



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## *The Herald of His Grace*

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 34  
Issue 829

## *A Further Look at the Disruption* (Forty Years Later)

Part 1 of 2

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

### THE THREE EARTHS

Two universal cataclysms, one in the past and one in the future, separate the present from the first and third Earths.<sup>1</sup> One of these was overflowed with water in the past, and the other will be dissolved by fire in the future. Two lesser cataclysms, the deluge of Noah's day, and the fiery judgments of the days of the Son of Mankind, mark off the three eons, or worlds, which are staged on the present Earth.<sup>2</sup>



upon it, was destroyed.

The earliest records we have of these two events are found in "Genesis," the book of Beginnings. The first and greatest of these cataclysms (the Greek term for DOWN-SURGE, deluge) is mentioned immediately after the record of creation. Then "*the Earth came to be a chaos and vacant, and darkness was over the surface of the abyssal expanse* [the Earth's submerged surface]" (Genesis 1:2).

These grand crises in Earth's history are complementary, and must be carefully distinguished if we wish a clear comprehension of God's plan and purpose in relation to the place we now occupy in His universe (II Peter 3:1-13; Matthew 24:37).

Not only the scoffers of the last days, but many of the saints, and even devout scientists who believe the promise of the presence of Christ, are oblivious of the fact that the Earth has already had a double deluge by means of water, once in Noah's day, which destroyed the "*ancient world*" (II Peter 2:5), and once before, of old, when the "*then world*" (II Peter 3:5) was deluged with water, and perished. So terrible was this cataclysm that the world, or cosmic system which existed

Nothing could be clearer than Yahweh's insistence that He not only created the Earth and made it and formed it and established it, but that He *did not create it a chaos*, as it subsequently *became* (Isaiah 45:18). He uses the very same words for "*create*" (*bra*<sup>3</sup>) and "*chaos*" (*theu*<sup>4</sup>) in Isaiah that He used in Genesis. This is hidden from us in the revered *Authorized Version*, because it renders the word "*chaos*" *without form* in Genesis and *in vain* in Isaiah.

A Concordant rendering of Isaiah's words will confirm this (Isaiah 45:18).

3. [Editor:] SEC H1254, bâra'.

4. [Editor:] SEC H8414, tôhû.

1. For a detailed consideration of the three Heavens, see *The Third Heaven — Our Celestial Destiny: A Comprehensive Compilation* (#2855). You will find it under the "Compilations" section of the order form, also at StudyShelf.com under "[Compilations](#)."
2. For a detailed consideration of the eons, or ages, see *The Ages: A Comprehensive Compilation* (#3241). You will find it under the "Compilations" section of the order form, also at StudyShelf.com under "[Compilations](#)."

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*For thus says Yahweh, Creator of the Heavens;  
He is the Elohim, and Former of the Earth, and  
its Maker, and He, He established it. He did not  
create it a chaos. He formed it to be indwelt.*

This is not a casual remark, but concerns creation, the very same theme as in Genesis. It is not the speculation of a mortal or the guess of a human, but the asseveration [assertion] of the Creator Himself, and seems to be made in the face of opposition, so emphatic is its form.

## WATER DISTINGUISHES THE EARTHS

The main difference between the three Earths is associated with *water*. The first Earth seems to have been, like the last (Revelation 21:1), of dry land which “*coher[ed] out of water and through water*” (II Peter 3:5). The second, after its restoration, is two-thirds covered with water, called *seas*, besides the fluids in the atmosphere (Genesis 1:10). The third will have *no sea* at all (Revelation 21:1). The land of the first Earth cohered, literally TOGETHER-STOOD (*sunisteemi*), making one compact mass. This agrees with the account of Earth’s restoration, for there we

find *land*, or *earth*, defined as the “*dry*” (Genesis 1:9).

## THE FIRST DELUGE

Given a dry Earth, with a sufficient subterranean supply of water, it is easy to see how there could be a deluge much greater than that of Noah’s day. Peter says that the world on this Earth *perished* (*apollumi*, FROM-LOOSE). We may compare this with the future destruction by fire, when its elements will be *dissolved* (*luoo*, LOOSE), which uses the same Greek stem (LOOSE) without the intensive prefix (*apo*, FROM).

The world of the first Earth perished in a sense quite as emphatic as will be the case with the future one preceding the New Creation. This was not the case with the flood in Noah’s day. After a year the waters subsided into seas and left the land, in a large measure, as before.

The *perishing world* of Peter’s epistle is more fully described in the statement that the *Earth* became *chaos* and *vacant*, with *darkness* on the face of the abyss. It is further amplified by the fact that, when the spirit of God began its restoration, it vibrated over the surface

### Bible Student’s Notebook™

*Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal*

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume 34, No. 829 – July 20, 2020

*Scripture education in a weekly format!*

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the absolute sovereignty and deity of God (Romans 11:36);
- the proclamation of the riches of God’s abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all 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 in ages past*” (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:16);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unprophesied, Celestial hope and calling of the Body of Christ (Colossians 3:4);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- 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 freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
  - union in His death, burial and resurrection and ascended seat-

ed position among the celestials (Romans 6; Ephesians 2:6);  
– adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of ordinary men intended to stimulate the earnest study of Scripture. We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication; thus they are not meant to imply finality on any subject discussed, or that further research would not add further light from the Word of God. God’s storehouse of truth is inexhaustible, so draw on its wealth by prayerful study. 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 “church,” “denomination,” “movement,” “organization,” “mission,” “creed,” “meeting,” “school,” “conference” or “fellowship.”

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*For definitions of abbreviations/acronyms, see index after the order form.*

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of the water. It seems certain from this that the water completely covered the land. This is confirmed by the emergence of land on the third day (Genesis 1:9-10).

Moreover, the fact that it is also called an *abyss*, or *abyssal expanse*, and the work of restoration separated the waters by means of an atmosphere, suggests that the gases, fluids and solids on its surface had been mixed together to form a mingled mass, which could be called only water, as it was neither a gas nor a solid, but merely contained some of these.

## CHAOS AND VACANT

Yahweh says that He formed the Earth to be *indwelt* (Isaiah 45:18). He ought to know, for it was His work. We cannot reason about it, for we have no premises on which to base our logic. But there is nothing unreasonable in the implication that, if it *became* chaos and vacant, it was not so before. This becomes a certainty when it combines with the declaration of Yahweh.

The verb BE, for mere existence, is seldom used in Hebrew. Anyone reading the *Authorized Version* will have noticed the frequency with which the words *be*, *is*, *are*, *was*, etc., are in *italics*. This indicates their *absence* in Hebrew, just as lightface type does in the *Concordant Version*.

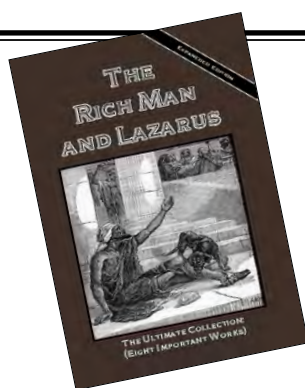
Hebrew is a very terse language, almost like shorthand, and simply omits whatever is not needed to convey the sense. If the verb for "was" in this place were in *italics* and absent in the Hebrew, then the popular versions would be correct. But the verb here is a form of BE (*eie*, not *eue*) which means BECOME.

The verb *eie*, BECOME, occurs about two dozen times in this chapter alone, and everywhere denotes a *change*, and not mere existence. In the third verse it marks a change from darkness to light. In the sixth verse, two changes occur, an atmosphere is made and waters are separated. Four times in verse fourteen there are changes connected with the luminaries. The *progress* of events is marked by the sixfold repetition of *becoming* evening and morning. And so it is throughout the Scriptures.

In the course of my work I have had to translate every occurrence in the sacred text, and have found that this is the *sense*, even if English idiom and context occasionally demand that it be rendered *come*, or a form of *be*. These cases are always indicated in the *Concordant Version*. On the other hand, the forms of the copula BE are usually absent and we have to insert them in English, hence print them in lightface type.

## WITHOUT FORM

The word "without form" *theu*, in the *Authorized Version* is also rendered *confusion*, *empty place*, *nothing*, *nought*, *vain*, *vanity*, *wilderness* and *waste* (Deuteronomy 32:10). How anything can exist *without form* is impossible to conceive, and hardly prepares us for what follows. Anything with a surface must have a form. The word "chaos" is just what is needed to suggest the necessity for the work done on the first two days. It is in full accord with the term *abyss*. It also implies that the Earth was not a chaos when created. Chaotic conditions are not fit to *dwell* in, yet the first Earth was created for that purpose.



328 pp., PB

See order form.

## *The Rich Man and Lazarus*

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## VOID

The word “void” is also misleading here. To speak of an object as a void would indicate that it has no existence. But if it *contains nothing*, then it is “vacant.” This word is the complement of the word “fill” in verses twenty-two and twenty-eight where living souls are told to “fill” that sphere in which they live. Indeed, it may be in contrast to the fruitfulness and *increase* enjoined on all living souls. It seems to imply that the first Earth had once been filled with some forms of life, such as plants, which are not said to have been specially *created* during the restoration of the Earth, but only *brought forth*, the term used of soul life *after* the record of its creation (Genesis 1:12, 21, 24).

## THE EARTH OF OLD

Confirming and elaborating the assertion of Isaiah that the Earth was originally created to be inhabited, Peter speaks of it as a “world,” that is, all was systematically and orderly arranged, and provision was made to support inhabitants. But a waste and vacant abyss covered with water and shrouded in darkness is not habitable, and it can by no means be called a “world.”

As a matter of fact, the Earth itself was not destroyed by water in the same sense as it will be by fire before

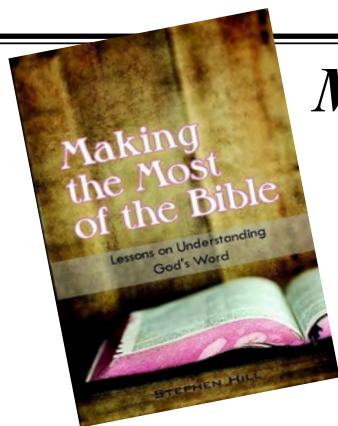
the New Creation. But the “world,” says Peter, “*perished*.” Becoming chaos and vacant conveys the same thought in different words. If we wish to express the matter literally and exactly, we would say that the “world” was restored in six days, though it is quite plain even if we say it was the “Earth.”

## EVIDENCE OF CATAclysm

The rocks and the remains on the surface of the land reveal the same ruin as revelation. They everywhere present evidence of a tremendous catastrophe. The strata, or layers, of which the Earth is composed, do not lie upon one another as they were originally formed, but are broken and tilted and in fearful disorder. Even a blind man could feel and perceive that they have been tossed about by a great cataclysm at some time after they were formed.

Layers, or “strata,” are visible wherever breaks in the outer crust of the Earth are exposed. These layers of the Earth differ greatly in contents, in width, in extent, in order, in position, and in level. The Earth is no longer a perfect structure, but a shattered wreck, so far as its outer crust is concerned.

The most important lesson the layers can teach us in our present inquiry is their *disorder*. They are so un-  
(see **DISRUPTION**, page 7056)



100 pp, PB

See order form.

## Making the Most of the Bible

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by – Stephen Hill

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# *The Dispensation of the Mystery*

## **(“The Administration of the Secret”)**

by — Ethelbert “Bert” W. Hallman (1933-2017)

**T**he hope of the mystery (“secret”) calling is not the Earth or the New Jerusalem; but it is

*Far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world [age, aiōn], but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His [Christ's] feet and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church [ecclesia], which is His Body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. ... and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:21-23; 2:6).*

If God had not revealed another plan after Acts 28:28, both Jew and Gentile would have been without a *calling* and a *hope*. But God inserts a parenthesis in his promise to Abraham that provides mankind with a hope today that never before could have been considered.

*Unto me [Paul] who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable [untraceable] riches of Christ; and to make [enlighten] all men see what is the fellowship [administration] of the Mystery [Secret] which from the beginning of the world [ages, aiōns] hath been hid in God (Ephesians 3:8-9).*

The purpose of the new revelation is

*To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church [ecclesia] the manifold wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:10).*

It was revealed through Paul,

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all [every] spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*



## OUR BLOGS

**blog:** Pronunciation: \ 'blōg, 'bläg\  
Function: noun

Etymology: short for Weblog: a Web site that contains an online personal journal with reflections, comments, and often hyperlinks provided by the writer; also: the contents of such a site.

— Webster's Dictionary

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according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation [overthrow] of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children [sons] by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness<sup>1</sup> of sins, according to the riches of His grace (Ephesians 1:3-7).

Paul explains it further in:

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: 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,

having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace (Ephesians 2:11-15).

Our hope<sup>2</sup> is that

... God, Who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened [made alive] us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved) and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:4-7). **BSN**

0-0-0

Bert was the son of Bible teacher [William B. Hallman](#) (1902-1985).<sup>3</sup> A graduate of Wheaton College and Milwaukee Bible College, Bert for many years taught at Open Bible Fellowship, Hales Corners, WI.

We ran another of his articles, "The Lord's Supper," in [Bible Student's Notebook #545](#).

#### TOPICS:

**Major:** Administrations; Secret

**Minor:** Hope; Right Division

1. [Editor:] The word often translated "forgiveness" here is ἀφεσις (aphesis; from-letting [Concordant Keyword Concordance]), meaning "freedom."

Ultimate freedom from sin is *far more* than forgiveness or pardon. Forgiveness is at the core of religious teaching and activity; and at the root of forgiveness is *guilt*. The followers of religion seek to obtain forgiveness through some means – concerted effort, confessions, prayers, penance, resolutions, etc. What Paul taught went well beyond that. The revelation given to him involved **justification** which, instead of being rooted in guilt, is rooted in righteousness.

For more information on this vital theme see [Ultimate Liberation: Beyond Forgiveness \(The Justification from and of Sin\)](#) by Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. (see order form).

2. [Editor:] For more information on the hope (or expectation) of the Body of Christ, see:

- Hope, Charles H. Welch, Part 1 – [Bible Student's Notebook #493](#); Part 2 – [Bible Student's Notebook #494](#); Part 3 – [Bible Student's Notebook #495](#);
- "The Hope of Israel" vs. "That Blessed Hope," Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #485](#);
- The Timing and Nature of Our Hope, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #510](#);
- The Hope of Paul's Prison Epistles, Tom Ballinger, [Bible Student's Notebook #582](#).

3. See the order form under "Hallman" for his many books.



608 pp, HB

## In Heavenly Places

### Commentary on Ephesians

by — Charles H. Welch (1880-1967)

This is a detailed exposition of "the Mystery" or secret purpose that was hidden in God and then revealed through Paul, our apostle, in his epistle to the Ephesians.

See order form.



# Reader's Question Box #53

## Would Adam Have Died if He Had Not Sinned?

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

**Q:** Would Adam and Eve have died if they had believed and obeyed God?

**A:** Superficially, the answer, of course, is “no.” They would not even have become mortal. *The death process*, which men now call “life,” did not begin with them until after they had disobeyed. But this question, like many others which imply that man, rather than God, controls the course of human events, is misleading. If Adam and Eve had not offended they would have *lived*, no doubt, but they would not have fulfilled the prime purpose of their creation. Through them, and the race of which they are the progenitors, God desired to display the depths of His love and the heights of His glory. This could not be done unless they had a knowledge of “good”; and this, in turn, demanded an acquaintance with “evil.” Mortality and death are essential features of God’s self-revelation. ... They are only the means He has chosen to attain His grand ultimate. ... If we look at God’s dealings with

His creatures from *His* standpoint, we will come to the conclusion that *all* is according to His intention, and *no if’s are worthy of notice.* **BSN**

— *Unsearchable Richs*, Volume 34 (1943)

[**Editor:**] We often receive questions to which, we believe, the answers would be of mutual benefit to all of our readers. This is the reason behind our occasional feature *Reader’s Question Box*. Over time we have come to see, more and more, the value of sharing such readers’ questions and editors’ answers. These appear to us to be great teaching resources; for surely, if one reader has a question, it is very likely that other readers share the question as well.

A few times in the past we have shared questions that were not raised by our own readers, nor answered by our editors, but rather they were from other periodicals, especially of the past. Such is the case with this issue’s inquiry. Over time we expect that *Reader’s Question Box* will become a more regular and valued feature of the *Bible Student’s Notebook*, and that we will likewise make greater use of questions and answers from a broader scope of trusted sources from the past.

### TOPICS:

**Major:** Adam; Intention, God’s; Q&A

**Minor:** Divine Viewpoint



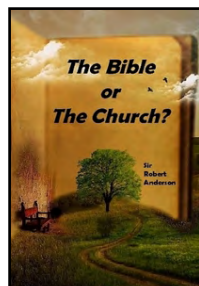
### *God’s Ultimate*

by — A.E. Saxby (1873-1960)

222 pages, PB (*See order form.*)

The larger work from the author of *God in Creation, Redemption, Judgment & Consummation* and *What is Ultimate Reconciliation?*

### *The Bible or the Church?*



by — Sir Robert Anderson (1841-1918)

206 pages, PB (*See order form.*)

This is Anderson’s revision and enlargement of *The Buddha of Christendom*. Both volumes contain material not in the other. Anderson was a close friend and associate of E.W. Bullinger.

### Notice to Our Foreign Readers

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**DISRUPTION** (continued from page 7052)

even and broken and tumbled about that the layman is usually struck by this fact far more than by their layer-like formation. Nothing going on now could have produced such confusion, or moved such immense masses of material. Earthquakes, to be sure, do have the same effect, but it would take a thousand severe ones united into one to disturb the strata of the Earth's surface as much as has been done. Mankind could not live through such a cataclysm. Only scoffers at God's revelation could think of saying that all has continued normally since the beginning of creation (II Peter 3:4).

If we examine carefully the details of the deluge of Noah's days as revealed in God's inspired Word, we will find that it has left its mark on the scroll of Earth's surface quite as plainly as on the printed page. Indeed, there is ample evidence for a much greater disturbance than it could possibly have produced. The rain from above probably was instrumental in making many deposits of soil, but could hardly have broken and shifted the layers very much. The breaking up of the springs of the abyss was probably done by an Earthquake. This would account for some of the displacements.

## THE GREATEST EARTHQUAKE

The implication that there was an Earthquake, much greater than humanity has experienced, *before man was on the Earth* (Revelation 16:18)<sup>5</sup> corresponds with the earliest divine declaration concerning the Earth after its creation (Genesis 1:2). There probably was one in connection with the deluge in Noah's day (Genesis 7:11). The springs of the vast abyss were rent with such force that the subterranean waters rushed forth upon the

surface of the Earth and joined the rain from above to provide the water for the flood. This rending must have made a terrific seismic disturbance; but mankind had been on the Earth a long time before this, so we must look for a still greater one before the days of Adam.

These two quakes have left their imprint on the face of nature and their record in God's revelation. These two are in fullest accord. In the time of the end, which corresponds with the days of Noah, there will be a great Earthquake. When the sixth seal is opened there will be such a tremendous tremor that every mountain and island will be moved out of place (Revelation 6:12). Again, before the seven trumpets are sounded there will be another Earthquake (Revelation 8:5). These would correspond with the disturbances which accompanied the flood of Noah's time. But there will be another even greater than that when the seventh bowl is poured out (Revelation 16:8). This was of such great proportions that one like it has not occurred "*since mankind came to be on the Earth.*"

Does not this suggest that there was a greater before Noah and before Adam? The greatest of all shocks that the Earth has received seems to have been the cause of the disruption which made it waste and vacant before man was created.

(continued in the next issue)

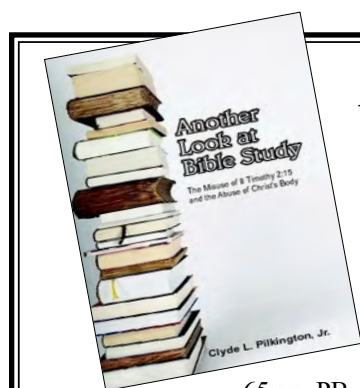
— Taken from *Studies in Genesis*<sup>6</sup>  
(edited excerpt)

**TOPICS:**

**Major:** Creation; Disruption; Genesis  
**Minor:** Deluge (flood); Restoration; Worlds

5. "And a great earthquake occurred, **such as did not occur since mankind came to be on the Earth**; of such proportions was the quake and so great" (CV).

6. [Editor:] Knoch's work, *Studies in Genesis*, can be found on the order form, under "Knoch," or on his author page at [Study Shelf](#).



65 pp, PB

See order form.

## Another Look at "Bible Study"

### The Misuse of II Timothy 2:15 and the Abuse of Christ's Body

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

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## ABBREVIATION KEY

### Scripture Version

ASV: American Standard Version  
AV: Authorized Version  
BSV: Bible Student's Version  
CLNT, CLV, CV: Concordant Literal Version  
DAR: Darby Translation  
DT: Dabhar Translation  
ED: Emphatic Diaglott  
ERV: English Revised Version  
EB: Exegeses Bible  
FF: Ferrar Fenton Bible  
GNT: Goodspeed New Testament  
HCSB: Holman Christian Standard Bible  
KJV: King James Version  
MKJV: Modern King James Version  
MNT: Moffatt New Translation (James Moffatt)  
NAS: New American Standard Version  
NET: New English Translation  
NIV: New International Version  
REB: Rotherham's Emphasized Bible  
TCNT: Twentieth Century New Testament  
WEB: World English Bible  
WNT: Williams New Testament  
WT: Weymouth Translation  
YLT: Young's Literal Translation

### Reference Sources

AA: Analytical Analysis (Welch)  
BDB: Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon  
CB: Companion Bible Notes & Appendixes (Bullinger)  
CC: Concordant Commentary (Knoch)  
CKC: Concordant Keyword Concordance (Knoch)  
CL: A Critical Lexicon and Concordance (Bullinger)  
CWS: Complete Word Study Dictionary (Zodhiates)  
FoS: Figures of Speech (Bullinger)  
SEC: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance  
TGL: Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon  
TtC: Things to Come  
UR: Unsearchable Riches  
VED: Vine's Expository Dictionary  
YAC: Young's Analytical Concordance

### Reference Notations

*cf.* – compare  
*e.g.* – for example  
*et al.* – and others  
*etc.* – et cetera (and so on)  
*ff.* – and the following  
*i.e.*, – that is