

Old Paths

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant. Psalm 25:14

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Straight and Narrow

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The God of Hope

“And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” (Matthew 24:6)

As the disciples gathered around Jesus on the Mount of Olives after He left the temple for the last time, they asked Him, “Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” (Matthew 24:3) Jesus began His response with a warning for them not to be deceived by false teachers. In fact, He noted that “many” would come under the banner of His name. Then He said,

“And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.” (Matthew 24:6-8)

Jesus noted that before the end of the world and His second coming that there would be a great deal of violence on an international level. While World War I and II are to be noted for tragic loss of life and warfare such as never been seen, and that was over 65 years ago. Based on the prediction of Jesus, “faithful and true witness,” we can be assured that the United Nations will not be able to find a lasting solution to the problems in the world, especially those between the United States of America and Iraq.

Today we hear of many rumours of war. According to the prophecy of Jesus, there will continue to be wars. Perhaps that will find fulfillment between the U. S. A. and Iraq, or maybe the U. S. A. and North Korea. Contrary to certain television and radio personalities, only God knows for sure. One thing that seems to be certain is that many people are quite concerned about the state of affairs in the world. At the time of this writing, the United States is in a state of high alert with intelligence reports declaring the possibility of a immanent terrorist attack by Al Qaeda. People have been advised to have drinking water, food, and simple provisions to protect their living area from disease polluted air, and communication plans in case of an attack. *Continued on page 3.*

Prayer Request

Recently, Benny Kayamba, a faithful minister in Zambia, wrote us a challenging letter explaining that he has been asked to leave his home because the truth which he is sharing has aroused persecution from his brother who had let him stay in a house he owned.

Many people have come to the knowledge of the truth through the labors of Brother Kayamba.

Currently Benny needs a place to live. If you would like to send Benny a word of encouragement, you may post him a letter at: The King is Coming Evangelism Institute, PO Box 32804, Lusaka, Zambia. His email address is: thethreeangelsmessagesofrev14@yahoo.com.

Please pray for all the ministers around the world who are spreading the truth about God and His Son.

Editor

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Letters

Newsletters

Thanks for the excellent papers that you send out each month. I use almost every article for different friends and family members. Example, the crossword puzzle I sent to my nieces because their Mother died and they do not understand the state of the dead. It is hard to talk about the state of the dead at this time but I thought the puzzle would be best.

Arizona

We receive a wonderful blessing from *Old Paths*, and appreciate all the work you all are doing. We keep you in our prayers everyday, and ask your prayers for your supporters. Hope to see you at the Florida camp meeting.

Florida

Appreciation

I pray all is well. I just want to drop a line to show my humble appreciation for the mighty work your team is doing! I wish that I could do more. I seem to have my hands so full, that I just do not have enough hours in the day. I am so ready to simplify my life so that I may serve the Lord more. Please pray for me. Our enemy is thrilled when we are too occupied to preach the Word. I pray that God will open a window or door so that I may change my situation.

Florida

Thank you, thank you, thank you for all the enlightening material that you send from time to time. God ever bless and keep you all until He comes. Here's a money order for the latest Panel Discussion, "Answers to Objections." Fantastic!

Michigan

I want to thank you, each one, for your dedication through the past year. I have enjoyed each and every issue of Smyrna Gospel Ministries' publications. I also appreciate the work that has gone into making audio tapes, videos and pamphlets. May the Lord reward each one of you in a special way.

Montana

Happy New Year to all of you at Smyrna Gospel Ministries! I pray that the Lord will continue to bless you abundantly as you spread the truth about God this coming year.

West Virginia

We are so blessed by your ministry. Thank you so much! We hope this tithe unto the Lord will help to spread the truth.

Minnesota

Just wanted to thank you for your prayers and counsel and literature and your dedication to what your ministry

stands for ... and I have appreciated the insight we have gained from the resources you provide. Please pray for us as we approach our church members at a public meeting hall, that the Spirit of God would prevail. May God continue to bless your ministry.

California

Translation of Truth-Filled Materials

We want to thank you for *Old Paths* newsletter, which brought us a lot of joyfulness. Although my English is very weak, I couldn't wait for the translated version from my son. So I decided to read it for myself. And guess what, I was not only able to understand it, but I translated it into Hungarian for myself and into German for my husband so that he understood it too! Praise the Lord for His love and care!

The girl from Moldavia we told you of, Sister J__, is doing a very good job in translating everything into the Romanian language, which is spoken in Moldavia besides Russian. Her father is a teacher of the Russian language and he is translating everything into the same. They have already sent us "Why Elijah Must come" and "The Truth About God." The whole family is on fire about the truth and though they are very poor people, nevertheless they are very eager in spreading the good news in Moldavia! We told them about your visit in Poland, Germany and Norway and they regretted that you couldn't visit Moldavia, too.

Sister J__ is currently here in Germany ... and we met her at her arrival and gave her more material to translate, also the booklet *Who is Telling the Truth About God*, among others. She told us that she will translate a great deal during her free time. She and her family are so thankful to know the truth, especially her father. He is studying the Bible every free second. But it is different in Moldavia because it is very difficult and dangerous over there for a person to hold ideas like this! Please pray for her and her family. They already had to face a lot of difficulties from their [Adventist] church and from the people of the village they live in.

Germany

Here you have the book [*What Did the Pioneers Believe?* translated into Romanian]. ... I have sent twenty [copies] to Spain and the rest of them are in Romanian.

Romania

(Efforts are continually underway to translate truth-filled materials as quickly as possible. Currently some materials have been translated into German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, Hungarian,

and some African tribal languages. For further details, please contact us. Editor)

Taped Media

Thanks for the last video “Answers to Objections.” I am thankful you keep sending the tapes. This donation is also to cover tapes you send. **Tennessee**

Enclosed is a M.O. for the last video you sent me, “Roots of the Trinity.” One of our prayers should be that stubborn hearts will be softened by the Spirit of God that the Father and Son may truly be worshiped in the proper manner. I thank God for the ministry of Smyrna and Restoration Ministries. My own heart and mind has to be swept clean of all worldly and carnal debris so that my own life will be a treasure house for my precious Father and Jesus that honor and glory will be to them alone. The Father’s richest blessings be yours at Smyrna. **Canada**

Please send me video tapes and cassette tapes. I will leave the choice to you. I am preaching the gospel in Korea. Pray for us. **Korea**

Tracts and Books

We would like to distribute material that directs people to God, not to a denomination (or to preconceived ideas).

The flyer that you sent us (Ten Commandments Old, New Testament & Catholic Church) is great. The one we have has a slight print shadow, on the Law of God (New Testament) section. This shadow when reprinted detracts from the print. **Australia**

(Sorry for the shadow, we try to cull out any bad ones before they are sent. Anyone receiving defective literature may request to have it replaced. Editor)

Thank you for your help. If you can’t provide all of the requested [material due to being out of stock] then please send what you can. I am consistently getting the books out to mostly Adventists over e-Bay, I get back email occasionally from many who have found truth in this material. I think it’s wonderful. Praise the Lord. **Colorado**

“Hope in God” continued from page 1.

Currently military aircraft are patrolling the skies of New York, Washington, D.C. and other cities intelligence considers under threat.

The United Nations seems powerless to help with the stalemate between Iraq and the United States. The Vatican sent a special envoy to Saddam Hussain with a message to encourage peace. Iraq has also sent its representatives to the Vatican with the purpose of trying to find a peaceful solution to the tension between Iraq and the United States. Events are unfolding at the time of this writing. Perhaps there will be a temporary peace brokered by the Vatican. It is significant that even the Arabs are looking to the Papacy for help. Truly all the world is wondering after the beast power.

The United States’ intelligence also reported recently that North Korea is believed to have intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), capable of reaching the western part of the United States. America has not known such fear since the Cuban missile crisis.

Surely the words of Jesus are true today, “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.” (Luke 21:26)

After predicting “wars and rumours of wars,” our Lord and Saviour added these thought-evoking words: “All these are the beginning of sorrows.” (Matthew 24:8) While we may not know all the details of future events, we can be certain, based on the prophecy of Jesus, that much more trouble is *to come*. Some of Adventists are thinking, “This is the end of all things.” Friends, we are *nearing* the end, but we are also at the *beginning* of sorrows! If we think that the time we are going through is emotionally difficult, we haven’t seen anything yet. However, Jesus has promised peace to those who put their trust in Him. He said, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (John 14:27) Though there are troubles all

around the Christian, we can have peace in Jesus as we trust in Him and put our hope in the “God of Hope.” (Romans 15:13) “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.” (Psalm 146:3) Instead of the arm of flesh, we are to trust and hope in God

Each day there are different conspiracy theories abounding concerning current events. We were all saddened when we heard of the Columbia tragedy. It was only the next day before I read on the Internet about a conspiracy theory concerning it. One prognosticator says that President Bush is behind all the country’s woes. Another, with supposedly secret insight, says that the European money magnets are the ones pulling all the strings. Some of these things *may* be true. Some *may* even fit into Bible prophecy. Personally though, I get very tired of hearing *more about these theories* than hearing about the gospel. You know what? There is a plan that Satan is behind to destroy Christians. The Bible gives us,

“Hope in God” continued on page 10.

Answers to Objections

(Concerning the truth about God as often given by Trinitarians, “Jesus Only”, and others who oppose the truth about God.)

Part 3

As many of our readers are aware, we have been producing a series of video and audio cassette tapes on the truth about God. We have entitled this series, “The Good News About God.” “Answers to Objections” is taken from our latest study in this series. This study carefully examines some Bible texts that are used to object to the truth about God. To help examine some of these texts, we assembled a panel of Bible students composed of: Pastor David Clayton and Brother Howard Williams of Restoration Ministries, Jamaica, West Indies, and Brother Lynnford Beachy of Smyrna Gospel Ministries. A question is introduced by the moderator, Allen Stump, and one of the panelists gives a response.

The last two months we printed the introduction study and several answers to questions. This study will conclude the presentation.

Allen

In Hebrews 1:8, the Father calls His Son, “God.” Does this mean that Jesus is the Supreme Being?

Howard

Let’s read the text. “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.”

Let us note carefully that the Father, the Supreme Sovereign of the universe gave this title to Jesus, so obviously Jesus is not the Supreme Being.

Jesus was coronated by the Father because of who he was. Jesus is divine by His very nature of being the Son of God. In comparison to the angels, Jesus hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they, because He is God’s own Son.

The Father exalted the Son to the same plateau as Himself, thus making His Son worthy of worship. “And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.” (Hebrews 1:6)

Here we see that even the angels of God were instructed to worship the Son even as the Father is worshipped.

The Father himself ordained that the Son should bear the title of God. Let us look at the next verse, “Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” (v. 9) The Son was elevated to this position by the Father himself, who has rightfully used the title of God, and then added that He was the God of His Son.

Look at who Jesus says made Him to be the God and Father of us, “...Behold I and the children which God hath given me.” (Hebrews 2:13)

It is the Father who is ultimately responsible for all things, and He it is that has given to Jesus the position He now holds, including the children He has, which are you and me.

If this sounds a little far-fetched and out of sync with the rest of scripture, let us read 1 Corinthians 15:27, 28 and we will see that the same sentiments are expressed there.

“For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” (1 Corinthians 15:27-28)

These verses clearly show that God the Father has put all things under

Jesus’ feet, and that He, God, is not under Christ, but when all things shall be given back to the Father, then shall Jesus be subject to the Father that God may be all in all.

Thus when Jesus is given the title of “God,” it is in reference to His divine nature and in reference to His relationship to us, His children. However, He, is not the Father himself.

Allen

Howard, that certainly agrees with Ephesians 1:17 where the Father is called “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ.” While the Father is called the God of Christ, Jesus is never called the God of the Father.

Let’s now look at a few texts that seem to speak of Jesus in a manner that would make it impossible for Him to be the literal begotten Son of God. Lynnford, let’s get back to you. Micah 5:2 is a well-known verse. How do you explain it?

Lynnford

This verse is used by many people to try to prove that the Son of God wasn’t literally begotten of His Father. They claim that it proves that Christ is a co-eternal companion of the Father. The interesting thing is that this verse actually proves the opposite. In the King James version it reads,

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; *whose goings forth* have been from of old, from everlasting.”

The key point of this verse that’s used to try to prove that Christ has always existed as a separate individual from the Father, is the statement that

says, His “goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Some people claim that this text proves that Christ never had a beginning.

But, before we jump to conclusions, let’s examine the verse a little more carefully. The margin has a note for the word “everlasting,” saying the original Hebrew literally means “the days of eternity.” Christ’s “goings forth have been from the days of eternity.” The truth comes out more clearly when we look at the definition for the Hebrew word that was translated “goings forth.” The word is *mo-tzah-aw* and it literally means “origin,” or as the *Strong’s Dictionary* puts it, “a family descent.”

The *Revised Standard Version* translated this text,

“But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.”

So the verse that’s so often used to prove that Christ had no beginning actually proves that He had an origin in the days of eternity, before anything was created.

As we compare this with Proverbs 8, we learn how Christ originated. In verses 23-25 Christ says “I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth.”

According to the Bible, Christ was literally begotten, or birthed, from His Father before the world was created.

Howard

Brother Lynnford, there is also a New Testament passage that says, “...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.” (John 8:58)

There are some that believe that this text shows that Jesus was the Great

God himself, but is this the meaning of the text?

Let’s examine this text, friends, to see if this is the meaning of it. What was the context of these words?

The Jews heard the words of Jesus, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.” (John 8:51) They then took Him to task about whether He was greater than their ancestor Abraham. Jesus answered and said, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.” (John 8:56)

The Jews were amazed at the fact that Jesus was not even 50 years of age and yet He spoke of Abraham seeing His day. Jesus hastened to tell them that He was before Abraham, in other words, what Jesus said was, “The truth is, I existed before Abraham was even born!”

This passage definitely speaks to the pre-existence of Christ. The message Jesus wanted the Jews to get was that He Himself existed at the beginning with the Father. The fact that He claims existence before Abraham can attest to that.

I do believe that Jesus existed before all things, based partially on the passage Brother Lynnford just read from in Proverbs 8:22-30, and I accept the testimony of the scripture that says, “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” (John 1:3) This is the truth of all the scripture.

Allen

Thanks for those simple, straightforward thoughts Howard. What can you tell us about Isaiah 43:10?

Howard

Let’s read that passage. It says, “Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.” (Isaiah 43:10)

This passage is somewhat similar to a previous passage that was examined by Brother Lynnford earlier, and I think the meanings are the same.

That this passage is speaking exclusively of God the Father, there is no doubt.

This passage speaks of the children of Israel who are the witnesses and servants of the Lord God. They have witnessed and can testify that He alone is God, and that there is none other God; there never has been and never will be.

What was it that led Israel to this knowledge? “I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God.” (Isaiah 43:12)

In other words, the text is saying, “First I predicted your deliverance; I declared what I would do, and then I did it—I saved you. No foreign god has ever done this before. You are witnesses that I am the only God,” says the LORD.”

Israel had an experience with God, and through the mighty experiences of deliverances they had come to know that He is the only true God.

Allen

Thank you, Brother Howard. Brother Lynnford, John 10:17, 18 is often used to support the idea that Jesus didn’t really, truly, and fully die, and that He was able to raise Himself from the dead. How can we harmonize this text with texts such as Isaiah 53:12 that says that Jesus “poured out his soul unto death,” as well as over thirty texts in the New Testament that teach that Jesus was raised from the dead by the Father?

Lynnford

Well, Brother Allen, let’s read these verses carefully and the truth will become very plain. Jesus said, “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might

take it again. No man *taketh* it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have *power* to lay it down, and I have *power* to *take* it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

According to the Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, the Greek word that was translated “I might take,” also means: “to receive (what is given), to gain, to get, to obtain, to get back.” The same Greek word was used in verse 18, but it was translated “received.” Christ laid down His life that He might receive it again. The Greek word that was translated “power” means power in the sense of “authority,” or “permission,” rather than physical force.

Let’s read the verses again with a more consistent translation of the words. Jesus said,

“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might *receive* it again. No man *taketh* it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have *authority* to lay it down, and I have *authority* to receive it again. This commandment have I *received* of my Father.”

Christ had the authority, or permission, to lay down His life so that He could receive it again from His Father. Christ could not, and did not, raise Himself from the dead, or else He wouldn’t have been dead to begin with. In the prophecy of Christ’s complete death, recorded in Psalm 88:8, Christ says, “I am shut up, and I cannot come forth.”

To make the claim that Jesus Christ raised Himself from the dead would be to directly contradict the words of Christ, for Christ said, “I can of mine own self do nothing.” (John 5:30) It would also contradict at least 30 verses in the New Testament that say that Christ was raised from the dead by His Father.

In Galatians 1:1 Paul said, “God the Father... raised him from the dead.”

The testimony of the Bible that Christ died completely, and that His Father raised Him from the dead, is overwhelming.

As Allen pointed out, Isaiah 53 speaks of the complete death of Christ. Verse 10 says, “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,” and in verse 12 it says, “he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

According to the Bible, the soul of Christ died; it was His soul that was made an offering for sin. A dead person can’t even think, let alone raise himself from the dead.

So we can see that John 10:17 and 18 doesn’t support the idea that Christ resurrected Himself from the dead, and, if it did, it would contradict many other verses in the Bible.

David

Lynnford, there is another verse which is also used to support this idea that Jesus raised Himself from the dead. This is John 2:19, where Jesus said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” The difficulty with this verse is that, as Allen stated, there are more than thirty texts in the Bible which state that the Father raised Jesus from the dead. In fact, all the apostles went out and taught that Jesus was raised from the dead by the Father. Can one text override the testimony of thirty? When we encounter seeming contradictions in the Bible, how do we normally deal with it? We go with the weight of evidence, don’t we? The first point is that on the basis of the weight of evidence, we would have to say that it was the Father who raised Jesus from the dead, rather than that He raised Himself. Even in the Old Testament we have the testimony of Psalm 16:10: “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”

Doesn’t this make it clear that it was the Father who was responsible for the resurrection of Christ? It was He who did not leave Christ’s soul in hell. But,

let us examine the text more closely and see if there is further evidence to support this conclusion:

The context of this verse is that the Jews had asked Jesus for a sign, seeing that He was doing all these works. Their exact words were, “...What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?” (John 2:18) It was in response to this question that Jesus stated, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.” Jesus was telling them to look for a certain sign. This sign would demonstrate His messiahship, His authority: it would establish His credentials. In context, this is the point of His statement.

Now, did the Jews conclude that Jesus raised Himself from the dead? Did they receive such a sign? The fact is that the Jews had absolutely no evidence that Jesus had raised Himself from the dead and, in fact, they could not have had any evidence to that effect from the apostles, who all went out and preached that the Father raised Jesus from the dead. The question is, did they receive the sign which Jesus had promised? If Jesus had made a valid point when He replied to their question then they must have had their answer. This demonstrates the fact that the point of Jesus was not that He Himself would raise Himself from the dead. The emphasis was, rather, on the fact that He would be resurrected in three days, not on who would do the resurrecting.

In Ephesians 1:19 and 20 Paul emphasized that “the exceeding greatness” of the Father’s “mighty power” was demonstrated “when he raised” Christ “from the dead.” If Christ had actually raised Himself from the dead, then Paul’s words could not have been true. It would not have been the Father’s power, but the power of Christ which would have been demonstrated.

The question then, is, why did Jesus say, “I will raise it up.” Jesus, at times, spoke in a way that may best be described as cryptic. In light of the overwhelming testimony of the rest of Scripture that it was the Father who raised Jesus from the dead, this verse

must be looked at in a similar light as, for example, the passage where God claims that He hardened Pharaoh's heart, or the passages which state that the Lord's purpose in giving parables was to prevent the people from understanding lest at any time they should repent and turn and be saved. In these cases we do not look at the precise meaning of the words spoken, but rather accept that God is speaking of the consequences of certain actions as though He were the one who was the cause of those consequences. In light of all the evidence, we must conclude that Jesus is speaking in a similar manner in this verse.

Allen

Let's now move on to some texts that deal with the Holy Spirit. As you all know, there are some texts that are used to try to demonstrate the personhood of the Holy Spirit apart from the Father and the Son. One of those texts is Romans 8:26 where it says, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Brother Howard, come to our aid on this text.

Howard

Brother Allen, as you mention this passage, I remember some years back I was talking to some people, about who the Holy Spirit really is, and there was this woman who opposed me strongly, and she said, "Of all the references in the Scripture of the Holy Spirit, none of them refers to him as 'it,' only 'he!' I asked her if she was sure about what she just said, she said, "Positive."

I asked her to turn to the passage we just read, and she read that over and over again in utter amazement, and she kept silent for the rest of the conversation.

The text is speaking of how the Holy Spirit assists or helps us when our

hearts are heavy and we know not what to pray for, as we ought.

Don't you know how sometimes we are so burdened and distressed that we can't even speak a word, we can but sigh or groan, the Spirit is able to relate to that feeling and God understands.

"The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us." How could the Scriptures refer to the Spirit as "it," if the Spirit is God?

We are made in the image of God—body and spirit.

We could refer to our body or our spirit and it would be okay to refer to any of these by using the term "it," but when there is a union of body and spirit, we are now dealing with a person, thus it would be inappropriate to refer to a person as it.

The Scripture tells us that we have only one that mediates on our behalf, "For there is one God, and one mediator (or intercessor) between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5)

According to 1 Corinthians 8:6 and Ephesians 4:5, we are told that there is one Lord, who is Jesus Christ. Now let's look at another eye-opening verse, it is 2 Corinthians 3:17: "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

So we see here friends, that Jesus, is that Spirit that maketh intercession for us, but because He is in a non-bodily form, He can be referred to as "it," and it would not be inappropriate. I suggest that this is the real reason for using the term "it." Ellen White noted:

"We have only one channel of approach to God. Our prayers can come to him through one name only,—that of the Lord Jesus our advocate. His Spirit must inspire our petitions. No strange fire was to be used in the censers that were waved before God in the sanctuary. So *the Lord himself* must kindle in our hearts the burning desire, if our prayers are acceptable to him. *The Holy Spirit within must make intercessions for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.*"

(*Review and Herald*, February 9, 1897, emphasis supplied)

Allen

Thanks for that help, Howard, but stay with me for a minute though. In Acts 5 there is the story where Ananias was struck down as a judgment of God. The verses in question are 3 and 4, which state: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." In verse three Peter says that Ananias lied to the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit, but in verse 4 Peter says Ananias lied unto God. Using some simple logic from algebra, it would seem that God is equated with the Holy Spirit. Does this text teach that the Holy Spirit is God?

Howard

Let's see whether it does!

The promise of the Holy Spirit to the apostles was something they looked forward to with great anticipation, and especially so because they had overcome self and were now converted. As the Spirit came they remembered the words of Jesus, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14:23)

When the Spirit came on the day of Pentecost they knew that indeed the Father and the Son were with them. In fact, the entire book of Acts tells of the marvelous works they had accomplished because the Spirit gave them power to work in building up the kingdom of God.

Peter knew full well who the Holy Spirit was, so when Ananias lied about the sale of the land, Peter could use the terms Holy Ghost and God interchangeably and not be wrong.

If I say to you, “you grieve my spirit!” do I mean you have grieved my friend, no, I mean you have offended me, on the inward level!

In John 11 we have a similar example at the death of Lazarus. In verse 33 we read this, “When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.” Notice the term used was, “he groaned in the spirit.”

A few verses later we read, “Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave...” (verse 38)

First it says He “groaned in the spirit,” and again speaking of the same person with the same experience it now says, “Jesus therefore again groaning in himself.”

So we see the term, “groaned in the spirit” and, “groaning in himself,” means the same. It is an experience of an individual.

Peter knew that the Holy Ghost was God Himself, personally present with His disciples in a non-bodily form.

Allen

Thanks for the help on that, Howard. David, there are a few places in the discourse from the last supper where Jesus seems to speak of the Holy Spirit as a personal individual, separate and apart from the Father or Himself. Could you discuss these texts and harmonize them with the plain passages that teach that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God?

David

Well, one of these passages is John 14:16-18. This is typical of many of the passages which are often so misunderstood. It reads,

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and

shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”

In these verses we seem to have a contradiction. First in verse 16 Jesus says He will send “another Comforter.” This seems to indicate that it is someone other than Jesus Himself who will come. However, a few verses later, in verse 18, Jesus says, “I will come to you.” Now what does He mean? Does He mean He will send another, or that He will come Himself? We have equal reason for believing either one of those two things. However, Jesus adds something in verse 17 which makes the issue clearer. He speaks of this “Comforter” and says, “Ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” He makes it plain that the person whom He will be sending is already dwelling with them, but in the future would be in them. Was He speaking of a third person called the Holy Spirit? This could not be because the Holy Spirit was not yet given according to John 7:39, and according to verse 16 of the same chapter (John 14), the Father would give this other Comforter sometime in the future, but at the time when Jesus was speaking he was not yet given.

So then, who was the one who was then with them, and would, in the future, be in them? It seems evident that this person was Jesus. There can be no other conclusion. This conclusion is strengthened when we notice that in verse 17 Jesus says, “He dwelleth with you and shall be in you.” Then in verse 20 He says, “At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” He clearly says that it will be He who will be in us, making it very clear that this Comforter will be Jesus Himself.

As we read further in the passage this conclusion becomes even more evident.

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how

is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:21-23)

As Jesus explains, the time would come when the world would not recognize Him and would see Him no more. However, the disciples would see, or recognize Him. Why is it that the world would not recognize Jesus? Because He would return in another form with which they were not familiar. The world evidently would think of the comforter as another person, while Jesus’ disciples would recognize and know that it was He. Hence, His seemingly contradictory statements that He would send “another Comforter,” and at the same time that He would come again.

When Judas asked how it would be possible for Jesus to show Himself to the disciples and not to the world, Jesus did not state that He would be present by means of a third person, His representative. He stated that He and His Father would make their abode with the one who loved Him. This was the means by which He would be present with His people. This is an important point because Jesus was answering the specific question of *how*. He was speaking of the method by which it would be possible, and if there were a third person involved who would simply bring their presence as he (the third person) came, this was the moment to say it. But Jesus mentioned no third person. He simply stated that He and the Father (nobody else) would come and make their home with the believer. This makes it clear that the Holy Spirit is not a third person, but rather is the actual personal presence of Jesus, by means of His Father’s omnipresent Spirit, in a form devoid of human personality and unrecognized by the world.

Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit as though it were another person in

several places, as, for example, in John 16:12-14, where He says,

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.”

But this was simply because He would be returning in an unfamiliar form and, in a sense, as a different personality, because there would be no bodily form, no audible voice, no physical contact. Nevertheless, as we have seen, it would truly be He Himself who would return because by means of His Father’s omnipresent Spirit, His mind, character personality and power would be literally present with His people in all places as He noted in John 17:23: “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.”

Allen

Friends, I want to thank you for taking the time to review this study. I realize that it hasn’t been exhaustive. Each and every verse of Scripture we’ve

looked at could be studied for years and never exhausted. We don’t claim to have done full justice to the two dozen or so references we have discussed today. But please keep in mind these words of Jesus. “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32) What we should desire, and must have, is the pure truth of God’s Word. As Ellen White noted, “the righteousness of Christ, [which we all desire] ... is pure, unadulterated truth.” (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 65) She also noted:

“God does not compel men to give up their unbelief. Before them are light and darkness, truth and error. It is for them to decide which they will accept. The human mind is endowed with power to discriminate between right and wrong. God designs that men shall not decide from impulse, but from weight of evidence, carefully comparing scripture with scripture. Had the Jews laid by their prejudice and compared written prophecy with the facts characterizing the life of Jesus, they would have perceived a beautiful harmony between the prophecies and their fulfillment in the life and ministry of the lowly Galilean.

“Many are deceived today in the same way as were the Jews.

Religious teachers read the Bible in the light of their own understanding and traditions; and the people do not search the Scriptures for themselves, and judge for themselves as to what is truth; but they yield up their judgment, and commit their souls to their leaders. The preaching and teaching of His word is one of the means that God has ordained for diffusing light; but we must bring every man’s teaching to the test of Scripture.” (*Desire of Ages*, pp. 458, 459)

In 2 Timothy 2:15 the Bible says to “Study to shew thyself approved unto God.” Beloved, whoever will prayerfully study the Bible, desiring to know the truth that he may obey it, will receive divine enlightenment. God has promised it. In John 7:17, Jesus said, “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” Finally, let me leave you with this counsel from the Apostle Paul as found in 1 Thess. 5:21, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” May God bless you lots, and lots, and lots. ✍

New Video in “The Good News About God” Series

The above study, “Answers to Objections,” is an edited portion of the latest production from the series, “The Good News About God.” This study-tape is now available in NTSC and PAL video formats. There will be a version for Adventists (AV) and non-Adventists (NAV) as well. For video cassettes, request tape number GNAG-V-06. The suggested donation is \$7.00 per tape plus actual postage. For audio cassettes, request GNAG-A-06. The suggested donation is \$2.00 plus actual postage. Please specify which version (AV or NAV), when ordering. ✍



**Panel Members from
“Answers to Objections”**

“Hope in God” — Continued from p. 4.

especially in the book of Revelation, an outline of Satan’s plan of attack. We know that he will use political powers teamed up with religious leaders to bring about the last conflict which will be against God’s people.

In fact, this will be the greatest crisis that the world or God’s people have ever seen. Has God given us instruction on how to be ready for this greatest of all crisis? He has! In Revelation 14:7 we are told to, “*Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*” Three things are mentioned. They are not, join a militia, “get off the grid,” or stockpile great amounts of food. The preparation that God tells us to make consists of reverencing Him, giving glory to Him, and worshiping Him. The sum of the matter is to personally know God, to love Him with all our hearts, and to serve Him.

You see, even if we had a detailed knowledge of all the events that are future; even if we had physical preparations that could carry us through that time; even if we were protected physically from harm, if we are not ready to meet the Lord in peace, then all else is in vain! However, if we are following God’s plan as outlined in Revelation 14:7, then no matter how unexpected the events that come; no matter how difficult the path before us, (and the road ahead is not a smooth path), we will be ready in the manner that truly counts.

“The ‘time of trouble, such as never was,’ is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God. ‘Though Noah, Daniel, and Job’ were in the land, ‘as I live,

saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.’ Ezekiel 14:20.” (*Great Controversy*, pp. 622, 623)

The book of Daniel states that “... the people that do *know their God* shall be strong, and do exploits.” (Daniel 11:32) Jesus said: “And this is life eternal, that they might *know thee* the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3) Friends, it is “life eternal” to know God and His Son. This is not speaking of intellectual knowledge. Satan has plenty first hand knowledge about God. Although He spreads many false teachings about God, Satan knows the real score. In fact, James says, “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.” (James 2:19) Even believing that there is only one true God Who gave His only begotten Son for our sins is not enough. There must be heart knowledge that comes from a personal relationship with the Father and His Son that is unshakeable!

In the last year few years I have had some close friends, who were once Seventh-day Adventists, decide that Adventism was wrong and should be given up. However, the people I have in mind did not stop there; they decided that Christianity was wrong. One accepted a form of Judaism; another became a Muslim; another couple accepted a faith that claims it is not “Christian.” How can that happen? Although I believe that the system of Adventism stands on solid Biblical teachings, I can understand how someone might, through improper study or under the wrong guidance, see certain doctrines different. However, to become Jew, one must deny the truth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Christianity is about having a personal relationship with a personal God and His Son. If we have ever had a true saving relationship with Christ in the past, how could we honestly say later that Jesus is a hoax or a phony? Today, if I backslide and fall into sin, if I am

honest, I will acknowledge that to be so. However, I will also have to acknowledge that Jesus is the true Son of God and that I need to repent and confess my sin or I will be lost. If I am honest, I cannot deny Him. Why? Because I have truly known Jesus.

What I am going to say next might at first seem silly, but please watch for the very real parallel. I know my wife really exists and is not a figment of my imagination. You can bring me documentation from state birth records that fail to reveal the existence of Charmaine. You may give me the testimony from the people who are supposed to be her parents, that they never had a child named Charmaine. You can show me the high school year book from the year she was supposed to graduate and remark that there is no picture or place for her in the book. But no matter how much “proof” you bring to me, I still know she is real and exists. How? I have had a personal, intimate relationship with her.

And that’s what we need with God and Christ friends; a real intimate, personal relationship! That is what I need and it is what you need now and in the crisis time to come. When all our earthly support is withdrawn; when all the facts and figures we have trusted in appear to be disproved, the only thing that will anchor us in that time is a personal relationship with God and his Son. Beloved, “the faithful and true witness” is correct. We need to know our God and Jesus. We must reverence Them, give glory to Them, and worship Them. Through the prophet Joel He bids us: “...turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. (Joel 2:12) Jeremiah declares: “And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” (Jeremiah 29:13) Friends, let us seek God with all our hearts and put our hope in God. “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. (Psalm 20:7)

Allen Stump

Youth's Corner - We Are Responsible for the Use of Our Talents

The question is asked, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" and the warning is given, "The night cometh, when no man can work."

Our life is to be hid with Christ in God; and if it is thus hidden, in his hands it will be converted into a lamp which will shed upon the world a bright and steady light. Our Saviour has endowed us with talents, bidding us occupy till he comes, improving them in such a way that he will receive his own with usury. By entertaining the Christian's ideas of eternity, we shall not be disqualified for the duties of this life, but through our understanding of the relation of this life to that which is to come, we shall increase in faithfulness, doing with our might that which our hands find to do. But though time is short, and there is a great work to be done, the Lord is not pleased to have us so prolong our seasons of activity that there will not be time for periods of rest, for the study of the Bible, and for communion with God. All this is essential to fortify the soul, to place us in a position where we shall receive wisdom from God to employ our talents in the Master's service to the highest account. The Lord inquires, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" Is there not sufficient time, if it is properly employed, if our work is wisely planned, to accomplish all that God would have us do? By presenting eternity to our view, our faculties are quickened, and with willing service we may devote our powers to the advancement of the cause of Christ. A great work is before us; and if we are united with Christ, we are laborers together with God. God gives the talents; he gives the oil of grace, that our lamps may be kept trimmed and burning. He prepares us to act our part

in the great work of shedding the light of his truth upon those who are yet in darkness, perishing for want of the knowledge of Christ.

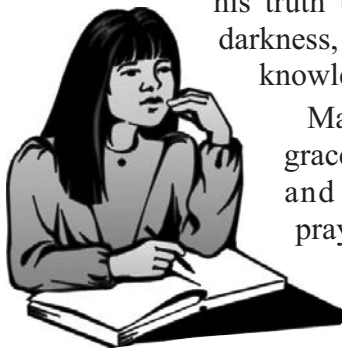
Many are longing to grow in grace; they pray over the matter, and are surprised that their prayers are not answered. The Master has given them a work to do whereby they shall grow. Of what value

is it to pray when there is need of work? The question is, Are they seeking to save souls for whom Christ died? Spiritual growth depends upon giving to others the light that God has given to you. You are to put forth your best thoughts in active labor to do good, and only good, in your family, in your church, and in your neighborhood. In place of growing anxious with the thought that you are not growing in grace, just do every duty that presents itself, carry the burden of souls on your heart, and

by every conceivable means seek to save the lost. Be kind, be courteous, be pitiful; speak in humility of the blessed hope; talk of the love of Jesus; tell of his goodness, his mercy, and his righteousness; and cease to worry as to whether or not you are growing. Plants do not grow through any conscious effort. Jesus said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin." The plant is not in continual

worrimont about its growth; it just grows under the supervision of God. The children of God are to cease worrying, cease looking at themselves; they are to take an earnest interest in others, and seek to lead the feet of the straying in the narrow path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. In this kind of work they will gain breadth of thought, tact, and skill. They will realize that they are to become agencies through which God will convey the truth to other minds, and that they are never to be left alone in their efforts; for heavenly angels will work with them, and impress the hearts of those who hear.

Man cannot do God's work; but he can be the instrument in God's hand to persuade, to entreat, to draw souls to Christ. The Lord is sending messengers with messages of love to draw the hearts of men to himself. He has thrown open the doors of his many mansions, and is working through heavenly instrumentalities, and through living human agencies, mercifully entreating, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The Lord requires that those who believe in him shall educate the people to know God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent to be the propitiation for the sins of the world. This is the higher education. (Mrs. E. G. White, *Youth's Instructor*, February 3, 1898)



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Obituary Notice

We are very saddened to announce the death of Sister Beverly Grant-Lewis of Jamaica. She rested from this life on January 31, 2003. Many had been been praying for “Sister Bev,” as she was known. We take comfort in the knowledge that she loved the Lord, and it is into the hands of a faithful Creator that we can entrust the keeping of her spirit till Jesus our Saviour returns to reunite all of His children, at the glorious second coming.



Sister “Bev”

2003 West Virginia Camp Meeting

While summer may still seem far away, it is really just a few short months from being upon us. We want to announce, for those who have not yet received the word, that the West Virginia camp meeting will be held June 17-21, 2003 at the Smyrna Chapel.

Howard Williams, David Sims, Lynnford Beachy, and Dr. Stephen Burks will be some of the featured speakers. More details next month.

Jamaican Camp Meeting announcement

The Jamaican camp meeting this year will be April 17–21. For details contact David Clayton via e-mail: david@restorationministry.com or you may call 1-876-904-7392. This is an international number

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