

ENDEAVORING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF THE PEACE. 4:3.

There is no command here to *make* a unity. It is not to make a union of man-made bodies so as to make a unity. It is our duty to *keep* a unity that is already made. We will have to go back a little in the epistle to find what unity has been made. But in order to do this we must take into consideration the rest of the statement. What is *the bond of the peace*?

He is our peace, the One who made both Jew and Gentile one new body or new man, breaking down the middle wall of partition. Having done away with commandments and ordinances which were a dividing line between Jew and Gentile during Acts, He made peace. Christ came (in Spirit) and preached peace so that the two might have access by one Spirit unto the Father. So *the bond of the peace* is that which holds the whole body together.

There is no recognition here of various sects and denominations. These are all divisions. There is some question as to how one could belong to these organizations which make for divisions and at the same time belong to the church of the dispensation of the mystery. We will make no attempt to answer the question. Each one will have to face that for himself.

We must not forget the word *endeavoring*. We find it in 2 Tim. 2:15 where it is STUDY TO SHEW THYSELF APPROVED. It means that one is to make an *earnest endeavor*. It is by no means a half-hearted trying. It may be somewhat like rowing a life boat with wind and surf against one. But there is an urgency about the whole matter that will not allow of any resting on the oars.

There is nothing easy about this endeavor when there is apostasy all about. Men make their temples, fill them with idols, and then point the finger of scorn at those who will not go to them, calling them heathen. They can make it very hard and miserable for one's children if he does not send them to their so-called Sunday Schools where they talk about all kinds of things except the Word of God. His business may suffer. He may lose his job. All these things are brot to bear upon the non-conformist. These are real problems, as many of our readers have found out. There is nothing so deadly as a whispering campaign against one who dares to be different and stand for the Word of God.

Ministers are not exempt by any means. They too can be subject to character assassination, lose their jobs and be barred from the pulpits of the denomination. If they continue to preach the truth, they will have to hire a hall and find work to support self and family. Paul foretold these days of apostasy. They are here upon us.

If one insists on teaching what the risen Christ has commanded, he is branded as a trouble-maker, a divider of churches, and all kinds of similar charges. It is true that truth will divide. Paul even said that there must be divisions so that which is genuine may be made manifest. Strange to say, keeping the unity of the Spirit may make for divisions in man's organizations.

The study of the purpose of the ages can never be complete without a study of the *AGE PEOPLE*, Israel. They have their place in the whole scheme that is unique and which is with so many parallels that point to doctrine for today that we must not neglect the lessons we may get from them.

The theme and scope of the Bible is not eternity, as so many believe. It is concerned with the ages. It is very unfortunate that the Heb. word OLAM and the Greek equivalent, AION have been translated eternal and everlasting, and the like. See the notes in the Companion Bible on these words and also the way they are translated in the Rotherham version.

Before the ages began there was a great time when there was no time. It had no beginning as we conceive of as a beginning. Then came a time when there is time, the ages. After the ages will come a time when there will be no time, no end as we think of an end.

Even the ages are so vast that our finite minds can hardly grasp their scope. Science has made attempts to name some of the ages past. The record is left in the rocks, the coal beds, and the like. Great upheavals and catastrophes have happened in those times. There have been ice ages, water ages, swamp ages, and other conditions with which we are not so familiar in these days. Our Lord spoke of the age to come and in Ephesians we have mention of ages to come. How long the ages will run yet is only a guess.

But our Bible spans the ages. It shows that there is a purpose connected with these ages and that we have a part in that great purpose. But the age people have a great part in it too, and that we purpose to look into at present.

So the ages had a beginning (see margin at 2 Tim. 1:9 and Titus 1:2). Some of the ages are past. Some are yet to come (Eph. 2:7).

Where one age leaves off and another begins is called a SUNTELIA. When it is an actual end, the word TELOS is used. Examples of the former are in Matt. 13:39, 40, 49 and Heb. 9:6. The latter is found in Matt. 24:6, 13.

Christ spoke of the Millennium as the age to come (Matt. 12:32). The ages of the ages is spoken of that great period of time after the Millennium, but before the new heavens and the new earth, the time of the post-Millennial kingdom of Christ (Rev. 11:15 and 20:11). But the age of the ages, the goal of all the ages is mentioned in connection with the church of the dispensation of the mystery (Eph. 3:21). Outside of these examples, there is a lot that we do not know about the ages. We make no attempt to number them and to set them out in order. There is not enough revealed for that.

Some day these ages will have run their course and eternity will set in. Whether this eternity will be a further unfolding of the things of God, we do not know. We are not told.

As for basic facts concerning the purpose of the ages, a very brief outline may be had by reading Eph. 3:6, 2 Tim. 1:1 and Titus 1:2. Note the items; *a promise, in Christ, of life, made before age times.*

## OUTLINE STUDIES IN ROMANS 4

Error. Last month in paragraph 5 we said that both prepositions in 3:30 were the same. They are EK and DIA. Weymouth renders these 2 prepositional phrases, ON THE GROUND OF FAITH and THROUGH THE SAME FAITH. Sorry.

This time we take up 5:12 to 6:23. Remember that 5:12-21 deals with *death*. Chap. 6 deals with *sin*. Chap. 7 has *law* for key-word. Chap. 8 has for its theme *spirit* and *sonship*.

Note that verses 13-17 are a parenthesis. Read from 12 right into 18 to get the gist.

*Wherefore* in v. 12 follows atonement. Sin entered the world. It must have existed before somewhere. It is followed by death, but all by one man, Adam. In Adam all die (1 Cor. 15:22).

Now the descendents of Adam had no law up until the time of Moses. Sin was not imputed where there was no law. Yet they all died. These did not sin as Adam did (transgress law, Hosea 6:5 margin note). But Israel transgressed (set aside the law) even as Adam. The Jew had a double disability; he was a sinner by nature and declared a sinner by the law.

Remembering that this epistle is to two classes of people, saved Jews and saved Gentiles, *ALL* is used for the whole group and *MANY* for the Jews. Righteousness is available for both groups.

The law was to expose sin. So where sin was most exposed, grace was the most plenteous. But, law or no law, *sin* reigned unto *death*. On the contrary, *grace* may reign unto *eternal life*. But like the word gift in verse 18, so here is a word that qualifies. Grace *might* reign. The condition is not mentioned. But a gift must be received; and grace comes by faith.

Now chapter 6 takes up *sin*. Sin is the root. Sins are the fruit. It has then to do with deeds. Deeds or works imply wages. The wages is death. Contrasted with works and wages is the fact that eternal life is the *gift* of God.

The last verse of ch. 5 brings on a question. But the answer is one that we should memorize and keep before us, HOW SHALL WE, THAT ARE DEAD TO SIN, LIVE ANY LONGER THEREIN?

Christ lay in the silent tomb dead to the world for 3 days and 3 nites. We that believe can look back and say that we too were there, identified with Him. But on the 8th day He was raised. If we were identified with Him, then we should walk in a new life. Notice the word *likeness*. This is a dry baptism. It is the one baptism that is left for us today (Eph. 4).

Our old man, the old nature, crucified. The word destroyed means put out of working order. He that is dead is justified from sin. Dead with Christ...live with Him. (Suffer with Christ...reign with Him). See 5:17.

Death had dominion over the Lord 3 days and 3 nites, but no longer, and never will again. It can have no dominion forever over them that believe and are in Christ (identified with Him). The gates of hell will open and they will rise.

Servants of sin have no claims upon them by righteousness. So those who are servants of God are no longer debtors to sin. No one can be a servant of righteousness until free from sin. To whom will ye obey?

## EVOLUTION OR CREATION, WHICH?

Many and varied are the attempts to account for the church of the dispensation of the mystery. Every attempt is made to discount revelation and substitute rationalism. What so-called great teachers have to say is more important than what God says, so it seems.

The evolution theory seems to be the dominant one. this theory holds that the church began at Pentecost, or Acts 13, or maybe Acts 19, and slowly went thru a transitional period during which miracles, gifts, and the signs of different kinds gradually dropped off and the new church emerged some time after Acts. They say that times have changed since Pentecostal times and that is the reason that the signs are not in evidence today. But they fail to show chapter and verse for their reasoning.

But was there a gradual change, or was it an abrupt one? What is the record? Late in his Acts ministry Paul revived the dead, was bitten by a deadly serpent, and healed a man of a bloody dysentery. Was there a gradual change? We leave it to you.

Also on the side of the rituals, we find that the Jew was subject to the law all during Acts. He observed the feasts of Lev. 23. The Gentile did not observe them. He was free from the claims of the law. Jews who observed the Passover unworthily became sick and some died. Read 1 Cor. 11. This could not apply to Gentiles for in the first place they were under grace and so not subject to such judgments. Also they, as long as they were uncircumcised, could not partake of the feast. That was the law. Also remember that the Passover was not a public feast, but was observed in the home.

Now the facts of the case are plainly set forth in Ephesians. There we read that the Jewish and Gentile believers of Acts have been reconciled to each other because the middle wall of partition was broken down (circumcision, keeping of feasts, holy days, etc.). Then the two were made into one new man. This is a creation, not a reformation. This is something new, not the old in evolution.

The change from Acts to the dispensation of the mystery is as abrupt as was the change from the antediluvian days to the new world Noah saw when he emerged from the ark. The fact that Christendom has gone back and tried to imitate the conditions in Acts does not alter the truth. Or even the fact that many have gone back farther than that and imitate the worship in the temples in Babylon with their partaking of wafers and wine, worship of the green tree, adoration of the cross, and all the rest of their abominations does not alter the fact that there was a new creation among believers at Acts 28:28. During Acts there was one body of believers which belonged to Christ their King. After Acts there was created another body in which there were no such dispensational differences as were in the former, but was a body of Christ with Him as the Head (not King).

If the 2 parties of the old body were reconciled and created into one new body, then the old ceased to exist. Now which do you believe, *truth or tradition, creation or evolution?*

## THE HOPE OF YOUR CALLING

## BEGINNER'S CORNER #28

It would not be a *realization of my calling* to find myself in the Millennial Kingdom, however blessed and far beyond all merit such a lot would be. It would not be a *realization of my calling* to find myself (for any possible reason) occupying one of the 12 thrones of the apostles.

Such hopes are not mentioned in the Word as having any connection with, or relation to, a poor Gentile like me. No, my faith has received the testimony of God concerning the *Dispensation of the Mystery* (the secret). The hope of that calling can only be realized in a sphere and place known as FAR ABOVE ALL.

But for the time being, the Lord Jesus is waiting until the appointed time shall come. Each move that He makes comes IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME. All is in order.

Before He descends with His angelic hosts to take the Kingdom and reign, He will be made manifest IN GLORY. There is a time coming, a moment, in which will be made manifest THE GLORY OF THE GREAT GOD AND OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

When that manifestation takes place, every member of the one body of the *Dispensation of the Mystery* will be made manifest with Him in that glory. Not one could be missing, for then His body would not be complete.

How do we get there? We are not told. See how some questions of a similar nature are answered (1 Cor. 15:35 etc.). No one, whatever may be his calling, can enter into the realization of it apart from resurrection. Whether the resurrection of this church shall be individual or collective, visible or invisible, is not revealed.

The church of the *Dispensation of the Mystery* is not numbered among the denominations of Christendom. If it should suddenly cease, there would be no effect upon the religious world. Its inception, its course, and its conclusion are alike secret.

There are some who will hear the archangel's voice and the sound of the last trump; but not so with the church of the mystery. Before that archangel speaks, or that last trump shall sound, every member of this little company shall have been even MANIFESTED WITH HIM IN GLORY. He doeth all things well!

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We do however, entirely endorse the teaching that the world can never grow better apart from the personal presence of the Lord. Neither can the great and precious promises to Israel, the nations, or creation itself, be realized apart from His return.

All this is true without altering our own sphere of blessing and hope. The different companies of the redeemed have as their respective hopes varying phases of the Lord's manifestation. They may differ greatly; some will find their inheritance FAR ABOVE ALL PRINCIPALITY and the meek shall INHERIT THE EARTH.

Nevertheless all, whether they be kingdom, church, body, or bride, are united in the one blessed fact that the *Lord Himself* is their hope.

Let us LIVE . . . LOOKING.

Aside from Scripture, when we question present day theology, we find our society lacking the Body of 1 Corinthians. If the church had started at Pentecost, or some such period, and the Gentiles were partakers of the promises made to the fathers (Rom. 15:27), we today then would be going to a Jewish church and worshipping together with those who had obtained the gifts of the Spirit and joined to the church of God. Within this society we would have those Jews who had turned back to perdition (Heb. 10:39), and others, both Jew and Gentile that had broken away and founded other forms of worship. But within this framework of theology we would still find the *True Church*, or Body, consisting of Jew and Gentile holding to the one true doctrine. *But do we?*

I am sure that if God would have instigated such a body, it would have endured. And yet the Body comprising the church in Romans and Corinthians made up of these 2 peoples is the one group that has not survived. *Strange!?*

First, nowhere, with few exceptions do we find a Jewish-Gentile relationship, but rather the very antithesis. The middle wall spiritually is more in evidence today than the physical one in Acts. Yet the admonition went out from the Lord, FOR TO MAKE IN HIMSELF OF TWAIN ONE NEW MAN...WHERE THERE IS NEITHER GREEK NOR JEW, CIRCUMCISION NOR UNCIRCUMCISION, BARBARIAN, SCYTHIAN, BOND NOR FREE... Then where is this new man? Under which of the following categories shall we find him?

We have the Jew clinging to his old customs and laws, claiming no part in Christ. We have Gentiles professing Christ but retaining old rituals and sacraments. We have some Gentiles who profess to be Jews spiritually that they may inherit the land promised to Abraham. And some who just as vaguely (?) know they are going to inherit heaven. One could hardly call these a new man; rather a hodge-podge of the old man.

When we again turn to Scripture we find nothing contradictory to this order in society. The Body was not intended as such from the beginning. Recalling Rom. 11 again we are reminded that the Gentile was brot in to provoke Israel to jealousy that they might produce fruit. Had they repented and accepted Christ, and carried out their commission obtained from the time of Abraham, who knows that they might not also have been entrusted with evangelizing the Body of Christ? It was from all people that this Body would have drawn its members, just as today it is made up of all those who will accept.

When the Jew failed he was discarded as the channel of blessing and the NEW MAN was chosen by God thru His Son. This new dispensation was then revealed in Paul's writings. Those who chose to accept the Lord would no longer be dependent on Israel's hope, but on the promise made in Christ before age-times.

Abraham believed the impossible of God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. If we believe that God has called out a Body to be the fulness of His Son, it is our righteousness.

FOR IT PLEASD THE FATHER THAT IN HIM SHOULD

-- EXTRACTED. ALL FULLNESS DWELL. Col. 1:19.

-- D. C. A.

## THE EDITOR'S DESK

Well here it is, almost the end of the year. Tempus fugit is right! For those of you who have come in lately, we want you to know that this little paper is printed each month by Oscar M. Baker and sent free to any who request it. It also can be sent to furnished names and addresses. Our telephone is Ulysses 8-2684.

For the convenience of our friends and neighbors, we have a Bible class in our home each Tue. nite at 8 EST. This class began in April, 1948. If you do not know where we live, just find the junction of roads 600W and 100S. We live at the first house west of this corner. That makes us about 7 miles southwest of Warsaw. For those in Warsaw, go south out Rd. 15 about 1 mile to first turn west. Go west about 6 miles. Glad to have new folks come to class.

Several have been getting the bound volumes 9 and 10 of TFT. They are free as long as they last. Sorry we do not have them indexed. Now that reminds me, can you use a few extra copies of the paper each month to give to friends? Let us know and we will furnish them.

It is surprising how far our tracts travel. We have responses to them from many foreign countries. When you ask for these tracts, tell us the number of each that you want. We do not have any idea of what a few or several may mean to you or how many you can use. They are free to any who want to help distribute them.

We have something new that can be of a lot of help to you in your Bible study. We got in a shipment of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. They are \$13.75 each postpaid. This is the new printing that came out last June. Nice looking and well bound in buckram.

Mr. A. P. von Deesten, 357 S. Curson Ave., Los Angeles 36, Calif. tells us that he is quite busy with the tape chains. New links are being added all the time. The tapes are much better than formerly. These tapes are lent free. It is the chance of a lifetime. You can sit in your home or in a class and listen to one of the world's best Bible teachers just as if in a classroom. You can follow with your Bible and take notes, running it over and over as you need to in order not to miss anything. No wonder folks are so enthusiastic about it.

When Mr. Welch got back home from his tour of this country 3 years ago, he showed about 185 35mm. color slides at the Chapel of the Opened Book and explained them to the crowd that came to hear about the trip. A tape recording (about 2 hrs.) was made of this report. Now you too can see the pics and hear his message. You find a recorder and projector, and we will lend the pics and tape free. Is it a deal? They are circulating now. Let us know and we will get you in on the circuit somewhere.

Have you forgotten to renew your Berean Expositor subscription? It is now time. You can send it direct or we can take care of it for you. It is \$1 per year. Maybe you would like to get the Sign Post magazine too. It is free. The same with The Babblor and the Young People's Babblor. If you wish to make a donation to the latter papers, we can send it in for you. Read widely; be well informed.

Finally we sold all the bargain tape recorders. There are no more to be had as the factory has been sold. But we can supply you with webcor machines, which we ourselves use and find very good. Send for information.

Already we have received a great number of Christmas cards. Thanks a lot for the remembrance of us in your hearts. NOW we have not sent you any and hope you understand. Our time is pretty well taken and we prefer to use the money for the TFT ministry.

Did you ever think of writing a tract or an article for TFT? Of course volumes are written that never get into print for they just can't get by the editor's desk. But if you would like to try, ask for rules and suggestions.

We have taken several orders for the Rotherham Bible which we expect to be off the press in January. It is \$12.75 postpaid. This is a fine reference work being almost a literal translation and by the use of symbols shows what are the emphasized portions of sentences. Also the large Newberry Bible will be ready in the spring. This is also a good reference work with its notes and helps. It is \$17.50 postpaid. One of our friends tells us that he bought one 69 years ago in Glasgow, Scotland for 40 shillings. He still has it.

Have you forgotten to get Vol. 3 of the Alphabetical Analysis by C. H. Welch? We have them but have had trouble keeping up with the orders for a while. We still stock volumes 1 & 2 so those who missed them at the first may get them. Each Vol. is \$2 postpaid.

You have sent us over 20 letters a week in 1958. We appreciate them and keep all of them. We like to keep in touch with beginners in R.D. Keep on writing!

We are glad for all the visitors we had last year. Sorry that some of you planned to come but could not make it this time. But maybe you can come yet some time.

Are you thinking of moving? Don't forget to consider this part of the country. No, we are not in the real estate business. Happy New Year!

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