# Articles by Henry Palmeiri

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# Amillennialism (October 1968)

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## The Most Obvious Answer

The most obvious answer to the question of the meaning of all is found in the context. The all is in antithesis to the in part of Romans 11:25 and the remnant of verse 5. During the present age a remnant of Israel is saved through the gospel. The hardening or blindness is "in part." When Christ returns, the situation will be changed. Instead of a remnant, instead of a small part, Israel as a whole will be saved. It will be a national deliverance.

A. T. Robertson while attempting to defend Postmillennialism in his interpretation admits: "All Israel (pas Israel). What does Paul mean? The immediate context (use of PAS in contrast to APO MEROUS, PLEROMA here in contrast with PLEROMA in v. 12) argues for the Jewish people 'as a whole'." He goes on to express his opinion that other Scripture (Rom. 9:6; Gal. 6:16) may justify the teaching that both Jew and Gentile or spiritual Israel may be the idea.

The opinion of Charles Hodge is worthy of weight as he is not arguing for Premillennialism: "Israel, here, from the context, must mean the Jewish people, and all Israel, the whole nation. The Jews, as a people, are now rejected; as a people, they are to be restored. As their rejection, although national, did not include the rejection of every individual; so their restoration, although in like manner national, need not be assumed to include the salvation of every individual Jew. 'All

Israel' is not therefore to be here understood to mean all the true people of God, as Augustine, Calvin, and many others explain it; nor all the elect Jews, i.e., all that part of the nation which constitutes 'the remnant according to the election of grace'; but the whole nation, as a nation." The viewpoint that 'all Israel' means 'Israel as a whole' is not 'an almost unprecedented extreme' of literalism which is characteristic of Millennarianism,' as Dr. Allis would have us believe, nor is it a peculiarity of a little sect of Plymouth Brethren' (Walvoord). 'It is the interpretation of those who believe that Israel means Israel, whether premillennial or postmillennial, and it is the only interpretation which makes sense out of the eleventh chapter of Romans.' It is the strong conviction of the writer that when God says ISRAEL, He means ISRAEL: WHEN HE SPEAKS OF THE CHURCH, HE MEANS CHURCH AND NOT ISRAEL." When the plain sense of Scripture makes sense, seek no other sense, lest it becomes nonsense." Professor Wm. Hendriksen, professor of New Testament Literature at Calvin Seminary and an avowed Amillennialist, interestingly disagrees with Dr. Allis and holds that ALL ISRAEL refers to the total number of elect Israel in all Ages - i.e., holds to a literal interpretation of the passage. This is, to say the least, an improvement on Augustine, Calvin, and Allis, though it misses the point of the context. (And So All Israel Shall Be Saved - P. 33). The deliverance predicted in Romans 11:26 is clearly a group deliverance rather than individual salvation. This is borne out in the explanation which follows in the chapter.

## What Is the Nature of the Deliverance?

The salvation of 'all Israel' is described as a fulfillment of prophecy. Isaiah 59:20-21 is quoted in part in Romans 11:26, 27. The full quotation in Isaiah is as follows: "And a Redeemer will come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith Jehovah. And as for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith Jehovah: My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith Jehovah, from henceforth and forever." Three things are mentioned specifically in the Roman quotation: (1) the Redeemer shall come OUT OF Zion; (2) He shall turn ungodliness from Jacob; (3) this is a covenant to be fulfilled "when I shall take away their sins."

All views of the Millennium agree that the Deliverer is the Lord Jesus Christ. Question has been raised concerning the meaning of "out of Zion." The Hebrew of Isaiah 59:20 is correctly rendered "to Zion." The LXX has interpreted this to mean "for Zion." Paul in quoting the Hebrew uses neither the Hebrew nor the LXX when he quotes the passage as "from Zion." How is this difficulty to be solved and what is the meaning of Zion? It is clear that Paul is here not directly quoting but is gathering up various passages in one statement. It will be noticed that his reference to turning away ungodliness is not in the Isaiah passage either. The Scriptures speak of Christ as both coming to Zion and from Zion (cf. Ps. 14:7, 20:2; 53:6; 110:2; 128:5; 134:3; 135:21; Isa. 2:3; Joel 3:16; Amos 1:2). It is certainly to quibble with words to argue, as Dr. Allis does, that this change of wording favors the Amillennial view that a

heavenly city is intended. In the nature of the case Christ must come "to Zion" before He comes "from Zion." The deliverance promised Israel is not PER SE His second Coming, but His rule on earth after His coming.

What is meant by ZION? This term has been used in reference to the city of Jerusalem or parts of it 'at least since the time of David' (Inter. Std. Bible Encyclopaedia). A study of its usage in the Old Testament reveals that its meaning is LITERAL, that is, IT IS ALWAYS ASSOCIATED WITH THE EARTHLY ZION. Its use in the New Testament is also LITERAL. The only cases in question are the references in Hebrews 12:22 and Revelation 14:1, which readily yield to a literal interpretation if the premillennial viewpoint be adopted in interpreting the passages as a whole. In no case does Zion become merely a 'heavenly city' (Allis). The many predictions in the Old Testament foretelling the coming of the Deliverer 'out of Zion' (see references above) argue for a literal interpretation.

When the Deliverer comes, He will "turn away ungodliness from Jacob." This is an event, not a process extending over ages of time. It is the subject of much Old Testament prophecy. It is part and parcel of the new covenant which Romans 11:27 mentions. A classic Old Testament passage bearing on the subject is Jeremiah 31:31-37. A new covenant is promised the house of Israel. In this new covenant, Jehovah promises: 'I will put My law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people etc.' (Jer. 31:33,34). The passage then goes on to declare that Israel will endure AS A NATION under this new covenant as long as the ordinances of the sun,

moon and stars endure. The passage concludes: 'Thus saith Jehovah: If Heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Jehovah" (Jer. 31:37). In brief, the new covenant promised the house of Israel is precisely what Paul refers to in Romans 11:26 - 27. The elements are the same: Israel is promised blessing as a group or nation; 'all' are to be blessed; 'all' are to know the Lord; 'all' are to be forgiven. Certainly this is not the picture of Israel in any period of its history until now A literal fulfilment demands an interpretation of Romans 11:26, 27 which is in accord with the Premillennial position. The fact that believers in this age enjoy a 'new covenant' of grace and blessing does not hinder the future fulfillment of this promise to Israel, which is in no wise being fulfilled now.

The Premillennial interpretation of Scripture adds a great deal to the bare outline provided in Romans 11:26, 27. According to this viewpoint, the deliverance will be more than spiritual. Israel will be in the great tribulation and threatened with extermination (Mt. 24:15-22). The coming of Christ will deliver them from physical harm. This is in view of their coming spiritual blessing which will be their portion after being judged and brought into the land of promise. These events are the means to the end — the spiritual blessing on Israel throughout the Millennium. To argue that all the details of the complicated series of events which will bring Gentile power to its end and establish the kingdom of Christ on earth must be in this portion of Romans in order to establish the Premillennial view of the future, is an example of the error of arguing from silence.

## Our Lovely Saviour (Dec 1957)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 3 No. 12, Dec 1957.

Some have gone to a great extreme in their attempt to describe the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ. One has only to look at the many paintings of the artists to see the various conceptions of His personal appearance. Because of this, we repress any imaginative idea of His bodily appearance, and feel that since the Scriptures give no detailed description of His features it is impossible to know anything about His looks and manners. Let us concede the fact that on this delightful subject the Scriptures are not absolutely silent, but give many significant and loving touches in regard to His person, His features, lips, eyes, face, and form. Surely we can love not only His future appearing, but also His perfect appearance as He was in the days of His flesh. To all these suggestive revelations of Christ, the response of our hearts must be that of the Psalmist in the "Song of the Beloved One," "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into Thy lips; therefore God hath blessed Thee forever" (45:2).

"No mortal can with Him compare

Among the sons of men.

Fairer is He than all the fair

That fill the heavenly train."

His enticing beauty is brought out more vividly as we get an insight into the meaning of the Hebrew word, "fairer." Strong's Concordance gives its meaning as "beautiful." While this beauty may be moral and

spiritual, in our present study we will note that it also may be physical, a fact that is often overlooked.

“Thou art fairer” (Psa. 45:2). “Yea, He is altogether lovely” (S. of S. 5:16). Do these statements not bring before us the attractiveness of our Saviour? He is fairer not only in mind and character, but also in person. The King of saints is peerless in His beauty—“Fairer than the children of men;” magnificent in His strength—“O Most Mighty;” and glorious in His physical accomplishments —“Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh.”

In this Psalm (45), the Hebrew word is doubled, “Beautiful, beautiful art Thou.” Jesus is so emphatically lovely that words must be doubled, strained, yea, exhausted before He can be described (C. H. S.). Diodati translates, “Tu sei piu bello,” which means, “Thou art most beautiful.” The translation from the Latin Vulgate gives, “Thou art beautiful above,” and F. W. Grant gives, “Thou art fairer far,” noting a duplicative form which makes it emphatic. He, the Son of Man, transcends all others.

Oh, the spiritual and physical loveliness of the Lord Jesus Christ! Have you seen Him in all His moral beauty? Those of us who love Him are constantly discovering His beauties, for by the Holy Spirit our eyes, long blinded, have been illuminated. Once we were like Israel who confesses, “He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him” (Isa. 53:2). Repentant Israel shall yet see His beauty, for the veil of unbelief will be taken away from their hearts. Like them we were blind and insensitive to His charms, but since we believed the

Word of God, we have been attracted to Him and can say with the chorus writer:

“Chiefest of ten thousand, Fairest of the fair,

Altogether lovely, beyond compare.

Lord of all creation, Man of Calvary,

Son of God Who loved, and gave Himself for me.”

“The chiefest of ten thousand” (S. of S. 5:10). “The Chiefest,” that is, the Distinguished One, the Chosen One (See the Greek Versions, the Syriac, Jerome, and Luther). Another rendering is “Bannered,” suggesting that He has been provided with a banner. What shall we say of the number, ten-thousand? This numeral is simply used to represent an innumerable multitude; “myriad” is so used among ourselves (cf. Ezek. 16:7), so we could paraphrase the statement, “He is the Chiefest among myriads upon myriads etc.” Of a truth then, the beauty of the Lord Jesus is exquisite, a beauty in His person and appearance that is unsurpassed. He indeed is beautiful to look upon. He Himself has said, “I am the good Shepherd” (John 10:11). The late Mr. Harold St. John wrote, “The beautiful Pastor knows His sheep, lays down His life for them and the reason for this act is, there shall be one flock and one Shepherd” (John 10:16).

Oh, brethren, think of Him as the lovely Man! Muse on Him! He is our Friend!

“Fairest of all the earth beside,

Chiefest of all unto Thy Bride,

Fullness Divine in Thee I see,

Beautiful Man of Calvary.”

Have you thought of Him today? Remember what the Psalmist said, “My meditation of Him shall be sweet” (104:34). Only in so doing do we get glimpses of His beauty and loveliness. We thank God for every Scriptural glimpse that is given to us of “the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6). We still see through a glass darkly; nevertheless, we learn to know and love His very visage. It is well to remember the saying of Justin Evans in this connection, “There is nothing in Jesus that is not lovely, and there is nothing lovely that is not in Jesus.”

“One Lord there is all lords above;

His name is Truth, His name is Love,

His name is Beauty, it is Light,

His will is everlasting right.

Lord of the everlasting name

Truth, Beauty, Light, Consuming Flame,

Shall I not lift my heart to Thee,

And ask Thee, Lord, to rule in me?”

# Lambs and Sheep (May 1958)

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Henry Palmerie

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father’s hand.” John 10:27-29.

Let us notice, dear young believer, seven things in regard to the sheep of Christ’s pasture.

## The Peculiarity of the Sheep

The Lord Jesus calls them, “My sheep.” All who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour have been brought into this blessed relationship to Him; that is, they now belong to Him. They are His unique possession, His private property; moreover, they are His by election (Eph. 1:4), by redemption (Acts 20:28), by adoption (Rom. 8:15), and for infinite duration (John 10: 28).

“His very own, His very own,

Wonderful grace in His Word made known;

Chosen by the Father, purchased by the Son;

Sealed by the Spirit, I’m His very own.”

We are called a “peculiar people” in Titus 2:14. This word when rightly understood is full of meaning. To be a peculiar people is not to be queer in our dress, ungracious in our manner, or rude in our conversation.

It is to be emphatically and distinctively the Lord's own people; and therefore, to be especially near and dear to Him. How precious it is to hear Him say, "My sheep," and to realize that we are His very own! It has been said that perhaps among all the animals in the world none is so utterly foolish, helpless, and weak in facing danger as the sheep. No man shows more tenderness and care to those over whom he has charge than does the shepherd. How befitting to see the Lord Jesus Christ as the wise, strong, ever-loving, and tender Shepherd; and ourselves the foolish and wayward sheep. We are His sheep; consequently, He calls us to Himself and cares for us. Why? Because we have cost Him so much. We were bought with a price, the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is as true of the tender lamb as it is of the older sheep.

## The Privilege of the Sheep

"My sheep hear My voice," asserts the Good Shepherd. The hearing of His voice truly is the earmark on the sheep. We heard His life-giving voice at the time of our conversion, and now that same voice sustains the life He imparted to us. If we really are His lambs and sheep we will know His voice. When last did we hear His voice? How heart-searching is this question! If His voice is not heard by His own, they eventually become like them that go down to the pit (Psa. 28:1).

The story is told of a man in India who was accused of stealing a sheep. He along with the rightful owner, was brought before the judge. Both men laid claim to the sheep, and both had witnesses to testify to their respective claims. The judge knowing something of the habits of shepherds and sheep, ordered the sheep to be

brought into the courtroom. One of the two men claiming the sheep was led from the court into an adjoining room. The other was forced to call the sheep in his usual manner. The sheep made no indication of recognizing the voice. The man in the adjoining room became impatient and gave his usual little call; immediately ownership was decided, for the sheep bounded to the door of the room in which his rightful master was shut.

## The Path of the Sheep

The Lord Jesus in speaking further declares, “They follow Me.” This is the foot-mark. One of the characteristics of the Lord’s lambs and sheep as given by Himself is, “They follow Me.” This pathway commences at the cross of Calvary and consummates in the crown of glory. Brethren and sisters, we have been given the great privilege of following the steps of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is recorded of the first disciples at Thessalonica, “They became followers of the Lord,” even in a path that entailed much suffering and affliction (Thess. 1:6). Let us prove to all that we have Christianity in very truth by following the Lord. To follow the Lord involves walking the pathway of obedience to His Word (John 10:28), and the doing of that which is well-pleasing to Him (Col. 1:10).

## The Perceptibility for the Sheep

“I know them.” We do not know for sure who are Christ’s and who are not. “The Lord knoweth them that are His” (2 Tim. 2:19). Many times we judge wrongly concerning those who are Christians; therefore, we are

not competent judges. Christ knows His own sheep and calls them by their names.

## The Portion of the Sheep

What a word of assurance! “I give unto them eternal life.” Note the kind of life we have, eternal life. If any are in doubt, let them turn to God’s Word and take it at its face value. He calls it eternal life, and if it could come to an end, it would not be eternal. Be sure of this, God never repents for having given us such a gift. May we enjoy this blessing and live in the power of this life that we possess. The Good Shepherd, not only gives His life for the sheep, but He gives His life to the sheep.

## The Promise to the Sheep

How blessed that such “shall never perish!” The believer on the Lord Jesus is saved completely from sin’s doom (John 5:24), sin’s dominion (Horn. 6:14), and will be saved from sin’s domain when Christ returns in His Second Advent. Here then is the promise of salvation to all of Christ’s flock, a promise that embraces the past, the present, and the future.

## The Preservation of the Sheep

“Neither shall any pluck them out of My hand.” These words present a challenge to every antagonistic power. His sheep are safe and secure in the hands of Christ and of His Father, God. There is no terrestrial or infernal power that could pluck them out, and there is no celestial power that would. Some may say, “But I can take myself out or jump out.” No, my friend, God’s hand is closed tightly and holds His sheep and lambs securely. His hand is one that grips. May our hearts be led to seek

Him daily, to hear His voice, and to follow Him until He calls us home or comes to take us there.

# Demonology (Part 1) (Jan 1960)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 6 No. 1, Jan 1960.

While God's Word says, "I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil" (Rom. 16:19), as believers we should know something of and be familiar with what the Bible says on this much neglected subject, demonology. That there is a devil and hosts of demons, no one familiar with the Word of God will deny. All that we know about the "devil," his demons and their work is told us in His Word, the Bible. Since God has spoken, declaring the existence and depicting to some extent the nature and work of demons, we do well to turn to this source of knowledge for a study of the doctrine of demonology.

## Differentiation Between Devil and Demons

There are two different Greek words translated by the one English word "devil" or "devils" in the Authorized Version, which unless one differentiates between them will lead to much confusion. One word is "diamonion", and its cognates which appear no less than 27 times in the singular and 52 times in the plural in our Authorized Version of the New Testament, and means "knowing ones."

The other word is "diabolos" which is used at least 35 times. This word means, "a traducer, a false accuser or slanderer," and always refers to Satan, the devil; the former always refers to the evil spirits who are the servants of the devil. It will help us if we keep in mind that there is only one devil, but there are many demons. We must be careful to differentiate between them.

An outstanding Greek scholar has well said, “The rule for the English reader to follow as he seeks to correctly interpret the passages in which these two Greek words are found, is as follows: First, where the word is found in the plural, as “devils” always translate by the word “demons,” for the word “diamonion” is in the Greek. Second, where you have the word devil in a passage that speaks of a person possessed with a devil as for instance Matt. 9:32, or a person having a devil as in Lk. 7:33, always translate by the word demon. Third, where the king of the demons is in view, that awful personality known as Satan, as in Lk. 4:2, 1 Pet. 5:8, Rev. 20:2, translate by the word devil. In John 6:70, Judas is called a devil by our Lord, the word being “diabolos.”

The seducing spirits of 1 Tim. 4:1 are not men, but the powers of darkness, (daimonion demons) unseen acting under their prince, (“diabolos”, devil), speaking through men, seeking to lead astray the children of God and to keep unbelievers in the bonds of evil doctrine. There are myriads of these invisible spiritual agents (demons) acting under one devil, disseminating errors among men and seeking to seduce believers. To hold the “doctrine of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1) is to deny the Deity, personality, sanctity and the eternity of the Being of the Son of God. To hold the “doctrine of Christ” (2 John 10) is to confess His Deity, personality, sanctity and the eternity of His Being.

## Origination of Demons

God has given us one written revelation, and in it He does not gratify idle curiosity and minister to mere human speculation. Consequently, there is much about

the spiritual world that it pleased Him not to reveal to us at present.

As to the origin of demons the Scriptures are all but silent. Their nature seems akin to that of the angels in knowledge and powers, but with the emphatic addition of the idea of positive and active wickedness.

Scripture is clear as to their existence as personal beings, able to enter into and control men and animals and possessed of sight, hearing and speech (Matt. 8:28-32).

Satan is called the “prince of this world” (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11); “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2), “prince of the demons” (Matt. 12:24); that is, he is the recognized chief of all the unholy emissaries which fill the atmosphere, the leader of evil principalities and powers in heavenly places. Since he is so called, and is recognized as such by these “seducing spirits” (1 Tim. 4:1), can it not be inferred that they shared in his sin? If this is so, and since they are called “his angels,” can we not suggest that they form part of the “angels which kept not their first estate”? Thus, “his kingdom” (Matt. 12:26), “his angels” (Matt. 25:41) seem to fall into two groups, the bound and the unbound. There are those who are imprisoned as Jude says, “delivered into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment” (2 Pet. 2:4), and there are those who are at liberty and active, against whom the Apostle Paul warns that the Christian must “stand”. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies” (Eph. 6:12 Margin).

Why and for what reason one group of evil emissaries is bound while the other left to roam the spaces, we cannot say for we are not told. Was there an additional offense against God’s holiness? Perhaps. Some things we know definitely, for Scripture bears abundant testimony to the fact that there are hosts of evil ones who are free to do their master’s bidding, as his agents or representatives in this world, and that others are chained.

# Demonology (Part 2) (Feb 1960)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 6 No. 2, Feb 1960.

## Animation of Demons

This word suggests to us the swiftness with which these demons move. Their liveliness, their swiftness, is beyond our conception. Due to their swiftness and number, Satan is practically, though not personally, everywhere. He is not omnipresent as many suppose. Concerning this I quote from F. C. Jennings book, Satan. “It is popularly supposed that he is omnipresent; that he is capable at one and the same moment, of directing an assault in America, of hurling his fiery darts with his own hand in all parts of Europe; of personally maintaining his kingdom in Asia, Africa or the islands of the sea. Every believer assumes, as did Luther, that he himself is the object of the direct personal assault of the one arch-enemy of mankind. Scripture does not so teach. When he was personally dealing with the Lord Jesus he was nowhere else; and when he ‘left Him for a season’, he did not remain with Him at all. It is true that there are hosts of evil ones; subordinate principalities and powers that do his bidding, and one may speak of these as merely the representatives of this master with perfect truth. Swift in flight, too, beyond our conception may these spirit-essences be, but that is not omnipresence.

Aye, and with possibilities of communications of which our telephone and wireless telegraphy may give us suggestions, one can readily apprehend the powers these spirits may have of communicating with one

another from one end of the earth to the other in a moment of time."

## Authorization of Demons

The governing authority and power among these hosts of evil is under the control of Belial (2 Cor. 6:15). Mr. James Gunn says, "This descriptive title, "Belial", implies that Satan is the chief of the unholy angels, the leader of evil principalities and powers in heavenly places." Satan not only is the author, but also the head of an organized kingdom of darkness; and, as such, all subordinate "seducing spirits" and "powers" are under his control, his agents to do his bidding.

While Satan has power, let us remember that God has all power. His power is limited only by God and can act only under the permissive will of God.

Scripture is clear as to demons being under authority. Since Satan reigns over "his kingdom" (Matt. 12:41), demons are "his angels" (Matt. 25:41), messengers or emissaries to do his works.

## Occupation of Demons

These demons are personal beings, able to enter and to control men and animals. They possess sight, hearing, and speech (Matt. 8:28-32).

That they seek embodiment is seen from Matthew 9:32; 12:22; 15:22; 17:18. Mark 5:12; and Acts 16:16. Possession with or by a demon or demons is distinctly asserted in Luke 6:17, 18. Luke as a physician was able to distinguish between the symptons of disease and those of demoniacal possession. The Spirit of God in the Evangelists would not have sanctioned such a

distinction, or have left men under a superstitious error, had the distinction been false. “There is nothing wrong in our using the word lunacy for madness; but if we described its cure as the moon’s ceasing to afflict, or if the doctor addressed the moon commanding it to leave the patient alone, it would be a lie” (Trench, Miracles). Demons spoke with superhuman knowledge (Acts 16:16); recognized Jesus, not merely as Son of David (which they would have done had their voice been merely that of the existing Jewish superstition), but as “Son of God” (Matt. 8:29). Our Lord speaks of the disciples’ casting out of demons as an earnest of the final “fall” of Satan before the kingdom of Christ (Luke 10:18). “Men might imagine the existence of demons; but swine could only be acted on by an external real personal agent; the entrance of the demons into the swine of Gadara and their consequent drowning prove demons to be objective realities” (Fausset).

We also note that these spirits are unclean (Matt. 10:1; 12:43). Their being such, are they not responsible for the impurity and passions of men? As “unclean” they can tempt man with unclean thoughts.

They are “exceeding dangerous” (Matt 8:28, J.N.D.). They are able to blind the eyes, bind the tongue and beguile the minds of men.

Their influence is also manifest in religious asceticism, fanaticism, and evil teaching (1 Tim. 14:1). Concerning this the late W. E. Vine has said, “Demons are capable not merely of dragging men into sensuality, but of persuading them to a life of asceticism, philanthropy, self-denial, and morality — all excellent things in themselves — deceiving them all the while as to the path

they are really treading, and blinding them as to the true character of sin in God's sight, and the divinely appointed remedy. It is deplorable that men and women of thought and influence are today being thus beguiled under the impression that they are merely engaging in psychical research for the benefit of their fellow-men".

Scripture also makes clear that their power under Satan is immeasureable, and it is against such power that the warfare of the spiritual believer is made — "not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the world-rulers of this darkeness, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12).

Recently I read an interesting item in Now which was entitled "An Experience with an Evil Spirit", from which I quote:

"As a rule evil spirits affirm that intercourse with them makes men happier and better, and that they themselves are blessed in the spirit-world, and that there is no resurrection of the dead, no future punishment, and no day of judgment."

According to "A Message from God", published in Exeter, England, these things were declared to W. B. Laning through a writing medium. But he cross-questioned the spirit, and demanded of it in the name of the Lord to answer his questions truly; and though professing to be happy, it at once began to quail. Mr. Laning then asked: "In the name of the Lord is the Bible True?"

Answer — "Yes."

"The Bible forbids necromancy and the consulting of familiar spirits; which shall I believe, you or the Bible?"

Answer — “The Bible.”

“Why then did you tell me it was right and useful to consult the spirits?”

Answer — “Because I wished to deceive you.”

“What is the business of these spirits with men?”

Answer — “It is to deceive.”

“Are you happy?”

Answer — “No, I am miserable.” “Are you in hell?”

Answer — “Not yet.”

“Do you expect to go there?” Answer — “Yes.”

“When?”

Answer — “At the day of judgment.”

“Is there a day of judgment?” Answer — “Yes.”

“Is there to be a resurrection of the dead?”

Answer — “Yes.”

“Have you any prospect of happiness?”

Answer — “I have no hope.”

“In the name of the Lord, is there a good spirit, the spirit of a departed Christian, among all those rapping and writing spirits?”

Answer — “No, not one.”

“Where are the spirits of departed Christians?”

Answer — “The Lord has taken them.”

The Bible Says: “There shall not be found among you any one that… useth divination … or a consulter with

familiar spirits … For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.” (Deut. 18:10-12).

# Demonology (Mar 1960)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 6 No. 3, Mar 1960.

This is the closing part of a detailed biblical study into the existence, attributes, and operations of demons.

The concluding section should provoke deep thinking. While one is deeply grateful for the omnipotence of the indwelling Spirit of Power, he should be on his guard lest he be ensnared by the evil one, Satan, and the ensnarement be accomplished by these sinister denizens of darkness. — Ed.

## Destination Of Demons

That their judgment is sealed, along with their chief "Satan", Scripture is very clear. In Colossians 2:15 it is written that through His cross our Lord Jesus Christ spoiled "principalities" and "powers", making a show of them openly and triumphing over them in it. In a coming day they will be cast into the lake of fire, for this place was "prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41), where they will be "tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:10).

Demons know that their doom is sealed. James 2:19 tells us that they "shudder" (American Standard Version). They themselves ask the Lord Jesus, "Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?" (Matthew 8:29).

Thus the awful judgment descends relentlessly and surely upon the hosts of evil.

## Discrimination Of Demon Persuasion From Demon Possession

Scripture discriminates between the two. We have no doubt that demon possession is a reality. It existed and exists. Some instances of demon possession are given in Matthew 4:24; 8:16; 28, 33; 9:32; 12:22; 15:22, etc.

There are many things concerning demons that are a mystery, for what is revealed limits our knowledge on the whole subject; yet, we have this certainty, no believer on the Lord Jesus Christ can ever become demon possessed. This is due to the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit Who is a safeguard against any such thing for, “Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4). While the Scriptures tell of demons entering and controlling both humans and beasts, we never read of one instance of a believer being demon possessed. So we conclude that only an unbeliever may become demon possessed.

Since Christians act in a very wrong way at times, can this not be the result of giving heed to the persuasions or suggestions of those who do Satan’s bidding? I think so. Many Christians toy around with thought-reading, palm-reading, fortune-telling, etc., which are all forms of spiritism. This is definitely an activity of seducing spirits. Concerning the persuasion of demons, the words of another give us warning:

“Let Christians take heed against being drawn into tampering with spiritism in any form. To play at planchette with the idea that it is an innocent toy, or to engage in thought-reading, table-turning, palmistry, and clairvoyance is to throw oneself into the devil’s snare.”

## The Presence of God (Oct 1960)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 6 No. 10, Oct 1960.

What does it mean to practise the presence of God? This can best be answered by illustrations.

There is a delightful story told concerning the late beloved and highly esteemed Principal Cairns. In spite of his great learning and high position, he was a very humble man. He had an odd way when approaching a doorway with another person of standing aside and saying, “You go first, I follow.” When he was dying friends noticed that his lips were moving, so bending down to listen, they heard him whisper, “You go first, I follow.” The habit of a lifetime found fruition in his death as he followed the Saviour into glory.

Let us prayerfully acquire the habit of humility; Christ first, we follow.

“Not I, but Christ,” said the saintly missionary, Mary Slessor, adding, “If I have ever done anything, it was because Christ went in front.”

“You are not afraid to die,” tenderly whispered Hudson Taylor to his wife as she died. “Do you not know,” came her reply, “there has not been a shadow between my Lord and me for the last eight years.”

These saintly persons knew what it was to practice the presence of God. Do we know anything of such wonderful experiences?

## The Sinlessness of Christ (Oct 1966)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 12 No. 8, Oct 1966.

Questions that have been raised across the centuries ask, “Could Christ have sinned?” “How could the Son of God be tempted when God cannot be tempted of evil?”

If Christ were sinless, then, of course, temptation could have no effect upon Him. If this claim be true, why does the writer of the Hebrew Epistle teach that Christ can sympathize with His tried people because He was tempted in all points as we are apart from sin? There are mysteries in the nature of Christ which no serious-minded believer will deny. These defy explanation.

A very able Bible teacher of broadcasting fame said: “Jesus did not have a weakness, bent or slant to sin. He was perfect and pure in all His motives, desires, and human needs; but He did share our infirmities (because of our sin) and was subject to all the temptations of man.” So while we emphatically reject the suggestion that Christ had a tendency to sin, we must not jump at the conclusion that He could not sin… To this question therefore, “Could Jesus have yielded to Satan?” we must answer. “Yes! If He had met him like Adam did without prayer, without the Word, and in disobedience.”

It might be asked in all sincerity, if the Lord Jesus Christ had no sinful nature, no weakness, bent or slant to sin, all to which the above preacher adheres, with what would He yield to sin, or how could He sin at all, as is maintained?

The Holy Spirit through Paul, Peter, and John, plainly declares that our Lord was faultless and without sin:

“He knew no sin” (2 Cor. 5:21), “He did no sin” (1 Pet. 2:22), “In Him was no sin” (1 John 3:5). The only sinless character, the greatest character, that ever walked this earth was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from every vile association, the Lord Jesus.

He is called God’s “Holy Servant Jesus” (Acts 4:27, R.V.), and “That Holy Thing” (Luke 1:35). Not only was He merely innocent, as Adam was when created, but He was born holy. Innocence is ignorance of sin and is not incompatible with an inherent tendency to sin. Holiness is the manifestation of a nature which loves righteousness and hates evil (Heb. 1:9). Christ’s incarnation was without sin; His conduct was without sin; His temptation was without sin; His death was without sin, although He was made sin for us; His resurrection was without sin (His resurrection is the divine affidavit of His sinlessness), and in His glorification He is without sin; He is Jesus Christ the Righteous (1 John 2:1). His present exalted station in glory is a further proof of His spotless excellence.

## The Impeccability of Our Lord Jesus Christ

God’s Word declares the Saviour to be not only sinless but impeccable, or incapable of sinning. We must remember as Dr. H. C. G. Moule says, “One Person is in view throughout… Two natures are in view, the divine and the human, in equally real relation to this One Person! He is God … He became Man … The Human nature of the Son never for a moment stood or stands apart from His divine nature and person… The manhood was and is never independently personal … In the highest sense He was incapable of sin” (Quoted by C.F.H.).

Testimony is borne that the Lord did no sin, that in Him was no sin. These are statements of fact. The question whether He could have sinned is purely hypothetical and is barely removed, if at all, from mere curiosity. Moreover, there is physical impossibility and there is moral impossibility.

C. F. Hogg gives an excellent thought on Hebrews 4:15: “The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews adds, ‘sin apart.’ This qualifying phrase seems to mean apart from any actual, or potential relation with, or participation in sin.”

While Man was God, and the God was very Man, we must not speak of Him as doing anything as Man, or as God. We must be very careful as we might fall into the ancient heresy of dividing the person. He was and He is God and Man; He holds two natures in one personality for ever.

## The Temptation of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Those that in their conflict with evil have been comforted by the idea that the Lord had to struggle as they do when tempted should realize that He did overcome, blessed be His holy name, because His temptations were from without and never from within as are ours.

It is because they do not seem able to understand any other sort of temptations than those that incite to evil that certain contend that temptation has neither force nor meaning unless there is desire, or at least the liability to yield.

The verb to tempt has various shades of meaning: to try, to test, to prove; that is when it is used in a good sense.

It is used thus in connection with Christ and the Christian in Hebrews 2:18. There the context shows that temptation in the sense of trying was the cause of the Lord's suffering, and definitely not a drawing away after sin. It is because of this that believers are assured of the sympathy of Christ as their High Priest in all those sufferings occasioned by sin. In a similar passage, Hebrews 4:15, we are told that in all the temptations He endured there was nothing in Christ that responded to sin. There was no sinful infirmity in Him. While He was truly man, and His divine nature was not in any way inconsistent with His manhood, there was nothing in Him, such as there is in us because of our fallen nature, nothing that could be tempted in the evil sense of the word.

Christ was not tempted, enticed to sin, when men tried to ensnare Him in His speech (Matt. 16:1; 19:3; 22:18; and other parallel passages). He was not tempted as we might be in the restoring of an erring brother (Gal. 6:1). Temptations are mentioned as coming from the devil (Matt. 4:1. Jas. 1:13-14. 1 Cor. 7:5. 1 Thess. 3:5). Christ, the God-Man, never could try or challenge God (Acts 15:10. 1 Cor. 10:9. Heb. 3:9). See Dictionary of New Testament Words.

It is because some do not distinguish between testing and enticing to do evil that they misunderstand and assert that Christ could have sinned.

J. T. Mawson rightly says: "I impugn this popular teaching, it is a lie. It means that there was liability in the Lord to sin even though He did not yield. Such a view of Him is not found in Scripture; it is false; it is derogatory to His holy person, and damaging to the faith

of saints. Our Saviour, High Priest, and Leader was and must ever be beyond the possibility of sin! “Yet without sin” (A.V.) or “Sin apart” (J.N.D.) means that He was tried by every kind of temptation except that kind, the sin kind. Never, no never, was He enticed as we are, for there was nothing in Him that answered to sin from without, although He suffered keenly because of it. It is said that before a railway wheel is passed for service it has to be severely tested. A weight of some ten thousand pounds is brought down upon it. The purpose of this test is not to break the wheel, but to prove that it cannot be broken. The glorious truth, then, is that the Lord Jesus was tested not to see if He would sin, but to prove that He could not sin.”

Samuel Ridout in his Lectures on Hebrews says, “We read of one of John Bunyan’s characters who at the close of his life said, ‘Wherever he had found the footprints of the Lord Jesus there he had coveted to put his feet.’ How beautiful! But sweeter far is the thought that our blessed Lord, when here on earth, searched wherever the feet of His weary saints would have to go and, He not only coveted to do it, He did put His feet just there. He has gone through all the circumstances of the wilderness. He knows what all the testing and the trials mean in a way infinitely beyond the experience of the ripest saint. He has passed through them, apart from the deadening, dulling, wasteful, yielding to sin. Our blessed Lord has passed through never yielding in thought for one moment to a thing that was not in accordance to His Father’s will.”

To think otherwise is to take a too low estimate of Christ. What folly! He the “True Light” shone in the

darkness and the darkness overcame it not. To think adversely is blasphemy, is a satanic delusion.

There are two great doctrines we must hold fast, the doctrine of the person of Christ and the doctrine of the work of Christ. In all the temptations He endured, He was the Mighty God, the One who by the word of His mouth created the worlds, the One who upholds them by His power.

“Though our Great High Priest is Man, it is blessed indeed to have Him called in that great passage, Hebrews 4:14, Jesus the Son of God. etc. Having passed through the path of temptation, suffering therein because He was the infinitely Holy One, loving righteousness and hating iniquity. He remained throughout, of course, apart from, without, sin” (W. R. Newell on Hebrews).

“Yet spotless, undefiled and pure,

Our great Redeemed stood;

While Satan’s fiery darts He bore,

And did resist to blood.”

## Commander of Passenger (May 1967)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 13 No. 5, May 1967.

There is an incident in the life of the early disciples when they thought they did not need the Lord Jesus Christ. Is this possible? Indeed it is! As we look into this incident let us remember that it is recorded for our learning.

In the miracle of the Lord showing His power over the deep and the boisterous wind as recorded by Mark, we read that “they took Him into the ship,” as they were going to the other side of the lake (Mk. 4:36).

Another has imagined them saying to the Lord something like this, “Lord, You are weary and tired. Why don’t you take a much needed rest? We can manage the boat all right. Remember that a number of us were fishermen before we followed You, and we know this lake like an open book. We don’t need Your help at all. You have done some wonderful miracles on the land, where You are familiar, but You don’t know anything about sea-faring. That’s our line. Just take it easy, we’ll run the boat. Lie down here in the stern where You won’t be in the way, and we’ll get along fine” (A.V.R.).

You say, “How foolish of them to so treat the Lord! We would never have said those words to Him.” Perhaps not in so many words (to give us the benefit of the doubt) but by our very actions we all say the same thing. I’m afraid that we are just as foolish in our actions if not in our very words.

We know the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour. We have taken Him on board just as the disciples did, but that is

not sufficient. He wants to be more than a passenger or guest on board our life's boat. Taking Him as Saviour we must also acknowledge

Him as Sovereign, as Captain and Commander of our lives. It is blessed indeed to know Him as Saviour, assured of sins forgiven, saved from hell, but Christ must become Lord of the life.

The Apostle Paul could say to the Colossians, "That in all things He might have the pre-eminance" (1:18). In our lives He wants not a place along side of others, nor does He even want a prominent place which is going a step farther. He wants the only place. He must have it; and He will have it; and He shall have it. Let us yield allegiance to Him so as to be able to say, "Over me, the Son of God, the Lord from Heaven, incarnate, sacrificed, glorified, absolutely presides. In everything, at every moment, I am under His command. He is my Sovereign, and I am His bondservant."

They took Him along as a passenger, for Mark tells us that "they took Him" into the ship. They took the initiative (A.V.R.). How many of us do the same! We have the Lord Jesus Christ on board. We are taking Him along with us through life, instead of letting Him take us. How often we hear young Christians ask whether they can take the Lord to this place or that! It is not for you to take Jesus anywhere; He should take you. How many today, as the disciples years ago, take the Lord merely as a passenger, when He wants to be our Commander. He desires to be constantly in command, completely in control.

The disciples soon found out that they did need Him on the sea just as they needed Him on the shore. For this

reason the storm was raised, that they might learn that they needed Christ all the time. Oh, how we need to learn this lesson; that we are dependent on Him! He is the Captain of our salvation. He must be more than a passenger, whom we take along. He must be the Commander who controls every avenue of our being.

We must let Him take us! He is our Leader. We must follow Him. What a privilege is ours! We can follow the greatest Leader that ever lived, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain of salvation. Of course, this begins with letting Christ come into your heart. Once you do this, you are saved. You become a real Christian. Then you are in a position to follow the Leader and let Him take you where He wills.

This Captain wants to be the Commander of your life. He wants your life to tell for Him. He wants you to follow every hour of every day of every week. He wants young and old whose hearts are right with God, to stand for Christ, to be led by Him amid all that are living in sin in this wicked and perverse generation.

Are you being taken by Him? Are you being led by the Sovereign Saviour? Are you standing for Christ? Are you telling others that Christ is the only Way? Are you following the Leader, the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you know the joy of having Christ constantly in command? Christ completely in control? This should be the aim of your life and mine.

We can only accomplish these things as we yield ourselves unto Him to do His will instead of our own. Only as we let Him take us through life and not our taking Him, will life be a spirited success.

“I need Jesus, I need Jesus,

I need Jesus ev’ry day;

Need Him in the sunshine hour,

Need Him when the storms clouds low’r;

Ev’ry day along my way,

Yes, I need Jesus.”

## Burned or Buried (Oct 1967)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 13 No. 8, Oct 1967.

When one Bible teacher was asked, “Is there anything in the Scriptures against cremation for the believer?” he replied, “I do not know any Scriptures touching this point.” Others have said, “Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” Writing to a very able Bible teacher of broadcasting fame years ago, I asked him what the Christian attitude should be toward cremation. While his reply was quite informative I did not agree with him. Here is his reply:

“Ethnologists have listed about thirty methods of disposing of the human body, such as interment in graves which may or may not be in consecrated ground; interment in huts, tombs, vaults, caves and catacombs; in canoes, boats, ships, on rafts, in rivers; or in trees as practised by some American Indians. The Parsees expose the bodies in “towers of silence” where birds pick the bones which are later cast into a central well. Burial in urns and under cairns of stones has also been practised.

“False notions have arisen about the disposal of the bodies of Christians, through a mistaken idea of the resurrection. People think that the corpse must be preserved as long as possible so as to be in better condition for resurrection. But the Bible tells us that at the coming of Jesus Christ He will change our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power which enables Him even to subject all things to Himself (Phil. 3:21). The Lord God announced that the dissolution of the body was part of the curse upon the race because of

sin. ‘You will return to the ground for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return’ (Gen. 3:18, M.T. 19,). It does not make any difference whether the body returns to dust by gradual disintegration, or by the swift violence of an atomic blast. The Lord will be able to resurrect the body, no matter what its condition may be.

“There is an interesting paragraph in the official Roman Catholic Dictionary of Hallett, Addis and Arnold. While deprecating strongly, as we do, the teaching of cremation as anti-Christian propaganda, these authorities state, ‘There is nothing intrinsically wrong in burning the bodies of the dead. The practice might become necessary at times of excess mortality or of danger to the living; e.g., after a battle or during a plague. But ordinary times cremation disturbs the pious sentiments of the faithful; it is not in keeping with the beautiful rites of Christian burial.’ Then the noted Bible teacher closed his reply with the following statement.

“With the last sentence we disagree, because every Christian funeral can be conducted in all sacredness, no matter what the method of disposal of the body. Those who know the Lord Jesus Christ and the power of His resurrection will not be overly concerned with pious sentiments about it.”

In view of the recurrence on the part of some in these last days to the Pagan custom of burning the bodies of the dead, it may be well to recall the custom followed by the people of God. That great man of faith, Abraham, “buried his dead out of his sight.” Of Isaac we read that “His sons Esau and Jacob buried him” (Gen. 35:29); also

in the same chapter (verse 19), that “Rachel died and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.”

When Jacob died, there was no question as to the manner in which the body was to be disposed of. Joseph said to Pharaoh, “My father made me swear, saying, Lo I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me” (Gen. 50:5).

Tacitus mentions this way of disposing of the dead as characteristic of the Jews. In the Mishna burning is declared to be idolatry. The attempts to prove that burning was ever practised among the Jews, as an honorable way of disposing of the bodies of the dead, have failed. Urquhart points out, “In this the Jews were following the early practice of the human race, as is shown in the customs of the Babylonians and of the Egyptians. It may be that flee idea of consecrating the dead by offering the body as a sacrifice led to burning instead of burial. This may explain the decision of the Mishna which denounces the practice as idolatry.”

The prediction in Isaiah 53:9: “They made His grave with the wicked” (R.V.), is explained by another Jewish custom. Lightfoot, referring to the burial of Stephen, makes the following quotation from the Talmud, “They do not bury (any one condemned by the Sanhedrin) in the sepulchres of their fathers. But there are two places of burial belonging to the Sanhedrin; one for those who are beheaded and strangled, the other for those that are stoned and burnt.” In other words, the bodies of criminals were not given up to their relations or friends. Their lot was a shameful burial as well as a shameful death. It is probable that the crucified were buried at or near the place of crucifixion.

“The reason,” continues Lightfoot, “why such are not to be buried with their fathers, is this: because they do not bury the guilty with the innocent… The stone wherewith any one is stoned, the wood on which he is hanged, the sword by which he is beheaded, or the halter wherewith he is strangled — is still buried in the same place with him, or, at least, very near him.”

To get back to the Scriptures, which is always our final authority, one notes that there are three terms used to describe the disposal of a dead body. (1) Burning: This is always used of the ungodly (Josh. 7:25, Lev. 10:2, Amos 2:1) and is a mark of God’s judgment on grievous sin. (2) Burying: This is always used of the godly (Note the sixth paragraph of this paper). We might also add that the New Testament uses the term Sowing in connection with the Christian. Burning is out of bounds for the Christian, for he is not to be confused with the world (1 Cor. 11:32). Since Burying is always used for the godly, we conclude that scriptural burial is the proper mode. Note too, that our blessed Lord was buried. This should clinch the matter for every believer. It is interesting to note also that His burial is the last mentioned in the Word of God (1 Cor. 15:4).

Mr. P. Parsons pointed out years ago that “Sowing is an advance on both burning and burial. It introduces an expectation and a hope. The gardener does not say that he has buried the seeds, although that is what he actually has done. No! He says that he has sown the seeds. So the Christian’s body is said to be sown, and sown in the hope of participation in a wonderful harvest of which Christ is the firstfruits, to which the harvest will be conformable (1 Cor. 15:23, 42-44): By burning the body of a Christian, we give absolutely no testimony

to the world of this wonderful hope, and lose sight of a God-given picture provided so that we ‘sorrow not even as others, which have no hope’ (1 Thess. 4:13).”

We wholeheartedly concur with J. A. Fraser in his delightfully instructive booklet, Cremation, Is it Christian?, when he says, “I am not concerned about the resurrection of bodies that have been cremated, for God can, and He will, raise from the dead all bodies of believers and unbelievers who have been burned, buried, or eaten, and all who lie in the depths of the seas, or who have been blown to atoms, or destroyed in any way; for His power and ability are infinite.

When we lay away the body in the grave, according to the sentence of God, it returns to earth in the natural way or by an act of God; whereas cremation is an act of man. God said, ‘Out of it (the ground) wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return’ (Gen. 3:19). According to divine precept and example there is but one Christian way to dispose of our dead, and that is to bury them.”

# Angelology (Jan 1968)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 14 No. 1, Jan 1968.

Henry Palmeri

Were it not for the Word of God, we would know very little about the unseen heavenly hosts called angels. Anyone at all familiar with the Holy Scriptures will see their prominence in both the Old and New Testaments. Since God has spoken, then all that we know about these heavenly powers is by direct revelation. And it is to this source of knowledge that we turn for a study of the doctrine of angels which we shall consider under seven divisions:

1. The Attestation to the existence of Angels
2. The Origination of Angels
3. The Numeration of Angels
4. The Limitations of Angels
5. The Designations of Angels
6. The Habitation of Angels
7. The Ministration of Angels

## The Attestation to the existence of Angels.

That Angels exist is a fact which no true Christian will deny. Using Strong's Concordance we note that the words "Angel" and "Angels" appear 297 times in the Bible. In the Old Testament the Hebrew word is mal'ah, from a root meaning to dispatch as a deputy, a messenger, and occurs 114 times in 17 of its books. In the New Testament, the Greek word is aggelos, a

messenger, and occurs 180 times in 17 of its books. The other three references to angels in the Old Testament have a different meaning into which we will not go during this study. These make the total of 297, references to “angel” or “angels” in the Scriptures. Literally then, both Old and New Testament words rendered angel, mean messenger.

An angel, then, is a messenger sent either by God, by man, or by Satan. Generally the word is used in connection with an order of supernatural beings of the spiritual realm belonging to Heaven (Mt. 24:36; Mk. 12:25) and to God (Lk. 12:8) and engaged in His service (Ps. 103:20). The term is occasionally used in other connections; for example, in Jude 6, “The Angels which kept not their first estate.” These are supernatural beings who have fallen. There is also the expression, “The Angel of the Lord” (Gen. 16:7; 22:11 etc.), which refers to the Lord Jehovah Himself in His pre-incarnate appearances to men as the Divine Messenger. Note, He is “the Angel” in contrast to “an angel.” In Revelation 2 and 3 men are alluded to as angels in the letters to the then actual churches existing in Asia.

There are only 3 of these supernatural beings mentioned by name. First, Michael, the archangel (Jude 9), the only archangel mentioned in the Scriptures. Christendom would add more. In Daniel 12:1, he is seen as an emmisary of God for a specific purpose, namely in behalf of the remnant of Israel. In Jude 9, he contends for Moses’ body with the devil, and in the Revelation, we see him leading in war against Satan and his Angels.

Then there is Gabriel (Lk. 1:19, 26) who announced the Baptist’s birth, and who carried the answer to the

praying prophet of God, Daniel (Dan. 9:21-23). But the greatest message ever carried by an angel was the announcement by Gabriel of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Lucifer (Isa. 14:12), the third, is none other than a glorious angel, the day star, the morning star fallen.

We conclude then, that there can be no question as to the existence of these supernatural beings for the fact of their existence is sufficiently vouched for by 34 books of the infallible Word of God, giving attestation to their existence by its many references naturally and without apology. The Sadducees did not believe in angels (Acts 23:8). Modernism (today's Sadduceeism) also denies their existence, but we accept what God has spoken as proof of angelic reality.

## The Origination of Angels

The Bible teaches that Angels are created beings whose position is above man (Heb. 2:7), that is the original creation, but in the new creation man is carried into a higher position than angels will ever occupy.

As to the period or time of their creation, the Bible is silent. We do know from Job. 38:3-7, that they were present when God created the heavens and the earth. Vain is the research of men who seek to find out the when of their origin. They were, therefore, in existence when the foundation of this vast universe was laid, and as they witnessed His wonders and epochal events, called into being by the Word of His power, they lifted their voices in chorus and "shouted for joy" in admiration and adoration.

## The Numeration of Angels

The Scriptures not only tell us of the existence and the origin of angels but also inform us that their number is stupendous and incalculable. Daniel in vision saw "thousand thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand" (Dan. 7:10). Matthew makes mention of "more than twelve legions of angels" (26:53). Luke refers to a "multitude of the heavenly host" (2:13). Hebrews 11:22 speaks of an "innumerable company of angels" (literally: myraids). The aged Apostle closes with this statement that he "beheld and heard the voice of many angels and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" (Rev. 5:11). So we see that from the beginning their number is great. No doubt their number runs into the millions. It is said that the Hebrew had no word for million and expressed it by saying, "a thousand thousands," and so the expression thousand thousands means a million, and ten thousand times ten thousand, of course, would be a hundred million. Be this as it may, how large the number of the angelic host is only known to Him whose name is Jehovah-Sabaoth, the Lord of Hosts. There is no increase in their number by generation, nor is their number lessened by cessation of their existence by expiration (Mt. 22:30).

## The Limitations of Angels

The question is often asked, what then, is the nature of these angelic beings? That they belong to an order of beings above that of man, we have seen. The Bible says that they are spirits. They have the attributes of strength, swiftness, wisdom, and holiness and are depicted as winged (Isa. 6:6, Dan. 9:21, Rev. 4:6), and as

radiant in countenance (Mt. 28:3). We must keep in mind that these beings are limited in these attributes. While they are wise, they know not all things. They have not all-preceiving knowledge, omniscience, which only their Creator possesses. While they travel with exceeding swiftness, not an all-prevading presence, omnipresence, which is a divine attribute of the Lord Himself. And while great and mighty feats are ascribed to them, they have not all-prevailing power, omnipotence. Being created beings, such as we are, they like us, can only do things by His permission and will, and are limited just as we are; the only difference being one of degree and extent of these creature limitations.

Do they have bodies? It so, what kind? These are questions often asked by thoughtful believers. I do not know that we are told specifically that they have bodies, but Paul speaks of “spiritual bodies” (1 Cor. 15:44), which they must possess, if they have bodies. But being purely spiritual in their nature, they are immaterial and invisible to the human eye. Yet, these angels are sometimes shown as possessing a material appearance, inhabiting material bodies, human in form, appearing as men (Acts 1:10, Heb. 13:2). It would seem as though they possess the faculty of appearing in corporeal form at will. “They possess personality and, though spirits, they have their own distinctive bodies” A.C.G.

Whether they were given special bodies for these occasions, or whether it is the capacity of such spiritual bodies to assume human form, or to disappear and appear at will, as the risen Christ did in His resurrection body, we do not know. We do know that there are different kinds of bodies (1 Cor. 15), terrestrial and celestial, a natural and spiritual and that angels have

spiritual, that is celestial bodies, corresponding to their exalted, glorious spiritual nature. As created beings, then, they have all the limitations of creatures and we know from the Scriptures that they are spirits and assume human form at will, swiftly appearing and disappearing in the same manner; they have bodies, the nature of which we do not know for it is unrevealed.

# Angelology (Part 2) (Feb 1968)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 14 No. 2, Feb 1968.

## 5. The Designations of Angels

In the Scriptures, good or unfallen angels are designated as to their nature, dignity and power as “ministering spirits” (Heb. 1:14). This shows that they are ceaselessly active in the life of the believer as they were in the life of the Lord Jesus Himself. This fact explains itself, for as “ministering spirits” they sustain in relation to God and man.

They are also designated: “the angels of His might” (2 Thess. 1:7 margin) which implies that they are exceedingly powerful; “holy angels” (Lk. 9:26), “elect angels” (1 Tim. 5:21). In what way these angels are elected or chosen, it is not made clear, but from the context we would assume that all these good or unfallen angels are “elect angels.” It may be that they are so called in contrast with some of their original number who sinned (Mt. 25:41).

“The Scriptures speak of ‘principalities and powers in the heavenlies’ and distinguish them from ‘angels’ in Romans 8:28 and 1 Peter 3:22. Angels may be likened to the privates in an army and principalities and powers to its officers, with varying degrees in dignity” (W.W.F.)

Another class of these marvelous beings is called the “Seraphim” (Isa. 6:1-6). This particular class stood above the throne in continuous worship of Jehovah. The reference in Isaiah is the only place in the Scriptures where they are mentioned.

Another class of these mighty beings close to the throne of God is designated “Cherubim.” We meet these upon the early pages of Holy Writ as guards at the gate of Eden (Gen. 3) after Adam and Eve were expelled. Their figures in gold are seen again in connection with the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:19). It is interesting to note that Satan must have been of this class, as he is called the “annointed cherub” (Ezek. 28:12-15).

Another group of angelic beings called “living creatures,” “beasts,” in the A.V., appears in Revelation 4:6-11. It may be that the “living creatures” and the “seraphim” are identical. Some teachers say they are cherubim. Mr. A. A. Hodge in his, “Outlines of Theology” says regarding seraphim, “It probably presents under a different aspect the ideal beings commonly designated cherubim and living creatures.” At any rate, the cherubim and seraphim are supernatural beings of a very high rank and are always seen in connection with the throne of God.

Then there are those designated by name. One is the archangel Michael. His name means ‘Who is like God’ (Dan. 12:1, Jude 9, Rev. 12, 1 Thess. 4:17).

Then we note another name, Gabriel which means, the mighty one (Dan. 8:16, 9:21, Lk. 1:19:26).

There are three other angels that appear on the sacred pages who are called by name and these are fallen angels, as the context clearly shows, “the prince of the kingdom of Persia” and the “prince of Grecia” (Dan. 10:13, 20).

The third mighty and glorious being called by name is “Lucifer, the son of the morning” (Isa. 14:12), “the

anointed cherub that covereth" (Ezek. 28:12-15), who became a rebel.

Another designation is given these angelic beings which must not be overlooked in a study of this nature. Sometimes they are called "the sons of God." While this is a subject on which the great scholars are divided, we will not be dogmatic.

The expression, "the sons of God" appears six times in the Old Testament (Gen. 6:2, Job 1:6, 2:1, 38:7, Ps. 29:1, 89:6).

The late editor of that great work which bears his name, The Scofield Reference Bible, says "The uniform Hebrew and Christian interpretation has been that verse two of Genesis six marks the breaking down of the separation between the godly line of Seth and the godless line of Cain."

In an article that appeared in "Food for the Flock" (Feb. 1957), under Bible Study on the Book of Genesis, Mr. James Gunn says, "Certain scholars regard the designation, "sons of God," to refer to angels and they urge that the abnormal union of the angels with the daughters of men produced a race of giants. While such an interpretation may appear quite ingenious, it is far from natural. In the earlier interpretation that we have given to these opening verses of chapter six, the union of the Cainite and the Sethite lines appears more in keeping with the whole tenor of Holy Scripture" (So A. R. Fausett, Matthew Henry, Adam Clark and Thomas Scott).

Mr. H.P. Barker says, "Some think that they were descendants of Seth, and that the "daughters of men" were women of Cain's line. But this implies that the

word “men” in verse 1 were men of Cainite descent exclusively, which can hardly be so. The Septuagint, in the marginal note, says that the Alexandrine Version has “angels of God,” i.e. fallen angels. G.H. Pember, in Earth’s Earliest Ages, advocates this view and quotes various authorities in support. Geoffry R. King, in his recent book, The Forty Days, pp 22, 23, develops this view: “These incarnate demons married human women and produced a race of demonized mankind so wicked that the whole earth became utterly corrupt.” So William Kelly, C.E. Stuart, Walter Scott, Bishop Ryle, C. F. Hogg, C. A. Coates, W.E. Vine, Kenneth Wuest and A. C. Gaebelein who is one of the strongest advocates of this view that I have found. Six times we read of the ‘Sons of God’ in the Old Testament and each time it means these supernatural beings. But it must be noted that while angels are called ‘Sons of God’, they are never called ‘Sons of the Lord.’ It is the Hebrew always Bnai Elohim (Elohim is God’s name as creator) and never Bnai Jehovah. The Bnai Jehovah are sinners redeemed and brought into filial relationship by redemption. The Bnai Elohim are unfallen beings, Sons of God by creation. The Angels are Sons of God in the first creation; sinners saved by grace are the Sons of God in the new creation.

Mr. William Lincoln, in his “Typical Foreshadowings in Genesis” is very strongly against this latter view. Darby’s Synopsis, Grant’s Numerical Bible and C.H.M. are perhaps the wisest, in non-committal. While there is much that is logical and scriptural in each of these views, it is the humble judgment of the writer that this latter view is more in keeping with the Scriptures.

The last designation that we want to look at is perhaps the most interesting, Malach-Jehovah, Hebrew for “The Angel of the Lord.” He has been called by some a mysterious being who is closely identified with the Lord Himself, but who is the bearer of the more intimate and personal messages from the divine throne.

The One so designated here is not a created being, but an untreated angel. “The Angel of Jehovah” appears to be a title which belongs to God. It seems to me that this Angel is more than a bearer of intimate and personal messages, for He who is called the “Angel of Jehovah” (Ex. 3:2) is called “God” (v. 6), and “I am that I am,” (v. 14). He appears at times as an Angel and even in the form of a man. Unmistakeably, this is a manifestation of Deity. There are a number of these manifestations of “the Angel of the Lord.” He appeared to Hagar (Gen. 16:7), Abraham (Gen. 18:1, 22: 11, 12), Jacob (Gen. 48:15, 16, 31:11-13, 32:24-32), Moses (Ex. 3:2, 6, 14), Joshua (Josh. 5:13, 14), Israel (Judges 2:1-2), Gideon (Judges 6:14), Manoah (Judges 13:19-22), David (Ps. 34:7). It is He who destroyed the army of Assyria, (2 Kings 19: 35), and fought for and defended His own (Zech. 14:1-4. 1 Chron. 21:15, 16).

The inevitable inference is that by the “Angel of the Lord” in such passages is meant He who is from the beginning the “Word,” i.e., the Manifester or Revealer of God. It will be observed from the context of the many such appearances, that “the angel of the Lord” not only was a messenger representing the Divine presence; He was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. “It is Jehovah, the Lord, who revealed Himself at different times in the garb of an angel, and generally in the form of man. This angel of the Lord is not a messenger sent from God, but

a theophany, a manifestation of Deity. Jehovah, the “I am,” is the Son of God. We have, therefore, in the repeated appearances of the Angel of the Lord very interesting pre-incarnation manifestations of the Son of God, our Lord. In each case of the manifestation of this Angel of the Lord, the marks of Deity are present!” (A.C.G.)

# Angelology (Part 3) (Mar 1968)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 14 No. 3, Mar 1968.

## 6. The Habitation of Angels

“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day” (Jude 6). That angels have their own “habitation,” is clearly taught in this verse. “The word “habitation” (oiketerion) is used in Jude of the heavenly region appointed by God as the dwelling place of angels” (W. E. Vine; Dictionary of New Testament Words). Mr. Kenneth Wuest points out that the words “first estate” are from the Greek word Arche which means, the first in order of importance, honor or position. The word speaks here of the exalted position of angels in Heaven, in contradistinction to the lower place occupied by the earth dwellers. This high position and condition, these angels left, which means that they descended to a lower position and condition. In doing this they sinned.

Is not this what happened to Lucifer? Did he not leave his principality or dominion (arche), his throne, if you like, and sought to “ascend into Heaven … above the stars of God … upon the mount of the congregation … above the heights of the clouds … be like the most high”? (Isa. 14:13, 14).

Although these beings were created as sinless angels of God, they, like Lucifer, the brilliant and magnificent angel, bartered their realms of bliss for selfish ends. Keeping not the glorious estate which had been given

them in creation, they abandoned their holy habitation, and are now in eternal chains under darkness awaiting the great day of judgment.

## 7. The Ministration of Angels

Angelic ministry occupies a large field of activity in the Word of God. Perhaps the greatest service that angels perform to God is that of adoration (Ps. 148:1-2). But this is not all. Scripture also teaches that theirs is a function of communication (Math. 1:20), consolation (Gen. 21:17), and of condemnation (Math. 13:41).

a. They were witnesses at the creation of the world (Job 38:4-10). What beautiful words these are in which God speaks to Job concerning the beauty of His wondrous creation when these heavenly beings, the principalities and powers in the heaven-lies, shouted in exultant joy as the marvelous panorama of nature opened out before them.

b. They were witnesses at the ordination of the law (Gal. 3:19). According to Acts 7:53, the law was given “by the disposition of angels;” it was “ordained by angels” (Gal. 3:19), and “the word spoken by angels” (Heb. 2:2). That angelic beings were prominent at Sinai, Scripture is clear (Ps. 68:17).

c. They are frequently seen in ministration on behalf of the people of God, servants of God, “to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Heb. 1:1, Matt. 18:10). This is true not only of Old Testament believers, but also of us in this present age.

Such ministry should serve as an encouragement to believers today, as we are assured that the angels who so acted for the encouragement and care and protection

of the saints have not ceased in such ministry (Acts 5:19, 12:7). Perhaps we little realize how often we have been the objects of this angelic ministry during our pilgrim pathway. Many Christians can remember remarkable deliverances and a sense of care and protection over them in very difficult circumstances.

The writer remembers one such event which happened in his experience, when, as a young man, he was confronted with a masked mounted highway robber who demanded at the point of a revolver the bag containing the wages of a considerable number of employees. When the demand to hand over the bag was refused, the robber immediately commenced to shoot. Though he fired five or six bullets at very close quarters, I was miraculously preserved from harm. This is the text for that day sent me by a friend: “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.”

The Apostle Peter tells us that angels are also interested in our salvation (1 Pet. 1:12), and Paul tells of their interest in our conversation, even the details of our attire (1 Cor. 11:10).

Without enlarging any further upon their service to God’s children, we sum up by stating that angels are manifested:

1. Pointing out the way we should go (Ex. 23:20; 32:34).

2. Preparing us for coming conflict (Judges 6:11-22).

3. Providing our necessities when discouraged (1 Kings 19:5).

4. Protecting us when in danger (2 Kings 6:17).

5. Preventing us from being harmed (Dan. 3:28; 6:22).

6. Pulling us out of difficulties (Gen. 19:16; Acts 12:7-11).

7. Preserving us in all our journeyings (Gen. 24:7, 40).

8. Portering us to glory at death (Luke 16:22).

We cannot enumerate or enter into all of the activities of these angelic beings, but we do know that they are ceaselessly active in the life of the believer on the Lord Jesus Christ. They were also ceaselessly active in the life of our Saviour and Lord.

We shall now consider our last point.

d. They are seen in relation to our Lord Jesus Christ in connection with His sojourn down here. It is in ministration to the Lord Jesus Christ that the service of angels fulfils its high end. Although Matthew says, “even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister” (20:28), the Gospel narrative shows that angels ministered unto Him as their Sovereign Lord, though He was found in fashion as a man. They were present at the:

1. Annunication of Mary of His immaculate conception (Lk. 1:26-38); to Joseph concerning His appointed name, Jesus (Math. 1:21).

2. Proclamation to the shepherds (Lk. 2:8-12) “fear not.”

3. Incarnation of Christ (Lk. 2:13) in a chorus of praise.

4. Temptation by Satan, to serve him (Math. 4:11).

5. In the garden of Gethsemane, strengthening Him (Lk. 22:43).

6. Resurrection (Math. 28:2) proclaiming, “He is not here” (v. 6).

7. Ascension (Acts 1:10) assuring His disciples of His coming again.

8. At the descension to rapture us home, it will be “with the voice of the archangel” (1 Thess. 4:16).

9. When He appears in glorification, He “shall be revealed from Heaven with the angels of His might” (2 Thess. 1:7, Margin).

10. They were seen at the coronation day when the Lord Jesus returned home, His work finished, to receive the place of honor and glory. What a Hallelujah chorus swept through the heavens as He took the highest station (1 Pet. 3:22)! Yes, in Heaven itself, many angels will be about His throne, celebrating in holy song His victorious rule and Divine Majesty. All the angels of God worship Him.

Consider, then, the greatness of this Person before whom the heavenly powers in all their lofty ranks prostrate themselves, covering their faces and crying with loud voice night and day: “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of hosts: The whole earth is full of His glory” … and the climax of His exaltation is expressed by Peter, “Jesus Christ: who is gone into Heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him” (1 Pet. 3:22).

## Amillennialism (Part 1) (May 1968)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 14 No. 5, May 1968.

A Letter To An Amillennialist

Dear Brother in Christ:

In your last letter you state that you are convinced from Scripture that the “So-Called Coming Millennial Reign will never occur.” Permit me to say that I also am convinced from the Word of God that the Millennium will occur. Since most of the comments made by Amillennialists are open to discussion, one will make the following remarks I trust in kindness, love and humility, and not just for the sake of argument, even though in some quarters this subject is becoming a battleground amongst professing Christians. So it is, we trust, in the attitude of “kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering etc” (Col. 3:12, 13) that we make the following remarks.

I agree fully with my good friend and beloved brother in Christ, Mr. August Van Ryn, of Hialeah, Fla., the well known and highly esteemed teacher of the Word, and author of many excellent books on Scripture subjects, when he says, “The basic error with men like that (Amillennialists) is that they totally fail to see the difference between Israel and the Church.” Everything is spiritualized by them, the Church is merely a sort of glorified Israel. Don’t they ever read the Scriptures? Nothing is plainer than that Israel in the Bible is Israel, and NEVER anything else. There are simply hundreds of passages in the Old Testament and of course some in the New to teach that only Israel will be God’s people on the

earth in the future, and many of such passages could not possibly be spiritualized. It is impossible to begin to cover this subject, but look at a few of them:

1. As to their being God's people in the future: (Jer. 30:3, 32:38; Ezek. 34:30; Zech. 13:1, 9).

2. As to Christ being their King (Jer. 23:5-6, 33:23-26). Amillennialists are those who despise God's people Israel (v 24: Ezek. 34:23-31). See specially v. 30 "The house of Is-real, My people." (Ezek. 37:25) "The land wherein your fathers have dwelt, and they shall dwell therein." Since when has the Church dwelt in any particular land?

3. As to Israel going back to their land, see Isaiah 11:11-12. Try to apply that to the Church if anyone can (Ezek. 36:28). Try to apply this to the Church.

4. Israel's conversion in that day (Jer. 31:31-34; quoted in Heb. 8:8-11; Ezek. 32:37-39). Gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them. When have we ever been driven into all countries and have converted them when so gathered? (v. 19). These and hundreds more, with Romans 11:25-26 etc. all teach that Israel shall be gathered back to their land and that Christ will reign over them and the Gentile nations.

As to the Millennium, of course Revelation 20:1-6 is as clear as daylight. Six times it mentions the thousand years. If Satan, the pit, the angels, Heaven, the nation and resurrections are all Eternal, as no one would deny, then who dares to say the thousand years is symbolic and not literal? Their argument is that the Old Testament never mentions the Millennium, but that is absolutely untrue. It practically mentions nothing else but the millennial reign of Christ, with rare exceptions,

for it speaks many times of Christ reigning in power, subduing His enemies, ruling with a rod of iron, etc. Are there enemies in the eternal state? Of course not, so here is a temporary condition. Yet it says He reigns, and He is not reigning now in power, so the reigning refers to the future and the fact that He subdues ‘enemies then shows there is still sin on earth. 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 is a strong and conclusive passage in that direction. Verses 25-26 say that He reigns till all enemies are destroyed and the last enemy is death. Since death is not destroyed till the great white throne judgment (see Rev. 20:14), it proves Christ reigns during the Millennium. And since there are enemies to reign over as verse 25 states, therefore the Millennial state is not the perfect eternal state. He reigns till all is subdued under Him for a thousand years; then delivers the Kingdom in its perfection to God the Father. Can anything be clearer than this?

To substantiate this, there are Scriptures to show there is sin during Christ’s reign on earth, as described in the Old Testament. For instance Jeremiah 31:30; everyone shall die for his own iniquity; Isaiah 65:20, shows there will be death and disobedience then; so Isaiah 66:24; Zepheniah 3:5. A very clear passage in that connection is Zechariah 14:16-19. The very fact that it says for instance in Isaiah 32:1, Psalms 96:10, and many other places that Christ will reign in righteousness proves there is still sin on earth and therefore not the eternal state, for there would be no need to emphasize righteousness unless there were sin. This is clearly intimated in Romans 5:21, where at present it says that “grace reigns” suggesting that sin is borne with; in the fact, that righteousness reigns, thus intimating sin will

not be allowed. This is further stressed by the fact that in the “Day of God” righteousness is said to “dwell,” not reign. The very fact therefore of the multiple statement that Christ will reign intimates a temporary condition, with sin still present. The Book of Revelation furnishes the information that this temporary condition will last one thousand years. During that time creation itself will largely have the curse lifted. Romans 8:20-22 tells us this, as do passages like Isaiah 11:5-9, Isaiah 35, etc.

Only believers will enter this millennium or millennial reign of Christ as Matthew 25:46 and 13:41 show. At the rapture, the Lord, takes all believers to Heaven; at His Coming all unbelievers He consigns to hell. Israel shall be a spiritually newborn people — (See Jer. 31 with Heb. 8:8-12). The Holy Spirit shall be poured out on all of them. Yet at the end Satan finds millions malcontented and will lead them in rebellion against God (Rev. 20). The Amillennial sneers at this. But why? Children are born during that period (Jer. 32:20) among the Jews (Ezek. 47: 22) and among the saved Gentile nations. As our children today, they are not saved any more than our children are at their birth. That day, as we have said already, is not the eternal day, but a temporary time of blessing for a special purpose; yea, many purposes. That it is not the eternal state or condition of things is clear from Matthew 19:28, where the Lord Jesus calls that time the “regeneration.” Regeneration is not the eternal condition of things. I am regenerated (born again) now and so are all believers but I thank God this is not my eternal condition, I can still sin, and so can those who live in the Millennium. Righteous judgment will keep sin under control. Many will give, as Psalm 18:44 says

“feigned obedience” (margin). They submit because they have to; (Ps. 66:3 and 81:15).

But, argues the Amillennialist, “What is the purpose of this Millennium? Why not the eternal state right away at the coming of Christ?” The answer is that doubtless there are a number of purposes in God’s heart. Here are a few suggested:

1. It will be the Day of the Lord. He suffered from His enemies; now they are to prove His power so that He may be honored.

2. It will be Christ’s reward for His long patience — His endurance under the brutality of man.

3. It is His glory to give His earthly people their place so long promised to them.

4. God will be vindicated. God will indeed prove He is not dead, and every knee shall bow to Him.

5. The despised people of Israel will become the people saved and honored, and the Gentiles who have so long trodden them under foot will be forced to recognize them and come to worship in their city (Isa. 66).

6. All creation shall display its beauty and His glory in this sin-cursed earth.

7. The Millennium is the final trial of man.

This last fact is perhaps the most outstanding reason for a Millennium, when man can still set himself against God, or obey Him. Man likes to argue if you only improve his condition, eliminate poverty, give all equal rights, do away with slums, have abiding peace etc. etc., then he’d never complain any more; everything then would be just fine. Well, the Millennium is the chance

God will give him. The most glorious chance man has ever had. And the outcome of the test? After one thousand years of perfect bliss, man follows (many millions) the devil and is removed from the earth to prove it is not his circumstances or his lack of privilege. No, it is man himself that is a no-good wicked sinner. You have a sample of it in 1 Kings 4:20. After forty years of unparalleled bliss the people came to Solomon's son to complain that Solomon had made life too hard for them — 1 Kings 12:4.

Man is thus tested three times. First under law, which looks to the "flesh" for results; next under "grace," these last nineteen centuries, and next, under "glory" as in the Millennium. The last test will prove that man is hopelessly lost, corrupt, when, after one thousand years of perfect bliss, he still turns away from God. That's why there will be a Millennium! The testing of man would not be complete or perfectly convincing apart from the Millennium's golden opportunity for man to justify himself. This threefold test is beautifully illustrated in the Old Testament. There were just three kings who reigned over the twelve tribes — Saul, David and Solomon and each of them for forty years, which is the Scriptural time for testing. Saul represents the man after the flesh; from Adam to Christ man was tried that way and failed. This was followed by the day of grace when Christ is the rejected King as was David. In this day therefore man is tested under the action of grace (Rom. 5:21), and needless to say man has proven a total failure. Solomon represents Christ reigning in power and glory, and this is seen in the Millennium.

# Amillennialism (Part 3) (Aug-Sept 1968)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 14 No. 7, Aug-Sept 1968.

What is the Meaning of 'All Israel' in Rom. 11:26?

I quote in full from Israel's Restoration by John F. Walvoord, Th.D. in Bibliotheca Sacra (Oct. - Dec. 1945). "The confusion in the minds of expositors of Scripture concerning the meaning of Romans 11:26 is one of the obvious facts of biblical interpretation. Not only various schools of thought disagree, but the passage is a problem to all. An important clue to its interpretation is found in its preceding context. The entire chapter of Romans eleven deals with the question, 'Did God cast off His people?' (Rom. 11:1). The answer given to this leading question is that 'God did not cast off His people which He foreknew" (Rom. 11:2). The argument proceeds to the pointing out that there has always been a remnant of Israel who believed both under the law and under grace. The fact that this group was only a small portion of the nation of Israel is explained as the occasion of the present grace extended to Gentiles: 'I say then, Did they stumble that they might fall? God forbid: but by their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealosy' (Rom. 11:11). The argument then turns on the point that if the unbelief and 'fall' of Israel as a nation was the occasion of blessing on the Gentiles; how much more will be the blessing: "Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" (Rom. 11:12). These facts combine to serve as a warning to Gentiles not to be high-minded and serve

as an encouragement to Israel that a future time of blessing is in store, The contrast throughout the passage is not between the believer and unbeliever but between Gentiles as such and Israel as a nation. In Romans 11:25, the issue is brought to a head with the revelation that Israel's present blindness and unbelief will be concluded at the same time that the present Gentile opportunity is ended. Then follows the event described as 'all Israel' being delivered.

The issues involved in the passage under consideration can be resolved into a series of questions: (1) What is the meaning of 'all Israel'? (2) What is the nature of the deliverance? (3) When will the deliverance occur? (4) What are the concomitant events? Any answer to these questions involves both premises based on interpretation of the entire Scriptures and exegesis of the passage itself. The history of its interpretation has revealed a tendency to determine the meaning of the passage largely on the basis of other Scriptures. Hence, most Amillennialists have denied that the reference is to Israel in the flesh and have given a spiritual interpretation of the passage. Premillennialists have insisted upon a more literal exegesis. The issue is determined by the meaning of the key words.

It is apparent that the construction placed upon the word Israel practically determines the exegesis of the entire passage. The question is answered by at least three important considerations: (1) What is the use of the word in the context? (2) What is the use of the word in the New Testament as a whole? (3) What is the relation of the question to doctrine in general?

A study of the context bears out the fact that the word Israel as used in this passage is in contrast to GENTILE. This is clear in Romans 11:1, where Paul identifies himself as an Israelite because of his connection with the tribe of Benjamin — a racial and national relation rather than spiritual. The contrast is made further in Romans 11:11 ff. The use of 'ye', i.e., the Gentiles, is opposed to 'they', i.e., the Jews. In other words, the entire chapter carefully preserves the distinction between two classes — Jews and Gentiles. Further, the Gentiles are in most cases those who have believed in Christ and members of the Church. The contrast is not, therefore, between believing Israel and unbelieving Gentiles, but rather the two groups are treated racially. There is no ground whatever in this passage for the idea that Israel is a reference to all believers as such — the interpretation advanced by Origen, furthered by Calvin, and embraced by most amillennialists. This interpretation would nullify the very theme of the chapter.

The immediate context also brings out the contrast between Israel and Gentiles. In Romans 11:25, both terms occur in contrast. As far as the general context and the immediate context is concerned, there is no ground for SPIRITUALIZING THE WORD ISRAEL. Even A. T. Robertson, who is not a premillennialist, rather reluctantly admits that the context would indicate that the Jewish people are indicated. (Word Pictures in The New Testament, Vol. 4, p. 398). Charles Hodge, who is also not a premillennialist, states flatly, 'Israel, here, from the context, MUST MEAN THE JEWISH PEOPLE, AND ALL ISRAEL, AS THE WHOLE NATION. THE JEWS, AS A PEOPLE, ARE NOW REJECTED: AS A PEOPLE

THEY ARE TO BE RESTORED' (COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS, P. 589). The Amillennial view that Israel refers to all believers, must be held in spite of the context. It is noteworthy that Dr. Oswald T. Allis, who more than any other recent amillennial writer has attempted formally to refute premilliennialism, passes by Romans 11:26 with only a footnote reference in which he tries to sustain his thesis that Romans eleven says nothing of Israel's restoration (Prophecy and the Church, p. 305). In brief, his argument is that if Paul believed in Israel's restoration, he would have mentioned restoration to the land.

In other words, because Paul does not include all the elements of Israel's restoration, he cannot be speaking on the subject at all. If words are to be taken in their ordinary meaning, Paul is speaking of Israel's spiritual and national restoration throughout the chapter. The fact is that Romans 11:26 is an embarrassing passage to the amillennial school of interpretation and, as they have no satisfactory interpretation of it, they are prone to give none.

The predicament of the amillennialist in interpreting Romans 11:26 is further disclosed by examination of their theory that Israel as a term is constantly used in the New Testament as a synonym of the Church composed of both Jews and Gentiles. Their prejudice is expressed well by Dr. Allis when he states that when the Brethren Movement "insisted that Israel must mean Israel, and that the kingdom promises in the Old Testament concern Israel and are to be fulfilled to Israel literally that they were carrying to an almost unprecedented extreme that literalism which is characteristic of Millennialism." Yet Allis himself admits

that premillennialism was extensively held in the Early Church and that it was superseded only when Augustine advanced the idea that the millennium was to be interpreted spiritually as fulfilled in the Christian Church (Prophecy and the Church, p. 218). As a matter of fact even a casual study of the writings of the early Fathers reveals that millennialism was not only "extensively held" but was in fact the outstanding characteristic of early Christian eschatology. Dr. Wilbur Smith in his review of Dr. Allis' book quotes Schaff to this effect: "The most striking point in the eschatology of the ante-Nicene age is the prominent chiliasm, or millenarianism, that is the belief of a visible reign of Christ in glory on earth with the risen saints for a thousand years, before the resurrection and judgment. It was indeed not the doctrine of the Church embodied in any creed or form of devotion; but a widely current opinion of distinguished teachers, such as Barnabas, Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenacus, Tertullian, Methodius, and Lactantius (Sunday School Times, Nov. 24, 1945, p. 940). Dr. Allis' unprecedented literalism was, in the impartial hands of doctrinal historians, the prevailing opinion of the Church until the perversions of Augustine and Roman Catholicism began to have weight. After all, is it such "unprecedented literalism" to believe that the Bible means Israel when it uses the term? Is not the burden of proof on the amillennialist to prove that the word means other than its ordinary meaning?

It is not difficult to prove from Scripture that Israel is frequently used in the New Testament to mean what it meant in the Old Testament — the nation descending from Abraham through Jacob. Further, there is not a single reference in the New Testament to Israel which

cannot be taken in its plain meaning. Not a single instance requires the term to include Gentiles. In a word, there is no justification based on usage in the New Testament to interpret the word Israel as ever including Gentiles.

The question remains concerning the relation of the passage to biblical doctrine as a whole. This involves the issues which determine premillennialism and amillennialism as systems of doctrines — a subject which is too large to be treated here. This much is clear; the premillennial system of interpretation is in full harmony with the interpretation that Israel in this passage refers to Jews in the flesh rather than to all believers, Jews and Gentiles alike. The Amillennial system demands that the passage be spiritualized or their whole system is in jeopardy. The nature of the argument is illuminating, however. The Amillennialist usually argues that Israel must be spiritualized because to do otherwise involves what is to him the extreme literalism that Israel means Israel. In other words, he argues from the system of doctrine to its necessary interpretation of the passage. On the other hand, the Premillennialist appeals to the immediate context —the contrast between Israel and Gentiles; the general context — the discussion of Gentile privilege because of Israel's fall; and the useage in the New Testament as a whole. From the standpoint of arriving at biblical doctrine, the hermeneutics of the Premillennial argument is obviously sound.

A difficulty for all systems of interpretation is the use of the word "all." What is meant when it is stated that "all Israel shall be saved"? This has been referred to as a difficulty of the Premillennial interpretation. Obviously,

all Israel is not saved. Israel in view in the prophecy must first of all be limited to living Israel, that is, those living on earth at the time. It is not true that all Israelites of all generations are to be saved. Further, the Scriptures reveal that a large portion of Israel will be martyred during the time of trouble preceding the consummation of the period before the second coming of Christ (Zech. 13:8, 9). There are other complications in the doctrine when the judgment on Israel is taken into consideration (Ezek. 20:33-38). What is meant, then, by all?

Before attempting to answer the question, it should be noted that the same difficulty attends the Amillennial view, or any other view which attempts to find an actual event in this passage. While Israel according to the Amillennialist means “all believers,” it is also obvious that all believers are not saved at the end of the age by the coming of Christ. For the proper interpretation of the passage both principal millennial views must limit the fulfillment to those living at the time. The difficulty is not, then, a result of the premillennial viewpoint.

# Amillennialism (Part 4) (Nov 1968)

From Food for the Flock, Vol. 14 No. 9, Nov 1968.

Henry Palmeiri (continued from last month)

When Will The Prophesied Deliverance Occur

The Amillennial viewpoint of Romans 11:25, 26 among other things does manifest injustice to the chronology of the passage. Whether the view of traditional Amillennialism be followed, or the recent view of Professor Hendriksen that 'all Israel' refers to elect Israel in all ages, the interpretation contradicts the order of events indicated in Romans 11. The point of the entire chapter is that the present age is one of blessing to Gentiles and that this follows Israel's fall. During this age some in Israel come to Christ and are saved, but the nation as a whole goes on in hardness or blindness and unbelief. According to Romans 11:25, 26, the present situation is going to change when the fullness of the Gentiles, i.e., the present period of Gentile blessing, comes to its close. The terminus of Gentile blessing is the point in time when Israel's blindness is lifted.

## Amillennialism

When Israel's blindness is lifted, the way is opened for the work of the Deliverer who will bring spiritual restoration as well as physical. The order of events is therefore: (1) Israel's all; (2) entire fullness of blessing; (3) Israel's blindness lifted; (4) Israel's Deliverer comes out of Zion; (5) Israel is turned away from ungodliness and her covenants are fulfilled. Now, manifestly, Israel fell as a nation. The reference is not to believing Israel

or true Israel. Likewise, Israel is blind as a nation. Believing Israel is not blinded even in this age. So also "all Israel" refers not to believers in this age or in any previous age, but to the entire group which enters the Millennium. To make "all Israel" "all Believers" as Dr. Allis does, or "all Jewish believers," as Professor Hendriksen does, is to blur the distinctions which are so carefully maintained in the entire passage. A study of the entire passage or chapter including Verses 28-32 reveals that the antithesis of "ye" and "they," i.e., present believers as in contrast to "all Israel," is carefully preserved throughout.

The deliverance of "all Israel" is not a process but an event. The time of the event is clearly when the Deliverer comes out of Zion, an event following the return of Christ in His second coming. The prophesied deliverance is, therefore, a future event and a single event. The great prophetic passages of the Old Testament upon which this prophecy is based do not have any harmony with the present undertaking of God. It is evident that it is not true today that everyone knows the Lord, that it is no longer necessary to teach our neighbors. This is not true for Gentiles and it is certainly not true for Israel. The future revelation of Christ to Israel will fulfill these predictions and bring the prophesied time of blessing for God's ancient people.

## What are the Concomitant Events?

The predictions of Romans 11:25, involve important doctrinal considerations beyond the revelation explicitly made. This explains why its interpretation has been characterized rather sharply by the school of interpretation represented. The Pre-millennial

interpretation has as its background important considerations. The restoration of Israel as a nation involves the Davidic Covenant. It involves Israel's continuance as a nation and possession of the land. It involves the separation of the purposes of God for the Church, believers in this age, and for Israel. The themes of Scripture bearing on the time of great tribulation for Israel, the consummation of Gentile power, the second coming of Christ, the judgment of the Gentiles, the resurrection of Israel and her judgment, the judgment of Israel still in the flesh, and many other important doctrines are directly or indirectly related. It is not claimed that Romans eleven in itself settles all the problems or that it alone establishes the main premises of premillennialism. What is claimed is the a literal interpretation of Romans eleven is in full harmony with prophecy which has been and is being fulfilled and that it fits perfectly the general scheme of the premillennial interpretation of Scriptures. If the statements of this chapter are taken in their ordinary meaning without recourse to allegorical or spiritual interpretation of the key words, the inevitable conclusion is that we have here in broad outline God's program: present blessing for Gentiles, future restoration and blessing for Israel as a nation. We say with Paul in the sense we believe he meant: "Did God cast off His people? God forbid."

As Benjamin Wills Newton pointed out concerning the safe rule to guide us, "I adhere to the ancient canon, that where a literal interpretation can be adopted, the furthest from the literal is commonly the worst: and that the literal may be adopted where no proved absurdity or impossibility follows its adoption. Secondly, I enquire whether a different principle of interpretation could be

adopted consistently throughout the whole passage; so as for no clause to be dropped out or set aside on pretence of poetic exaggeration. Thirdly, I ask which interpretation would best agree with the testimony of the rest of Scripture, especially those parts which definitely apply to the same period."

With these rules to guide us the writer is whole-heartedly in agreement; These would be my chief criteria.