



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## *The Herald of His Grace*

Issue 37

### *Coverture*

#### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOME Part XII

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

**T**here is a legal word that describes the place of protection and care of the wife under the authority of her husband. That word is “coverture.” The word is defined as:

Coverture – “2. In law, the state of a married woman, who is considered as under *cover*, or the power of her husband, and therefore called a *feme-covert*, or *femme-covert*. The *coverture* of a woman disables her from making contracts to the prejudice of herself or husband, without his allowance or confirmation.” Noah Webster – 1828

Coverture – “The condition or position of a woman during her married life, when she is by law under the authority and protection of her husband.” Oxford English Dictionary

Blackston's Law Commentary

Let us observe some very interesting points taken from Blackston's Law Commentary (1771 edition, Vol. I. p. 433-445).

“By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law; that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of [her] husband: under whose wing, protection, and *cover*, she performs every thing; and is therefore called in our law-french a *feme-covert*, *foemina*

*co-operta*; is said to be *covert-baron*, or under the protection and influence of her husband, her *baron*, or lord; and her condition during her marriage is called her *coverture*...

“A man cannot grant any thing to his [married] wife, or enter into covenant with her: for the grant would suppose her separate existence; and to covenant with her, would be only to covenant with himself: and therefore it is also generally true, that all compacts made between husband and wife, when single, are voided by the intermarriage...

“In trials of any sort, they are not allowed to be evidence for, or against each other: partly because it is impossible their testimony should be indifferent; but principally because of the *union of person*...”

“These are the chief legal effects of marriage during the *coverture*; upon which we may observe, that even the disabilities, which the wife lies under, are for the most part intended for her protection and benefit. So great a favourite is the female sex of

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Dear Saints:

## E-mail Address

I now have an E-mail address: *Clyde@Pilkingtonandsons.com*. Feel free to use this address to communicate with me personally, or to place an order. What does the E in E-mail stand for? Edification I hope! So let's send each other some E(dification)-mail!

## Hospitality Directory

We are planning to publish a listing of saints who desire to use their homes for fellowship, Bible study and hospitality. If you are interested in being included there is a form in the center of this issue of the *BSN*.

## New Books

Also in the center of this issue of the *BSN* you will find a list of new books that are available. We are, for the first time, offering a number of books written by Gene Edwards. Maybe, without realizing it, you have read some of his works via the *Bible Student's Notebook*. We have run "Do It My Way" (in issue #29), "John Calvin Revisited" (#22) and "Three Groups in Church History" (#24). I have also quoted him on numerous occasions. In fact, this very issue of the *BSN* has an excerpt from his book *Climb the Highest Mountain*.

Over the last few years I have really come to appreciate him. He was trained by the religious system to the *max*, a graduate of the world's largest Protestant Seminary. He held positions among the Southern Baptists. This brother's writings have been

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## Bible Student's Notebook™

ISSN: 1936-9360  
No. 37 – January, 1997

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) - \$24<sup>00</sup>; 1 year (24 issues) - \$42<sup>00</sup>; 2 years (48 issues) - \$72<sup>00</sup>; 3 years (72 issues) - \$90<sup>00</sup>;  
Foreign: 1 year (24 issues) - \$60<sup>00</sup>;

## 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@studyshelf.com  
www.BibleStudentsNotebook.com

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

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

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the laws of England."

Below are a few additional quotes from the Oxford English Dictionary on coverture:

"A feme-covert [married woman] cannot make a contract." (1602 Fulbecke)

"If a freeman marry a bondwoman, she is also free during the coverture" (1708, Chamberlayne).

"His accomplished wife could scarcely be

subjected to ... imprisonment ... while sheltered by the aegis [protection] of her coverture." (1868)

Now, with these facts in mind turn to our text (Numbers 30:1-16) and give the passage a very thoughtful and careful reading! It will reveal that early English and American law understood something very basic in God's design of the role of a husband!

(This is part of a continuing series on the Home.)

## *The Word of God on a Blank Page*

by – Keith R. Blades

**T**he Bible is the complete revelation of the Word of God, and is composed of the 66 books of Genesis through the Revelation. Since its completion, and since the days of the printing press, the Bible has been traditionally divided into two main segments: the Old Testament – composed of Genesis through Malachi; and the New Testament – composed of Matthew through the Revelation.

This basic dividing and labeling of God's Word, though traditional, is clearly not completely accurate. For though we call Genesis an Old Testament book, the Testament, or Covenant, which God made with Israel which became 'old' was not brought down by God until Exodus 19. Hence, in truth, nothing from Genesis 1 to Exodus 19 is under the Old Testament. Likewise, the New Testament, or Covenant, was not established by God until the Lord Jesus Christ had died upon the cross. Therefore, in truth, the Gospel accounts are Old Testament books. For Christ was "*made of a woman, made under the law*," just as Paul the apostle says.

Beyond the fact that this traditional dividing and labeling of God's Word is not completely accurate,

there is also the fact that it unfortunately obscures the *right division of the Word of truth*. The Bible needs to be *rightly divided*, just as Paul the apostle instructs us to do.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH.**" (II Timothy 2:15)

God has made divisions in His Word, and He expects us to recognize them and *rightly divide* His Word accordingly. But the traditional dividing of the Bible into Old Testament and New Testament has caused many to think that *that* is the *right division* that God is talking about us making. Hence, they think Genesis through Malachi is God's *old time* dealings with Israel since it is the Old Testament, but beginning with Matthew's Gospel, God's *new time* dealings with us get under way since Matthew begins the New Testament. Though this is commonly thought to be the case, the testimony of God's Word is that it is not so.

Where God expects us to *rightly divide* His Word is not between Malachi and Matthew, but rather,

as will be seen, the division is to be made in connection with the revelation of the “*mystery of Christ*” which God revealed unto Paul the apostle.

## THE BLANK PAGE

The blank page which comes between the end of Malachi and the beginning of Matthew in our Bibles is often looked upon as the dispensational dividing line which God has placed in His Word. With it, it is thought, He has set off the books of Genesis through Malachi as having to do with “*time past*,” and has signified that Matthew begins the record of His program and dealings with us today. But that blank page isn’t there as a separator. It isn’t there to function as a divider. It isn’t there to make us think that something has now come to a close with the end of Malachi, and now something new and different is beginning with what Matthew records.

Rather, instead of functioning as a separator, divider, or spacer, that blank page stands for the prophesied period of silence in God’s program and dealings with Israel in which they experienced “*a famine of hearing the Word of God*” to them. Instead, therefore, of indicating a distinction between what has come before and what follows after, that blank page links them together.

That blank page, standing as it does for that period of God’s silence to Israel, testifies to us that the Gospel accounts which follow it don’t bring in something new, but instead end the period of silence and continue God’s program and dealings with Israel. In essence, that empty page following Malachi is *the Word of God on a blank page* to Israel.

## THE PROPHESIED SILENCE OF GOD

In the course of God’s dealings with Israel, and in view of their persistent rebelliousness and contrariness to Him, there came the time when God began to walk contrary unto Israel in His fury, just as the Law contracted for. This began when God brought His people into the captivity

of the Assyrians and Chaldeans, and sent them out of the land.

As is set forth, though, in the prophets Isaiah through Malachi, the captivity was only the beginning of the judgments of God which Israel would experience as the fury of God’s chastisement came upon them. There would, in fact, be five installments to this final round of God’s chastening of His nation, with the fifth and last installment being the “*day of the LORD*” in which He would purge His nation and leave only a righteous remnant. But before that final installment of the chastening arrived, there would be other matters of judgment which the nation would face, one of which would be an extended period of time when God would be silent and would say nothing to His nation.

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor of thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it” (Amos 8:11-12).

Israel, as part of the final round of God’s chastening of them, would experience this time of God’s silence. A time when He would not say anything to them; an extended time when the Word of God would not come to them.

This aspect of the final round of God’s chastening came upon the nation following the days of Malachi the prophet. Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi were the last prophets through whom God spoke to Israel before He went silent, and the ‘*famine of hearing the words of the LORD*’ began to be experienced in the land. For approximately 400 years God was silent to Israel. The silence of God was not broken by God until, as each one of the Gospel accounts opens up with, the Word of God came unto John the Baptist and he began functioning as God’s prophet to Israel.<sup>1</sup>

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1. NOTE: By understanding this time of God’s silence to Israel, we are also able to know assuredly that the books of the Apocrypha are not the Word of God.

With John the Baptist, God began speaking once again to Israel, and John began to herald to the nation that the time was “*at hand*” for the arrival of the final installment of the Lord’s chastening of them and for the establishment of their covenanted and long-awaited “*kingdom of heaven*” in Zion.

That blank page, therefore, between Malachi and Matthew, stands for the silence of God to Israel which Amos prophesied would come upon them. It’s not a dispensational dividing line or marker. Rather, it’s *the Word of God on a blank page* testifying to the time of approximately 400 years when God said nothing to Israel, as part of His chastisement of them.

### **PROPER RIGHT DIVISION**

The proper *right division* which God expects us to make in His Word is not between Malachi and Matthew. It is not the traditional division of Old Testament and New Testament. But rather, we are to be “*rightly dividing the Word of truth*” in connection with the great dispensational change which God brought in when He raised up Paul as a brand new and different apostle.

From the time God separated Abraham unto Himself, as recorded in Genesis 12, and made His covenant with him and his seed, God’s program and dealings have been with His nation Israel. The Gentile world was put in a position of alienation from God as He drew nigh to Israel and dealt exclusively with them. This is how things were in “*time past*,” just as Paul describes.

“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:” (Eph. 2:11-12).

This former “*far off*” status which we Gentiles possessed is what we find in effect not only

throughout what we call the Old Testament, but also in the record of the Gospels and the opening chapters of the book of Acts. Our Lord’s earthly ministry and that of the 12 apostles with Him pertained to God’s program and dealings with Israel, with us Gentiles still “*far off*.” Hence, as Paul says, we at that time “*were without Christ*.” And as he declares in Romans 15:8 ...

**“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:”**

The books of Genesis through the opening chapters of the book of Acts, therefore, set forth the outworking of God’s program and “*time past*” dealings with His nation Israel. They don’t relate God’s program and dealings with us Gentiles today.

The present dispensation of Gentile grace in which we live today was not ushered in by God until the Lord unexpectedly came back from heaven, as recorded in Acts 9, and raised up Paul as a brand new apostle. To Paul God revealed that He was temporarily suspending His program with Israel, and was bringing in a new and different dispensation in accordance with the “*mystery of Christ*” – a secret purpose He has in Christ which He kept hid in Himself until revealing it to Paul. As Paul testifies in Ephesians 3:1-9 ...

**“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; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) ‘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 fellowheirs, and of the same body and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel: whereof I was made a minister,**

**ter, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of His power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:**

God revealed and brought in a great dispensational change when He raised up Paul as a new apostle. In this present dispensation of ... grace God's program with Israel is suspended, and the "time past" status of Israel being "nigh" to God and us Gentiles being "far off" isn't in effect. Today God is working out the "mystery of Christ" and is forming the "new creation," the "one new man," the church the body of Christ in accordance with it [without any respect to Jew or Gentile]. Accordingly, God's program and dealings with us today is new and differs greatly from God's program with Israel [in "time past"].

It is especially because of this great dispensational change which God brought in with the raising up of Paul that the Bible needs to be *rightly divided*. To *rightly divide the Word of truth* means to properly handle the Bible by recognizing and making the divisions in it which need to be made in it because of God's different programs recorded in it. Since God's program with Israel is not only distinct and different from God's program with us today, but is also suspended and not in effect today, God's Word must be *rightly divided* in recognition of that so that confusion and misusage of God's Word will not result. The Bible must be *rightly divided* so that Christians can follow the program and instructions which God has given for us today and has in effect today. If the Bible is not *rightly divided* then confusion, uncertainty, and actual misusage of God's Word will result.

As the "apostle of the Gentiles," and the one to whom God revealed the "mystery of Christ" and this present dispensation of His grace, it is in the epistles of Paul the apostle that God has set forth His program and dealings for today.

"Rightly dividing the Word of truth" means to recognize that in Genesis through the book of Acts God records His *time past* program with Israel, with the book of Acts historically setting forth the unexpected ushering in of this new dispensation with the raising up of Paul, and the time of transition from Israel's program to this new dispensation. Following the book of Acts, in Paul's epistles of Romans through Philemon, God sets forth His present program in this dispensation of His grace to us Gentiles.

Romans through Philemon records what God is doing "now" in His plan and purpose. Then, in accordance with the fact that God will resume His program with Israel following the conclusion of this present mystery dispensation, the books of Hebrews through Revelation follow Paul's epistles in the layout of the Bible. In these books the focus of God's attention is Israel once again, and the fulfillment of His program yet "to come" with them. They are directed to Israel and written by their apostles in anticipation of God fulfilling His program and covenants with them.

It is not the blank page between Malachi and Matthew which is to be looked upon as the dispensational dividing line. That's *the Word of God on a blank page to Israel* representing the silence of God to them of which Amos prophesied. But rather, the great dispensational change was brought in by God with the raising up of Paul the apostle and the revelation of the "mystery of Christ." It is that epoch-making event which serves as the dispensational dividing line, and upon which the *right division* of God's Word is to be made.

*Open Bible Quarterly*

# Our Mission:

## The Impossible Call

by – Gene Edwards

**T**he religious system – an organization – is the natural enemy of the church, an organic being.

Since the dissenters, major denominations have pretty well stopped being born. In the place of the birth of new denominations, there has more recently arisen the “non-profit, non-denominational religious organization.” Now these folks come right out and say it: “We are an organization!” And they are, too!

In the 1700’s and the 1800’s, when a strong, religious man wanted to do something, he probably went out and started a new denomination. That is passe now. (Besides, today just about all the theological disputes have already been chewed over.) Today, such a man gets a tax-exempt status and founds a religious organization. Instead of pastor, churches, and denominational headquarters, there are staff, centers, and ... ah-hum ... just “headquarters.” Essentially, at least in structure, there is little difference in the flow chart of a denomination and the flow chart of a non-profit religious organization.

I have often visited the headquarters of the world’s largest such organization. They boast of their organizational efficiency. I was once told (I do not know if the story is true, but the point is nonetheless obvious) that a graduate student of the Harvard School of Business studied their organization carefully and concluded that it was as well-organized and as efficient as General Motors!

Yes, *all* religious organizations and denominations are virtually the same in structure: the structure of Nimrod, Darius, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Constantine, King George, Washington,

Jefferson, Napoleon, Hitler, Churchill, and Henry Ford. My dear brother, denominations and tax exempt religious movements are all organizations. That is *all* they are ... no more. *Religious* organizations ...

I do not know, dear reader, how you feel after reading all this [96 pages at this point]. Personally, I burn to be through with such practices and from such distant meanderings from the Lord’s intent. Church history is perhaps the most tragic story of tongue or pen ... as we think of what might have been if Christian men would have never adopted, or would now abandon, organizational structure. And that point underscores *our mission*. We will catch it from the religious institutions – if the future can be judged by the past – for not being organized ...

Few things demand restoring more than the simple matter of Christians gathering as the Body of Christ, outside of predictable organizational pattern. Our course is clear. We will not be a part of institutionalization ...

Christendom has, by and large, for the last 1700 years, been part of the *world* system and it has been structured like all the *secular* institutions of the earth. Yet, there have *always* been Christians in every age who would not conform to this tradition. Peacefully, quietly, unobtrusively, uncritically, without pride or boast, I take my stand with *that* testimony. With malice toward none and with charity toward all, we have stepped *outside* the traditional church to stand with the *organic* expression of the Body of Christ ... We should stay out of the *religious system*. Not help it, not feed it, not encourage it – yet not fight it, either. Just ignore it ... [and] when we leave Christ as the center of our message ... when we fight one

another. When we take a list ... and stuff it down one another's throats with a half a dozen possible interpretations of its meaning. When we *start* fellowshipping with the religious system it will be time for us to fold up our tent and steal off the stage of history. When we *stop* being open to, when we stop fellowshipping with individual Christians in that system ... then it will be time to close shop and vanish from the earth.

It seems impossible to have nothing to do with the religious system and be totally open to all Christians. Yet, we must. This is our call ... Now to the big problem. A gigantic problem. What shall be our relationship to Christians in the religious system? And remember this; they don't have even a translucent notion that they are in a system ... Now get a firm fix on this: There is a vast difference between the religious system and the dear, precious saints of God – some in love with the Lord with all their hearts – who are in that system. These people are as precious to God as we are to Him ... You are not loved by the Lord more than they! Nor am I!

Now we come to our calling. What shall be our relationship to the Lord's people in the system? This is our mission ... the Lord has called us to the impossible. You see, if we have nothing to do with other Christians, we will end up bigots. *That* will destroy us. It should. On the other hand, if we have anything to do with that *system* they are in, we will end up back in it, too! And that will also destroy us.

The Lord has called us to an impossible position. We must leave that system. Leave it. Never go back to it. Despise it; never help it, condone it, participate in it, nor even touch it ... and at the very same moment, we must be totally open to the Christian in it. An impossible call.

To leave the system, yet be as open, as understanding, as guileless, as uncritical, as patient, as unconditional in our love as we are toward the saints we live with daily in the practice of church life. This is impossible; it can't be done. Nevertheless, it *must* be done!

I'm not hedging this statement. It is unequivocal. We must see other Christians as the dearest people on earth, not one atom less wonderful than the dearest saint in this part of the Body of Christ you now fellowship with and whom you love so unreservedly.

How can we do this? The answer will not be easy to find. Perhaps it won't be found (I remind you, we are dealing with an unscriptural problem. Scripturally, all Christians ought to be outside the systematization of organized religion.)

We have one thing going for us, though. To a large extent, our problems are nonexistent. Most Christians "out there" are monumentally uninterested in us. When they hear about us, they are underwhelmed. We are easily overlooked. We are a very forgettable people. What do I mean?

Basically, it is only the seeker, the heart-hungry Christian, and the recently saved "gentile" who never so much as heard of Christianity or the system, who make up our ranks. The rest of the Christian family is some way able to not even see us.

Nevertheless, you must ... never compare other Christians to "us." There is no "them" or "us." ... Let this be your standard: When you meet a Christian in the religious system, treat him as we treat one another! Greet him with all the love and openness of unhindered hearts.

On the other hand, we do have a task, and we must not get distracted. And that just might create a problem. He will love your openness; it is only logical he will try to get you involved in his religious activities.

So be sure, one day you will wake up and find yourself in a tight spot. One day, with all this uninhibited openness on your part, you are going to get invited to a fund-raising banquet ... or something! THEN you are going to have a problem.

And what will you do?

As I said, you've got *yourself* a problem! Sorry. There are few guidelines anyone can offer you.

Let's sum up.

As to the religious system: In the days of Paul, there existed a religious system. Paul grew up in that system, but he left it when he became a believer. That system persecuted him ... all his life. He never went back into that systematization. And that system never got into the Body of Christ. Paul and Judaism were two worlds apart.

Today the situation is radically changed. We become a Christian only to discover that virtually all believers are in a religious system. We have been called to come out of that system ... and yet be totally one with the believers who are in it. Impossible. But, still we must.

Further, we can expect some opposition from the system. History says so. We must never react to that opposition, or in any way be negatively affected

by it ... and we must continue to be totally open to all saints.

Brother, take the Christ deposited in you and share *Him* with the saints you are with. ... In every man, there is a sectarian spirit ... longing to be expressed. And contrariwise, there is also part of each of us that would dearly like to go back to Babylon. [These are the two religious extremes of the carnal mind.] Both elements must be dealt with.

We are called to be a people without a sectarian spirit ... and to be *out* of the religious system. An impossible call. I suspect that such a people are extinct today. Yet *this* is our goal. The accomplishment of it will be a divine event.

May we see such a high mission ... accomplished.

*Climb the Highest Mountain*  
(formerly *Our Mission*)

## *The Other Side*

This isn't death, it's glory!  
It isn't dark, it's light.  
It isn't stumbling, groping,  
Not even faith ~ it's sight!

This isn't grief, it's having  
My last tear wiped away.  
It's sunrise, it's the morning  
Of my eternal day!

This is the end of pleading  
For strength to bear my pain;  
Not even pain's dark memory  
Will ever live again.

How did I bear the earth's life  
Before I came up higher  
Before my soul was granted  
It's very deep desire?

Before I know this rapture  
Of meeting face to face  
Jesus Christ who sought me,  
Saved me,  
And kept me by His grace!

Author Unknown,  
Submitted by:  
Don & Lou Carol Stevens

# Men Who Are Down

by – C.H. Spurgeon

No man's lot is fully known till he is dead: change of fortune is the lot of life. He who rides in the carriage may yet have to clean it. Carpenters change places, and he who is up high may have to take his turn in the pit. In less than a few years, we shall all be bald and poor too, and who knows what he may come to before that? The thought that we may ourselves be under the window should make us careful when we are throwing out our dirty water. With what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again, and therefore let us look well to dealings with the unfortunate.

Nothing makes me more sick of human nature than to see the way in which men treat others when they fall down the ladder of fortune. "Down with him," they cry, "He always was good for nothing."

Down among the dead men,  
    Down, down, down,  
Down among the dead men,  
    There let him lie.

Dog won't eat dog, but man will eat each other up like cannibals and boast of it, too. There are thousands in this world who fly like vultures to feed on a tradesman or a merchant as soon as he gets into trouble. Where the carcass is, thither will the eagles be gathered together. Instead of a little help, they give the sinking man a great deal of cruelty and cry, "serves him right!" All the world will beat the man whom fortune buffets. If providence smites him, all men's whips begin to crack. The dog is drowning, and therefore all his friends empty their buckets over him. The tree has fallen, and everybody runs for his hatchet. The house is on fire, and all his neighbors warm themselves. The man has ill luck, therefore his friends give him ill usage: he has tumbled into the road, and they drive their carts over him; he is down and selfishness cries, "Let him be kept down, then there will be more room for those who are up."

How aggravating it is when those who knocked you down kick you for not standing up. It is not very pleasant to hear that you have been a great fool, and there were fifty ways at least of keeping out of your difficulty, only you had not the sense to see them. You ought not to have lost the game: even Tom Fool can see where you made a bad move. "He ought to have locked the stable door!" – everybody can see that, but nobody offers to buy the loser a new nag. "What a pity he went so far on the ice!" – that's very true, but that won't save the poor fellow from drowning. When a man's coat is threadbare, it is an easy thing to pick a hole in it. Good advice is poor food for a hungry family.

A man of words  
    and not of deeds  
Is like a garden  
    full of weeds.

Lend me a bit of string to tie up the traces, and find fault with my old hardness when I get home. Help my old horse to a few oats, and then tell him to mend his pace. Feel for me; and I shall feel much obliged to you, but mind you feel in your pocket or else a fig for your feelings.

Most men who go downhill meet with Judas before they get to the bottom. Those whom they helped in their better days generally forget the debt or repay it with unkindness. The young sucker runs away with sap from the old tree. The foal drains his mother and then kicks her. The old saying is, "I taught you to swim, and now you would drown me," and many a time it comes true. The dog wags his tail till he gets the bone, and then he snaps and bites at the man who fed him. Eaten bread is forgotten, and the hand that gave it is despised. The candle lights others and is burnt away itself. For the most part, nothing is more easily blotted out than a good turn. Everyone for himself is the world's golden rule, and we all know who takes the hindmost. The fox looks after his own skin and has no idea of losing his brush out of gratitude to a friend.

A noble spirit always takes the side of the weak, but noble spirits do not often ride along our roads. They are as scarce as eagles; you can get magpies, hawks, and kites by the score, but the nobler breed you don't see once in a lifetime. Did you ever hear the crows read the burial service over a dead sheep before they eat it? Well, that's wonderfully like the neighbors crying, "What a pity! How did it happen? Oh dear! Oh dear!" and then hurrying to work to get each of them a share of the plunder. Most people will help those who do not need it; every traveler throws a stone where there is a heap already; all the cooks baste a fat pig, but the lean one gets burned.

In times of prosperity  
friends will be plenty:  
In time of adversity  
not one in twenty.

When the wind serves, all aid. While the pot boils, friendship blooms. But flatterers haunt not cottages, and the faded rose no suitor knows. All the neighbors are cousins to the rich man, but the poor man's brother does not know him. When we have a ewe and a lamb, everyone cries, "Welcome, Peter!" The squire can be heard for half a mile, if he only whispers, but Widow Needy is not heard across the park railing, let her call as she may. Men willingly pour water into a full tub and give feasts to those who are hungry, because they look to have as good or bad in return. Have a goose, and get a goose. Have a horse of your own; then you can borrow one. It is safe to lend barley where the barn is full of wheat, but who lends or gives where there's none? Who, indeed, unless it be some antiquated old soul who believes in his Bible, loves his Lord, and therefore gives, "hoping for nothing again?"

I have noticed certain gentry who pretend to be great friends to a falling man because there are some few pickings yet to be got off his bones. The lawyer and the money lender will cover the poor fellow with their wings and then peck at him with their bills till there's nothing left. When those folks are very polite and considerate, poor men need to beware. It was not a good sign when the fox walked into the hen house and said, "Good morning to you all, my very dear friends."

Down men, however, must not despair, for God is yet alive, and He is a friend of the friendless. If there be no one else found to hold out a hand to him who has fallen, the Lord's hand shall not fail to bring deliverance to those who trust Him. A good man may be put in the fire, but he cannot be burned. His hope may be drenched but not drowned. He plucks up courage, sets a stout heart to a stiff hill, and gets over rough ground where others lie down and die. While there's life, there's hope. Therefore, my friend, if you've tumbled off the back of prosperity, John Ploughman bids you not to lie in a ditch, but up with you and try again. Jonah went to the bottom of the sea, but he got to shore again all the better for his watery journey.

Though the bird's in the nest,  
It may get away yet;  
Though I'm down in the dust,  
In my God I will trust,  
I will hope in Him still,  
And leave all to his will;  
For He'll surely appear,  
And will banish my fear.

Let it never be forgotten that when a man is down, he has a grand opportunity for trusting in God. A false faith can only float in smooth water; but true faith, like a lifeboat, is at home in storms. If our religion does not bare us up in time of trial, what is the use of it? If we cannot believe God when our circumstances appear to be against us, we do not believe Him at all. We trust a thief as far as we can see him; shall we dare to trust our God in that fashion? No, no. The Lord is good, He will yet appear for servants, and we shall praise His name.

Down among the dead men!  
No, sir, not I.  
Down among the men!  
I will not lie.  
Up among the hopeful,  
I will ascend,  
Up among the joyful,  
sing without end.

*John Ploughman's Talks*

# And God Said, "No."

I asked God to take away my pride,  
And God said, "No."

He said it was not for Him to take  
away,  
But for me to give up.

I asked God to make my child whole,  
And God said, "No."

He said her spirit is whole,  
Her body is only temporary.

I asked God to grant me patience,  
and God said, "No."

He said patience is developed through  
tribulation,  
It isn't granted, it's learned.

I asked God to give me happiness,  
And God said, "No."

He said He gives blessings,  
Happiness is up to me.

I asked God to spare me pain,  
And God said, "No."

He said suffering draws me apart from  
the world,  
And brings me closer to Him.

I asked God to make my spirit grow,  
And God said, "No."

He said I must grow through study,  
But He will prune me to make me  
fruitful.

I asked God to help me love others,  
As much as He loves me,  
And God said,  
I finally had the idea.

by – Claudia Minden Weisz,  
Revised and Edited

(continued from page 390)  
a great encouragement to me.

Now, be prepared – for *whatever* – when you read Gene. There is no telling what you will find on the next page. He is radical – or maybe as he would say “*beyond radical*.” Now, these books are not for everybody – but I think that they will speak to some of you as they have to me. Until recently, I have offered those around me the opportunity of reading only excerpts of his writings – because of their radical nature. I’ve been trying to prepare everyone. I think it is now good timing to let his books *out!* (Smile!!)

Now, Gene is not a mid-Acts dispensationalist. But as we learn, over time, other members of Christ’s Body have something to offer too! So, don’t give up when he says something we think is incorrect. He is an interesting author. Be patient with him – give him your ear, hear what he has to say. And when he appears to be saying one thing – keep reading – because he *may* end up saying something different!

*Climb the Highest Mountain* may be one of the greatest books in print. I highly recommend this book to you. Another outstanding book that we are able to offer is *Turkeys & Eagles* by Peter Lord. This is an excellent work on the believer’s identification in Christ. This book could very well transform your thinking. My heart rejoiced, page after page!

Love, your fellow,



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.  
Gladstone, Virginia