



JACOB'S CHILDREN AND PROSPERITY—TYPE AND ANTITYPE

Genesis 29:31—30:43

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1. THIS section of the Scriptures gives an account of the birth of twelve of Jacob's children, his further term in Laban's service, and his prosperity in Haran.

2. Gen 29:31 And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren. Early in the Gospel Age God recognized that certain more or less perverted truths and their appliers—antitypical Leah—were, because of their perversions, far less appreciated and desired than antitypical Rachel by antitypical Jacob—His special servants, particularly the star-members and their special helpers; nevertheless, in harmony with the permission, in His plan, of a falling away at that time (2 Thes. 2:3), He allowed the way to be opened for these more or less perverted truths and their appliers to bring forth sectarian movements during the Interim, while the spiritual elective truths and their appliers—antitypical Rachel—remained in an unproductive condition, in so far as bringing forth a fruitful movement of God's spiritual elect people was concerned.

REUBEN SIMEON, LEVI, JUDAH

3. Gen 29:32 And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me. The teaching on the office of Christ before, during and after the days of His flesh, as God's Special Representative, was the stewardship doctrine whereby antitypical Jacob, acting in the chief Smyrna star-member, the Apostle John (assisted by Ignatius of Antioch and Polycarp), began a Little Flock movement, which was taken by pertinent perverted truths (truths mixed, e.g., with God-manism and trinitarianism) and their appliers (Leah - particularly crown-lost leaders, e.g., Origen and Athanasius) and sectarianized into the Greek Catholic



Church (Leah conceived, and bare a son . . . Reuben [behold a son], v. 32; E Vol. 8, pp. 226-236, 700, 701); and in these appliers' consequent great elation, they expressed their great confidence that God had looked upon them in their trials and had specially blessed them by giving them this symbolic son, and that as a result His special servants would now surely have the greater appreciation and affection for them (love me).

4. Gen 29:33 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the LORD hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also: and she called his name Simeon. Antitypical Jacob, in the person of Irenaeus (aided by Tertullian, his special

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helper), by the stewardship truth that there is but one Church of God, the custodian and administrator of the Truth, began the next Little Flock movement; it was taken by pertinent perverted truths and their appliers (Leah - particularly crown-lost leaders, e.g., Cyprian and Augustine) and sectarianized into the Roman Catholic Church (son, v. 33; E Vol. 8, pp. 236-254, 439, 701-703); and these appliers expressed great confidence that God had taken cognizance of the fact that they were loved less than antitypical Rachel by antitypical Jacob, and that therefore He had given them this symbolic son also; so they regarded the development of this additional (sectarian) movement as an answer to prayer, and characterized it as such (Simeon [hearing, attentive]).

5. Gen 29:34 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have born him three sons: therefore was his name called Levi. It was not until many centuries later that antitypical Jacob, in the person of Luther (aided by Melancthon, his special helper), by the stewardship doctrine that justification by God's grace is through faith alone in Christ's merit, began the Little Flock movement that was taken by pertinent perverted truths and their appliers (Leah - particularly crown-lost leaders, e.g., John the Steadfast) and sectarianized into the Lutheran Church (son; E Vol. 8, pp. 297-322, 440, 714-716); and these appliers expressed that surely now God's special servants would be joined fully to them, because they had developed this additional (sectarian) movement. Therefore they characterized it as one that would bring such results (Levi, [joined, attached]).

6. Gen 29:35 And she conceived again, and bare a son: and she said, Now will I praise the LORD: therefore she called his name Judah; and left bearing. Furthermore, antitypical Jacob, in the person of Zwingli (aided by Oecolampadius, his special helper) by the stewardship doctrine that the Lord's Supper is a symbolic representation of faith appropriating Yeshua's merit, and also the common-union of the saints, began another Little Flock movement; it was taken by pertinent perverted truths and their appliers (Leah - particularly crown-lost leaders, e.g., Calvin) and sectarianized into the Calvinistic Church, otherwise known as the Reformed or Presbyterian Church (son; E Vol. 8, pp. 190-199, 439, 692); these appliers were moved to express their desire to praise God in this connection, for they thought this denomination would bring special praise to Him, and so they characterized it as such (Judah [praise]). These perverted truths and their appliers (Leah) then ceased for a time from sectarianizing any additional Little Flock movements (left bearing). It is noteworthy that these four of the denominations (Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinistic Churches) that were brought forth by antitypical Leah were all state-church systems in Continental Europe.

7. Gen 30:1 And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die. When the Reformation period came, and the spiritual elective truths in their appliers came to realize that, despite many centuries of yearning and earnest endeavor on their part, they had not brought forth to God's special servants any fruitful movements of the spiritual elect people of God as such, whereas antitypical Leah had brought forth several (sectarian) movements, they more or less envied antitypical Leah; and in their intense yearning they pleaded with God's special servants to give them fruitful movements, feeling that they would perish fruitless if they did not soon develop some of such movements.

8. Gen 30:2 And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? God's special servants, who by then had served faithfully in setting forth several stewardship truths (Jacob), were quite displeased with the attitude of these appliers, and by attitude, word and act inquired whether the latter expected such fruitage to be provided by them personally, instead of by God, who had withheld from these appliers the development of such movements. They should have realized that while God's people are privileged to plant and water, He alone gives the increase, in His own time and way (1 Cor. 3:7, 8).

9. Gen 30:3 And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. In their attitude of intense longing to develop such movements, the spiritual elective truths and their appliers (Rachel) by attitude, word and act offered to God's special servants a set of related, subordinate, but somewhat perverted truths and their appliers (maid Bilhah), for them to be united with, hoping thereby to gain the earnestly desired fruitage, which would be brought forth with their own co-operation, and which they expected to have attributed to them as their own.

DAN, NAPHTALI, GAD, ASHER

10. Gen 30:4 And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her. The truths and their appliers typed by Leah were quite perverted, those typed by Zilpah less so, and those typed by Bilhah much less so (they were the most closely related to those typed by Rachel—E Vol. 8, p. 381). Accordingly, antitypical Rachel was instrumental in bringing together God's special servants (Jacob) and these least perverted truths and their appliers.

11. Gen 30:5 And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. Antitypical Jacob, in the person of Hubmaier (aided by Blaurock, his special helper), using the stewardship doctrine that only the truly justified and consecrated are God's real people, began a further Little Flock movement; it was taken by such least perverted

truths and their appliers (Bilhah - particularly crown-lost leaders, e.g., Simon Menno) and sectarianized into the Baptist Church (E Vol. 8, pp. 381-400, 440, 690, 721-723).

12. Gen 30:6 And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name Dan. Because this denomination was developed by these least perverted truths and their appliers, because it was brought forth despite much persecution by antitypical Leah and her children and because it was closer than any other in spirit and teachings to the spiritual elective truths and their appliers (Rachel - E Vol. 8, pp. 381, 392), the latter claimed that by its development God had vindicated them—that He had heard their supplications and, accordingly, had given them this symbolic son; so they characterized it as one whereby He had judged or vindicated them (Dan [judge]).

13. Gen 30:7 And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. Antitypical Jacob, in the person of Michael Servetus (aided by Laelius Socinus, his special helper), by the stewardship doctrine that there is but one God, whose highest attribute is love, began another Little Flock movement; it was taken by the pertinent least perverted truths and their appliers (Bilhah -particularly crown-lost leaders, e.g., Faustus Socinus) and sectarianized into the Unitario-Universalist Church, the next in the time order of development (E Vol. 8, pp. 421-437, 440, 690, 721, 726-729).

14. Gen 30:8 And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali. The spiritual elective truths in their appliers (Rachel), who in connection with the development of this symbolic son had engaged in much doctrinal controversy, particularly against trinitarianism, human immortality and eternal torment, averred that with mighty strivings they had striven with antitypical Leah, particularly as represented in the Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinistic sects, and by means of the greater purity of the Truth and its Spirit on these subjects that they possessed, they had gained the advantage and superiority in this striving; and so these appliers characterized this symbolic son as one that had caused much striving (Naphtali [wrestling]). Note that both of the denominations (Baptist and Unitario-Universalist Churches) that were brought forth by antitypical Bilhah also were of Continental Europe, but were not state-church systems.

15. Gen 30:9 When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife. When the most perverted truths and their appliers (Leah) realized that they had ceased to bring forth (sectarian) movements, while antitypical Bilhah was doing so for antitypical Rachel, they resorted to offering to God's special servants a set of their own

related, subordinate, less perverted truths and their appliers (Zilpah), for these servants (Jacob) to be joined with, hoping thereby to develop additional (sectarian) movements for themselves.

16. Gen 30:10,11 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son. And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad. Antitypical Jacob, in the person of Thomas Cranmer (aided by Latimer, his special helper), using the stewardship doctrine that Yeshua and the Church, while in the flesh, in secular matters were by God made subject to the civil powers, began a Little Flock movement, which was taken by antitypical Zilpah (particularly crown-lost leaders, e.g., Queen Elizabeth, Cecil and Parker) and sectarianized into the Episcopal Church (E Vol. 8, pp. 254-283, 689, 703-705). Antitypical Leah rejoiced greatly in the birth of this symbolic son, claiming it as an evidence of additional prosperity and good fortune and as the promise of bringing forth many more such movements, and therefore so characterized it (Gad [good fortune, a troop]).

17. Gen 30:12 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son. Next, antitypical Jacob, in the person of John Wesley (aided by Charles Wesley, his special helper), using the stewardship doctrine that disinterested love, as the heart of sanctification, is the Divine ideal for God's people, began another Little Flock movement; it also was taken by antitypical Zilpah (particularly crown-lost leaders, e.g., Dr. Coke), and was sectarianized into the Methodist Church (E Vol. 8, pp. 400-420, 440, 723-726). This denomination, because of having this stewardship doctrine on Divine love, was more closely related to the spirit of the Little Flock than the first denomination brought forth by antitypical Zilpah, or any of those brought forth by antitypical Leah (E Vol. 8, p. 723).

18. Gen 30:13 And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher. Antitypical Leah—in the appliers—felt very joyful and fortunate after the birth of this symbolic son, and claimed that therefore and thereafter other groups would revere them and consider them as having been greatly favored (daughters will call me blessed). They characterized this denomination as one bringing joy and good fortune (Asher [happy, fortunate]; E Vol. 8, pp. 400-401). Thus the setting of the birth of antitypical Jacob's children changed to Britain; both of the denominations (Episcopal and Methodist Churches) that were brought forth by antitypical Zilpah were developed there as distinct from in Continental Europe.

THE MANDRAKES

19. Gen 30:14 And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. About 863 A.D., Cyrillus (Constantine) of

Thessalonica, and his brother Methodius, two monks of the Greek Catholic Church (Reuben), came at the request of Ratislav, Duke of Moravia, and introduced their Greek forms of worship to the Moravians. In his labors in Moravia, Cyrillus learned the Slavic language and translated into it large portions of the Scriptures and other religious books, inventing a new form of alphabet for this purpose. Thus the Greek Catholic Church (antitypical Reuben) was instrumental in establishing Christianity there.

20. In the 14th and 15th centuries many Moravians joined in the reform movements of John Huss and other reformers of that locality. In the time of the Counter Reformation and the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) fierce persecution arose there (E Vol. 13, p. 403); many Moravian brethren were martyred, and others went into hiding. From 1722 onward a remnant of them escaped to Germany, where they settled on the estates of Count Zinzendorf and other Pietists. At the time these Moravians arrived there, many adherents were being gathered into the Pietist movement (Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest; E Vol. 13, pp. 527-537).

21. In this sphere these Moravians found special teachings of God's Word concerning the cultivation of the fruits of the Spirit, especially love, which were being greatly emphasized (found mandrakes [comp. Cant. 7:13; E Vol. 11, p. 712] in the field). By attitude, word and act they conveyed their understanding of these teachings to antitypical Leah, particularly in Zinzendorf and other leaders (brought them unto his mother).

22. The spiritual elective truths and their applicers, especially John Wesley and other Little Flock members in the Methodist movement as such applicers (Rachel), appealed by attitude, word and act, particularly in Wesley's contacts with the Moravians (E Vol. 8, p. 409; E Vol. 13, p. 545), to antitypical Leah for these special love-inspiring teachings from God's Word for the development of Christlikeness in the heart (give me . . . mandrakes [love apples—the idea of Rachel's time still prevails in some places, that conception is insured by eating the fruit of this plant]). The members of antitypical Rachel greatly desired thereby to make themselves fruitful in bringing forth a movement of God's spiritual elect.

23. Gen 30:15 And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes. Antitypical Leah did not react favorably to this appeal, but remonstrated with these members of antitypical Rachel; they alleged by attitude, word and act, e.g., by Zinzendorf's arrogant and wrathful course toward Wesley from 1738 onward (E Vol. 13, pp. 538-544), that the latter had alienated from them the appreciation and affection of God's special servants; and, likewise, were they now, without

accepting pertinent (erroneous) teachings, going to take away from them God's Word in these special love-inspiring features also?

24. In reply, the members of antitypical Rachel by attitude, word and act assured the members of antitypical Leah that if their own desire would be granted, they would not discourage God's special servants from consorting with them again. Accordingly, antitypical Rachel appropriated the Word of God in these special love-inspiring features. Thus the antitypes of vs. 14, 15 occurred prior to those of vs. 12, 13 (which evidently occurred from 1784 onward, when the Wesley movement began to be sectarianized—E Vol. 8, p. 403). Likewise, in the type the events of vs. 14, 15 evidently preceded those of vs. 12, 13, as will be shown later. This was possible because Zilpah was not involved in the events of vs. 14, 15.

25. Gen 30:16 And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. More and more of God's people gradually came to America in the 17th and 18th centuries, to escape persecution and for other reasons; and in the beginning of the 19th century the setting for the birth of antitypical Jacob's children changed from Europe to America. God's special servants turned their special attention from their sphere of activities in Europe to the newly founded settlements in North America; and members of antitypical Leah in these settlements contacted them, and urgently invited them to join with them to develop movements, indicating by attitude, word and act that because of their having given to antitypical Rachel God's Word in these special love-inspiring features, the latter should consent thereto; accordingly, God's special servants agreed to this union.

ISSACHAR, ZEBULUN, DINAH, JOSEPH

26. Gen 30:17,18 And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar. Antitypical Jacob, in the person of Thomas Campbell (aided by Barton Stone, his special helper), using the stewardship doctrine that the Bible alone as the creed of God's people is the center of their unity, began in 1809 a Little Flock movement; it was taken by pertinent perverted truths and their applicers (Leah, particularly crown-lost leaders, e.g., Alexander Campbell) and sectarianized into the Christian or Disciple Church (E Vol. 8, pp. 201-206, 689, 694, 695; E Vol. 12, p. 763). The members of antitypical Leah claimed that God had given them this symbolic son as wages or a reward for having given antitypical Zilpah to God's special servants; and they characterized it accordingly (Issachar [hire, reward], v. 18).

27. Gen 30:19,20 And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son. And Leah said, God hath endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun. Antitypical Jacob, in the person of William Miller (aided by Wolff, his special helper), using the stewardship doctrine that prophetic chronology points out the Second Advent and the Kingdom, which will overthrow evil and enthrone righteousness, began a Little Flock movement; it was taken by pertinent perverted truths and their appliers (Leah, particularly crown-lost leaders, e.g., Joshua Himes) and sectarianized into the Second Adventist Church (E Vol. 8, pp. 206-214, 439, 689, 695, 696). The members of antitypical Leah expressed that God had indeed blessed them richly in the great increase He had given them (dowry); and they felt a confident expectation that God's special servants would choose them as their favorite and dwell with them unto the end, because of the many movements that they had brought forth; and they characterized the Adventist Church accordingly (Zebulun [habitation]).

28. This concludes the account of the birth of Jacob's sons by Leah and the handmaids Bilhah and Zilpah. In this picture the Congregational Church and the fanatical sects are not indicated separately, as they are in the picture of the tribes around the Tabernacle and in the picture of the tribal marches. Here the Congregational Church is included in the Calvinistic Church and the fanatical sects are included as fanatically disposed individuals in all of the above 10 groups (E Vol. 13, p. 9).

29. Gen 30:21 And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah. In Adventism antitypical Elijah and Elisha became in 1846 (when the 2300 days ended—Dan. 8:14; C 119) the Cleansed Sanctuary, separate from Great Babylon and its defiling errors connected with the Mass (E Vol. 8, p. 206; E Vol. 6, p. 460). Also, in 1846 antitypical Elijah, in the person of Bro. Miller, anointed antitypical Elisha (E Vol. 3, pp. 35-38, 398, 401, 402). In certain respects this is shown in the setting now under consideration: In 1846 God's special servants began a movement, which later was taken by pertinent perverted truths and their appliers, particularly J.F. Rutherford, and early in the Epiphany was sectarianized into the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (under its board of directors, particularly J.F.R.) as a sectarian movement (daughter), being partly a Truth movement, and partly a nominal-church movement. These appliers regarded this symbolic child as one that had brought and would bring vindication (Dinah [judgment; E Vol. 10, p. 602]).

30. Gen 30:21 Gen 30:22 And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. In the many centuries of the Interim the spiritual elective truths and their appliers (Rachel) had not themselves brought forth any fruitful movement of God's spiritual elect people, though they had ardently

desired to do so; but now at long last their earnest desires were about to be fulfilled. God's due time having come, He remembered them and their supplications and opened the way for them to become fruitful.

31. Gen 30:23 And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son. In 1846, in the Cleansed Sanctuary, antitypical Jacob began a movement (E Vol. 8, p. 8), which the spiritual elective truths and their appliers (Rachel) took and developed until in 1874 it came forth as the Parousia Little Flock and its movement (son); and these appliers in their great joy (Dan. 12:12) at this result averred that God had indeed taken away from them the reproach of barrenness as to bringing forth a fruitful movement of His spiritual elect people (God hath taken away my reproach). They characterized this Little Flock movement as one that God would increase (Joseph [increase, addition]) and, in harmony with the Scriptures (e.g., Rev. 7:9-17), declared that God would give them another fruitful movement of God's spiritual elect (another son). This additional symbolic son is, of course, antitypical Benjamin, the Epiphany Great Company and its movement (E Vol. 13, pp. 8, 19, 20).

TWELVE CHILDREN IN SEVEN YEARS

32. The Bible teaches that these twelve children—eleven sons and one daughter—were born within seven years, as is evident from the facts that Jacob served Laban fourteen years for Rachel and Leah and six years for his flocks (Gen. 31:41), and that Joseph was born seven years after Jacob's marriage, just before the six years of serving for these flocks began (Gen. 29:27, 28; 30:25-36). This Bible teaching has been attacked by higher critics as an alleged proof that the Bible is not inspired. They wrongly assume that none of these children was begotten until the immediately older one was born, a thing that the Bible does not state. While the Bible does indicate that each one was born in the time order given in the Bible, it does not imply that in all cases they were not begotten until the preceding one was born. Of course, in the case of each mother of more than one child, her preceding child was born before her subsequent one was begotten; but evidently as between the four involved mothers this was not the case. The following will show how these twelve children could have been born within seven years—84 months—from Jacob's marriage to Leah and Rachel, whose marriage, as already shown, was a week later than Leah's (Gen. 29:27, 28).

33. Let us assume that Reuben was born nine months after the marriage and that Leah's next three children (Gen. 29:31-35) were born at intervals of ten months. This would have caused the fourth one (Judah) to be born just 39 months after Jacob's marriage. Let us

further assume that Jacob begat the two children of Bilhah (Gen. 30:1-7) ten months apart, but that Dan, her first son, was begotten eight months before Judah was born and was thus born a month after Judah's birth. This would have caused Bilhah's second son to be born 50 months after Jacob's marriage.

34. Let us further assume that Leah, who had borne four children in such quick succession, on finding two months after Naphtali, Bilhah's second son, was conceived, which was thirteen months after Judah was conceived, that she was not conceiving as before, gave Jacob her maid Zilpah (Gen. 30:9, 10), and that by her Jacob immediately, i.e., two months after Naphtali was begotten, begat Gad, and ten months later begat Asher (vs. 12, 13). This would have caused Asher to be born twelve months after Naphtali, i.e., 62 months after Jacob's marriage.

35. Again, assuming that Jacob begat Issachar (vs. 17, 18) one month after begetting Asher, Zebulun (vs. 19, 20) ten months later, and Dinah (v. 21) still ten months later, this would have caused Dinah to be born 83 months after Jacob's marriage. Finally, assuming that Jacob begat Joseph one month after begetting Dinah, Joseph would have been born 84 months, i.e., seven years, after Jacob's marriage. The above allows for sufficient margins of time and still accounts for these twelve births within seven years from Jacob's marriage; it explodes another sophism of higher critics. We know of no point that higher criticism urges against the Bible that cannot be refuted.

ADDITIONAL CONTRACT OF JACOB AND LABAN

36. Gen 30:25 And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. The events recorded in vs. 25-43 have their antitypes in 1846 and thereafter in the Interim. God's special servants of that time, by attitude, word and act, told the main leaders of God's nominal people not to detain them in their midst any longer, but to allow them to go forth to their own domain, to the sphere of the Truth and its Spirit such as existed in the days of the Apostles.

37. Gen 30:26 Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee. They requested that these leaders permit them to take with them the spiritual elective truths and their appliers, and also the stewardship truths and their appliers (wives) and their sympathizers (children), for all of which they had rendered a full measure of service to these leaders, and depart (let me go), stating that these leaders already knew very well the quality and quantity of the ministry that these servants had rendered on their behalf (knowest my service).

38. Gen 30:27 And Laban said unto him, I

pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake. But these leaders (Laban) did not desire this; instead, they entreated these servants (Jacob) to stay with them (tarry); they admitted that they had learned from experience that God had blessed them because of His special servants' presence and service (blessed me for thy sake). Quite evidently it was the benefits, particularly temporal benefits, that these leaders had derived from such service, and not other considerations, that prompted their entreaty.

39. Gen 30:28-30 And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it. And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me. For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the LORD hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also? However, at least outwardly these leaders (Laban) appeared to be generous, and they by attitude, word and act told God's special servants (Jacob) to state what benefits they desired for their service, and they would bestow them. These servants replied that these leaders knew very well how they had served, and how it was with these leaders' adherents—that in the first part of the Interim, when antitypical Jacob began his service with them, these leaders possessed comparatively few adherents, whereas by then—1846 and thereafter—they possessed great numbers, and so God had blessed these leaders abundantly in the time that these servants had been with them; but these servants inquired as to when they themselves would be able to provide for their own spiritual family, if they would continue as they had been in serving these leaders (when shall I provide for mine own house also?).

40. Gen 30:31 And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock: These leaders of God's nominal people (Laban) asked similarly again what benefits they should give to God's special servants (Jacob) for their service; and these servants, not desirous of great titles, large salaries and other emoluments of Babylon, replied that these leaders should not give them anything (not give me anything; comp. Gen. 14:21-24); but they said they would propose one thing which, if these leaders would grant, they would continue to feed and minister to these leaders' adherents (feed and keep thy flock).

41. Gen 30:32 I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire. God's special servants (Jacob) proposed that they would take as their own followers, from among these leaders' adherents, as rewards for their service, those that were considered as being "unorthodox," varying in kind and degree, including such as were considered by the "orthodox" as being

"black sheep" (comp. A.R.V. [it is said that in the East the sheep are generally white, with fewer of the dark-colored and variegated, and that the goats are generally dark-colored, with fewer of the variegated; in each case Jacob requested the unusual kind of animals, of which there were fewer]).

42. Gen 30:33 So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me. And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word. God's special servants (Jacob) indicated that by making such an arrangement for separation between "orthodox" and "unorthodox" there would be no question in the future, when it came to separating adherents—that if any of the "orthodox" were found with antitypical Jacob, among the "unorthodox," they as "orthodox" ones would be considered as having been taken unlawfully by him. The main leaders of God's nominal people (Laban), seeing that this proposition of God's special servants (Jacob) seemed very much to their own advantage and profit, readily agreed to it.

43. Gen 30:35,36 And he removed that day the he goats that were ringstraked and spotted, and all the she goats that were speckled and spotted, and every one that had some white in it, and all the brown among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons. And he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks. The Evangelical Alliance was formed in 1846; those in it, including antitypical Laban, set forth belief in human immortality and other errors as a requisite to being considered "orthodox," or "evangelical" (C 119, 120). Accordingly, antitypical Laban set aside those among their adherents who did not conform to the tenets of the Alliance and other similar "orthodox" doctrinal statements and who were therefore considered "unorthodox," including those among them who were active in begetting and bringing forth figurative children (1 Cor. 4:15; Gal. 4:19), and placed them under the surveillance of their own staunchest supporters (sons), and provided for them to be kept widely separated from God's special servants (Jacob), who were directed to minister to the part of the nominal people of God that was considered by these leaders as "safe" under these servants' care. Thus antitypical Laban sought craftily to keep the "unorthodox," the adherents of antitypical Jacob, from increasing in numbers and influence. But he was not successful, as we shall see!

JACOB'S PROSPERITY

44. Gen 30:37 And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chesnut tree; and pilled white strakes in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods. God's special servants (Jacob) took certain pertinent practices, institutions and

arrangements and made such changes in them that they were no longer regarded as "orthodox"; e.g., titles such as Reverend were dropped, in favor of using only Scriptural designations, such as Elder and Pastor; paid pews were dispensed with; church begging, church gambling and the taking up of collections were discontinued in favor of donations being made voluntarily, etc..

45. Gen 30:38,39 And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink. And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted. God's special servants (Jacob) set these "unorthodox" practices, institutions and arrangements before the nominal people of God, when the latter congregated and Bible truths were presented for them to imbibe, and while, thus gathered, they were begetting and developing symbolic children. As a consequence, the nominal people of God that were under these servants' shepherding brought forth many "unorthodox" new believers.

46. Gen 30:40 And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstraked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not unto Laban's cattle. Antitypical Jacob separated these "babes" from the nominal people of God, and caused the latter to have continually before them for their contemplation such "unorthodox" ones, their greater knowledge and liberty in Christ, etc.; God's special servants placed their adherents, the "unorthodox," the Cleansed Sanctuary and those associated with them, into a condition of separation, and not into the sects with antitypical Laban's adherents (not unto Laban's cattle).

47. Gen 30:41,42 And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. But when the cattle were feeble, he put them not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. Antitypical Jacob arranged matters so that when those among the nominal people of God who were stronger spiritually and capable and desirous of appreciating "strong meat" (Heb. 5:12-14) were considering Bible truths and begat and developed symbolic children, the "unorthodox" practices, institutions and arrangements were placed before them, but when the weaker ones (1 Cor. 3:1, 2; 1 Pet. 2:2) convened, or when the deeper truths were not considered, they did not do so, with the result that the weaker ones that were developed belonged to antitypical Laban, and the stronger ones to antitypical Jacob.

48. Gen 30:43 And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses. As time went on after 1846, especially as the Harvest drew near,

God's special servants became increasingly prosperous, and possessed many adherents, less able and more able assistants, and organizations and teachings. We praise God for this additional unfolding of Truth!

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HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

BS# 399, June 1969, pp. 41-48

1. MANY people have a Bible in the home; some carry one to church on Sundays, perhaps as a matter of outward show, possibly in some cases considering it somewhat in the nature of a fetish or an amulet to protect them against evil—but how many spend much time in reading, examining or really studying it carefully and unbiasedly?

2. We are reminded of the farmer who entertained a preacher at his home. At the dinner table a question came up and the preacher gave the answer from the Bible. The farmer asked in astonishment, "Is that in the Bible?" The preacher replied, "Yes. Let me see your Bible and I will show it to you." The farmer sent his little boy into the front room to get the family Bible. The boy called back, "Which is the Bible?" The father replied, "Why, you know; it's that book we use so much." The boy came back with the mail order catalog!

3. One often hears it said that the Bible is too deep and too difficult for the average person to understand; and too often such reasoning becomes the excuse for laziness in its study, or for not studying it at all. Furthermore, some become discouraged because of so many conflicting creeds and so many disagreements between various sectarian church heads, preachers and writers as to what the Bible really teaches; they feel that if various theologians, who have gone through much schooling, cannot figure it out and agree as to its correct meaning, there is little hope for them to do so. Others care little about learning of the wisdom of God as contained in His Word, for they are indifferent, seeking after earthly wealth and honors, and often are "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Tim. 3:4).

4. However, we should recognize that the all-wise, all-just, all-loving and all-powerful Creator, who has given His human creatures the capacity for understanding a written revelation, would surely provide for them some such revelation of His purposes and plans for them. The Bible, the oldest book in existence, claims to be that revelation; and if one reverently, humbly and earnestly desires to understand what his great Creator thus offers him, he is in the proper attitude to receive "the wisdom that is from above" (James 3:17). "The entrance of thy words giveth light" (Psa. 119:130). "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering" (James 1:5, 6). The soul that truly thirsts for God (Psa. 42:1, 2) and rejoices in His fellowship (1 John 1:3) delights to draw near to



Him (James 4:8) and to have undisturbed seasons of communion with Him; "for he will speak peace unto his people" (Psa. 85:8).

5. Of course, the Truth of God's Word is now only for the faith class to understand; and "all men have not faith" (2 Thes. 3:2). The time has not yet come when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea," when no man need to say to his neighbor, Know the LORD: "for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD" (Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34). For many centuries God has been selecting the faith class, Abraham and his seed (Gal. 3:8, 16, 29), for the converting and blessing of the non-elect world of mankind in the incoming Messianic Age. Meanwhile God hides His purposes and plans, His secrets, "from the [worldly] wise and prudent" (1 Cor. 3:19, 20; 1:19) and reveals them unto babes (Matt. 11:25). "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5).

6. Faith is basically essential if one would come to God and learn of Him (James 1:5, 6). "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). Even if one has this basic faith quality, there are seven other qualities that are especially necessary in order to gain and retain the true understanding of His Word: humility (Matt. 11:25), meekness (Psa. 25:9; Isa. 61:1), reverence (Psa. 25:14), hunger and thirst after righteousness (Matt. 5:6), honesty and goodness (Luke 8:15), and holiness (Heb. 12:14).

7. The study of God's Word will profit us little unless it is "mixed with faith" (Heb. 4:2). Nor can the Truth be gained and retained unless one has the additional necessary qualities. (1) Humility is needed, because it dispels pride—a feeling of self-satisfaction, self-sufficiency, conceit and self-opinionatedness, and causes one to have a proper, lowly self-estimate, whereby he recognizes his own lacks and his need of God, Christ and the wisdom which comes from on high. (2) Meekness is necessary, because it furnishes the teachableness and leadableness of mind and submissiveness of heart that makes one open and responsive to the instructions of God's Word. (3) Reverence is essential, because "the fear [reverence] of

the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" . . . "the beginning of knowledge" (Psa. 111:10; Prov. 1:7), and God reveals His secrets only to those who reverence Him (Psa. 25:14).

8.(4) Hunger and thirst for truth and righteousness—strong yearning for them—is needed to make one's love for these strong enough to overcome the obstacles in the way of his attaining the Truth and its Spirit. (5) Honesty of heart and mind is needed to accept the teachings of God's Word as true, since a dishonest heart naturally impinges against the Truth, while an honest heart has affinity for it. (6) Goodness of heart is needed, because, as like attracts like, a good heart is drawn to that which is good, and the Truth being an expression of God's goodness, a good heart naturally appreciates it. (7) Finally, holiness, a setting apart from the common and ordinary, and a dedication to truth and righteousness, is necessary.

9. Such are the heart and mind qualities necessary in order for one to receive the intended blessing from the Divinely approved method of Bible study. And not only are such qualities needed in order to get the Truth initially, but they are necessary also in order to get it progressively as due to be understood and to retain it after it is received. On the basis of these Scripturally-based qualities, our Lord in His Sermon on the Mount assures us that if we ask we shall receive, that if we seek we shall find, and that if we knock it shall be opened unto us (Matt. 7:7). And now, in the end of the Gospel Age, the Faith Age, in the final, the Laodicean stage of the nominal church (which system He has now rejected and spued out of His mouth—Rev. 3:14-16), He says (v. 20): "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Let us, then, open wide the doors of our hearts and minds and let Him come in to feast with us and we with Him.

GOD'S PLAN SYSTEMATIC, LOGICAL, PRACTICAL

10. In reverently approaching the study of God's Word we should recognize that its Author is a God of order. Many friends of the Bible, instead of regarding it as containing a system of Truth, look upon it as a compilation of facts, precepts, commandments and promises, that are not capable of being properly arranged. Such people are apt to be weak and vacillating, and at the mercy of the errorist and the unbeliever.

11. Everything that we know about God shows Him to be logical, practical and orderly in every respect. Just as in His great work of creation, "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31), so in His great plan of salvation for Adam and his race, everything is perfectly arranged and in perfect order for its full accomplishment. And

concerning His Word God declares: "It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:11).

12. A bold unbeliever in the Bible may find in his "God of Nature" the embodiment of law and order. He sees order in Astronomy, Geology, Biology, Chemistry and other sciences, but only confusion in the Bible, and he rightly reasons that God's works should be orderly and harmonious. He knows the principles of those sciences, and can understand the book of nature, but knows little, if anything, of the plan of the Bible, and therefore cannot understand or appreciate it, so rejects it. But one has as much right to reject Astronomy because he cannot understand it, as he has to reject the Bible for the same reason.

13. What is confusion when not understood, becomes when explained beautiful and harmonious. Until absolute knowledge is gained, each ray of light will at least modify former ideas. To understand any science or book it should be read according to its own principles of interpretation. "No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Pet. 1:20). Since God's Word from Genesis to Revelation (2 Tim. 3:16) was recorded and is properly interpreted by the aid of one Spirit (God's holy Spirit—2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Cor. 2:10-14), it should be taken as a whole, and not disconnectedly, thus working disharmony. When we compare Scripture with Scripture, and thus consider the united testimony of the Bible, we learn more and more that "God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain."

14. It is not reasonable to suppose that God would present to us a series of wonderful books (the 66 books of the Bible) as His written revelation to His people, and yet make them so obscure and difficult as to be impossible for His people to understand them. Everything that God produces is purposeful. Surely His purpose for the Bible would be defeated if He made its message so obscure that with the aid of His Spirit His true and loyal people could not understand it!

15. But many are greatly hindered and confused by the "mumbo-jumbo" of supposedly mystical beliefs which create their own pointless mysteries simply in order to impress others, and many fall victims to the popular assumption that what is wonderful must be inexplicable. Thus many tenaciously hold to more or less mysterious and illogical misconceptions inherited from the creeds of the Dark Ages concerning the nature of God's being and character, Christ's nature, carnation and Ransom-sacrifice, the holy Spirit, the nature of death, the Bible hell, the resurrection, the soul and the spirit, the Millennium, Paradise, the new earth, etc.

16. To rightly understand God's Word, we must be emptied of self, must be humble and meek enough to lay aside creedal beliefs and preconceived notions that conflict with His Word, must reverence His Word

rather than the conflicting teachings of men, must have real hunger for the Truth rather than indifference and must exercise faith rather than credulity. Unless we are properly meek toward God and desire to learn from Him, He cannot teach us. We are not to be partial to earthly leaders and their teachings nor prejudiced against any of the true teachings of the Bible; we are not to accept some of its teachings and reject others, holding to only those passages which comfort and please us or which we can use independently of other Scriptures to support our creedal beliefs. If we are not willing to accept the testimony of the whole Word of God, even though some of it may not agree with what others have taught us or with what we have believed in the past or prefer to believe, then we are not ready to come to God to learn of Him.

THE WHOLE WORD OF GOD NEEDED

17. Piecemeal interpretation of the Bible is the cause of much confusion among Christians. It has given rise to the profane proverb that "the Bible is like an old fiddle on which any tune can be played." Very few use much of the Bible; only a few practical precepts, and only enough doctrine to try to prove some particular creed, are valued by the majority. They virtually blame God for giving such a large book when a small one, they think, would have been all-sufficient.

18. A preacher who advocated justification by works, rather than justification by faith, took for his text the following words from Rom. 4:4: "To him that worketh is the reward." The perversion will be apparent to all who note the context. We must be careful not to use a text without its context, lest we use it as a pretext. A text is of comparatively little value as proof of a doctrine unless it is understood in harmony with its context and all other texts in the Bible that have a bearing on the same subject, and unless we "rightly divide the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15) and assign each text to its proper time and place in God's great Plan of the Ages. The Calvinist, the Arminian and the Universalist may each readily find one or more texts that may seem to sustain his theory; and the infidel will say that the three texts contradict one another.

19. Thus the Calvinist, with his theory of individual predestination to salvation or damnation, may appeal to such texts as Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:5 and Yeshua's own words in John 6:44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." The Arminian, on the other hand, holding to the belief that salvation is free to everyone everywhere, may emphasize that "whosoever will" may come and "take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17) and that Yeshua Himself said (John 12:32): "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Both of them, though disagreeing with each other on this point, agree that only those who believe in this life can be saved and that all others are eternally and hopelessly lost (though

Arminians will often say that God excuses many because of ignorance). The Universalist comes along with such texts as Heb. 2:9; 1 Tim. 2:4-6 and 1 Tim. 4:10, showing that Yeshua tasted death "for every man," that God "will have all men to be saved" and that He is "the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe." Each of them stands in his own sectarian corner, defending himself with his own chosen favorite texts. Each will pass lightly over or ignore the proof texts set forth by the others, and so seek to sustain his own theory, despite Bible testimony he cannot harmonize with it.

20. The Bible is true; therefore there must be a way to harmonize all these texts and all other texts in God's Word and not ignore, pass lightly over, or belittle any of them. Surely God does not contradict Himself. Therefore if His Word seems in some ways to contradict itself we may be sure that the fault is with us, not with Him. God has a consistent purpose and a consistent plan for carrying it out. We cannot rightly divide the Word of Truth and thereby apply the various texts to the Ages and Dispensations and the times to which they pertain, unless we understand God's "eternal purpose [Greek, Plan of the Ages—Diaglott; see also A.R.V.; Rotherham, etc.] which he purposed in Christ Yeshua" (Eph. 3:11).

21. While God earnestly desires His people to understand His Plan of the Ages, He does not leave us to flounder in darkness without coming to our assistance. He has graciously provided us with the twelve Apostles, with general prophets or teachers, such as Zwingli, Luther, Wesley, etc., with evangelists, and with local pastors and teachers, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith . . . that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:11-14). Thus we are not left to dig things out of the Bible, every man for himself, with many varying opinions. God has arranged for Truth servants, "overseers" of the flock, both in general and locally (note, e.g., Acts 20:17-31).

THE BIBLE A BOOK OF TEXTS

22. It is a widely held view that Christians should use the Bible as a textbook, both privately and publicly, and from such study learn the Truth. Thus they treat the Bible as a textbook, and not as a book of texts. The Bible certainly is not a textbook, and therefore should not be treated as such. A little consideration will show this. A textbook is a logical, progressive and orderly treatise on some branch of learning. Any good arithmetic textbook will serve as an illustration. In it the subjects are presented as they logically belong together, systematically, progressively

and completely; each line of thought is kept separate and distinct. The subjects are presented so as to progress in each one from the simpler to the more complex, and in their relations so that one leads up to the next. They are never mixed up, but each one follows in its proper order. In these ways the entire subject of arithmetic is presented in such a textbook.

23. The same general course is followed in every other rightly prepared textbook. But the Bible is not so arranged. In no one place in the Bible is everything on any given subject found, let alone discussed in its logical and progressive order. Rather it is treated "here a little, and there a little" (Isa. 28:10). Take any one of its subjects, like God, Christ, the holy Spirit, faith, repentance, justification, man, the ransom, restitution, the soul, the spirit, the wages of sin, the resurrection, etc., and it will be found that it is treated in connection with other subjects, whose subject matter also is given in many scattered places in connection with still other subjects, also presented piecemeal, etc. God has purposely arranged it in this way so as to hide His secrets from those who are proud, conceited, self-sufficient, self-opinionated, "wise and prudent" in their own eyes, and to reveal them to "babes" (Matt. 11:25)—those who are meek and humble and willing to learn from God in His appointed way, i.e., with the help of the Truth teachers that He has appointed for their instruction.

24. Many classes of Bible students feel self-sufficient and ignore the Truth servants God has provided. They use the Bible as a textbook and seek to dig the Truth out of it for themselves, taking up Bible books in turn and studying them chapter by chapter and verse by verse. They are headed for very limited understanding, and for much confusion and disappointment. They often come to as many opinions on the meaning of many verses as there are members in these classes. This demonstrates that the Bible is not a textbook, but a book of more or less scattered, disjointed, enigmatical texts. Likewise, individuals who feel self-sufficient, ignore God's servants and try to dig the Truth out of the Bible for themselves, usually only kindle sparks of error and walk in their light, and therefore will "lie down in sorrow" (Isa. 50:11). During the faith dispensation God through Yeshua speaks to the non-faith and disobedient classes in parables and dark sayings, for "to them it is not given . . . because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand" (Matt. 13:10-16).

25. During the world's thousand-year Judgment Day, the books will be opened and the Truth will be revealed to all (Rev. 20:12; 1 Tim. 2:4; Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34); but God in mercy now withholds from the world the knowledge of the Truth and the responsibility that such knowledge would bring upon them, until the Day that He has appointed for their judgment (John 12:47, 48; Acts 17:31). Only the faith classes are on trial now (1 Pet. 4:17; 1:7).

26. Since the textbookistic study of the Bible has been proven to result in many conflicting opinions, much confusion and many errors among God's people, it should of course be avoided. In view of this, some may be inclined to give up Bible study altogether and despair of ever understanding the Bible. But this would be to go to the other extreme, for the study of God's Word is enjoined in, and approved by the Bible (John 5:39; Deut. 29:29; 31:10-13; Neh. 8:7, 8; Psalms 1:2; 119:96-100, 103, 105, 140; 147:19; Isa. 8:20; 30:21; Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 3:10; Luke 11:28; Acts 8:28, 30; Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Pet. 3:2; Rev. 1:3).

THE PROPER WAY TO STUDY THE BIBLE

27. The proper way, then, to study the Bible is to use it, not as a textbook, but topically, as a book of texts, and to look especially to the Divinely appointed Truth teachers for God's people in general, for assistance in the correct understanding. This is the method approved in Acts 17:11 (compare Isa. 8:20; 1 Thes. 5:21; 1 John 4:1-3), where the Bereans are commended as more noble than the Thessalonians, because they listened "with all readiness of mind" to the things preached to them by the Apostle Paul, and searched the Scriptures daily to see whether the things he declared to them were true.

28. Here, then, we have the Divinely approved method of Bible study: (1) one of the pertinent Divinely appointed Truth teachers through whom Yeshua speaks the Truth, explains the Word of God, the Truth message due to be understood; (2) good attention with a ready mind is given by the hearers to his presentations, and (3) daily search is made in the Scriptures to see whether these teachings come from, and are in harmony with the Bible as a whole. Thus each one can be "fully persuaded [assured] in his own mind" and "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and fear [reverence]" (Rom. 14:5; 1 Pet. 3:15).

29. Why is this the correct method of Bible study? Because Yeshua, the only true Interpreter of God's Word, gives in New Testament times the Truth as due through His special Truth messengers, even as in Old Testament times God spoke "by the prophets" (Heb. 1:1, 2). The first thing, therefore, that one should do in seeking for a correct understanding of God's Word is to put himself into contact, either directly or indirectly, with the Lord's special Truth messengers. This may be done either knowingly or unknowingly. In the latter instance Yeshua manipulates the true-hearted in such a way as to bring them into contact with His special Truth messengers, either personally or in the Truth writings. Thus a Truth message may reach one who is meek, humble and hungry for the Truth, either in the form of a Truth writing—a book, booklet, magazine, tract, etc.—or in the personal ministration of a servant of the Truth.

30. Many Scriptures show that the Lord does not "open the book, and loose the seals thereof" (Rev. 5:2, 5) directly to each one of His people. His Body members were properly organized, in an orderly and efficient arrangement. "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers?" (1 Cor. 12:29). Surely not. God "tempered the body together"; for "the body is not one member, but many"; and "if they were all one member, where were the body?" "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him" (1 Cor. 12:24, 14, 19, 18).

31. Thus throughout the Gospel Age Yeshua has been symbolically walking "in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks," the seven stages of the Church, starting with the Ephesus or Jewish Harvest stage of the Church's history, and ending with the Laodicean stage of the Church, the time of His Second Advent (Rev. 2:1-29; 3:1-22). He is pictured as having "in his right hand seven stars," which He explains as representing "the angels [messengers] of the seven churches" (Rev. 1:16, 20).

32. Each of these stars or lightbearers consisted of more than one individual. Thus the star or angel of the Ephesus stage of the Church (which ended in 69 A.D.) consisted of the twelve Apostles; and the star or angel of the Philadelphia, the Reformation, stage of the Church likewise consisted of a number of special servants, through whom Yeshua set forth important Reformation truths.

33. Note carefully: In connection with each of the seven stages of the Church, Yeshua exhorted, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). But not once was the initial unfolding of the Truth as it became due given directly to the members of the Church in general. It was always directed to the "angel," the "star," in its own constituency exclusively. In each case it was stated, "Unto the angel of the church in—write" (Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14).

34. How careful we should be, then, to look to the Lord and to accept only His Truth teachings as supported by God's Word from Genesis to Revelation, given through His special Truth servants and those who are in harmony with Truth teachings! Well does our Lord warn us to "beware of false prophets" and to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees [self-righteous sticklers for traditional teachings] and of the Sadducees [deniers of the resurrection and other important Bible doctrines]" of our day (Matt. 7:15; 16:6). "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8).

35. It will help us to avoid error and the many vagaries of teachers of error if we keep in mind the seven axioms or criteria whereby the truth or error on any religious subject can readily be recognized. A teaching to be true must be harmonious (1) with itself, (2) with every Scripture passage, (3) with every

Scripture doctrine, (4) with God's character, (5) with the Ransom, (6) with facts, and (7) with the purpose of God's Plan of the Ages. The true, sincere Christian can with the help of these seven axioms readily recognize the many errors that are presented to him for acceptance, and so not waste valuable time on them, but cast them aside.

36. As a basic help in the understanding of God's Word and His wonderful Plan of salvation for the Church and for the world of mankind in general (which harmonizes, e.g., the doctrines of election and free grace), we recommend especially the book entitled "The Divine Plan of the Ages." It is a "best seller"—over 10 million copies have been circulated. It is written in simple language, from a non-sectarian standpoint. It is based strictly on the teachings of the Bible itself and is a veritable Bible key that unlocks its mysteries and enables one to "rightly divide the Word of Truth" with understanding.

THE HOLY BIBLE

When childhood needs a standard,
Or youth a beacon light,
When sorrow sighs for comfort,
Or weakness longs for might,
Bring forth the Holy Bible—
The Bible! There it stands!
Resolving all life's problems
And meeting its demands.

Though sophistry conceal it,
The Bible! There it stands!
The Pharisees profane it,
But still its truth expands.
It fills the world with fragrance
Whose sweetness never cloy;
It lifts our eyes to heaven,
It heightens human joys.

Despised and torn in pieces,
By infidels denied,
While many wrest its teachings
And cynics scoff in pride—
All these have railed against it,
In this and other lands;
Yet dynasties have fallen,
And still the Bible stands.

It is God's revelation—
The Bible! There it stands!
Its promises unfailing,
Nor grievous its commands.
It points man to his Savior,
The Lover of his soul;
Salvation is its watchword,
Eternity its goal.

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“COALS OF FIRE ON HIS HEAD”

BS Question Book, p. 207



What is meant by Rom. 12:20: “If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head”?

1. Here again fire is used as a symbol of destruction, even as is the case in Mal. 3:2; 4:1; Heb. 12:29; Lam. 4:11; Zeph. 3:8, 9; Matt. 3:10-12; Luke 12:49; 1 Cor. 3:12-15; James 3:6; 2 Pet. 3:7, 12; Jude 7; Rev. 17:16; 20:9, etc. The context helps us to understand the meaning of this text. The Christian is to bless those who persecute him (v. 14), is to be sympathetic (v. 15), is to be humble (v. 16), not vindictive, but honest (v. 17), living peaceably with others, in harmony with good principles (v. 18), not avenging self, but rather, whenever he can do so without compromising principle, getting out of the way of adversaries and their wrath (v. 19), and is not to allow evil to rule in his heart and mind, but is to overcome evil and evildoers with good (v. 21).

2. And accordingly, if you return good for evil, feeding your enemy when hungry, giving him drink when thirsty, or showing him other kindnesses, you will make him ashamed of his own conduct in contrast with yours; he will see that you have only good will toward him, that you are not his enemy, but his friend; and thus “in so doing” you will figuratively “heap coals of fire on his head”— burning out (destroying) his animosity. You are not really his enemy; he just thinks you are. Your acts of kindness will get him to think more correctly and may turn your enemy into a friend.

*Thus saith the LORD,
Stand ye in the ways,
and see, and ask for
the old paths,
where is the good way,
and walk therein,
and ye shall find
rest for your souls.*

Jer. 6:16

NOTE

Some portions of the Newsletter articles have been modified in harmony to the present Calling and in harmony with the Present Truth received till now.

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