



# Bible Student's Notebook<sup>TM</sup>

## The Herald of His Grace

### Weekly

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

Volume XX  
Issue 494

# Hope

## Part 2

by — Charles H. Welch (1880-1967)

### The Testimony of Romans

The epistles written by Paul before his imprisonment were Galatians, Hebrews, Romans, I and II Thessalonians, and I and II Corinthians. We are sure that any well-instructed reader, who was asked to choose from this set of epistles the one giving the most recent as well as the most fundamental teaching of the apostle for this period, would unhesitatingly choose the epistle to the Romans.

In this epistle we have the solid rock foundation of justification by faith, where “no difference” can be tolerated between Jew and Gentile. When, however, we leave the sphere of doctrine (Romans 1-8), and enter the sphere of dispensational privileges, we discover that differences between Jewish and Gentile believers remain.

The Gentile, who was justified by faith, was nevertheless reminded that he was at that time in the position of a wild olive, grafted into the true olive tree, from which some of the branches had been broken off through unbelief. The grafting of the Gentile into Israel's olive tree was intended (speaking after the manner of men) to provoke Israel to jealousy. When, in the days to come, these broken branches shall be restored, “All Israel shall be saved.”

These statements from Romans 11 are sufficient to prevent us from assuming that, because there is evidently DOCTRINAL equality in the Acts period, there is also DISPENSATIONAL equality. This is



not so, for Romans declares that the Jew is still “first,” and the middle wall still stands, making membership of the One Body as revealed in Ephesians impossible.

In Romans 15 we have a definite statement concerning the hope entertained by the church at Rome. Before quoting the passage, Romans 15:12-13, we would advise the reader that the Greek word rendered “trust” in :12 is *elpizo*, and the word “hope” in :13 is *elpis*. There is also the emphatic article “the” before the word “hope” in :12. Bearing these points in mind, we can now examine the hope entertained by the church at Rome as ministered to by Paul before his imprisonment.

*There shall be a Root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles hope. Now the God of that hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:12-13).*

Here we are on firm ground. Paul himself teaches the church to look for the millennial kingdom and for the Savior as the “Root of Jesse” Who shall “reign over the Gentiles.” How can this hope be severed from “the Hope of Israel”? How can it be associated with the “Mystery” which knows nothing of Abraham, or of Israel, but goes back before the “foundation of the world,” and reaches up to heavenly places? In case the reader should be uncertain of Paul's references to the millennial Kingdom, we quote from Isaiah 11:

(see HOPE, page 4355) ↗

## Bible Student's Notebook™ Weekly

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This free weekly electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
  - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
  - union in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6);
  - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

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### ABBREVIATION KEY

<i>Scripture Version</i>	(	Concordance (Knoch)
(Unless otherwise noted all Scripture quotations are taken from the <i>Bible Student's Version</i> ).		CL: A Critical Lexicon and Concordance (Bullinger)
CV: Concordant Literal Version		CWS: Complete Word Study Dictionary (Zodhiates)
DAR: Darby Translation		FoS: Figures of Speech Bullinger)
DT: Dabhar Translation		SEC: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance
FF: Ferrar Fenton Bible		TGL: Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon
KJV: King James Version		UR: Unsearchable Riches
RE: Rotterdam's Emphasized Bible		VED: Vine's Expository Dictionary
WT: Weymouth Translation		YAC: Young's Analytical Concordance
YLT: Young's Literal Translation		<i>Reference Notations</i>
<i>Reference Sources</i>		cf. – compare
AA: Analytical Analysis (Welch)		e.g. – for example
BDB: Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon		et al. – and others
CB: Companion Bible Notes & Appendixes (Bullinger)		etc. – et cetera (and so on)
CC: Concordant Commentary (Knoch)		ff. – and the following
CKC: Concordant Keyword		i.e., – that is

### Bible Student's Notebook™

PO Box 265, Windber, PA 15963

Office: (800) 784-6010

Local: (814) 701-0063

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

### Department Managers and Assistants

Clyde L. Pilkington, III, Keith Martin, Nathan H. Pilkington, Janet L. Maher, Stephen & Amy Hill, Mark Peters, Cindy Pilkington, Nadine Sneidar

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HOPE (continued from front page)

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse. ... He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked. ... The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb. ... And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to It shall the Gentiles seek: and His rest shall be glorious (:1, 4, 6, 10).

The reader should consult the note on Isaiah 11:4 given in *The Companion Bible*, where the reading, “He shall smite the oppressor” (*ariz*) is preferred to the A.V. “He shall smite the earth” (*erez*). This reading establishes a link with II Thessalonians 2:8,

*And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.*

Before referring to I Thessalonians 4, which presents the hope of the church *at that time* very clearly, we must say something about the strange avoidance of the second epistle that so many manifest when dealing with this subject.

### **The Importance of a Second Epistle to the Thessalonians**

If a business man were to treat his correspondence in the way that some believers treat the epistles of Paul, the results would be disastrous. A second letter, purporting to rectify a misunderstanding arising out of a previous letter, would, if anything, be more important and more decisive than the first; yet there are those whose system of interpretation demands that they shall claim I Thessalonians 4 as the revelation of their hope, who nevertheless either neglect the testimony of II Thessalonians or explain it away as of some future mystical company unknown to the Apostle. Let us first verify that these two epistles form a definite pair, written by the same writer, at the same period, to the same people, about the same subject.

### **Identity of Address**

FIRST EPISTLE

*Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the*

*church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ (1:1).*

SECOND EPISTLE

*Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (1:1).*

### **Identity of Theme**

FIRST EPISTLE

*Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father (1:3).*

*The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints (3:13).*

SECOND EPISTLE

*We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet; because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth; so that we ... glory ... in your patience (1:3).*

*The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire (1:7-8).*

### **The Special Purpose of Second Thessalonians**

The Thessalonian Church had been disturbed by the circulation of a letter purporting to have come from the Apostle, and by certain messages given by those who claimed to have “the spirit.” These messages distorted the Apostle’s teaching concerning the coming of the Lord, as taught in the church while he was with them and mentioned in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of his letter.

*We beseech you, brethren ... that ye be not soon shaken in mind or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ [or the Lord] is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first (2:1-3).* ►

Before the hope of the church at Thessalonica could be realized, certain important prophecies awaited fulfillment. As we have seen, the hope during the period of the Acts (and therefore that of I Thessalonians 4) was essentially the Hope of Israel. When I Thessalonians 4 was written, Israel was still God's people. The Temple still stood, and the possibility (speaking humanly) of Israel's repentance had still to be reckoned with.

If the Hope of Israel was about to be fulfilled, then Daniel 9-12 must be fulfilled also, together with many other prophecies of the time of the end. This we have seen to have been the testimony of the Lord Himself in Matthew 24, and so far Israel had not been set aside (*i.e.*, when the epistles to the Thessalonians were written).

The following predicted events must precede the coming of the Lord as revealed in I and II Thessalonians:

- The apostasy must come first (*"falling away,"* Greek, *apostasia*).
- The Man of Sin must be revealed in the Temple (the word *"Temple"* is the same as in Matthew 23:16).
- The coming of this Wicked One will be preceded by a satanic travesty of Pentecostal gifts. (The same words are used as of Pentecost, with the addition of the word *"lying."*)
- This Wicked One shall be *"consumed"* and *"de-*

*stroyed"* with the brightness of the Lord's coming (see Isaiah 11:4).

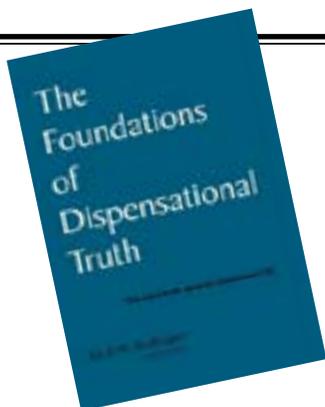
*All of this* the Apostle had told the Thessalonian church when he was with them, before he wrote I Thessalonians 4 (see II Thessalonians 2:5).

The Thessalonians had already been taught by the Apostle himself concerning the events of prophecy, and would doubtless have read I Thessalonians 4 in harmony with his teaching had they not been deceived by false interpretations. The reference to the Archangel would have taken them back to Daniel 10-12. The epistle of Jude uses exactly the same word as is used here, and tells us that the Archangel's name is Michael (Jude 9).

Immediately following the great prophecy of the seventy weeks, with its climax in the *"Abomination of desolation,"* we have the revelation of Daniel 10. There the veil is partially withdrawn, and a glimpse is given of the satanic forces behind the *"powers that be."* Michael is said to be [Israel's] *"your Prince"* and in Daniel twelve we read,

*And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of Thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation ... and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake (Daniel 12:1-2).*

Here we have Michael identified with the people of Israel, and when he stands up the great tribulation and the resurrection take place. *This follows the*



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## ***The Foundations of Dispensational Truth***

*by – E.W. Bullinger (1837-1913)*

Originally published in 1913, this was Bullinger's last book. It serves to help cut the tether of tradition with which Christians have been bound for so long. It does so by showing the absolute necessity of observing the great duty of *"rightly dividing the Word of Truth"* (II Timothy 2:15).

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events of Daniel 11, which are briefly summarized in II Thessalonians 2. Compare, for example, the following passages:

*He shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods (Daniel 11:36).*

*Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped (II Thessalonians 2:4).*

### I and II Thessalonians and Revelation 13

If the reader would read consecutively Daniel 9-12, I Thessalonians 4-5, II Thessalonians 1-2, and Revelation 13, the testimony of the truth itself would be so strong as to need no human advocate.

Our space is limited, and we therefore earnestly ask all who value the teaching of the Scriptures regarding “that Blessed Hope” to read and compare these portions most carefully and prayerfully. When this is done, let the question be answered, “What have all these Scriptures to do with the church of the dispensation of the Mystery, a church called into being consequent upon Israel’s removal and the suspension of Israel’s hope?” The answer can be only that, while the close association of the hope of the Thessalonians with the hope of Israel was consistent with the character of the dispensation then in force, the attempt to link the “one hope of our calling” with prophetic times is a dispensational anachronism and a failure to distinguish things that differ.

### “Till He Come”

The coming of the Lord referred to in I Corinthians 11:26 must be the same hope as was entertained by the Thessalonians, and by the church at Rome (Romans 15:12-13). The Apostle himself summarizes this hope in Acts 28:20 as the “*Hope of Israel.*”

The Corinthian epistle deals with a variety of subjects, and is addressed to different sections of the church. Some called themselves by the name of Paul, others by the name of Cephas. Some were troubled with regard to the question of marriage, and others with regard to deportment questions.

The section in which the words “*till He come*” occur is addressed to those whose “*fathers*” were “*baptized unto Moses*” (I Corinthians 10:1); whereas the section that immediately follows is addressed to Gentiles (12:2). Concerning the question of marriage, the Apostle writes,

*I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress. ... The time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not. ... and they that buy, as though they possessed not (I Corinthians 7:26-30).*

Shall we fall into the error of teaching, as some have taught, that marriage is wrong because of what Paul says in this chapter? If we do, what shall we say of his wonderful words concerning husband and wife in Ephesians 5? Or of his advice that the younger ▶



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women should not only marry, but marry again if left as widows (I Timothy 5:9-14)?

The right interpretation is clearly that Paul's advice in I Corinthians 7 was true *at the time*, because the Second Coming of Christ was expected to take place during the lifetime of some of his hearers. He speaks as he does "because of the present necessity," and because "the time is short." When writing to the Thessalonians, he rightly identifies himself with the imminent hope of the Lord's coming by saying, "We which are alive" (I Thessalonians 4).

The "present necessity" of I Corinthians 7 is no longer applicable on account of the failure of Israel and the suspension of their Hope.

So in I Corinthians 11, the teaching of the chapter was true only while the hope of that calling was still imminent. When the people of Israel passed into their present condition of blindness, as they did in Acts 28, their hope passed with them, not to be revived until the end of the days, when the Apocalypse is fulfilled.

Meanwhile a new dispensation has come in, a dispensation associated with a "mystery" and unconnected with Israel. In the very nature of things a change of dispensation means a change of calling. It introduces a new sphere and a fresh set of promises, and demands a re-statement of its own peculiar hope.

## HOPE OF THE THIRD SPHERE

### *The Manifestation in Glory*

Before considering the special characteristics of the

Hope of the One Body, it may be of service to set out some of the distinctive features of the *Dispensation of the Mystery*, so that, perceiving the unique character of its calling, we shall be compelled to believe the unique character of its Hope.

### Special Features of the Present Dispensation

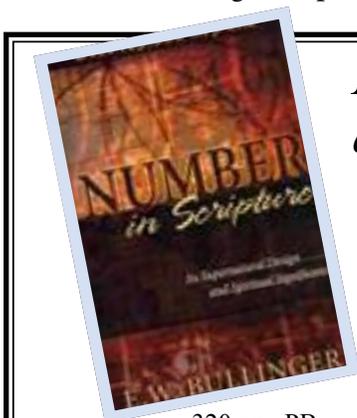
First of all, let us observe two features that marked the previous dispensation, but are now absent.

#### (1) The Presence and Prominence of Israel

The testimony of the Gospels (Matthew 10:6; 15:24), the witness of Peter (Acts 3:25-26), and the testimony of Paul (Romans 1:16; 3:29; 9:1-5; 11:24-25; 15:8), all combine to show that the nation of Israel was an important factor in the outworking of the purpose of the ages, and that during the period covered by the Gospels and the Acts, no blessing could be enjoyed by a Gentile in independence of Israel. It is evident that, with the setting aside of this favored people, a change in dispensation was necessitated.

#### (2) The Presence and Prominence of Miraculous Gifts

Throughout the public ministry of the Lord Jesus, and from Pentecost in Acts 2 until the shipwreck on the island of Melita in Acts 28, supernatural signs, wonders and miracles accompanied and confirmed the preached Word. Not only did the Lord Himself and also His apostles work miracles, but during the time of the Acts ordinary members of the church were in possession of spiritual gifts in such abundance that they had to seek the Apostle's advice as



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to their regulation in the assembly (I Corinthians 14:26-40).

The miracles of Mark 16, Acts 2 and I Corinthians 12-14 are not the experience of the church of today. Their absence, together with the setting aside of the people of Israel, constitute two pieces of negative evidence in favor of a new dispensation.

We are not, however, limited to negative evidence. Scripture also provides definite evidence of a positive kind, which we must now consider.

### The Prison Ministry of the Apostle Paul

When Paul spoke to the elders of the church at Ephesus, he made it quite plain that one ministry was coming to an end and another, which would be closely associated with prison, was about to begin. He reviewed his past services among them, and told them among other things that they should see his face no more (Acts 20:17-38). Later, before King Agrippa, he reveals the important fact that when he was converted and commissioned by the Lord in Acts 9, he had been told that at some subsequent time the Lord would appear to him again and give him a second commission (Acts 26:15-18).

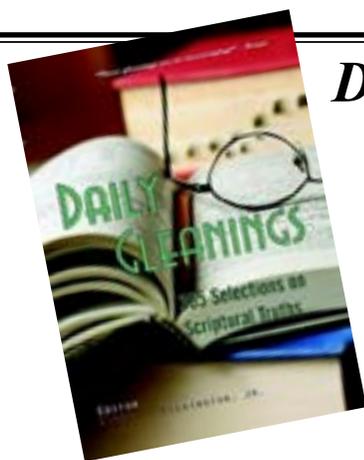
### The Dispensational Boundary of Acts 28

Right up to the last chapter of the Acts, Israel and miraculous gifts continued to occupy their pre-eminent place (Acts 28:1-10, 17, 20). Upon his arrival at Rome, Paul, although desirous of visiting the church (Romans 1:11-13), sent first for the "chief of the Jews," telling them that "for the Hope of Israel" he was bound with a chain. After spending a whole day with these men of Israel, seeking unsuccessfully to persuade them "concerning Jesus" out of the law and the prophets, he finally pronounces their present doom of blindness, adding,

*Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it (Acts 28:28).*

During the two years of imprisonment that followed, the Apostle ministered to all who came to him, teaching those things which "concern the Lord Jesus Christ" with no reference this time either to the law or to the prophets (Acts 28:30-31).

*(To be continued)*



264 pp., PB

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Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., Editor

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