



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Issue 26

The Key to Understanding the Bible

by – Richard Jordan

The Bible is the world's most marvelous book, all because it is God's book. It is wonderful that God wrote a book, even more so that He has preserved it intact through history and has even provided for it to be translated into the languages of the nations. We have His Word, preserved for us and translated into our own language so that we can hold it in our hands, read it and see for *ourselves* just what God has said. This is all a marvelous blessing! But there is more.

It is important to recognize that God has also provided us with a divinely prescribed method for *understanding* it. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable ..." II Timothy 3:16 declares. But if we are to gain the profit from God's Word that He has placed there for us, we must approach it in His way. Thus II Timothy 2:15 instructs:

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Clearly our study of the Word is for the purpose of showing ourselves "approved unto God." This is to be our one great goal, our objective: to have God's approval, to be workmen who have no need to be ashamed before Him. But *how* is this objective to be reached? The answer is given with equal clarity: "Rightly dividing the Word of truth." This is the key to having God's approval on our service for Him – the *key* to understanding His Word.

"Rightly dividing the Word of truth" is a reference to the *dispensational approach* to studying the Bible¹ and it is clear that this is the correct approach if we are to have God's approval on our lives and ministries.

It is important to notice that Paul says, "rightly dividing the Word." The clear implication is that there is a *wrong* way to divide it. Paul does not, as many seem to suppose, simply say we are to make divisions in God's Word. No. We are to make *right* divisions – correct, proper distinctions. Great care is called for at this point for, remember, it is God's Word we are handling. This is not the word of a doctrinal statement, a church creed, or tradition of human viewpoint; this is the Word of Almighty God.

As we approach it, therefore, we want to approach it in God's way, properly recognizing the distinctions He has made in it. Just *how* to do this – that is the important question!

(continued on page 259)

1. Lit., cutting straight" (Gk. orthotomounta). Perhaps because of a failure to appreciate the dispensational nature of Scripture in general and the immediate context of II Timothy 2:15 in particular, many modern translators and commentators unfortunately have abandoned the Greek reading and have followed the Latin Vulgate which reads, rightly handling."

The Key to Understanding the Bible	257
The Gospel of the Grace of God	264
The Gap Theory: Affirmed	265
Bowels	268

Dear Saints of God:

Greetings in the wonderful name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! With joy we bring you another issue of the BSN. To be able to bring you the BSN on a monthly basis is the fulfillment of a long standing desire. We pray that God will use the BSN to bring honor and glory to Himself, glory which He alone so rightly deserves.

We trust that you will give careful consideration to the feature article of this issue of the BSN, which is on Paul's missionary methods. We have found the truths shared in this article, by a missionary from a century ago, to be profound.

I would also like to remind you of our PURPOSE, ATTITUDE and GOAL in the publication of the BSN.

PURPOSE

1. It is our purpose to glorify the Lord by assisting in the establishment, maturing and equipping of the saints to their fullest potential through continual doctrinal exposure and edification (Colossians 1:28).

2. It is our purpose to glorify the Lord by:

A. Purifying the doctrine - "prove all things" (1 Thessalonians 5:21)

B. Propagating the doctrine - "make all men see" (Ephesians 3:9)

C. Protecting the doctrine - "set for the defense" (Philippians 1:17).

ATTITUDE

We fully recognize that we have no corner on truth, nor does anyone else. No one person or group possesses "all truth" infallibly. We therefore desire to avoid destructive uniformity and allow for differences of opinion. We don't expect our readers to agree with everything that appears

(continued on page 268)

Bible Student's Notebook™

ISSN: 1936-9360
No. 26 – March, 1995

This biweekly publication (24 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of *rich* Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "Movement," "Organization," "Mission," or separate body of believers, but is sent forth to and for all "saints."

SUBSCRIPTION

U.S.: 6 months (12 issues) - \$24⁰⁰; 1 year (24 issues) - \$42⁰⁰; 2 years (48 issues) - \$72⁰⁰; 3 years (72 issues) - \$90⁰⁰;
Foreign: 1 year (24 issues) - \$60⁰⁰;

PATRIARCHS

Remember that it is our responsibility as husbands and fathers to take the truths we learn from God's Word, the truths that we hold dear, and impart them to our families.

The Bible Student's Notebook™

bsn@studysshelf.com
www.BibleStudentsNotebook.com

PO Box 265
Windber, PA 15963
Office: (800) 784-6010

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. – Editor
Andre Sneider – Managing Editor

Visit our online bookstore at: www.StudyShelf.com

Copyright © 1989-2007 Pilkington & Sons
(recompiled and edited)

Since it is Paul who instructs us to rightly divide the Word, it would seem safe to ask Paul just how this should be done. So, instead of going to Darby, Scofield, Larkin, Hodges, Calvin, Strong or the like, let's turn to Paul and see if he can help us understand just how God's Word is to be "rightly divided."

A THREE-FOLD DIVISION

God Himself never changes. In His person, essence and character He is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). His dealings with man, however, have undergone various changes down through history – changes made necessary by changes in man himself. Identifying these changes is a basic issue in studying the Bible dispensationally,² for a dispensation is a particular program that God administers (or dispenses) for man's obedience.

In Ephesians chapter 2 Paul the Apostle gives us a panoramic view of his understanding of the way God's dealings with mankind have been divided. He does this by making a clear, distinct and easily identifiable threefold division: *Time Past* (vs. 11, 12), *But Now* (v. 13), *the Ages to Come* (vs. 7).

TIME PAST

During "*Time Past*" there was an unmistakable distinction made between the *circumcision* and the *uncircumcision*, between the nation Israel and the Gentiles.

*"Wherefore remember, that ye being in **time past** Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;*

"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:" (vs. 11, 12).

2. It is readily apparent that God's program for man has changed from time to time: compare Exodus 31:15 with Colossians 2:16; Leviticus 11:7, 8 with I Timothy 4:4; Matthew 5:19 with Romans 6:14; Psalm 51:11 with Ephesians 4:30; Genesis 17:11 with Galatians 6:15, etc.

The terms *circumcision* and the *uncircumcision* identify a basic physical, racial and social distinction; one that was "*in the flesh*" and "*made with hands*." It was, in fact, so real and intense that they were obviously "calling" each other names! But there was more:

In this "time past" status, the Gentiles were also spiritually alienated from God and thus said to be "*without Christ*." This is said to be their condition because they were "*aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise*."

Thus the *physical* distinction only pointed to the more important *spiritual* alienation the Gentile masses occupied in *Time Past*.

The basic issue in *Time Past* is this division between the circumcision and the uncircumcision, between Israel and the Gentiles. When you find this issue governing the way God was working with men, you know immediately you are in *Time Past*.

BUT NOW

Ephesians 2:13 indicates that in the "*But Now*" period all this has changed. No longer are Gentiles considered "*far off*" but rather this distinction has been eliminated and now "*those who were far off are made nigh*."

*"**But now** in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*

"For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;" (vs. 13, 14).

So there is a *Time Past*, the basic characteristic of which is the *separation* between the circumcision and the uncircumcision, between the Jew and the Gentiles. Then there is *But Now* where they are dealt with on an *equal* basis and in the same manner. During the *But Now* there has been a change in the way God deals with the nations, for "*the middle wall of partition*" has been "*broken down*." There is one remaining section:

THE AGES TO COME

Much is to come in the future as God brings His purposes to fruition and hence the final division:

“That in the ages to come HE might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (v. 7).

So we have Paul's three-fold division: Time Past, But Now, and the Ages to Come. How can the Word of God be laid out according to this? Let's see.

Time past

Time Past is marked by the basic characteristic of the separation between circumcision and uncircumcision. We know where circumcision came from. It began with Abraham as a sign of the covenant God made with him and his seed after him.

In Genesis 17 the Lord confirmed His covenant with Abram, changing his name to Abraham and instituted the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant – circumcision:

“And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep My covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.

“This is My covenant, which ye shall keep, between Me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.

“And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt Me and you.

“And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.

“He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

“And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken My covenant” (Genesis 17:9–14).

Thus “circumcision in the flesh made by hands” was a sign of the special status given to the seed of Abraham by God. It was an outward sign of the spiritual privilege God had given to them and was a required mark of their identity and covenant privileges.

So the division between the circumcision and the uncircumcision began in the book of Genesis. It was there, with Abraham, that God began to erect the “middle wall of partition” between Jew and Gentile by giving to Abraham and his seed circumcision as “the sign of the covenant.” In Genesis 22:17-18 God states His purpose in that covenant and in thus separating the nation Israel from all other nations of the earth:

“That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

“And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice.”

Numbers 23:9 declares concerning Israel's special status:

“... Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.”

God not only erected this “middle wall,” He also reinforced it by the giving of the law through Moses:

“Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

“Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these

statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

“For what nation is there so great, who bath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon Him for?”

“And what nation is there so great, that bath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?” (Deuteronomy 4:5–8).

We see from this that what is generally referred to as the “Old Testament” is in fact part of *Time Past*. But when does the change occur? When do we move into the *But Now* status? And what about the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Paul sheds real light on this latter question when he writes:

“Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:” (Romans 15:8).

Note well that the character of our Lord’s earthly ministry is defined as His being “a *minister of the circumcision*.” Thus we learn that the period covered by the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John is in fact part of *Time Past*. The distinction between the circumcision and the uncircumcision still formed the basis of God’s dealings with men at that time.

There is now a way one can read the records of our Lord’s earthly ministry and fail to see this basic fact. For example, in His first great commission to His Apostles, He declares:

*“These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, **Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:***

“But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 10:5, 6).

Later when they besought Him to work a miracle for a Gentile woman, He pointedly told them:

“... I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 15:24).

Further, John 4:22 records His words to the woman at the well in Samaria:

*“Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: **for salvation is of the Jews.**”*

Too often such passages are simply ignored – no doubt because they are not properly understood. Such plain words, however, cannot be gainsaid or mistaken. They mean what they say and their implication is clear: the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ demonstrates itself to be a part of *Time Past*. Thus the books of *Matthew, Mark, Luke* and *John* are properly placed in the *Time Past* division when we “rightly divide” the word of truth.

The same is true of the early Acts period. In His post-resurrection commission our Lord clearly maintained the advantage status of the circumcision:

*“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, **beginning at Jerusalem**”* (Luke 24:47).

After some 40 days of personal instruction from their resurrected Lord in things “pertaining to the kingdom of God,” the apostles understood that the program of God still focused on Israel and her coming kingdom:

*“When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, **Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?**”* (Acts 1:6).

That this understanding was in no way a mistake of human frailty is borne out by the fact that on the day of Pentecost, Peter, speaking “as the Spirit gave [him] utterance,” three times specifically limits his message to the nation Israel:

*“But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, **Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you,***

and hearken to my words:

“... Ye men of Israel, hear these words ...

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly ...” (Acts 2:14, 22, 36).

Thus the understanding of Peter and the eleven as to just where they stood in the program of God gives clear evidence that they still functioned in the *Time Past* division, when Israel was still in the place of honor and advantage.

Peter is identified in Galatians 2:8 as the apostle of the circumcision and as such preached “the gospel of the circumcision” (Galatians 2:7). It is in this capacity and with this message that he declares to his nation:

“Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities” (Acts 3:25, 26).

Throughout their ministry as recorded in Acts the Pentecostal believers declared their testimony that,

“The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

“Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:30, 31).

In fact, Israel’s special privileged position extended even after they were scattered from Jerusalem by persecution, for Acts 11:19 tells us:

“Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.”

The record is clear: The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and the early part of the book of Acts properly belong in *Time Past*.

But Now

When, then, does the change to the *But Now* position occur? When did the circumcision and the uncircumcision being reconciled into one body begin to take place? Ephesians 3 supplies the answer:

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

“If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

“How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery..

“Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

“That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel” (Ephesians 3:1–3, 5–6).

From the record it is evident that the Apostle Paul was the instrument our ascended Lord used to initiate the program of *grace* for the Gentiles by way of a message he calls “the mystery” – a secret purpose which God kept “hidden” in Himself until He revealed it to and then through Paul the apostle.

With the raising up of Paul we move from *Time Past* into the *But Now* section and cross what in fact is the most important boundary line of the Bible – that between *prophecy* and the great *mystery* proclaimed by Paul. It is into these two great subjects that the Bible is basically divided.

Manifestly there is a great difference between Peter’s preaching of that “which God hath spoken

by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21) and Paul's proclamation of that "which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25).

This great message has to do with the *breaking down* of the middle wall of partition and the placing of Jews and Gentile into one body on an absolutely equal basis through simple faith in the cross-work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:13–22).

How is it that this "mystery" message can now go to the Gentiles without regard to Israel's former status? Romans 11 answers:

"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather **through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles**, for to provoke them to jealousy.

"... The **casting away of them [is] the reconciling of the world ...**

"For **I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery**, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that **blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in**" (Romans 11:11, 15, 25).

Our Lord set the nation Israel aside during the Acts period and from heaven's glory introduced a *new* program through a *new* apostle. With the revelation of this new program we move into the *But Now* period and thus we read Paul now declaring:

"**For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office**" (Romans 11:13).

Romans through Philemon are the books, then, that fit into the *But Now* division. These are the books that detail what God is doing during the present dispensation of grace.

The Ages to Come

After the present dispensation is brought to a conclusion, there is still much that God has to

accomplish. Since His prophetic program for the nation Israel has currently been interrupted in order to form the Body of Christ, the first order of business would logically be its completion.

Appropriately, the grouping of books following the Pauline epistles is called the *Hebrew Epistles*. They, in fact, fit doctrinally into the *Ages to Come*. Consider Hebrews 2:3, 5:

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; **which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him** [early Acts];

"For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection **the world to come, whereof we speak** [Hebrews through Revelation]."

The distinction between the circumcision and the uncircumcision is also again in vogue in the Hebrew Epistles, and thus we find such things as:

"James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting" (James 1:1).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (I Peter 2:9; c.f. Exodus 19:5, 6).

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION

Thus we see that the Word of God itself provides us with the key to its own proper understanding and right division:

Time Past: In *Matthew through John* we find the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ to the nation Israel. In the book of *Acts* we have the fall of Israel and salvation going to the Gentiles through the ministry of Paul the apostle.

But Now: *Romans through Philemon* provide the doctrine for the present dispensation of grace.

Ages to Come: *Hebrews* through *Revelation* focus on the *ages to come* when God will bring to fruition His purposes for *both* the nation Israel and the Body of Christ.

We are not the only people in the programs and purposes of God. People in other ages need Scripture to instruct them in the specifics of God's dealings with them just as we do. Remember: all of the Bible is *for* us but it is not all *to* us nor is it all *about* us. If we fail to recognize this important fact we will never be able to properly understand just what God is doing today nor will we know just what He would have us do.

One important question remains: you are one of "the nations." Paul the apostle says unequivocally, "*I am the apostle of the Gentiles [i.e., the nations].*"

Who, then, is *your* apostle? There can be no answer but that Paul is our apostle, for he was raised up by our ascended Lord specifically that he "should be the *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*" (Romans 15:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, *He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me*" (John 13:20).

Thus it is in Paul's writings alone that we find the doctrine, position, walk and destiny of the Body of Christ.³

■
3. This article is available in booklet form from www.StudyShelf.com

The Gospel of the Grace of God

by – Oliver B. Greene, *Galatians*, (pp. 16, 17)

Paul's message was a new message a mystery not known before. His message, received direct from Heaven, was a new revelation of divine truth. The heart of Paul's message was 'the grace of God' and that the grace of God had been extended to all men everywhere regardless of nationality – Jew or Gentile, Greeks or Barbarians – Jesus died for all and invites all ... "whosoever will;" let him come.

[B]efore the grace of God [preached by Paul the Apostle], [the gospel had been limited to the nation Israel; and Gentiles could be saved only by becoming Jews, by submitting to the Jewish rite of circumcision, thus placing themselves under the laws and the rituals of the Israelites. These were called "Jewish proselytes." When Paul came with this new message of salvation by grace through faith plus nothing, he met with

serious opposition from the apostles who were preaching the Kingdom message to the Jew only. Paul was a Jew ... Paul was devoted to Judaism – soul, spirit and body. He was a fanatic in his defense of what he believed to be the only true religion on earth. Paul was present when Stephen was martyred. He became the most bitter enemy Christianity had in his day. He was traveling to Damascus to arrest Christians and persecute the church when he was struck down and blinded by a light from Heaven. He called out, asking who it was speaking to him. The answer recorded in Acts 9:5 was: "*I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest.*" Through this gigantic experience, – Paul became a believer ... he received the revelation of his new message ... the mystery of the church, the body of Christ, the Age of Grace ... salvation by grace through faith plus nothing. ■

The Gap Theory: Affirmed

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

When we consider the issue of a time period between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 it is important to understand that such gaps are not uncommon to the Bible. Another example of such a gap is in Isaiah 61:1, 2 (c.f. Luke 4:19). In this passage in Isaiah we have the first and second comings of Christ spoken of as if no time had lapsed. While in fact, we now know, a simple comma in verse two represents a 2,000+ year period.

The gap in question (Genesis 1:1, 2) has, at times, over the years, become a very debated issue, with some believers actually being unkind and ungracious in their attitudes toward one another over it. It is important for us not to become disturbed because another believer *holds to* or *does not hold to* the “gap.” In fact, not all of the members of the BSN editorial board have come to the same conclusion as this author.

What I would like to present to you are some of the things which have led me to the conclusion that there is a gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. Before proceeding, it is important to understand that I do not hold to any “evolutionary process.” Some opponents of the “gap” have attempted to make the issue one of “orthodoxy.” They seek to paint those who hold to the “gap” as standing against the fundamental tenets of creation, or at least succumbing to the weight of evolutionary thinking. The idea is communicated that the “gap” theory is a recent attempt to reconcile evolutionistic thought with that of the Bible. I do not feel any need to make Scripture harmonize with current Pseudo-Scientific thought (I Tim. 6:20)!

It might help you to understand that I was raised with the “gap theory” and it is my experience that it is held by many believers, at least throughout the “Bible Belt.” It is also a position that has been held by prominent dispensationalists such as C.I. Scofield, Clarence Larkin, George Williams and E.W. Bullinger. Contrary to what some would have you believe, it has also been held by some within the Scientific community. In fact, the largest work on this subject (for either position) was written by a research scientist named Arthur C. Custance. His work entitled “*Without Form and Void*” demonstrates that the “gap” view was a view held through the centuries.

I. THE ISSUE OF THE GAP THEORY STATED

Genesis 1:1 is the record of the original creation. Lucifer and other “angelic” beings were -part of this creation (Job 3 8:4-7 – the “son of God” being a reference to direct creation – c.f. Job 1:6; 2:1; Genesis 6:2, 4).

Lucifer was given “dominion” or “kingship” of the Earth. He was created perfect and with great light and beauty; but sin was found in him – the sin of pride (Ezekiel 28:11-19; Isaiah 14:12-20).

Between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 there was a Satanic rebellion to invade heaven which produced divine judgement upon creation. God in His six day act restored the creation and introduced the Adamic race – His plan for the re-establishment of divine authority on the earth.

II. THE REASON FOR THE GAP CONSIDERED

A possible reason for the “gap” is that the Bible is primarily a book dealing with man. God’s purpose is not served by “dealing” with the subject of Satanic rebellion at this point in recorded Scripture, but the context presents sufficient cause for thoughtful consideration of a gap, especially when linked with subsequent revelation.

III. A LOOK AT THE GAP IN LIGHT OF OTHER PASSAGES

A. Isaiah 14

In this passage we find a study of the Antichrist’s fall. In the midst of this fall, there is a mocking of Lucifer’s fall, which reveals the Satanic policy of evil (vs. 12-15). We notice in this passage that:

1. Lucifer had a “Throne,” thus he was a king with subjects. Hence his title “*the god (magistrate) of this world*” (II Corinthians 4:4) and “*the prince (chief magistrate) of the power (jurisdiction) of the air*” (i.e., supreme land and air commander).

C.f. Luke 4:5-8 and notice that Satan’s *right* to offer “*all the kingdoms of the world*” goes unchallenged by Jesus Christ.

2. His dominion was on Earth (he invades heaven from below the clouds and the stars).

B. Ezekiel 28

This passage is like the one in Isaiah 14. Notice the description of Lucifer

in Eden. The description of him given here does not match the one found in the “Adamic Eden.”

The Nature of the Original Creation was *perfect* and not “*without form and void*.”

“He is the Rock, His work is PERFECT: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He” (Deuteronomy 32:4).

*“For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, he **created it not in vain**, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else.” (Isaiah 45:18)*

The word “vain” found in this last verse is Strong’s #H8414 and is the exact word translated “*without form*” in Genesis 1:2. So the Lord did *not* create the heaven and the earth “*without form and void*,” but it became so by Satanic iniquity and Divine judgement.

C. Psalm 104

The context of this Psalm is the subject of creation. In this chapter there is a reference to a *flood*, to “*the deep*” (vs. 6, 7). Yet the description does not match that of the Noahic flood. There is no record of the waters of Noah’s day fleeing and hastening away at His rebuke. Rather, that flood was a *continual* decreasing process of 157 days.

Also consider II Peter 3:4-6. Which flood is this? Did the Noahic flood change the heavens also?

IV. THE CONTEXTUAL REASONS FOR THE GAP

- A. The word “AND” throughout the passage.

They are “ands” of addition (then, next), not “ands” of explanation (“even”).

Every verse in chapter one, with the exception of 1 and 27 all begin with the word “and.” Some 148 times in chapter 1 & 2 the word “and” is used as an additional statement.

Continuing with this consistency, Genesis 1:2 is not a statement of explanation of 1:1, but one of addition.

- B. The nature of the term “WITHOUT FORM AND VOID.”

The only other reference to this phrase is a description of the Divine Judgment upon the Satanic plan of evil (Jeremiah 4:23).

- C. The meaning of the Word “EARTH.”

The meaning of word Earth is “dry land.” In Genesis 1:2 the earth (“dry land”) of 1:1 is now “wet land” and remains so until 1:10 when God removes the water and restores the earth (“dry land”). What happened to the “earth” (“dry land”) of 1:1?

- D. The Biblical significance of the word “DARKNESS.”

In Scripture the word “darkness” is a sign of divine judgement (Examples: Exodus 10:21-23; Isaiah 5:30; 13:9, 10; Jeremiah 4:23-26; Amos 5:18-20; Zephaniah 1:14-15; Joel 2:31; 3:15; Matthew 8:12; 27:45-46).

This explains why there is a re-entrance of “light” in verse 3 (*i.e.*, Divine presence), while the “lights” (the sun, moon and stars) do not show up until verse 14.

- E. The language of REDEMPTION that is used.

Paul associates this passage with the operation of salvation (*c.f.* II Corinthians 4:3-6). Paul, by divine inspiration, declared Genesis 1:1-3 to be an illustration of the work of redemption.

- F. The Adamic commission – “REPLENISH”

God told Adam to replenish the Earth (Genesis 1:28). This word replenish is:

RE – denoting a return, repetition or iteration (recital or performing over again), and

PLENUS – denoting a filling or fullness.

Every other occurrence of this word “replenish” has in its view that of “plenishing” again – *i.e.*, re-plentify (Special note should be made of its use in Genesis 9:1; water had just covered the Earth *again* – *c.f.* Isaiah 2:6; 23:2; Jeremiah 31:25; Ezekiel 2:2; 27:25)

- G. The Adamic commission – “SUBDUE”

There is an enemy in view! Webster defines the word subdue as meaning, “to conquer by force.” Who or what is the enemy?



Bowels

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

The Bible uses the word “bowels,” rather than the common-day word “heart,” as the seat of one’s emotions, as can be seen in the following Pauline references:

*“For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the **bowels** of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:8).*

*“If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any **bowels** and mercies,” (Philippians 2:1).*

*“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, **bowels:**” of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;” (Colossians 3:12).*

*“For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the **bowels** of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother” (Philemon 1:7).*

“Whom I have sent again: thou therefore

*receive him, that is, mine own **bowels:**” (Philemon 1:12).*

*“Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my **bowels** in the Lord” (Philemon 1:20).*

In light of the biblical usage of the word **bowels**, note the following medical quote:

“Anatomy makes it easy for stress to wreak havoc on the digestive system. The brain’s centers of emotion are connected *directly* to the abdomen through two nerve pathways, the vagus nerve and the sympathetic nerves. When the brain registers anxiety, it floods the gastrointestinal (GI) tract with chemicals that can cause it to slow down or speed up, secrete more acid, or even go into spasm.

“‘In many ways, the digestive system serves as a barometer of your emotions,’ says Dr. Sandra Holloway, a Peninsula gastroenterologist.” (Irritable Bowel Syndrome, *The Female Perspective* (May-July, 1994), Sentara Women’s Services. ■

(continued from page 258)

within the pages of this publication. But we do trust that each one will study out the information and that it will stimulate further Bible study. As another editor has so well said, “I hope anyone following after me will go further than I have gone in the search for truth, will see more of the Word of God than I have seen, and will explore where I never dreamt treasures were to be found.”

And as we stated in our very first issue, “Do not be surprised if, from time to time, you read articles which reflect change from previous things which have been said or written. This is PROGRESS. All that we ask of you is that you keep an open Bible and an open mind.”

GOAL

While it is our goal to print that which we believe will benefit the Body of Christ, we realize that we may, at times, publish that which might have been

best left unpublished. If we realize this disservice to the Body, we will apologize.

We realize that on occasions we may be misunderstood. If we are aware of this we will attempt to clarify ourselves. And if you disagree with us, please feel free to write. We will endeavor to handle all inquiries with Christian love and kindness and we would appreciate the same from you, as you write to us.

We love you!

Until next time,

Your Brother,



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.