'

'Behold, He calleth Elias', commented the priests from their seats above the Damascus gate. They were hearing village dialect from Nazareth, the Aramaic tongue his mother and playmates had used before He went to the synagogue school. They could not understand, nor shall any mortal ever plumb that abyss.

'I thirst' ... It is finished' ... Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit'. And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

Jehovah had stooped from heaven and broken the Man who was His living covenant, the staff that shepherded the poor of the flock, the slave, who, being in the form of God, thought it not a thing to be grasped at to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. There was an earthquake, and the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom.

A broken staff, a broken alabaster box, broken bread, a rent veil, and a broken nation all point to the Man who was broken for us.

The priests were perplexed by the money scattered across the holy floor. Blood money could not be returned to the treasury. Their problem was simply solved. It was reported that the little field belonging by inheritance to the temple potter, outside the wall above the valley of Gehinnom where the fires burned, had been defiled. A man had hanged himself from a tree overlooking the plot, but the tree had disowned and discarded its load. The bloody remains of the fallen body defiled the ground. They were sorry. They paid to the unfortunate potter the thirty pieces of unholy silver and reserved the plot, a most typical gesture, for the burial of Gentiles.

Many other prophecies were fulfilled that day. Like homing pigeons they had winged across the barren centuries to find rest and fulfilment around the cross of Christ. Its shadow, cast over the preparatory ages, had been upon priest and king and prophet. They had longed for that day and by faith rejoiced to see it. They had felt its sorrow and love, searched diligently, embraced the promises and entered beforehand into the peace made by the blood of His cross. 'Blessed', cried David, 'is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered'.

More, however, is contained in the message of the thirty pieces of silver, than the unerring fulfilment of prophecy. They tell of the sin of man, the dark hour of satan, the danger of a divided allegiance, the treachery of the human heart. They declare also the heart of the great Servant, for our Lord and Master chose to be the Slave of needy sinners. 'A goodly price I was priced at of them' was His prophetic approval. It is not strange that My Lord and My God has nail-marks in His hands and feet, and a wounded side. He was Jehovah's Staff, the Covenant Man, the Broken One.

Ministers are but a pole: it is for the Brazen serpent you are to look.

Behold Him all ye that pass by,  
The bleeding Prince of life and peace!  
Come sinners, see your Maker die,  
And say, Was any grief like His?  
Come, feel with me the blood applied.  
Jesus, My Lord, is crucified.

He still stands in the midst of contending disciples, girded with a towel for the washing of water by the word. How little are we aware of His tender presence!

He came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many. His nature is eternal, and we shall find Him if we seek Him with all our hearts, on His own ground of humility. We are so full of our own doings, our virtues or our shortcomings, that we protest with shamefaced Peter: 'Lord, Thou shalt never wash my feet'!

Ever patient comes the answer: 'Except I wash thee, thou hast no part with Me'. Peter, contrite again, wanted a re-baptism, hands and feet and head, and who can blame him? But Jesus' quiet voice replied: 'He that is bathed (with the washing of regeneration) needeth not save to wash his feet'. So Peter submitted, and so may we.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Let us make room for it, and inherit the earth with the meek! We have the mind of Christ. Let us put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another ... even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. I have given you an example ... the servant is not greater than his Lord.

'My yoke is easy ... ye shall find rest unto your souls'. At His feet the guilty sinner may lay down his sin and rest: the proud and contentious disciple can be redeemed from the reign of self; the burdened saint can find health and restoration.

The Servant of Jehovah is Servant and Lord to every needy soul ... 'Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and in earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father'.

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## Epilogue

The two disciples on the Emmaus road were lifted out of despair into assurance. The shocking sequence of events was changed, gilded with glory, grace and truth. Their hearts were prepared for pentecostal blessing by the more sure word of prophecy. Faith, hope, love sprang up again and blossomed. They desired the abiding presence of the Stranger whose penetrating word had made scripture, not experience, the basis of their faith. Then He was made known to them in the breaking of bread, and experience confirmed the word.

'We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts'.

# THE MAN OF GOD

## NORMAN MEETEN

'THAT THE MAN OF GOD MAY BE PERFECT, THROUGHLY FURNISHED UNTO ALL GOOD WORKS'

2 Timothy 3:17

GOD'S VISION AND PLAN for man is perfection. It was in the beginning and it will be at the end. God doesn't change. We read the same thought in Heb. 13:21, 'Make you perfect in every good work, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen'.

We need to align our vision with God's - believing what He believes, trusting Him to bring us increasingly into the reality of it and so equipping us to truly represent Him as a man of God.

Jesus is The Man - He is perfection.

Paul reminds us that it is into His image we are changed from glory to glory - even by the Spirit of the Lord.

As I read the scriptures I discover that God reveals clues or keys that unlock streams of revelation and truth to our spirits and to our understanding also. The key that yields up the truth of the man of God in 11 Timothy is the little phrase 'OF GOD'. This is a frequent word in the scripture and a very vital truth. Only that which is of God will return to God and be accepted by God.

The term 'Born Again' can be alternatively rendered - Born from above - born of God - John 3:7.

In John 1:12-13 we read:

'But as many as receive Him, to them gave He the

power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of man, but OF GOD'.

Unless we are 'born of God' we cannot be 'a man of God'.

The second letter of Timothy reveals seven characteristics of the man of God. Let us now look at these.

## 1 'The Foundation of God standeth sure' (2:19)

The most vital thing in any life or work is the foundation. The explanation of failure or collapse, back-sliding and inconsistent living is invariably bad foundations. One sees many illustrations of this in the natural world, where men have wanted quick results. Jesus warns against the folly of this in Luke 6:47-49, where He speaks of the wise man and the foolish man.

The wise man 'dugged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock'.

First of all we need to allow God to dig deep in our lives. The Samaritan woman in John 4 says 'The well is deep'. She wasn't speaking of Jacob's well - although she didn't realize it - but the well of her own life. There is nothing so unfathomable as the human heart. Only God can plumb the depths of it. That we need Him to do. Then He will discover and lay within us The Foundation. When Jesus speaks of the church in Matt.16, He says, 'Upon this Rock I will build my Church'. That Rock - foundation - was the inward revelation of Himself. This was the testimony of Paul the Apostle and the explanation of his consistent ongoing life in Christ. 'It pleased God to reveal His Son in me'. Therefore he could write to the Corinthian Church and say, 'Other foundation can no man lay than that, which is Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11).

In Christ Jesus all the foundational provision for the man of God is to be found. Heb.6:1-3 gives a sixfold analysis of this:

'The foundation' -

- 1 Repentance from dead works.
- 2 Faith towards God.
- 3 Doctrine of Baptism.
- 4 Laying on of hands - ministry.
- 5 Resurrection of the dead.
- 6 Eternal judgement.

These great truths are fundamental - foundational to genuine Christian experience - and thus to the qualifying of the man of God. 'A sure foundation'.

## 2 'The Will of God' (1:1)

'Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus'.

Paul was what he was 'by the will of God'. He had embraced God's great pre-ordained purpose for his life. Thus he sought by His grace to live 'perfect and complete in all the will of God'. He truly exemplified his Lord.

Jesus from His earliest day lived in the Father's will. The original words of Jesus recorded in the scriptures are found in Heb. 10:5f 'Wherefore when He cometh into the world, he saith ... a body hast thou prepared me ... to do thy will O God'. Those were His first words. And almost His last were, 'Not my will, but thine be done'. The whole of His life was regulated by this passion. 'My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me'. He was on earth 'to please the Father' - it was His life.

By the Spirit, God has put that same disposition into the heart of the 'man of God'. Therefore the exhortation of Paul in Rom. 1:12 is no longer grievous but joyous. No longer impossible but realizable.

'I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God'.

Jesus doesn't teach us to pray vain utterances. 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven'. The man of God, by His grace and the indwelling power of His Spirit, can prove the reality of His word and increasingly live in the good of it.

'I worship Thee sweet will of God  
And all Thy ways adore  
And every day I live I long  
To love Thee more and more'

Peter points out the antithesis of sin in 1 Pt. 4:1-2:

'He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God'.

The primary purpose for which God has endowed us with a body is in order that we might do His will - prove what is that good and acceptable will of God. In writing to the Ephesians Paul said, 'Be not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is'. The context reveals: 'Be being filled with the Spirit' (5:8).

Those graces which are most precious and desirable will cost us longest to produce; those good things which spring up hastily may have some transient worth about them, but we cannot look for permanence and value in them. There is no need to deplore the slowness of our spiritual growth if that which comes of it be of a solid character.

C H Spurgeon.

1 Thes. 4:3 - 'This is the will of God even your sanctification'

1 Thes. 2:8 - 'I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting'.

And so one could go on enumerating many facets of this truth.

The man of God is he who lives in the Will of God.

### 3 'The Gift of God' (1:6)

11 Tim. 1:6-7 - 'Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee ...'

The spirit of power and love and of a sound mind. The first thing we need to notice is that Paul exhorts Timothy to stir up the gift of God which is in him. He doesn't tell him to pray for a new experience - blessing - anointing - baptism - filling - from outside. He reminds him that 'the gift of God' is in him. That is clear New Covenant truth. God is no longer outside of us. By the gift of His Spirit He has made His abode in us.

'Father and I will come and make our abode with you' promises Jesus (Jn. 14:23).

'We have this treasure in earthen vessels'. It is within - to be stirred up - constantly drawn upon. It's the same truth which Jesus sought to reveal to the woman at the well. 'I will put a spring of water in you that will spring up into everlasting life and you will never thirst again'. She was a literalist - she left her water pot - the vessel - the symbol of her old sinful and inadequate life - behind. She needed it no more - it was redundant. She had the 'supply of God's Spirit' within. And so has every man of God - no matter where we are - in prison or out, on the mountain top or in the valley. We have the gift of God within us. This has been the secret of the true men and women of God down through the ages. That is the secret of victory. That is the mystery revealed. 'Christ in you' - the gift of God - the Holy Spirit. There is no end to the potential of this fact and truth. The old Quakers spoke of it as being Godded with God, Christed with Christ. All the fulness of the Godhead bodily in you, in me, by the Spirit.

### 4 'The power of God' (1:8)

'Be not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord ...'

The whole content of this verse gives us a clear understanding of the meaning of the power of God. The words Testimony - Witness (*μαρτυρία* see also Acts 1:8) - Prisoner - Afflictions - all point to identification with the Cross. Many people associate power with the Holy Spirit - Pentecost. The power of God is the cross. The Holy Ghost interprets its meaning - makes it real in our lives. Paul in 1 Cor. 1 speaks of the Cross - Jesus Christ and Him crucified

- as the power of God unto salvation. Romans 1:16 uses the phrase 'the gospel is the power of God unto salvation'.

The Cross is God's total answer for man's total need. The Cross operates from Eternity. Jesus was born crucified. He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Calvary effected in history what was always true in eternity. Jesus made the eternal historical, and the Spirit caused its power to become experiential. It is the law of the Spirit - death unto resurrection. It was defined prophetically by Jesus in John 12, 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die ...' It is the divine principle by which God has always worked. It is written into the creation - it is recorded in the scriptures - it was brought to perfection by Jesus. At the moment of the greatest weakness He demonstrated His greatest power. He defeated satan. He triumphed over sin. He manifested His victory over the flesh and released power to live triumphantly over it in the world.

Rom 6:6 - The old man was crucified

Gal. 2:20 - Self man was crucified

Gal. 5 - Flesh man crucified

Gal. 6 - The word crucified

and gave The Power to live in the world.

When Jesus died - we died. As we embrace the Cross by the faith of the Son of God - so all its virtue and power is released unto us. We are set free. Jesus said, 'Whom the Son sets free is free indeed'. We are free to be the man of God He originally intended us to be. Free as He was free - God's normal man.

### 5 'The Word of God' (2:9)

'The word of God is not bound'. It is the living word - logos - personified in Jesus. Word made flesh. We according to our order must also become Word made flesh.

Paul describes the man of God as a living epistle in 11 Cor.3. The word is written upon the fleshy tables of our hearts by the Spirit. It is God's purpose to incarnate His word in us by His Spirit. The word of God translated in action by simple obedience. 'Whatsoever He says unto you, do it'. Mary could speak those words with authority because she herself had responded to the word of God, 'Be it unto me according to Thy word' and 'There was a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord'. God's purpose and desire is to constantly manifest the boundless nature of His word. He has no limits. His word is expressive of His nature. What He says He does.

He is the word made flesh - so that the words that he speaks are Spirit and life.

There is no inconsistency. What He speaks He is, and what He is He speaks. So it must be in you and me. In fact that is what Jesus says of us. What a man is in his heart, that is what he speaks. 'For of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh' (Luke 6:45)

Lord fulfil your word in and through me.

## 6 'Lovers of God' (3:4)

The context here is in the negative - but I want to translate it into what is positive. God's great desire is to make us Lovers - Lovers of God and Lovers of men. We may never be great preachers, prophets or miracle workers, but we can all be Lovers. That is God's own nature, and Peter tells us we are made partakers of The Divine Nature. Jesus was the expression of that Love. 'God so Loved that he gave' 1 Jn. 3:16 - 'Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren'.

The great summary and fulfilment of the commandments, by Jesus, is: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength and your neighbour as yourself'. John exhorts 'to love even as Jesus loved in this world'. That is made possible because God has shed His love abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. This is the proof of a genuine Baptism in the Holy Ghost. 'A new pure heart, full of the perfect Love of God'. Such a transformation - metamorphosis - will manifest itself in the fruit of the Spirit which is Love. The rest of the statement in Gal. 5:22-23 is the analysis of this great nature. We can then adhere to the command of Peter, 'Love one another with a pure heart fervently'. The impossible is made possible. We can even do as Jesus says, 'Love your enemies'. Oh, God, make me a Lover.

## 7 Finally 'The inspiration of God' (3:16)

We have inspired scriptures because God inspired men. Speaking of the prophets, Peter says, 'Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost'. The great need of the church today is 'inspired men' - men moved by the Holy Ghost. We are not here to propound our ideas or propagate our own pet theories - but to communicate 'the Word of God'. Prophets under the Old Covenant were able to say, 'Thus saith the Lord'. They didn't suggest, or imagine or refer to this scholar and that writer to try and prove a point. They were men who were 'moved by the Holy Ghost' - could write 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me' and thus speak authoritatively - from God.

It was said of Jesus, 'This man speaks with authority' - because He knew.

Paul's great testimony was this: 1 Cor. 4:5 - 'My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God'.

Inspired men will inspire others.

'The letter killeth - the Spirit giveth life'. May God raise up inspired men to preach the inspired word and thus inspire others to know Him and so become men of God, perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

You can unlock a man's whole life if you watch what words he uses most. We have each a small set of words, which, though we are scarce aware of it, we always work with, and which really express all that we mean by life, or have found out of it, for such words embalm the past for us. They have become ours by a natural selection throughout our career of all that is richest and deepest in our experience. So our vocabulary is our history; and our favourite words are ourselves.

Professor Henry Drummond.

# SOUL AND SPIRIT

References taken from Young's Concordance simply supplying a list of passages in the New Testament where the Greek words 'psuche' and 'pneuma' are used: it is hoped will help in understanding this aspect of human nature. The verses in which the contrast between soul and spirit occur are dealt with separately.

- i) Psuche - translated 'soul' in A.V.  
Matthew 10.28; 11.29; 16.26; 22.37; 26.38.  
Mark 8.36/37; 12.30-33; 14.34. Luke 2.35; 10.27; 12.19-20; 21.19. John 12.27. Acts 2.27-31; 4.32; 15.24. 1 Thessalonians 2.8. Hebrews 6.19; 10.39; 13.17. James 1.21. 1 Peter 1.9 and 22; 2.11 and 25; 4.19. 2 Peter 2.8 and 14. 3 John 2. Revelation 6.9; 16.3; 18.13-14; 20.4.
- ii) Psuche - translated 'life' in A.V.  
Matthew 2.20; 6.25; 10.39; 16.25; 20.28.  
Mark 3.4; 8.35; 10.45. Luke 9.24 and 56; 12.22-23; 14.26; 17.33. John 10. 11, 15 and 17; 12.25; 13.37-38; 15.13. Acts 15.26; 20.10 and 24; 27.10 and 22. 1 John 3.16. Revelation 8.9 and 12.11. John 10.11, 15 and 17.
- iii) Pneuma - as referring to the spirit of man.  
Matthew 5.3; 26.41. Mark 2.8; 8.12; 14.38.  
Luke 1.80; 2.40; 8.55; 10.21; 23.46; 24.37-39. John 3.6; 4.23-24; 11.33; 13.21.  
Acts 7.59; 17.16; 18. 5 and 25; 19.21. Romans 1.9; 7.6; 8.16; 12.11. 1 Corinthians 2.11; 5.3-5; 6.17 and 20; 7.34; 14.14, 15, 16, 32; 16.18. 2 Corinthians 2.13; 7.1 and 13. Galatians 6.18. Ephesians 4.23. Philippians 3.3. Colossians 2.5. 2 Timothy 4.22. Philemon 25. Hebrews 12.23. James 2.26; 4.5. 1 Peter 3.4.
- iv) Passages where 'psuche' and 'pneuma' are used together in contrast. Luke 1.46-47. 1 Corinthians 15.45. 1 Thessalonians 5.23 and Hebrews 4.12.

Editor

# SPIRITUAL SLAVERY - PART ONE

BERNARD HULL

"A SLAVE OF JESUS CHRIST!" Each man who wrote an epistle in the New Testament uses this expression as a description of himself! John, James, Peter and Paul all do so. Even Jude who wrote a short epistle introduces himself as "the slave of Jesus Christ". Only one epistle varies from this rule, the one to the Hebrews. There the writer omits any statement about being a slave of the Lord, but surely that is simply because the epistle itself is anonymous and therefore personal descriptions would not occur.

"James, a bond slave of God and of the Lord Jesus" (James 1:1). "Simon Peter, a bond slave and an apostle of Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:1). "Paul, a bond slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ" (Titus 1:1). "Jude, a bond slave of Jesus Christ" (Jude 1), and finally "God sent and signified things to His bond slave John" (Revelation 1:1). Here then is the consistent testimony of the New Testament writers. There is no variation. On the occasions when apostleship is mentioned in their statements it is preceded by the fact that first and foremost they are bond slaves. Their basic position was simply that they were slaves of a Master. Paul mentions his friend Timothy and indicates that this son of his also served as a bondsman, just as Paul himself did (Phil. 2:22). There seems to be no end to the vast host of bondslaves of God and His Son. Perhaps it will cease to be like this when this age is past and all things are made new. However, even in the wonderful new heaven and new earth we find that there are hosts of God's bondslaves gladly serving Him in eternity (Rev. 22:3). Thus we must accept the truth that this glad slavery is to be an eternal state. It is a joyful thing to those thus joined to God and to Christ. Over and over again in the New Testament, in fact over one hundred times, we find this word of slavery and its derivatives used in respect of the life and ministry of God's people. This then is not unimportant, not an afterthought, something slipped in from time to time which we may bypass if we should so feel to do. It is fundamental to the life of the Lord's people.

It is vital that we come to grips with this truth in these days when liberty is being preached in various forms and with differing emphases. Sonship too is a grand and glorious truth, but too often it can run to excess and do injustice to aspects of truth such as the one we are considering. The Only Begotten Son of God, even Jesus, took upon Himself "the form of a bondsman and was found in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:7). It would seem that by connecting the truth of being a bond slave with that of being made in the likeness of men, God is particularly emphasizing the fact that men were fashioned by Him to be His willing love-slaves. Jesus the great love-slave of His Father is now highly exalted, but He still has the indelible marks of slavery upon Him. His slavery to

the will of His Father took Him to Calvary, which was the post of the house to which He was fixed and where He received the true marks of slavery upon Him, of which those in the ear of a willing love-slave in the Old Testament were but a picture (Exodus 21:6). It was written into the Old Testament law that if a man who was a slave came by right to obtain freedom from his slavery yet desired to remain a slave for life, then his master was to take him to the door-post of the house and use an awl to bore through the ear of the slave, thus fixing him to servitude for life. Thus the man bore the marks of his willing slavery in love to his master in his body for the rest of his days and the post of the house bore the mark also. The cross was the post to which Jesus was willingly fixed. It is ever the doorway in, and marks out the loving heart of the Father of the house. All who have right of entry there must be His slaves as well as sons.

In the New Testament the word 'doulos', often translated 'servant', really carries with it the meaning of 'bond-slave'. That is one bound to a master, a lord, in a life-time of servitude. Adding the word 'bond' to that of 'slave' brings in the fact of the legality of the indentures which bound the master and slave together in their proper relationship. It is interesting to note that this word 'indenture' relates to a contractual agreement between a master and an apprentice, and more particularly to the notches carved into these contractual papers, of which both the master and the apprentice had a copy. The notches were identical in both contracts. The master and apprentice were joined together under solemn contract! There is such instruction in these things for us since we are to bear in our own daily living the marks of being slaves to our God, even as He Himself bears the same marks.

In Roman times the slave was legally owned by his or her master. Earlier, in the days when His nation of Israel was being formed, there were strict laws laid down by God on matters of slavery. Opportunity for the freeing of slaves was provided, but also a way to be a voluntary slave for life was available. Each of these things contain precious truth for our hearts if we were to take time to look into them. However, it is more our purpose to look deeper into the spiritual side of slavery.

The New Testament writers state that there are two ways by which a person could become a slave. Firstly, a free person could be overpowered, captured and carried away in chains. This would be an act taking place against their will. No doubt, in the days of the New Testament many slaves had been obtained by this method in the punitive raids of the Roman legions on the perimeters of the Empire. These were then transported to Rome or other principal cities and sold

on the open market. They were uprooted from their homes and their homelands, from family and friend, from culture, indeed from everything they had ever known, and were brought to a palace entirely foreign to them with no prospect of ever returning to that place from which they had been taken. Peter, in his second epistle, describes something of this bondage, "of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage" (2 Peter 2:19).

The second method of becoming a slave was by selling oneself to a master, or being sold by one's father or some other person who had responsibility over one. Perhaps this thought was in Paul's mind when, in Romans seven verse fourteen, he declares that we are "sold under sin". There can be no doubt, from the examination of scripture, that man was not made sinful originally. He was made free from sin. However, it is also plain that there came a time when man became sinful. It took place when Adam sold the human race out. The devil bid for Adam and he used various ploys to do so, and the result was that humanity became enslaved spiritually to the mastery of sin. Adam sold us out before we were ever born. We were in his loins when it happened. Our first father, the head of the human race, Adam, sold us into slavery to sin and through that sin to the devil who is the father of sin. A slave exists to do the will of his master, and surely this awful mastery of sin produces those that scripture calls sinners, that is, slaves of sin!

How graphically this inherent slavery to sin and satan is described in the New Testament. It is many-sided. The mastery develops in a variety of ways until the whole personality, the totality of man, is under its thrall. Spirit first, body, and so to soul. Thus does the human become a tool, a mere vassal to the will of the wicked one. In Romans eight Paul shows how all begins in the spirit of man. The human race has "received the spirit of bondage to fear" (verse 15). All is therefore spirit-based and the root of this slavery to sin and satan is in the very spirit of man. Inevitably this has brought about "bondage (slavery) to corruption" (verse 21). The slave to sin goes inexorably from corruption to corruption! The Hebrews writer refers to humankind spending "their life-time subject to slavery" (Chapter 2:15). He also links this with death and the fear attached to death. "A lifetime subject to bondage"! An inevitable round of sin, self, fearing, guilt-ridden days and all leading steadily to the great unknown - death. Surely this description of life is most terrible and a veritable hell on earth.

Looking further into this truth we find that this slavery is not limited only to the spirit of man. It is not only inward and intuitively felt. There are also enslaving elements at work in the world. Paul mentions something of this in Galatians chapter four, in verses three and eight. These enslaving forces are at work outside of man. They work to subdue that man to a servitude which is nothing other than a moron-like conformity to the standards, values and cultural norms of the particular society in which that man is born and brought up. This includes unquestioning commitment to the local deities and superstitions that prevail, thus making the man one

"doing service to them which by nature are no gods".

Yet there is more in this awful description. As the inward spirit of slavery works in a man, linking all the time with the enslaving elements in the world in which that man lives, so habits of enslavement to various sins become established in the life. In Titus chapter three verse three we find this fact states "serving (as a bondsman) divers lusts and pleasures".

A set mind is thus formed, habitual thinking along lustful, proud, envying lines so that all becomes virtually involuntary and commonplace in the manner of life. Thus does a man "yield his members as bondslaves to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity" (Rom 6:19). The physical part of man, his eyes, hands, arms, legs and other parts of his body become set in the habits of sinful behaviour. Surely then, any honest heart reading these words can receive the statements of Jesus in which He says that "whosoever committeth sin is the bondsman of sin" (John 8:34). Yet, praise God, the Lord does not leave us there. In the very same context He says "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed" (verse 36). Can anything be plainer? He is certainly promising liberty from the old slave-master of satan and sin; He, the Son, is able to really accomplish this in those who will hear the truth from His heart and receive it!

An illuminating statement from the lips of Jesus is recorded in Matthew six verse twenty four. It is connected with the matter of mastery in the life of man. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon". As ever the Lord Jesus chooses His words with infinite care. He does not say that it is impossible for a man to think that he has two masters. The impossibility lies in the serving of two masters. Jesus is talking about the heart of man. It is therefore implied that a man can only truly be enslaved in his spiritual heart to one master. "You cannot serve God and mammon". We could say "God and ... sin, the world ... " and so on. As far as true mastery in the human heart is concerned it can never be by "God and ... ". Inevitably a man will hold to one master and look down upon any other so-called master. Only one can be master of my heart in practice. The master I enthrone will certainly be over the other who would desire to be master in my life. There is one throne in the heart and it is large enough for only one to sit upon and reign. It cannot be God and mammon. The slave will serve one master and the one he serves will be the one he loves.

In so serving that one he reveals that in truth he hates the other. This is the seriousness of Jesus' statement. Let us bless God for His clarity. Let us praise Him for the blessedness that is intrinsic in its meaning. Hidden in it is promise of whole-hearted servitude to God, all other would-be masters having been displaced. Here is the answer to the prayer of the psalmist who said, "Unite my heart to fear Thy Name" (Psalm 86:11). Here is an end to duality in the inward spiritual heart of man. A slave of one master and doing his bidding only, spirit, soul and body engaged in obedient and glad servitude to God.

# WITH NO DARKNESS AT ALL - PART ONE

GEORGE W. NORTH

THE PRESENT CHARISMATIC revival taking place among us is producing a completely new vocabulary within the churches. This is based upon a growing understanding founded upon a new grasp of scripture. From this has developed a set of terms incorporating Bible ideas and adapting them into late twentieth century language and jargon. In itself this is not a wholly bad thing; in fact in many aspects it is highly commendable, for it is usually both descriptive and specific. Seeing that Paul of the unveiled face says, 'We use great plainness of speech', it is good that we do speak simply directly and truthfully, providing we do so in words which the Holy Ghost teaches and not gimmickry.

One such word in frequent use among us in these days is 'deliverance'. It is a good Bible word, though I must confess I do not remember it being used much when I was a boy - perhaps I moved in the wrong circles! But nowadays the word is current everywhere in the churches and often connected with the word 'ministry', thus, 'deliverance ministry'.

## The word 'ministry'....

Used in this connection the word 'ministry' itself seems to have undergone something of a change. Formerly 'ministry' was understood to be 'of the word'; it signified preaching or exposition of the scripture. But being now prefixed with the word 'deliverance' the word 'ministry' is transformed into something more of works than words.

This is all to the good; indeed it must be the logical result of any Christian renewal. Paul insisted that, 'my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God' (1 Cor. 2:4/5). There is full New Testament justification for the shift of emphasis underlined by Luke when he refers to 'all that Jesus began both to do and to teach'.

One takes it that much of Jesus' teaching would have been largely pointless without His works. What He did was most important to what He had to say, and in many instances it was from a deliberately performed miracle that His teaching flowed, as for instance in John chapter six. The miracle became His text. He enacted it.

So, providing the word 'deliverance' is not given false overemphasis we shall remain scriptural. The purpose of this present series is to examine the Bible with a view to establishing fully documented ground for the ministry of deliverance.

Both Testaments include instances of powerful interventions by God in the affairs of men for the

sole purpose of deliverance from the works of Satan in whatever forms they appear, whether sin, sickness, evil spirits, needless suffering, slavery or self. It is therefore perfectly in keeping with the whole tenor of scripture to occasionally use the words 'salvation' and 'deliverance' interchangeably. Though each is not an exact synonym of the other, this can be done without in any way straining their respective meanings. So long as we bear in mind that salvation includes all the various aspects and effects of God's powerful love operating on behalf of men, and deliverance is but one emphasis and demonstration of that saving grace, we shall be safe.

## .... Has been delivered!

Perhaps the most significant demonstration of this truth was given when Peter on the day of Pentecost answered the famous question, 'What meaneth this?' Quoting extensively from Joel he gave interpretive point to the inspired writ by making calculated changes in what the prophet had spoken and written. He deliberately altered the word 'delivered' in Joel 2:32 to 'saved' in Acts 2:21. Moreover, the apostle curtailed his quotation in the middle of the verse which in the prophecy continues thus ... 'for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call'.

Peter's treatment of this hallowed verse is brilliantly illuminating. Had he not been newly baptized in the Spirit and his words equally inspired as his predecessor's for inclusion in holy writ, we might well doubt the validity of his audacious handling of precious truth. For, pausing only to insert, adapt and apply to his theme certain other verses from David's writings, the great apostle returns to Joel and proceeds further to identify deliverance with salvation by virtually repeating the formerly unquoted latter part of the verse. The fact that all this was done in Jerusalem adds further point to it, though in this age God is calling not so much a 'remnant' as 'first-fruits' - but that is another story!

Here then is proof that the Holy Spirit taught the early church to believe that present day salvation includes the Old Testament ideas of deliverance, and caused this to be included in New Testament writings. Furthermore, the New Testament amplifies and perfects these ideas far beyond what was formerly understood thereby when written. This is not uncommon in scripture; God at times takes a former statement of His and proceeds to show that through Christ there is more in it than meets the eye or was originally believed.

## **I am - I deliver**

The national deliverance which God granted to Israel was clearly related in His own mind to His personal self-consciousness and certain specific promises He had made to Abraham. These two things are most important and He knew He must lay this foundation in the mind of His deliverer, Moses first. Having caught his attention at the burning bush God begins to establish His own identity: 'I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob' ... and later, 'I am that I am'.

Then, in the context of, and allied to, His identity, God reveals His purpose: 'I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them ...'

There is no doubt that the Israelites were the outstanding historic example of God's mightiest deliverances; they only existed because of them. If ever there was a miracle race this was it. Deliverance was their daily and hourly state. Having finally delivered them from Pharaoh and his house of bondage, the Lord wrought for them such an astounding succession of unending miracles that these became the background of all living.

No part of day or night was without its demonstration of God, and this despite their total unworthiness. They drank of a spiritual Rock that FOLLOWED them; angel's food lay at their feet every morning; the sun never smote them by day, for always they were shaded as they were led by the cloud; they never knew what it was to walk in darkness nor to feel the dead chill of desert nights, for at eventide that cloud became a pillar of fire and a flame of light - true Israel always walks in the light! Moreover, their clothes and sandals neither wore out nor became too small upon their growing bodies; and all this for the space of forty years until life meant nothing less and familiarity lessened wonder into contempt.

Only to mention these things is surely sufficient to reveal the constant state of deliverance they enjoyed in God's care. For to live as they did in daily experience of such permanent provision (even if perhaps unappreciated) is manifestly in the very event to know deliverance from all the contrary conditions that could have been their lot but for a loving and faithful God.

## **We are - we deliver**

At one stage removed so to speak, it is clear from many passages that God purposed that in turn Israel as well as He should always be conscious of their peculiar identity and in that consciousness fulfil their destiny. Among other things this was to bring the same deliverance they themselves had known to the nations of the world.

This predestiny was inherent in the covenant to Abraham, 'I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee ... and I will bless them that bless

thee ... and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed'.

At the end of his life Moses refers to Israel as a people 'saved by the Lord' (Deut. 33:29). God's people must know their identity, for from that results their sense of mission with direction and purpose in the earth. But Israel constantly failed in this and on God's behalf, Isaiah complains: 'The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider'.

A true prophet is always raised up by God to be the real national consciousness and conscience; in his ministry he has to speak for men as well as for God. That is, under the power of the Holy Spirit he speaks as man awakened, thoroughly aware of the truth, though at the time they are quite dead to both God and truth being expressed. This was true in Isaiah's case.

In chapter 26 verses 17/18, for instance, he speaks for the Lord as the voice of a people suddenly awakened to the overwhelming tragedy of its irrevocable loss ... 'We have not wrought any deliverance in the earth'.

Not infrequently in scripture Israel is likened to the unfaithful wife of Jehovah and here we are shown the terrible results of that unfaithfulness - wind ... nothingness. Deliverance is here set forth as the expected child of the union between God and his people. The terminology is Eastern and not to them indelicate; it is also abstract - wind is an unlikely enough child to those who think only in terms of flesh and blood; but God is spirit. In all His dealings with men, however great and concrete His many saving acts may be, He is always moving through and beyond the physical and environmental to spiritual things.

What we are to understand from this picture is that God expects His people to identify themselves with His purposes on the earth. Isaiah is saying by implication that the nation ought to have been so intimate with the Lord that they should have lived, thought, spoken, practised and promoted deliverance throughout the whole of their domestic, national and international relationships. Subjectively they had been delivered, objectively they were God's manifest deliverance before the eyes of men; consequently their work in the earth should have been deliverance. But instead - wind ... nothing.

They TALKED endlessly of God's mighty acts and phenomenal deliverances - of Pharaoh and the Red Sea, of Moses and Joshua, Sihon and Og, Samson and David. They sang their psalms, recounted their sagas, boasted of their national heroes and their epic deeds, but produced no comparable or corresponding works to verify the words they spoke and the claims they made.

The deliverances of former times were true enough in all conscience, but each generation needs its own proof. History is nothing but past today's; miracles must be flowing rivers not dead seas. Did not Gideon speak for us all when he said, 'Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all His miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?'.

# THE KING IS DYING

GEORGE W. NORTH

In January 1936 King George V, the King of England and a servant of God, a man much loved by his people, was dying. Sadness filled the palace. He was such a good man and had reigned well and long; good wishes flowed into the palace, messages of sympathy and hope from every quarter, but few hearts held any expectation of his recovery. The whole nation, hushed with grief, paused, stricken, waiting for the end. His was a life of service, assured of the love of his Lord, realized earlier in his royal life when he put his personal trust in Jesus Christ as his Saviour and Lord.

Once upon a time, in another land, people gathered in groups, memories of bygone splendour stirring in many minds; the King was dying. Men told anecdotes of great state occasions and solemn assemblies, women recalled marvellous banquets and splendid balls, wonderful times when lords and ladies, resplendent in gold and glittering with jewels, had dined and laughed with the king. They were pleasant tales, some were jocular, even comic, especially an occasion when the king invested the biggest old fool in the land with the bells and uniform and installed him as court jester. It was an uproariously funny occasion: the old fool bowed and curtsied and bobbed his head, he rattled his bells and told jokes, he was a proper clown and the king and his guests were delighted. The king especially was in great form, he enjoyed every minute of it and wittily called out in a loud voice, 'If ever you find a bigger fool than yourself give the bells and the clowns dress to him', and everybody roared with laughter. Without more ado the old fool donned the jester's outfit with a flourish and bowed again with mock solemnity, saying 'Yes Sire'; it was hilarious and everybody laughed and clapped till the hall was filled with merriment.

But now the King lay dying and laughter had long since fled from the palace. The jester was forgotten, nobody called for him, he was not even thought of; his very clothing would have seemed out of place at such a time. But suddenly the tinkling of his bells sounded at the door - the jester had come; he wanted to see his king once more. 'May I be permitted to visit His Majesty?' he asked. He had been a great favourite of the king, entertaining him many a time with his prancing and clowning; he was a faithful and loyal subject, so with a word of caution he was granted his request. Entering the room, he tip-toed up to his sovereign's bedside and looking sadly at the dying monarch fell on his knees and softly greeted him. The king gazed at him awhile and in a weak voice began to speak, 'I am going', he said, and paused; 'Where Sire?' broke in the old fool. The king began again, 'I am going on a long

journey'. 'Are you prepared for your journey Sire?' asked the jester again, and waited. 'No', said the king at last, and sank into silence. A world of sorrow in his eyes, the old fool laid aside his bells and slowly began to take off his jester's clothes. 'Sire', he said, 'You told me that if ever I found a bigger fool than myself I should give him the bells and clothes - I have found him', and he handed them to the king.

The king died and found that he wasn't a king any longer - he could not take his crown and kingdom with him; he could not take the bells and jester's clothes either, he came naked into the world and naked he went out. He came into the world ignorant and died a fool - so is everyone who lives and dies likewise. Better never to have been born than, having been born, fail to make sure of eternity and be unprepared for death. Birth is man's opportunity, it is a beginning from which there is no returning; death likewise is a commitment from which there is no escape. At birth we all commence the journey from this world to the next. Whatever else a man may be or do, he cannot turn back or cease from this, it must be continued without pause to the end, but though the journey commences on this earth, it does not end here. Only bodily is man a creature of this earth, spiritually he is a creature of eternity, whether he knows it or not; whatever that eternity may be and wherever it may be spent, man shapes his own soul for it. It is utter foolishness for any man to presume that he can find the way to God on his death-bed: God gives no guarantees to foolishness. To say the least it is a terribly risky thing to do; a sudden accident, a terrible mistake of some kind can hurl his soul into eternity at any moment, unprepared - what then?

No man is born 'in the way', it has to be sought and found, but no-one has to look for it. The way is not difficult to find, it is simple for anyone who really wants to find it, for it is a named way and it is very well known in some quarters: God gave it many years ago and named it 'Jesus'. The man Christ Jesus is that one way which every man must find and take; no man was born in it, but every man is born to find it, and find it we must - or perish.

Although in the eyes of men he was a good man, at his death the king in the story was a fool in the sight of God for many reasons, two of which are as follows: (1) he had failed to find the way and make provision for his journey, (2) he thought the journey began at death - this is not so, it begins at birth. The way, once found, is a journey to God. The man who said, 'O that I knew where I might find Him, that

I might come even to His seat', (Job 23.3) surely spoke for every person born into this world who has become aware of his need. 'I am the way', says Jesus - the way is a living, speaking way, the human/divine way, the true way there and to Him. No-one else in his right senses has ever said of himself that he is the way; if any man had said it or should say it no-one in the world would believe him. There have been and still are, many who have claimed to show us a way, perhaps even claiming it to be the way: Jesus came into this world to be the way in it and through it and out of it unto the Father.

The God who all true men seek dwelt in this world as Jesus Christ, in love drawing all men unto Him, and the man who responds with all his heart and soul to His drawings and comes to Christ comes immediately to God. When that man leaves this world he does not set

out on a journey in search of Him and heaven, in hope of rest and peace, he has already found Him. Eternity spent with God our Father is God's will for men; God's will and provision for man is a blessed eternity with Him, but only for those on the way.

To all men **WARNING:** neglect of opportunity, if continued in, counts as rejection of grace; individual unbelief, if persisted in, prevents that person from entering the way; refusal to respond is spiritual suicide. To all who respond - **PROMISES:** everyone who seeks shall find, all sins shall be forgiven, new life will be given, truth will be assured, safety is guaranteed, God will make Himself known as Father, heaven will be the final home. Place upon your own soul the value God places upon it, take the opportunity granted you now - seek and find Jesus, the only Way.

This article can be ordered in Tract form.

## ....AND FINALLY

## BIBLE STUDY

RON BAILEY

2 TIMOTHY

### Introduction ...

Suppose that your next letter was to be your last. To whom would you write, and about what? In an earlier time men were encouraged to 'preach as dying men to dying men', and not without cause. Life is a precarious thing. Thomas Watson wrote 'A Body of Divinity' under such circumstances, and Samuel Rutherford his letters. They are models of concentration and singlemindedness. Some years ago I spoke to a young man who was about to return to his homeland where difficulties, persecutions, and the clear possibility of martyrdom awaited him. Such circumstances have a sobering and concentrating effect upon the mind.

Paul was in life's departure lounge, awaiting the call to give an account of his stewardship before the Righteous Judge. To outward appearances those who were the result of his labours in Asia Minor had abandoned him, though he is mindful of the kindnesses shown by a few. His overwhelming passion, however, is for the purpose of God to be continued. So he writes, under the Spirit, to one that he never expects to meet again, but on whom he sees the hand of God. These final words of Paul to those who must carry the torch of the testimony on the next leg of its journey, are ours to cheer and challenge. They bring to mind the words of Gerhard Tersteegen:-

We follow in His footsteps;  
What if our way be torn?  
Where He has marked the pathway  
All hail the briar and thorn!  
Scarce seen, scarce heard, unreckoned,  
Despised, defamed, unknown  
Or heard but by our singing  
On, children! Ever on!

Paul's last letter was written to Timothy who enters the gospel story at Acts 16.

**His Mother** ... His mother, Eunice, was a BELIEVING Jewess, as was her mother, Lois, before her (2 Tim. 1:5). Their faith was the genuine kind (unfeigned (an-upokritou) = without hypocrisy) which had taken up permanent residence in them, and was at home (en-oikeo) = in a house) there, and this provided the home atmosphere in which Timothy grew up.

**His Father** ... His father, however, was a Greek and, by implication, a non-believer. The Greeks worshipped an absolute, idealistic perfection, and we may wonder whether this had its influence on young Timothy too (cf 1 Tim. 5:23 and 2 Tim. 2:3-8).

**His Spiritual Father ...** His spiritual father was Paul himself (1 Tim. 1:2) and the events surrounding his earliest impressions of the gospel must have been a sobering initiation (Acts 14:8-20, 2 Tim. 3:10). His giftings were recognised (Acts 16:2, 1 Tim. 1:18 and 2 Tim. 1:6), and he joined Paul and Silas.

**Aspects of his life ...** It is possible to trace aspects of his life from the records. He stays with Silas when Paul moves on (Acts 17:14 and 18:5). He is sent by Paul with a particular mission (Acts 19:22, 1 Cor. 4:17 and Phil. 2:19). His name is added to Paul's letters (Rom. 16:21, 2 Cor. 1:19, Phil 1:1, Col. 1:1 etc). He was a FAITHFUL MAN for Paul (2 Tim. 2:2, 1 Cor. 16:10 and Phil. 2:20). He ENDURED HARDNESS (Heb. 13:23). YET, IN SPITE OF ALL THESE things he was evidently timid and self-effacing by instinct (1 Tim. 4:12 and 14, and 2 Tim. 1:6-12).

**Take encouragement ...** We can take encouragement from a man whose needs were as apparent as his graces, but from where did Paul find his encouragement?

**Points of reference ...** 2 Tim. 1:1, 8 and 9 have the phrase "according to ...". It has the sense of "with reference to ...". In appearance the gospel looked in poor shape at this time (2 Tim. 1:15, 3:1-13, 4:3, 4, 10 and 14-16) but there is no hint of depression or discouragement for Paul. His points of reference are not the transitory events of today, but the settled purpose of God.

**The outworking of the eternal purpose ...** He puts his counsel to Timothy into the context of the outworking of the eternal purpose (Eph.3). Paul sees that it all depends, ultimately, on a promise made within the God-head, before the world began (Tit.1:2) which was later "confirmed" or "made sure" to Abraham, etc. Paul's apostleship (and Timothy's calling v.9) need to be seen in the light of "the will of God" (v.1), and its outworking through many a generation (v.5).

**Resting ...** Paul's confidence for the long-term welfare of the gospel is not resting on Timothy, but on God (v.12) (cf Is.26:3). The calling is not "with reference" to "our works", but is "with reference to His own purpose and grace" (v.9).

**Respond to His ability ...** When we are free from the sense of RESPONSIBILITY which says "it all depends on me" (which usually crushes a man' cf 1 Kg. 19:14), we are free to respond to His ability by "rekindling the free-gift of God" which is in us, no longer intimidated by fear of our own failure.

## SUMMER FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCE



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