



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Grace

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

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# Are Bride and Body Identical?

Part 3 of 10

by — F.H. Robison (1885-1932)

*He who has the Bride is the Bridegroom (John 3:29).  
He is the Head of the Body, the Ecclesia (Colossians 1:18).*

### JOHN'S PLAIN SPEECH

John bears testimony of Jesus as the "Son of God" (John 20:31). He came unto His own possessions (His throne, as David's Heir; His land, as Abraham's Heir; and His Earth, as Adam's Supplanter), and His own subjects received Him not.

*To His own He came, and those who are His own accepted Him not (John 1:11).*

There is a difference in the gender between the first "His own" and the following "His own" which is difficult to show without the addition of words in English. The first is neuter; the other masculine.

However, some of His subjects received Him. Among these was Nathanael, whose double confession established our Lord's divine origin and rightful Kingship:

*Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel (John 1:49).*

It was not by accident that the beginning of Jesus' miracles was at a wedding feast (John 2:1-11). He turned water into wine, thus making a tiny picture of the great feast which He will make to all people in His Kingdom, "a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined" (Isaiah 25:6). That great feast will be His own nuptial feast.

From the statement of John the Baptist, "He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom" (John 3:29), we have three



points established:

- (1) The "bride" was then present;
- (2) Jesus was the "Bridegroom," and present; and
- (3) John was the "friend" of the Bridegroom.

Probably none of these points will be challenged by any Bible student, or even reader. The question of importance is whether the bridal nucleus, which was then present and consisted of the believing remnant of Israel, Israelites indeed, *in whom was no guile*, ever has expanded in God's purpose and working to include Gentile believers such as we are now. In other words, is the "bride" Jewish, as the "wife" certainly was in Old Covenant times, or has the ecclesia, the Body of Christ, as subsequently revealed by Paul and as gathered out during this period of Israel's blindness,<sup>1</sup> supplanted or taken the place of the Jewish "bride," as well as being the body of Christ? The long-time and general prevalence of a theory is no proof of its Scripturalness. Only the Scriptures can establish the Scripturalness of a thing.

Our Lord's talk with the woman at the well near Sychar illustrates the situation somewhat. The woman said, "I have no husband." Jesus said unto her, ▶

1. [Editor:] For more information concerning the mystery (secret) of Israel's present spiritual blindness (Romans 11:25-27), see:
  - Israel's Blindness: When Was It Put into Full Force? E.W. Bullinger, [Bible Student's Notebook #620](#);
  - When Was Israel as a Nation Set Aside? John H. Kessler, [Bible Student's Notebook #629](#);
  - The Temporary Setting Aside of Israel, S. Lee. Homoki, [Bible Student's Notebook #642](#);
  - Christ's Appearing and Israel's Prophetic Clock, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #567](#).

Thou hast well said, "I have no husband": for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly (John 4:17-18).

The Samaritan woman was apostate from the divinely established worship in Jerusalem, even as the Jewish nation has long been, even woefully been, apostate. She had had five husbands and, apparently, one *illegitimate* at the time of our Lord's utterance. So, when the Lord comes again to His own nation, that nation will have bartered its love and confidence in turn to Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Medo-Persia and Grecia, and will then be philandering most shamelessly with the last worldly might, the nondescript monster of Daniel and Revelation. Israel can well and in confusion confess, "I have no husband."

The frequent picturing of Israel as "sheep" and the Lord as their "Shepherd" features a point similar to the figure of the "bride and Bridegroom." In the one case the nation is shepherded and in the other husbanded. Both figures are used freely in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the Greek Jewish portions of the apostolic writings. Neither figure is used as illustrative of the ecclesia of the present dispensation in any epistle written by Paul. More than that: the word "sheep" is not even used by Paul in any letter bearing his name, except in Romans 8:36, which quotes Isaiah in describing our Lord as a Sheep for the slaughter. The same is true of the word "shepherd." It is used only once by Paul in his epistles, and then in the sense of pastors (Ephesians 4:11), but the usage of both words in the Gospels is very frequent.

All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers ... By Me if any man enter in he shall be saved (John 10:8-9).

Moses and the prophets were not thieves and robbers; but they did not claim to be the great King, to be He Whose kingly, shepherdly and husbandly withdrawal from His people had marked the beginning of Gentile domination in the earth, and Whose parousia, or kingly presence, was and is to mark the termination of Gentile empire, the re-enthronement of Himself as King, the taking up again of His place as Shepherd, and the reentering into the close and happy bonds of wedlock with His people.

This is the peculiar kind of salvation offered to the Jews, which depended to some extent on their own works. They needed to repent in deed and in truth of their

national sin of adultery before He would save or deliver them from their oppressors. This is both distinct and different from the general salvation founded on Christ's death, which affects all men (I Timothy 4:10), and which is not out of deference to works but is of God's sovereign grace<sup>2</sup> (Ephesians 2:8).

In John 10:26-29 and 17:2, 6, 9, 11-12, 24 is stressed the fact that our Lord took, yea, took pleasure in having, only those whom the Father gave Him, as was the case with Isaac and his beloved Rebecca. Rebecca was a daughter of Isaac's own people. No other would do.

If we wish to believe God's Word at all we must believe that the Gospels are not to, nor *concerning* us, though they are *for* us,<sup>3</sup> for our instruction in God's ways, the same as the Hebrew books of the Bible. The ethical instructions of Jesus' earthly ministry were given exclusively to Jews and are no more for Gentiles,<sup>4</sup> either believing or unbelieving, than were the rituals of the Old Covenant. The fun poked at the *Sermon on the Mount* by unbelievers has had much of its basis in a misconception of its application. The *Sermon on the Mount* was an epitome of the laws of the Messianic Kingdom, which will not fit, and were never intended to fit, the times of Gentile supremacy. There is no "nucleus" of the ecclesia, as we know it in the Prison Epistles<sup>5</sup> of Paul, anywhere to be found in the Gospels.

2. [Editor:] For more information on grace, see:

- The Nature of Grace, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #274](#); or see *Daily Goodies*, January 18, same title (book, see order form);
- Divine Justice and Grace, Steve McVey, [Bible Student's Notebook #290](#);
- God will Judge in Grace, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #505](#);
- Reigning in Life: The Present Effect of Super-Abundant Grace, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., *Bible Student's Notebook #75*.

3. [Editor:] See,

- The Address on the Envelope, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #326](#); also found in *God's Holy Nation: Israel and Her Earthly Purpose*, Appendix 3, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. (see order form).

4. [Editor:] For more information on the Messiah's ministry to Gentiles (the Nations), see:

- The Place of the Nations Under the Ministries of Christ and Paul, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #505](#).

5. [Editor:] For a look at Paul's Perfection Epistles, see:

- Paul's Perfection Epistles, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #310](#);
- Paul's Previous Epistles Need Minor Modifications, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #490](#);
- Present Truth Is Found in Paul's Latest Epistles, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #515](#);
- Organically the Same: Constitutionally Different – The Distinction Between the Pre-Prison and Prison Epistles, Vladimir Gelesnoff, [Bible Student's Notebook #509](#);
- The Ranking Revelation of the Prison Epistles, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #524](#).

It simply is not there. The stage is Jewish, the actors are Jewish, the message is Jewish. They gather up the thread of drama right where it was dropped by the last Hebrew prophet.

## AN EXAMINATION OF ACTS

Then, when we come to the Book of Acts, what? The stage is still crowded with Jewish actors, at the first exclusively so.

Our Lord had come to His own once-wedded people as their Husband-King. They had scorned His advances in His humiliation. They saw not the beauty there that they desired to see in a national caretaker. Will they now spurn Him when He speaks from heaven? The Book of Acts is the answer to that question.

First it is well to note what the Book of Acts does not do and does not claim to do. It does not give an account of the “founding of the church.”<sup>6</sup> That is a figment of human imaginings. Its own subject matter is briefly alluded to in 1:3.

1. Infallible proofs of Jesus’ resurrection;
2. Instructions pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

These were the things which constituted the subject matter of our Lord’s talks with them after His resurrection and before His ascension. Details of some of these instructions are given us, some of His “*Commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen*,” but not all of them. They were to remain in Jerusalem until they should be *baptized*, not begotten, with the holy spirit, which had already been referred to as “*power from on high*” (Luke 24:49).

Further, they were to be witnesses of their Lord’s resurrection in (1) Jerusalem, (2) the rest of Judea, (3) Samaria, and (4) the rest of the land (Greek, “*limits of the land*,”) which may be understood of the Promised Land or of the whole earth. In light of the actual activities of the Jewish apostles during the Acts period<sup>7</sup> the land of

Palestine is the thought; but in light of God’s purpose in the future, after the present dispensation has ceased, the larger thought is also contained, as elsewhere expressed in Matthew 28:19-20; 24:14.

One of the “*commandments unto the apostles*” was evidently for them to proceed with the selecting of a successor to Judas Iscariot. It may be objected, are we to put Matthias in and leave Paul out? The answer is: it is not for any of us to do the putting. It is for us to give close heed to what has been already done. That Matthias was chosen to the vacant place among the Twelve is most plainly set forth.<sup>8</sup>

In the first place, it had been said to Peter personally,

*Whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven* (Matthew 16:19).

Again, to the Jewish disciples generally (Matthew 18:1) and of the Twelve in particular,

*Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven* (Matthew 18:18).

Yet again:

*If two of you shall agree on Earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in Heaven* (:19).

None of these promises can be appropriated by us; for we live in a different dispensation.<sup>9</sup> Those were the days

6. [Editor:] For more information on the beginning of the Body of Christ, see:  
– Are the Twelve Apostles in the Body of Christ? Joel W. Fink, [Bible Student’s Notebook #393](#);  
– When Did the Body of Christ Start? André Sneider, [Bible Student’s Notebook #475](#);  
– The Body of Christ: Its Beginning and Maturity, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student’s Notebook #490](#);  
– Two Bodies or One? A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student’s Notebook #526](#).

7. [Editor:] For more on the period covered by the Book of Acts, see:  
– The Acts Transition and the Pentecostal Dispensation, Sir Robert Anderson, [Bible Student’s Notebook #507](#);

– The Acts of the Apostles And Paul’s Epistles: Considered Historically and Dispensationally, J.J.B. Coles, [Bible Student’s Notebook #613](#);  
– The Earlier and Later Chapters of the Book of Acts, Sir Robert Anderson, [Bible Student’s Notebook #526](#);  
– Acts 28: The Dispensational Boundary, Charles H. Welch, [Bible Student’s Notebook #550](#);  
– Before and After Acts 28, Oscar Baker, [Bible Student’s Notebook #595](#);  
– The Acts Period and the Acts Period Epistles, Tom Ballinger, [Bible Student’s Notebook #604](#);  
– *The Dispensation of the Grace of God, and Acts 28:28 – A Dispensational Boundary Line*, Otis Q. Sellers (see order form).

8. [Editor:] For a closer look at this subject see:  
– Paul Was Not One of the Twelve Apostles, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student’s Notebook #101](#), also as an article at [StudyShelf](#).

9. [Editor:] See,  
– *The Divine Calendar*, A.E. Knoch (see order form), also available in [Bible Student’s Notebook #434-5](#).

of miraculous<sup>10</sup> testimony. Those were the days of the Kingdom of the Heavens. These are the days of neither.

Any or all of these special promises cover the case in hand. Shall we, more deeply charged with rationalism than with reverence, say, without scriptural foundation, that eleven noble hearted men acted rashly and on their own initiative?

Some might say, had not the same Peter denied his Lord, and did not the same Peter in years to come deal doubly? Yes, but we are not left to guess at it. We are told by the sacred narrative itself. Furthermore, the situation is quite different. In both of the other cases the trouble was fear of man, under great stress. There was no such moving cause here.

To say that the eleven acted unwarranted and out of order in this matter would be for us to show even less reverence for the Word than they would have shown in such a case. We may quite reasonably assume that Peter had specific instructions from his Lord what to do and how to do it (Acts 1:2). Dropping that assumption, there is any one of the three authorizations cited above.

Even if it were assumed that the eleven erred, there would be no occasion for Luke, writing many years afterward, and with Paul at his elbow, to perpetuate the supposed mistake by recording it without inspired comment indicating its erroneousness.

The whole effort to force Paul in where he does not belong is traceable to a failure to apportion the Scriptures aright (II Timothy 2:15), to a failure to appreciate the distinctions between Kingdom believers (before and after Pentecost<sup>11</sup>) and Body believers.

**10. [Editor:]** For more information on sign gifts, see:

- Tongues, Signs and Visions: Not God's Order for Today, A.E. Bishop, [Bible Student's Notebook #416](#);
- Sign Gifts: For Another People and Another Time, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. & André Sneidar, [Bible Student's Notebook #417](#);
- The Signs of Paul's Early Ministry, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #511](#);
- Miraculous Demonstrations: Watch Out!, Richard Jordan, [Bible Student's Notebook #430](#);
- Paul and His Early Healing Ministry, A. E. Knoch [Bible Student's Notebook #527](#);
- Israel's Signs, John LaVier, [Bible Student's Notebook #106](#);
- To What Do the Signs Point? Richard Jordan, [Bible Student's Notebook #156](#);
- *Spiritual Gifts for Today*, A.E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 108, Issue #3;
- *Spiritual Endowments*, James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 108, Issue #3;
- *The Duration of Languages*, James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 108, Issue #3.

**11. [Editor:]** For more information on Pentecost, see:

The account itself is most explicit: when Matthias was “numbered **with the eleven**” (Acts 1:26) he became one of the Twelve.

*Then the **Twelve** called the multitude of the disciples* (Acts 6:2).

*He was seen of the **Twelve** after that He was seen of all the apostles [i.e., of the Twelve again]. And last of all He was seen **of me also*** (I Corinthians 15:5, 7-8)

How could the “*Twelve*” be witnesses of our Lord prior to His ascension when there were only *eleven* apostles at that time?

The answer is simple: Matthias was there. So was Barabas. Both of them were qualified, insofar as they had both been with the Lord Jesus,

*... beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that He was taken up from us* (Acts 1:22).

However, both were not needed. I Corinthians was written many years after the choosing of Matthias, and all of those who were the ultimate “*Twelve*” saw and became witnesses of the risen Lord. Paul could not possibly have been one of the Twelve, for he had not been with Jesus during His earthly ministry. The ministry of the Twelve was to the Twelve Tribes. There was nothing done by them outside of the favored nation except among proselytes, and only very gingerly with them. Furthermore, as Peter's ministry declined, Paul's increased.

The small group of believers in the Messiahship of Jesus did not have long to wait from the time of their Master's ascension until they received “*power*” for witnessing by means of miraculous gifts. Pentecost came, and the near to one hundred twenty believers who had been meeting regularly for prayer were *all*, men and women, filled with holy spirit, and began to speak with tongues as the spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4).

The witness which was to be borne, beginning at Jerusalem, was a message similar to that which Jesus

- Did the Body of Christ Begin at Pentecost? Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Student's Notebook #1](#);
- [14 Reasons Why] *Pentecost Was Not the Beginning of the Body of Christ*, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., *Daily Goodies* [book], August 28 (see order form).
- Pentecost, H.W. Fry, [Bible Student's Notebook #666](#).



and His apostles had preached, as far as it touched the Kingdom – repentance, baptism and the Messiahship of Jesus; but it was now to be augmented by testimony as to His resurrection and ascension to glory at God’s right hand. This resurrection and glorification was a proof of the righteousness at once of His claims and of His conduct (John 16:10), for if He had been an imposter He would have been neither raised nor exalted to God’s right hand.

The Pentecostal message of Peter (starting the three-hour work of the parable of the vineyard laborers or of the penny – Acts 2:15) was to the “*men of Judea and all that dwelt at Jerusalem*” (:14). If we take it away from there and force it into or onto Gentiles, we do so with certain confusion of truth. Joel was quoted (Joel 2:28-32) to show that such signs and wonders could be expected as preceding the great and notable Day of the Lord. Men and women of all sorts and conditions of life were to be endued with the spirit of prophecy and of visions and of dreams and of utterance; whereas these gifts had been rare before.

The fact that the earthly Kingdom was prominent in the message, as well as in the minds of the believers (Acts 1:6), is shown by an early, almost immediate, reference to the Throne Covenant<sup>12</sup> with David (Acts 2:30). There are three unconditional covenants, none of them fulfilled: that with David, regarding a descendant to sit upon his throne – the heir is apparent but not reigning (Jeremiah 33:17-21); that with Abraham, regarding the land of Canaan (Genesis 17:8; 28:13); and that – implied at least – with Adam about filling the earth and having dominion over every living thing that is in the earth (Genesis 1:28). All of these find fulfillment in Christ. He is the King over Israel, the Allottee of the Land, and the One Who has been set over the works of God’s hands (Hebrews 2:7-8), the Lord of Earth. However, here (Acts 2:30) the talk is of Israel.

## POWERS OF THE AGE TO COME

Peter is speaking about the King and the Kingdom as one in whom hope had been reborn by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (I Peter 1:3). The little

**12. [Editor:]** “The Hope of Israel” concerns the coming physical, literal kingdom reign of Jesus the Messiah over a resurrected Israel (and the remaining Gentile Nations), in fulfillment of the prophesied Davidic (king) and Palestinian (land) covenants. This will take place during the Millennium after the completion of Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week, *i.e.*, the 7 years of the tribulation period, as foretold throughout the Old Testament, the Gospels, Acts, New Testament Jewish Epistles and especially the Book of Revelation. – Mark Peters.

group of believers had trusted that it had been He Who would deliver Israel (Luke 24:21); but when their Lord died, in ignominy and shame, their hope died too. Now He was alive, and hope was re-engendered. Would He, on the day of firstfruits, save them as the firstfruit of the nation, restore the Kingdom again to Israel, give them the kingly powers promised? The answer depended on the conduct of the nation to its King, on the way the naughty divorcee received the reoffer of marriage.

The Apostles and other disciples were visited with the “*powers of the age<sup>13</sup> to come*” (Hebrews 6:5), the endue-ments of the Millennial age, shown in the healing of the lame man who “*leaped as an hart,*” and in the destruction of Ananias and Sapphira, in line with the Psalm which promised,

*He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within My house: he that speaketh falsehood shall not be established before Mine eyes. Morning by morning will I destroy all the wicked of the land, to cut off all the workers of iniquity from the city of Jehovah* (Psalm 101:7-8).

Where are the healing, the flawless discerning judgment, the summary punishment, which were wielded by Peter? Of the judgment and punishment there is certainly none; and such healing as there may be is no more like the grand witness of Christly powers there given than a baby’s rattle is like a kingly scepter.



**13. [Editor:]** There are a total of five ages (or eons) in God’s revealed plan. We currently live in the third “*evil age*” which began with the flood of Noah and continues until the Second Coming of Christ. For a further look at God’s plan of the Ages (or Eons) see:

- A “Handy” Chart of the Eons, E. Lynwood Crystal, [Bible Student’s Notebook #518](#);
- The Eons of the Bible (with Concordance), Joseph E. Kirk, [Bible Student’s Notebook #433](#);
- The Divine Calendar, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student’s Notebook #434, #435](#), or see the order form for the book edition, same title;
- The Eons of the Ages (a chart) [Bible Student’s Notebook #353](#);
- The Purpose of the Eons (a chart) [Bible Student’s Notebook #352](#);
- The Ages: God’s Time Periods, Edward Henry Clayton, Part 1: [Bible Student’s Notebook #371](#), Part 2: [Bible Student’s Notebook #372](#).
- Eons and Worlds: A Preliminary Overview, Frank Neil Pohorlak, [Bible Student’s Notebook #446](#);
- “Ages” or “Eternity” and the English Versions, John Dokas, [Bible Student’s Notebook #309](#);
- Definition of Bible Terms: Æon and Kosmos, Arthur P. Adams, [Bible Student’s Notebook #517](#);
- Definition of Bible Terms: Eternity, Arthur P. Adams, [Bible Student’s Notebook #518](#);
- [Forever, Eternal and Everlasting](#), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. [Bible Student’s Notebook #83](#).

The outcome of the Pentecostal preaching was that three thousand more Jews were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, were baptized, and continued in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship in breaking of bread and prayers. All of the believers, looking for the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, were accustomed to meet for prayer in the temple. There was no disposition then or ever (Acts 21:20) to quit the Jewish method of worship or to cease being Jews.

### ACQUISITIONS SOLD

The selling of their "possessions," for better *acquisitions*, was not a "mistake." So far from being a mistake, it was an evidence of the believers' faith in the proximity of the Kingdom.

It was not their tribal and family allotments which were sold and which constituted the basis of their subsistence, their living; however, it was their freeholds, their superfluous property, acquired over and above what had been given them according to the law. It was evidence that they were seeking God and His righteousness, rather than the Mammon of the world. They knew that all such titles would be abrogated with the establishment of the Kingdom and the re-allotment of the land, so they were willing rather to use the price of their acquired holdings to the good of all.

We can neither throw the Body of Christ back into those conditions on the one hand, nor drag those conditions forward into the present on the other.

Sometime after Pentecost – we are not told just how long – Peter and John were going into the temple at the hour of afternoon prayers. On the way in Peter healed a man with congenital malformation of the feet and ankles. The marvel so attracted the crowd of other Jewish worshippers that Peter declaimed to them, under the guidance of the holy spirit. He laid at the door of the people the guilt for the murder of their King, the spurning of their espoused Lover, the Prince of Life, but assured them that He was raised out from among the dead and that it was He who had performed the miracle on the lame man.

Thus he brings home to them the message of repentance, urging them to acknowledge their faithlessness against their Husband-Lover, to reconsider, to confess their sin and to turn from it by letting the world know that He Whom they had despised and rejected was their true King. If they did so, He would come and vindicate them before the nations, their sins having been blotted

out, and send seasons of refreshing from God's favoring face,<sup>14</sup> so long and justly averted. Jesus Christ would be sent to them again, as the most marked evidence of divine mercy and favor, the same One who had been preached before to them, not only during our Lord's earthly ministry, but also through the prophets of old.

Why had this One not come before, if He loved the nation so ardently? The answer is, the times and seasons God kept in His own power, because some phases of the times had been made dependent on the conduct of Israel. Nothing they could do would ever affect His purposes<sup>15</sup> or His success in them. In any case, it had been long before determined that the kingly presence should be withdrawn during the times of the Gentiles; but when those times would end, when the holy city should cease to sense the sovereign tread of the stranger, that was *not* revealed. However, this official proclamation by God's official spokesman informs us that those times would have been terminated by the royal presence of the Anointed, if the people had reconsidered and reversed their attitude toward God's providence.

### TIMES OF RESTORATION

The "*restoration of all which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from the age*" must not be wrenched from its moorings by any high tide of sentiment or prejudice. In no case could the prophets referred to go back beyond the flood, where the present wicked age, or eon, began (Luke 1:70). We are not told that all of the prophetic utterances from the flood on are recorded in holy writ, but the prophets who bear testimony along this line are specified,

14. The word which, in the *Common Version [KJV]*, is rendered "*presence*" is not that which refers to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The reference is not to Christ, who is brought into the matter in the next clause, but to the Father. The word is not *parousia*, "*presence*," but *prosopon*, "*countenance*," as in Acts 6:15; 20:25; etc.

15. [*Editor*]: For more information on God's Purposes, see:

- The Purpose in Creation, Arthur P. Adams, *Bible Student's Notebook* #187;
- God's Earthly Purpose, Dr. William H. Walker, [Bible Student's Notebook #630](#);
- God's Perfect Plan, Theodore J. Silva, [Bible Student's Notebook #609](#);
- God's Purpose Cannot Fail, Arthur C. Lamb, [Bible Student's Notebook #274](#);
- God Justifies, Vivifies, Saves and Reconciles All, Dr. Edgar G. Jones, [Bible Student's Notebook #608](#);
- The Purpose of Evil, Arthur P. Adams, *Bible Student's Notebook* #116;
- The Role of the Adversary in God's Purpose, James Webb, [Bible Student's Notebook #280](#);
- *The Problem of Evil and the Judgments of God*, A.E. Knoch (see order form);
- *The Purposes of God*, Arthur P. Adams (see order form).

so there is no need or room for human guessing.

Moses is first quoted, and here, as generally, he is separated from the main body of the prophets, because he had a more exalted office in addition to the prophetic one. At all events, Moses heads the list; then “*all the prophets from Samuel*” follow. They were the ones who spoke particularly about the *restoration* of kingly honors, privileges and splendors, because nearly all of them followed the decline of the Kingdom, and some of them its fall.

Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15) was brought into witness as being the one upon whom the Jews prided themselves as building, and he condemned them outright. There was no escape from the meaning of the words. There was the *Law* about which they prated so much.

However, God was showing them mercy. Saul of Tarsus was also condemned by that pointed statement. Yet God not only showed him mercy but, much more, grace. He not only did not visit him with all of the punishment which there was just reason to expect, but He heaped on him boons and bounties for which there was no ground for expectation in law.

Mind, the whole discourse was to and concerning *Jews*. The restoration does not hark back to Adam, but to the Jewish Kingdom in and over the Earth. To be sure, even waste places and wildernesses adjacent to Mount Zion will become like Eden, the garden of the Lord, and stupendous political and religious changes will take place after the time of Messiah’s inauguration; but we must not attribute to the

Millennial reign of Christ any more than the Scriptures attribute to it. To do so would be to add to the Word of God.

The Jews only were the children of the prophets, and only Jews and proselytes are ever children of the covenant which God made with Abraham, saying,

*And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed* (Acts 3:25).

What! Is not the Body of Christ now blessed under the terms of that covenant? Absolutely not! Believers were blessed under it during the Acts period, but now, after Acts 28,<sup>16</sup> they are in a still more basic and comprehensive relationship to God as His children. Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and II Timothy know nothing of Abraham. The kind of blessing under the Abrahamic promise is specified as “*turning every one of you from his iniquities.*” The blessing of Body believers goes far beyond that.

## THE KINSMAN REDEEMER

“*The times of restoration*” alludes to redemption un- ►

16. [Editor:] For more information on Acts 28, see:

- Acts 28: The Dispensational Boundary, Charles H. Welch, [Bible Student's Notebook #550](#);
- Before and After Acts 28, Oscar Baker, [Bible Student's Notebook #595](#);
- The Acts Period and the Acts Period Epistles, Tom Ballinger, [Bible Student's Notebook #604](#);
- Acts 28: The Dispensational Crisis, Charles H. Welch [Bible Student's Notebook #642](#);
- *The Dispensation of the Grace of God, and Acts 28:28 – A Dispensational Boundary Line*, Otis Q. Sellers (see order form).



## *The Myth of Easter* “*The Christian Mythology*” Series

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

There are many myths in Christendom. They have managed to master their own form of mythology. Easter is an example of such a religious fable.

If Easter is the celebration of the historical fact of our Lord Jesus Christ’s resurrection, then why does its date change every year? Historical dates do not fluctuate; but Easter Sunday can fall anywhere between March 22 and April 25. Have you ever wondered why?

It is one of the glaring clues that something is seriously wrong with Christendom. The Western Christian religion can’t seem to get anything right when it comes to even the simplest of Scriptural truths.

Have you ever really considered if there is any scriptural basis of Good Friday or Easter Sunrise Services that are so commonly observed by the religious community? Additionally, have you ever considered what Easter Rabbits and Easter Eggs have to do with the resurrection of Christ or teachings of God’s Word?

Although millions of people are of the opinion that Easter and all of its customs are Christian and originated as a result of Christ’s resurrection, it is a historical fact that the observance of Easter long antedates Christianity by centuries.

der the law but brought in real perfection and grandeur with Messiah's reign, when He as the Kinsman Redeemer will redeem His enslaved and disinherited people. So, in talking to these Israelites about seasons of restoration it must be noted that not one word is said by Peter about the present dispensation of grace<sup>17</sup> and the Body of Christ, with its celestial destiny and setting. If Pentecost marked the beginning of the ecclesia as we know it, is it not strange that there is not only nothing to identify such beginning, but everything to separate the activities of that time from the things which are promised us in the Prison Epistles of Paul?

The official reoffer of the Kingdom to the nation of Israel as such came the next day, as a sequel to the arrest of Peter and John by the "priests and officers of the sanctuary and the Sadducees" who were vexed by what

Peter had said, and probably still more so because of the five thousand who believed his teaching. When the two apostles were brought before the governing body of Israel, would that group of functionaries, softened by a sense of their guilt in killing the Prince of Life, grasp eagerly at the opportunity for mercy and cooperate in the great missionary activities of Matthew 24:14 and 28:19-20? This was one of the pathetic hours of Israel's history. They stood on the threshold of their Kingdom. Would they scorn the liberation from Rome and disdain the long-promised sovereignty to which their repentance would be the password? It seems impossible that they would; but they did: and brought upon the nation an age-long condemnation.<sup>18</sup>

(edited)

(to be continued)

17. [Editor:] For more information about "the Mystery" and its "Secret Administration," see:

- What Is the Mystery? A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #516](#);
- The Present Secret Administration, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #575](#);
- A New Administration at the Close of Acts, Adlai Loudy: Part 1, [Bible Student's Notebook #562](#); Part 2, [Bible Student's Notebook #563](#);
- The Pentecost, Readjustment & Secret Administrations, Adlai Loudy, [Bible Student's Notebook #497](#);
- Acts 28: The Dispensational Boundary, Charles H. Welch, [Bible Student's Notebook #550](#);
- The Ranking Revelation of the Prison Epistles, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #524](#).

#### TOPICS:

Minor: Acts, The Book of

18. [Editor:] For a look at the fraud of the current state of "Israel," see:

- The Present State of Israel: A Grand Hoax, Tom L. Ballinger, [Bible Student's Notebook #492](#).

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