

'And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?'

Ezekiel 34:1-2.

You are warmly invited to meetings arranged by the
Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony, to be held, God willing, at
NEW LIFE BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
44 SALUSBURY ROAD, LONDON, NW6 6NN

Theme for 2017 – The Glory of God – Studies in the Book of Ezekiel

July 28th, 7pm

Subject: The Visions of the Fall of Egypt (29-32)

Speaker: Ian Shaw

Autumn Conference – September 22nd, 4pm and 7pm

Afternoon Subject: The Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones (37)

Speaker: Stephen A Toms

Evening Subject: The Vision of Gog and Magog (38-39)

Speaker: Martin Humphrey

It is hoped that each message will be recorded and friends should be able to listen to and download messages from our website. Applications for cassettes and/or CDs should be made to the secretary. Full lists of S.G.A.T. recordings and of publications can be found on our website (WWW.SGAT.ORG) or may be obtained from the S.G.A.T. secretary.

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To our subscribers and friends: Please send subscriptions, gifts to Sustentation Fund, for Bible circulation and orders for publications to the S.G.A.T. secretary, Mr Stephen A Toms, 1 Donald Way, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 9JB. Cheques, etc. should be made payable to 'Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony.' In order to save postage, receipts will be sent with the next issue of the magazine.

To those not residing in the United Kingdom: In view of the high charge for exchanging foreign currency, it would be appreciated if, where possible, friends send in sterling. Supporters in Australia, Canada, or New Zealand may send to their respective representatives. Payments can be made over the S.G.A.T. web-site.

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Watching and Waiting

LIGHT FOR PERILOUS TIMES

SCRIPTURAL

Reformed, Protestant, Puritan, Prophetical, Expository, Doctrinal

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The objects are:

1. To teach the nearing approach of our Lord's return. James 5:8
2. To hold forth the Truth and to expose and resist error. Jude 3
3. To note passing events in the light of 'the Scripture of Truth.' 2 Peter 1:19
4. To unfold the Word of God by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Acts 17:11
5. To encourage missionary endeavour, and all service for Truth. Acts 1:8
6. To comfort and strengthen those who seek to stand with the Lord, apart from abounding lawlessness. 2 Timothy 2:19
7. To call for separation from false ecumenism. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

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The Principles of S.G.A.T.

By Brian Green

(This address was given by Mr Green at the Jubilee Meeting of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony held on 13th December, 1968. It is a verbal transcript of the actual message and has been taken from Watching and Waiting, March, 1969).

One thing our Chairman, Mr Martin, and I have in common is concerning the S.G.A.T, I believe that he and I learned these truths particularly from one person, and that is Mr Stephen Toms. We want to thank him, and I do particularly. I am a younger person and I cannot go back fifty years, but I can now go back quite a number of years and thank God for the way I was led and guided into the truths of the S.G.A.T. With others we pay tribute to the wonderful way in which God has used Mr George Fromow, and I see him a good deal these days in our office. He is eighty years of age; still rides a bicycle, and he is more alert than many of us who are less than half his age. We thank God for the wonderful way in which he has been led in keeping this Testimony going. Those of us who know anything about it, know that he and his brother and Pastor James Payne, have done so much to keep this Testimony alive and active, and to be what it is today. He has helped so many ministers and young men going into the ministry. If I have a young man concerned about the ministry coming to me, I say to him, 'You should see Mr Fromow, and he will give you some sound pamphlets and books,' and in this way we have certainly led many young men into these truths. In Northern Ireland many of the ministers in the Free Presbyterian Church believe in the S.G.A.T. absolutely, and we thank God for them.

The Unchanging Message

One thing which I feel is remarkable about the S.G.A.T. is simply this: that the principles that were proclaimed fifty years ago are the same as those being proclaimed today. You cannot say that about every advent testimony movement, but you can say it about the S.G.A.T. If you will read the first issues of *Watching and Waiting* published, you will see that the things that were taught month by month in the meetings and in the magazine, are exactly the same today, and we have no cause to be ashamed about any one of them. This is remarkable, because there are many people who say various things concerning prophetic truths and a little later they have to recant. But the principles on which the S.G.A.T. was founded have stood the test of time and surely this is one of the great seals that God has been pleased to put upon this movement.

A Personal Coming

We are living in a day when many people do not want the Lord Jesus Christ; when many people do not believe in His second coming. The Bishop of Woolwich, Dr

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Robinson, fairly recently wrote a series for a Sunday newspaper and one of the articles he wrote was concerning the 'so-called idea of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.' There are many liberals and modernists in our colleges, alas, who are denying this fact. They do not believe any more in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The old-fashioned preachers used to believe it. There are some people who try to spiritualise it away. They take hold of such passages as Matthew 24 and say these things are spiritual experiences, and the coming of the Lord Jesus is said to be at conversion and at death. My friends, what we believe concerning the Lord's coming is far more than just that. Beside those who do not want to believe it, and those who do not believe it, and those who spiritualise it, there are many in our churches who neglect this great and glorious doctrine. Tell me, when did you last hear a sermon in your church concerning it? Yet the Word of God is full of the fact of the second coming of the Lord Jesus. Someone has said that two-thirds of Scripture has something related to this truth. I am not sure if that is correct, but I do know that a great deal of the Word of God is concerned with this great and momentous occasion, and yet in our churches, alas, very rarely do we hear anything concerning this truth. I say, shame on the preachers! And shame that the congregations should know nothing about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Coming of Christ is our Hope

Why do we need to study this truth and to know something about it? First of all I would say that it gives us hope in this present world. We are living in a world full of unrest and uncertainty. We do not know just what is going to take place in this present evil world, but one thing I do know, that although the times may become worse, and although the days may be more difficult, one day there is going to be a wonderful event – it will be the Day of the Lord. It is not the undertaker we look to, it is the up-taker, the Lord Jesus Christ Who will come, and this is our hope. It is not the grave, it is the sky.

Influences our Lives

Then we should study this subject because it spurs us on to holiness. Whoso has this hope in Christ purifies himself, and I know of nothing that will purify my life more than to know that I must live in the light of His coming. And I would say that it urges me to evangelism. To know that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming and to realise that this world is lost in sin and that the wicked will be turned into hell, urges me indeed to preach the glad news that Jesus saves. One other reason why we should study the prophetic Scripture is because it helps us to understand something of the fullness of the plan of God. We believe not only that Jesus was born of a virgin, that He lived a sinless life, and that He died a sacrificial and substitutionary death upon the cross; not only that He rose again triumphant over death, and ascended into heaven, but that one day this same Jesus will come again in great power and glory. This is the fullness of the plan of God in Christ.

The Principles

My subject this evening, however, is particularly *the Principles of the S.G.A.T.*, which is a very large subject. It is such a large subject that we could not possibly deal with the whole of it. You have had the principles read to you. Mr Fromow certainly has spoken well about them tonight; but there are three things I would say concerning the principles of the S.G.A.T. The first principle we stand upon whole-heartedly is that 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God' - ALL Scripture. And we believe it with all our hearts. I know that this is not a popular doctrine today; that there are many people who will, alas, try to disprove this, but we are not ashamed of this truth. We stand solidly upon it and say without a shadow of a doubt that we believe the Bible to be true from cover to cover, and we accept it as the inspired and inviolable, unerring Word of the Living God. This is where we begin. Having said that 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,' we must say that all Scripture must be preached and proclaimed, not just subjects and doctrines that suit us best; not just one little portion of the Word of God that we like particularly; but we believe the Psalms must be preached from and also the Book of Daniel. We believe that the Books of Genesis and Exodus must be preached from just as much as the Book of the Revelation. Therefore, seeking to be faithful to the Word of God, we seek to proclaim the whole counsel of God, and this includes prophetic Scripture.

Then we must proceed further and underline this point, that Scripture says what it means and means what it says. This is very important. We have said there is no error in Scripture, and we believe there is no exaggeration in Scripture, no poetic licence. There is nothing like this, but rather we believe that Scripture really says what it means and means what it says. When it says that Christ will reign for a thousand years, we do not have to spiritualise this in some mystic interpretation whereby we destroy what the Bible says, but we accept it and believe it. And we say that if Scripture says that, then that is what it means. When the Bible says that the earth shall be full of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, we accept it, and do not have to try and look for some fancy meaning. When the Word of God says that Jesus will come again, a personal coming, and that the clouds shall break and the Lord shall descend with a great shout, and the trumpet of the Lord shall sound, we believe it. Scripture is not given just for intellectuals to put some meaning behind it, which is mystical and magical, so that only those with high intelligence can understand anything about it. My friends, the Word of God is given for the common people, just ordinary people who reading the Word of God by the Spirit's interpretation and illumination can understand it. When you read through particularly the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, where the literal sense makes good sense, then that is the right sense.

God's Sovereignty

One other thing concerning the principles; we believe in the sovereignty of God. We have heard this evening that we believe in the sovereignty of God concerning salvation; that only free and sovereign grace can save the sinner and lift him from the pit of sin,

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and put his feet upon the rock and give him that new song to sing. Only God can do that, by His eternal election; particular redemption, and the Spirit's effectual call. Let us take the sovereignty of God a step further, as we do in the S.G.A.T., and believe that God's plan has been from eternity and will be fulfilled unto eternity; that all things that happen, happen according to the purpose of Him Who purposeth all things. And so we believe that what God has said in His Word, He will indeed do. All the events that we have recorded for us in the Bible are bound to take place because God is sovereign. The nations may roar and be full of trouble, but we know that there is One upon the throne and He is the LORD Himself, the Lord of glory. What God has said will come to pass.

What We Believe

Having introduced very briefly these principles – All Scripture given by inspiration of God; Scripture means what it says and says what it means; and the sovereignty of God in the performance of all these things – let me now go through what we do believe. The times are going to become worse. We are not living in a day when things are going to get better, but rather the reverse. There is the apostasy and there will be even more apostasy in the world, leading to lawlessness. We think that we have seen a departure from the faith, we certainly have; but there will be more departure in the days to come and things are not going to get better, but rather worse, and in this world which is full of crises even now with strikes on every hand – lawlessness will increase. In every sphere of society and in every nation, lawlessness will be the order of the day, and it will be even as in the days of Noah, before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A little while ago I saw a poster outside a church; perhaps it was not a church; it was a place where people met for some religious profession or other. This is the poster anyway: 'The history of man is not one of fall but a rise.' How foolish to believe that! Man has been falling and is still falling, is not getting better; no, 'the darkness is not yet turning to dawning, nor the dawning to noon-day bright, for Christ's great kingdom to come on earth, a kingdom of life and light.' I never choose that hymn, as I do not believe it to be true. Things are getting worse, and in the darkest hour, when the times are even worse than we can imagine; that is when the Lord will come, and the brightness of His coming will be seen and known.

A Superman, the Antichrist

There will arise in this world a superman, the antichrist, and maybe we are upon the very era when this superman, the antichrist, will be revealed and will come. He certainly will be a mighty man, boasting great things, having great flattery on his tongue. He will be able to perform many remarkable feats, miracles people will say; a remarkable man in every way. He will be a peacemaker it seems, and will be able to do all sorts of things, maybe through the United Nations, and by Satanic means, and people will accept him. And they will say, this is the leader we have been looking for; this is the mighty man that will be able to solve all our problems. Who will he be?

Some say he will be the pope, or a Jew, or an Arab, but if you look through the various journals and books that have been published by the S.G.A.T. you will find they have never said who this man will be. They have always emphatically said that he will not be the pope as head of the Roman Church. They have suggested that it *could* be the pope as head of an apostate Christendom and other religions as well; that is to say, not just of the Roman Catholic religion, but rather of a World Council of Churches together with other religions of the world, a religious syncretism, the head of which would be the wild beast of Revelation, summing up all political and religious forces. Others in the S.G.A.T. have said that he would arise from Greece because of Scriptures which seem to point that way. But we have never been emphatic about who it will be because this is not given clearly to us in the Word of God, but we do know that the antichrist will arise and that he will have tremendous power, that he will persecute the saints of God and finally stand up against the King of kings and so meet his doom.

The Coming Federation

There will arise ten kingdoms within the former Roman Empire. These ten kingdoms, the toes in Daniel's vision of the image, will arise. Britain was once mainly within the Roman Empire and we believe that Britain will join in the coming Federation. The Common Market, perhaps, may facilitate this, for the ten kingdoms of the revived Roman Empire, will have mighty power in commerce.

Let us pass quickly from this and say that Israel is to be the centre of the prophetic earth. There are some people that say, 'Yes, but the antichrist will be from Russia, the king of the north.' If you read your Bible aright, you will see that in the last days all the prophetic earth is gathered around Israel; around Jerusalem. The battles; the great things that will happen in the days to come will be around Israel. It seems to me that the king of the north will be the king of Syria. I know that some of the great nations as we know them now will be connected with these happenings, but the great events that will take place in a future day will be around Israel and in that part of the earth. We have seen remarkable things happen in Israel, and it has been thrilling to us. We have seen Israel take many possessions, and she will take more possessions in the days to come, but we know also that there is going to be trouble in Israel; more trouble. It is not the end yet, and there will be battles between the Israel nation and Egypt and the Arab nations, which will continue right on to the end. Nasser and the ten Arab nations have said that they have not finished with Israel yet, and we know it, and the Bible has said it. We know they will continue their idea of pushing Israel into the sea, which is what they want to do but they will never do it. The wars around Israel will become so great that the antichrist will step in and he will make a covenant of peace with Israel. He will make a covenant of peace with Israel for seven years. Then for three and a half years there will be peace and tranquillity, but suddenly it will be broken because the covenant will be broken, and then will enter in the period of the great tribulation. The saints are not going to escape that great tribulation; we believe they will go through it.

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And then all nations will be gathered against Israel and they will fight in such a way that they will cut off two-thirds of the nation. At the end of the three and a half years of great tribulation, which is Jacob's trouble, such as never has been seen on the face of the earth, when all the nations are gathered around Israel and they have come right up to Jerusalem; it is then that Israel will use the language of Isaiah 53, and they will cry, 'All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.' In that day there will be a fountain opened to the house of David, and we know that that fountain will be for sin and uncleanness, and they will be cleansed.

All Israel will be Saved

The Lord will pour on them the spirit of grace and supplication, and in a moment, just as you and I have been translated from darkness into light and have been regenerated by the Spirit of God, in a moment all Israel will be saved. They will be regenerate, cleansed and saved for time and for eternity. They will look upon Him Whom they have pierced and they shall mourn, but that will be the time when they will be saved. In response to Israel's cry unto the Lord will be the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This will be the time when the Church will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. The dead in Christ will rise and the Church will arise and meet the Lord together in the air. There are not two comings of the Lord but one coming. There is no point in speaking of two comings when the Bible just speaks of the one coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. This will be the great and glorious day of the Lord, and in that day the Lord will come to save Israel. Israel has a glorious future; it will be through Israel in the days to come that all blessings will come to this world. The Lord will come to Mount Zion and He will come indeed to His people Israel. His feet will stand upon the Mount of Olives, and He is going to dwell among His people. But then His wrath will be revealed as well. The nations will be punished because of their sin against Israel; and then will enter in the personal reign of Christ, the thousand years reign when the devil will have no power but the Lord Jesus Christ Himself will reign over this earth. And all the peoples of the earth and all the nations of the world will be blessed through Israel as a nation. That is going to be 'a golden age' indeed, when Christ the Prince of Peace will reign. What a wonderful time that will be, and you and I will have some part in that because we are going to reign with Christ. After that there will be a time of judgment; the time of the great white throne, when all will be gathered before God and the time of solemn judgment will begin. After that judgment there will be the new heaven and the new earth.

Conclusion

What a vast subject I have taken tonight but I have tried to survey the whole of what we seek to teach. I am sure I have missed out something; please forgive me for that. I

have tried to emphasise some matters that we really believe. And what a wonderful subject it is! It is not just for the sake of curiosity but rather for strengthening us in our Christian lives. Our congregations would be stronger if they knew these things. We as Christians would be far better equipped to meet the trouble of our days if we only knew what the Word of God really teaches concerning the future.

It can be seen from the records of the past that whether thirty years ago or fifty years ago the S.G.A.T. taught these same truths.* We have nothing to be ashamed of because the Bible is our guide and may God help us as we seek to go forward in proclaiming these truths, which are eternal, and we look indeed for that coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. We look for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour – *Maranatha*.

**(Extracts from early issues of Watching and Waiting were read in confirmation of this, and we print elsewhere in this magazine an article read by Mr Green entitled 'Some Cardinal Principles of Prophetic Interpretation' which appeared in the 2nd issue of the Watching and Waiting, May, 1919)*

Called Home



Mr Brian Green was called home on 5th March, 2017, age 81. He was born in South Wales but whilst young his parents moved to Romford in Essex and the family attended 'Salem' Baptist Chapel in that town. At the early age of ten, he was convicted of sin and came to trust on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. On leaving school, Mr Green found employment in the City of London, near to where the present SGAT secretary worked. In God's providence the two persons were able to meet every lunch hour when the Word of God was discussed. Therefore a friendship was formed which has lasted for over 65 years. Mr Green began preaching whilst still in his teens and, amongst other engagements, he regularly took services at Chadwell Heath Baptist Church. He attended the Birmingham Bible Institute in preparation for the ministry and received a call from a church commenced by C H Spurgeon – Major Road Baptist Church, Stratford. After a short time there he was called in 1962 to the pastorate at 'Zoar' Chapel, Hounslow and he was able to meet frequently with Mr George H Fromow, the first secretary of the SGAT. Mr Green became actively involved in testifying against the errors of Romanism and Ecumenism, and both he and Mr Fromow took part together in the witness of the International Council of Christian Churches. For a time, he edited and published a newspaper entitled, 'The Christian Guardian.' He

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entered into a friendship with Mr Ian Paisley and many protests were organised against the apostasy. The friendship with Mr Paisley continued and many protestant meetings were held, first at Hounslow and then, after the Church moved its premises, at Feltham. Following problems with the ICCC, Mr Green with Mr Paisley sought to re-organise the British Council of Protestant Christian Churches. At the time of the visit of Pope John Paul II to this country, Mr Green did his utmost to lawfully resist this event. His association with Mr Paisley brought him into contact with other ministers of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster and he enjoyed good times of blessing preaching the Word of God in Northern Ireland. In later years, he has been involved in organising an annual Holiday Bible Conference at High Leigh, Hoddesden. He spoke at the Jubilee meeting of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony in 1968 and that message was recorded and printed more or less verbatim in *Watching and Waiting*. We have been pleased to include this message in the current magazine. From time to time, he has spoken for the Testimony and also for the Bible Spreading Union and there are details of some recorded messages in the present issue. Two books have come from his pen – ‘The Shepherd of the Hills’ (an exposition of the Song of Solomon); and ‘Building and Battling for God (an exposition of the Book of Nehemiah). The latter publication is still available from ourselves.

Recorded Messages by Pastor Brian Green

(These messages have been recorded over the years and are available from us on cassette tape but not on CDs. The cassettes are £1,20 each or £20 for the set of twenty tapes)

1. The Principles of the S.G.A.T.
2. Elijah – Faithful Witness in a Day of Apostasy.
3. The Devil and the Millennium.
4. The Falling Away, or Apostasy.
5. Jerusalem, A Troublesome Stone.
6. The Death of the Lord Jesus Christ.
7. The Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
8. The Church in the Millennium.
9. The Blessing of Judah.
10. The Blessing of Zebulon.
11. The Inspiration of Prophecy.
12. The Apostle – a title of the Lord Jesus.
13. The High Priest – a title of the Lord Jesus.
14. Exposition of Psalms 124-126.
15. The Inspiration of the Bible.
16. God’s Purpose for Jordan.

17. Heaven and Hell.
 18. The New Heavens and the New Earth.
 19. Mapping the Course of Gentile Power (Daniel 2).
 20. The Voice of My beloved – Thoughts on the Song of Solomon.
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Some Cardinal Principles of Prophetic Interpretation

By Charles T Cook

(This article is taken from the second issue of Watching and Waiting, May 1919).

1. Prophecy is never given to satisfy curiosity, but to inculcate some needful moral and spiritual lesson (Daniel 9:2-3; Daniel 10:18; Luke 21:28; 2 Peter 1:19; 2 Peter 3:14).
2. Prophecies of events still future will be fulfilled on the same principle as those which have already come to pass. (The following prophecies concerning our Lord Jesus have been literally fulfilled: Micah 5:2; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:7-9; Psalm 16:8-11. The following prophecies will also be fulfilled literally: Zechariah 12:10; Zechariah 14:3-4; Matthew 24:29-31. Prophecies concerning Israel's scattering have been fulfilled literally, so also will be the promises of regathering: Jeremiah 30:3; Jeremiah 31:7-10; Isaiah 14:1-3; Amos 9:14-15).
3. It is well to bear in mind that there is no 'poetic exaggeration' in Scripture. The use of figurative and symbolical language does not imply that the subjects thereof are unreal and fictional. Israel means Israel, Jerusalem signifies Jerusalem, and not the Church. Babylon means Babylon, not Rome. So also days mean days, and years mean years, when a numeral is prefixed.
4. All prophecy is a preparation for Christ in connection either with His first or His second coming (Acts 10:43). In its dispensational aspect prophecy embraces, first, the Jews; secondly, the Gentile nations when brought into connection with Israel and Jerusalem; and, thirdly, Christendom or the Professing Church.
5. Every prophecy has its particular interpretation, even when capable of more than one application. But application is not interpretation, and adumbration is not fulfilment
6. As soon as any prophetic narrative reaches the point at which Jerusalem ceases to hold a *national* existence in the earth such historic detail as the mention of localities, dates, personages, is suspended, and is not resumed until Israel again becomes possessed of a recognised *national* position. For example: there is a gap of more than 1800 years in the middle of verse 26 of Daniel 9, i.e. between the crucifixion of our Lord and the rise of antichrist. During this long interval Israel

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is out of the land and set aside and so the period is not reckoned in the chronology of the 70 weeks. The same interval separates the two events mentioned in Isaiah 61:2 (compare Luke 4:18 and note where our Lord finished His reading).

7. For the reason afore-mentioned, prophecies relating to Israel, Jerusalem and Christendom during this period of Jewish dispersion are *general* in character. (for example Hosea 3:4; Luke 21:24; Matthew 13; Matthew 24:4-14).
8. Prophecy is rarely written in chronological order. The order is moral rather than historical and, therefore, involves repetition and retracing. Thus Genesis 2 goes over the ground of chapter 1 in order to add further details about the creation of man. Daniel 2 takes us right to the end of this age; the later visions simply retrace and give fuller particulars. In Revelation the final glory and blessedness is frequently mentioned before the events leading up to it.
9. Dispensational distinctions of light and knowledge between Jew and Gentile belong merely to their earthly circumstances and are not carried over into the eternal state, nor do they in any way affect the essential oneness in Christ of believers, whether Jew or Gentile, of all dispensations.

The Church of God is one; it comprehends all the redeemed from Abel to John the Baptist, from Pentecost till the close of the Millennium. All are saved under the same new covenant of grace, all have preached to them the same everlasting Gospel, all are justified through the Blood and Righteousness of the same Substitute, all are regenerated by the same Spirit, are united to the same Risen Lord, and shall alike be changed into the same heavenly likeness and dwell in the New Heavens and the New Earth. Scripture knows of no redemption that does not involve also union with the Person of the Redeemer. Any other teaching means two Gospels, two ways and two ends of salvation, which is impossible.

Beginners in the study of prophetic truth will do well to procure 'Elementary Studies in the Facts of Prophetic Scripture, parts 1 and 2' (obtainable from ourselves).

The Song of Songs

By Brian Green

(This is the first part of Mr Green's book, 'The Shepherd of the Hills' which is an exposition of the Song of Solomon).

The Title

In 1 Kings 4:32 we discover that King Solomon wrote 1005 songs. This song is the only one left for us to meditate upon, but it is the best – the SONG of SONGS (1:1). Martin Luther called it the 'High Song.' Its title denotes the superlative character of the

message it conveys, as well as the descriptive vocabulary it uses. It also reveals to us a pre-eminence over all other songs – even the Song of Deliverance by Moses at the Red Sea. It surpasses the songs of the Psalmist as he praises God for His mercy, grace and blessing; the songs of the angels at creation and at the birth of Christ and, dare we say, even the Song of Heaven?

We must therefore approach this most glorious book with reverence, and take, as it were, our shoes from off our feet as we approach this best of songs. This is the song grace alone can teach, and experience alone can learn.

The reader may be familiar with the layout of the Tabernacle in the Old Testament. Solomon's books seem to typify it. Ecclesiastes shows us the outer court with man's activity in this life; Proverbs takes us into the Holy Place showing God's true wisdom; but when we come to the Song of Songs we are conducted into the Holiest of All – the very place of union and communion with God.

The Theme

The Song of Songs is like a parable – an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. It is usually regarded as an allegory which in its true sense, is an extended metaphor and conveys the idea *'to say one thing but mean something different.'* But what is the meaning of this parabolic allegory?

Although a picture, the people are real. Solomon was the king and the various citizens, the Shulamite and the shepherd were real people. The places are real places – En-gedi (1:14), Sharon (2:1), Lebanon (3:9), and Tirzah (6:4), etc. The book does not reveal any progressive story line but is a captivating account of the experience of the shepherdess taken from her home in the hills and brought to King Solomon's court to marry him. She, however, is in love with a shepherd in the hills, to whom she has given her heart and to whom she will remain true. He is now absent, but she loves him, longs for him and daily looks for him. Solomon tries in vain to impress her with his pomp and power; the daughters of Jerusalem try in vain to persuade her to accept the offer of the king and, when she still declines, the watchmen of the city persecute her. During these times of trouble and attack, her shepherd visits her in her distress, comforting her with the sound of his voice and the fragrance of his presence.

There are four main characters in the drama:

1. The Bride (1:5-6), who is sometimes referred to as the Shulamite Shepherdess.
2. The King (1:12), Solomon is displayed with great majesty and wealth.
3. The Shepherd (1:7), who dwells in the hills and at times visits his beloved.
4. The Daughters and Watchmen of Jerusalem (2:7; 3:3).

Most commentators (and there are many) interpret this book as a song about Solomon as a picture of Christ, and the bride representing the Church. However, it seems to me to be a wonderful story of **three** instead of **two**. Solomon the king represents the world

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with all its allurements. The bride depicts the Church battling to remain faithful in times of turmoil. The shepherd gives us a glorious foretaste of his love and care for the bride, the Church.

It is difficult to take Solomon as a type of Christ. In this book he boasts of ‘sixty queens, eighty concubines and virgins without number’ (6:8). Eventually his harem would include many more. The question must be asked – how could such a sensualist be a type of Christ? Dr Ironside, the successor to D L Moody, speaks of Solomon disguising himself as a shepherd to win the shepherdess, but that does not satisfy the diligent reader of this book. Dr Graham Scroggie in his book, ‘Know Your Bible,’ says, ‘If we regard the king in the poem as the world, the shepherd-lover as Christ, and the Shulamite as the individual soul, we shall not fail to be helped.’ Dr John Phillips in his book, ‘Exploring the Song of Solomon,’ agrees with this view, ‘The shepherd is a picture of Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep. The Shulamite mirrors the Church and the individual believer devoted to Him. Solomon represents the prince of this world, armed with all worldly pomp, power and magnificence.’

The Truth

The Relationship. The Church of Jesus Christ is described in Ephesians as a Building (2:19-22), a Body (4:4), a Blessed Family (3:15), and above all, a Bride (5:23). This speaks of the intimate relationship which exists between Christ and His people. Here in the Song of Songs we have this special bond illustrated in the words, works and watchfulness of the shepherd towards his bride. Who can explain or understand the wonderful care, love and protection of the Saviour, the great Shepherd of the sheep, towards His children even when we fail Him and sometimes go astray?

The Rivalry. The Shulamite belongs to the shepherd but there is a battle to win her heart away. The king uses all his worldly influence to this end. His power as king, as well as the magnificence of the palace with its feasts, fun and favour, are brought to bear upon her, to turn her head from the shepherd of the hills to the outstretched hand of the king. The daughters of Jerusalem are always on hand to promote the king’s cause and persuade her to leave her steadfast course. The watchmen and men of the city are ready to persecute and even wound her (5:7). These attacks are all designed to force her away from the one she loves and looks for, and into a liaison with the king. B W Newton in his ‘Thoughts on Parts of the Song of Solomon’ observes, ‘In the Song of Solomon it speaks of one who, pardoned, accepted and loved by her heavenly bridegroom ... is left during His absence in the midst of shadows and darkness of this present night of evil, surrounded by many adversaries and many dangers. She was to be ‘without the gate’ to sojourn where His truth sojourned. So, and only so, was she to receive the present sanction of her Lord and tokens from Him of practical fellowship with her in her ways.’

The Revelation. The Song of Songs is pre-eminently about the Beloved, the Shepherd of the hills.

C H Spurgeon says, 'this is the soul and heart of this divine composition.' His Name is as ointment poured forth (1:3). His right hand embraces me (2:6). His tender voice calls (2:8,10). His mouth is most sweet (1:2; 5:16). The Chiefest among ten thousand (5:10). He is altogether lovely (5:16).

The Record. Here is set before us the glorious possibility of full fellowship with the Lord - its height and depth and breadth. Here also is a record of the fickleness of our love. How could she forget the shepherd, leave him lingering at the door? (5:2-6). But she does! We see ourselves, so often unfaithful in service, fickle in our love and ungrateful for His blessing.

The Text

Every book of the Bible seems to have a key verse which stands out as the one that explains the whole of the message. 'My beloved is mine, and I am His' (2:16) is the key verse for me, speaking of possession and passion. It is the summary of all that is set before us in the romance of the ages.

A Book of Protest

By Brian Green

(The following was an editorial in an early edition of 'The Christian Guardian').

Let one thing be made abundantly clear. The New Testament is a Book of Protest, to say nothing of the Old Testament. Nearly all the New Testament books were written against one heresy or another. Professor Klaus Runia writes, 'The silence of Evangelicals has done untold harm to the Church! And the few who have raised their voices have often been given the cold shoulder by their fellow Evangelicals.'

Ten temple visits of our Lord are described at some length in the Gospels. One was as an infant. One when He was but twelve years of age. And, on a further one, no comment is made on His relationship to what He found there. This was the occasion when He sat over against the treasury and drew attention to the widow's mite. However, on each one of the other seven visits He was embroiled in heated controversy. He was bitterly hostile to what He found there. Stones were thrown at Him. He overturned the moneychangers' tables, and drove them out with a whip.

Six of His visits to the synagogue are recorded. On every occasion we find Him rebuking those He found there, upbraiding them and stirring their hatred, so that they threatened Him and plotted to kill Him. Is this the Christlike attitude of Evangelicals who frequent the temples and synagogues of ecumenism?

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Read again Matthew 23. Our Lord is speaking to the Pharisees, the religious leaders of His day, those who sat in Moses' seat. He calls them 'children of hell,' 'fools and blind,' 'full of extortion and excess,' 'whited sepulchres,' 'full of dead bones and all uncleanness,' 'serpents,' 'a generation of vipers,' 'heading for the damnation of hell,' 'blind guides,' 'children of them who killed the prophets.' Six times He calls them hypocrites. I do not know of any Protestant Evangelical whose language is stronger than this.

This, of course, can be carried on into the epistles. Peter called his hearers, the religious leaders, a bunch of murderers! In Romans 16:17 we read, 'Avoid those which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine.' 'Avoid' never means 'associate.'

Titus 3:10 warns us to 'reject heretics.' In 2 John we are warned not to receive those who are not walking in the way of the apostles. Paul tells the Galatians that even if the preacher of another gospel were an angel, he must be accursed!

Let us then be quite clear as to what 'Christlikeness' is! Carefully note the religious protest of the New Testament.

'The Things Which Shall be Hereafter' by Septimus Sears. This excellent book by the one-time minister at Clifton, Beds has been out of print for some time but we are pleased to announce that it has now been reprinted, hardbound. Every Christian should have this volume and it would make a good gift to your minister. Copies can be obtained from us at £5 each with discounts for quantities.

Bible Spreading Union: The 123rd Annual Meeting of the Bible Spreading Union will be held, God willing, on Wednesday, 11th October, 2017, at Northend Baptist Church, Larnar Road, Erith, DA8 3RD. The preacher engaged is Mr Rowland Wheatley (Cranbrook). Please support this meeting.

S.G.A.T. Meetings: The theme of the monthly meetings of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony during 2017 is 'The Glory of God – Studies in Ezekiel.' We trust that friends will be interested in the subjects chosen, and we would like to see others come to our meetings, which are due to be held on the fourth Friday of each month except August and December. The Autumn Conference is in September, when we have an afternoon meeting at 4pm. in addition to the usual evening meeting. All evening meetings are at 7pm. Details of the meetings arranged for the present quarter are given on the back page, and so that you can insert the dates in your diary and arrange to be present, we would mention that other meetings for the year are due to be as follows:
 October 27.....The Vision of the Millennial Temple (40-46).....*Richard Monteith*
 November 24...The Vision of the New Land of Israel (47-48).....*David McMillan*