

'All the words of My mouth are in righteousness: there is nothing forward or perverse in them. They are plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.'

Proverbs 8:8-9.

You are warmly invited to meetings arranged by the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony, to be held, God willing, at
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**Theme for 2021 – By the Mouth of ALL His Holy Prophets
 Spring Conference - April 23rd, 4pm and 7pm**

Afternoon Subject: The Testimony of Elisha

Evening Subject: The Testimony of Ezekiel

Speaker: Brian McClung

May 28th, 7pm

Subject: The Testimony of Hosea

Speaker: John Douglas

June 25th, 7pm

Subject: The Testimony of Amos

Speaker: Gordon Dane

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Representative in Australia: Mr Graeme McPhee, 8 Lawrence Street, Goolwa North, South Australia, 5214. (E-mail: graeme.mcphee@gmail.com). (Mobile: 0421 028 040)

Representative in Canada: Mr Andrew Foster, 549 Johnson Crescent, Oliver, British Columbia, V0H 1T5 (E-mail: atcfoster@gmail.com).

Representative in New Zealand: Miss E R Wilson, 27 Walshs Road, Ashburton, 7700

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Watching and Waiting

LIGHT FOR PERILOUS TIMES

SCRIPTURAL

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Website: WWW.SGAT.ORG

Secretary: Stephen A Toms 1 Donald Way Chelmsford Essex CM2 9JB

(Tel: 01245 268815. E-mail: satoms@hotmail.co.uk)

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 Aravah in Scripture with Views Relative to History and Prophecy

By John Douglas

Early in the morning of 17th July, 2019, the coach we were travelling in pulled away from our Dead Sea resort en route for Eilat on the shores of the Red Sea.

To the Israeli that well-travelled road is recognised as Route 90, the longest road in Israel. To the map-reader, it is the (trunk) road through the Aravah; and we set out early because we had, in round terms, a hundred miles to go, and much to do. To those in Israel for the first time, this was a day that would take them through the NEGEV DESERT. We would visit the full size replica of the Mosaic Tabernacle at Timnah Park, near Eilat, and to their delight the party looked forward to sailing on, and swimming in, the Red Sea. A BBQ on board the boat was a bonus, and everybody was ready for a 'tuck-in.'

Everyone in our party had come because of their interest in searching the Scriptures.

Given the role I had on board the bus, I turned the attention of the folks (at least those who were wide-awake) to some features of the journey they could link in with Scripture.

Among my subjects was the Aravah itself, the Aravah in Scripture. The Aravah is a natural depression, part of the great rift valley, and our road ran through the Negev, in parallel with the Jordanian border not so many miles away.

We were able to look at some details about the Aravah and a number of the Scripture references I used are given below.

First of all, the Aravah, as it is referred to in the Word of God, is a specific part of the land of Israel.

A Topographical Study of the Promised Land, for Military Purposes, Delineates the Aravah as a Definite Place (Deuteronomy 1:7)

Nine place names feature distinct areas of the Land of Promise in Deuteronomy 1:7. These names provide an example of the topographical study of the land, a preliminary analysis necessary for a military assault to be launched against Canaan. Think of these names in terms of the CONTOURS of the land.

This talk was given by Moses before he sent out the spies to view the land God had promised.

The mount, (generally the whole land may be called **the Mount of the Amorites**, but specifically this is the mountainous region lying before the host of Israel, prominent in the area of Hebron).

The plain in verse 7, is the **ARAVAH**, (Hebrew Bible), clearly a recognisable area. A single entity.

THE HILLS form the rugged backbone of the country, immediately to the north and south of Jerusalem.

The vale in Hebrew is distinctive also, in that this is a reference to the Shephelah, (rendered 'vale' in our translation). The vale is the sloping valley between Jerusalem

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and the Coast. This name (Shephelah) is commonly used in Israel nowadays for the same stretch of country.

The word used here for the **SOUTH** is Negev. Everyone in Israel knows where the Negev is.

The sea-side is the Mediterranean coast. I say this to indicate these are not random titles. They are definite geographical areas in the make-up of the Land of Canaan, eventually stretching out to the borders of Lebanon and to the great River itself, the river Euphrates.

The **ARAVAH** is one of those regions clearly mentioned in verse 7. It is an identifiable part of the Land. The spies were called on to make a survey of all the places detailed in this way.

Read the verse yourself. ‘Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all *the places* nigh thereunto, **in the plain** (the aravah), in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates’ (Deuteronomy 1:7).

The employment of the term ‘ARAVAH’ in this regional study underscores the point. The Aravah is a recognised section of the land.

The Children of Israel Toiled Along the Ancient Road Through the Aravah. We Know Moses Took This Road When They Departed from the Land of Egypt (Jeremiah 2:6)

‘Neither said they, Where *is* the LORD that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, **through a land of deserts** and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt?’

Through a ‘land of deserts’ in Hebrew is, through ‘the Land of the Aravah.’

The children of Israel in days of old travelled through the Aravah, in the wilderness. Famous kings in after-times followed in the footsteps of Moses.

Solomon, Jehoshaphat too, among them.

For Israel, it was part of the wilderness experience. It was a place inimical to life. They owed their survival there to the Lord. The Lord alone could bring them, and lead them – a whole nation – through this terrible wilderness.

Other Scriptures could be added:

Joshua 3:16 – ‘That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that *is* beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward **the sea of the plain, (the ARAVAH) even the salt sea**, failed, *and* were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.’

The Dead Sea in this place is called the Sea of the Aravah. The Aravah is clearly identified. Joshua took the people across the bed of the Jordan river into the land of Canaan.

Deuteronomy 2:8 – ‘And when we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, **through the way of the plain (the Aravah) from Elath** (Eilat), and from Ezion-gaber, we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.’

The Aravah carried the road down from the Dead Sea to Eilat, even in ancient time. Moses himself traversed this route. ‘We’ passed that way, he said.

While the word aravah may be regarded as having a general application in our English version at times, yet there is reason to give a summary.

A Summary

The Aravah is not any desert but a distinct part of the desert in Israel. For the most part the name aravah today is given to this desert area which runs through the Negev from the Dead Sea to Eilat. The Aravah is part of a depression in the great Rift valley. In round terms it extends for a hundred miles.

There is reason to add, that in earlier times, the word aravah described the whole Jordan valley as well, and parts of it spread over into neighbouring countries. The aravah in that circumstance ran from the sea of Galilee to the Dead sea, and then beyond, stretching as far south as the modern day Eilat, eg. Deuteronomy 3:17, 'the plain (aravah) also, and Jordan, and the coast *thereof*, from Chinnereth (Sea of Galilee) even unto the sea of the plain, *even the salt sea*, under Ashdoth–piggah eastward.'

It carries a road which in its ancient setting, was frequently travelled even in Bible times. As I have said, nowadays this road is named Route 90, the longest road in Israel.

It is a road where for a number of reasons in the days of Moses, the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way (Numbers 21:4). It meant arduous travel, so the going was tough.

Historically, The Aravah Features in Various Incidents.

I list some of them.

Beth-abara, (by metathesis, from BETH ARAVAH) where John baptised, takes its name from the region (John 1:28).

David, fleeing from Absalom, thought to stay for safety in the aravah. Then later the message came instructing him to depart at once, for he was certain to be captured, if he remained (2 Samuel 15:28. Cf. 17:16).

The murderers of Ishbosheth, Saul's son who had sought to be king, beheaded him and carried their grisly trophy all night through the Aravah, until they took the road through the mountain pass not far from Masada to Hebron, where David was. They sought a big reward from David for to them, this was proof he could now become king of the whole nation. David had them executed for their crime (2 Samuel 4:7).

King Zedekiah realising he had no hope of defeating Nebuchadnezzar in the final days of the siege at Jerusalem, made his escape by night. All his army had melted away, and Zedekiah with a few trusted aides reached the old Jericho Road on Olivet. From there he managed as far as Jericho, and the Aravah (2 Kings 25:4). Nebuchadnezzar got wind of it and pursued him with his cavalry until he captured him there.

All this makes for interesting reading. Though there is more which can be said of events pertaining to this distinct part of the land.

The Aravah is mentioned in English in Joshua 18:18.

Joshua 18:18 refers to the border of Benjamin's inheritance, to the part which touches on the Jericho valley: 'And passed along toward the side over against Arabah northward, and went down unto Arabah' (pronounced, Aravah).

But the Aravah is not only featured Historically in the Scriptures.

The Word of God has the most remarkable things to say of the Aravah in the Days to

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come. The Prophetic Scriptures not only challenge faith but they lead us to believe that the coming Kingdom of Christ will be accompanied by evidential wonders not seen in Jerusalem alone but additionally, in places which have resisted change through the millennia of time. Men have never seen the desert change, and particularly the Aravah itself has never changed.

Prophetically: The Aravah Figures in the Prophetic Scriptures

STUNNING THINGS WILL BE SEEN IN THE ARAVAH, AND MEN WILL SEE THE GLORY AND EXCELLENCY OF OUR GOD IN IT. Consider Isaiah 35:1,2 and 6.8.

‘The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and **the desert** (Hebrew, ARAVAH) shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose’ (verse 1).

‘It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, **they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God**’ (verse 2). (This Glory, this Excellency of GOD, will be SEEN – IN the aravah, as well as in other places).

‘Then shall the lame *man* leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the **wilderness shall waters break out**, (BAQA) and streams in **the desert**. the ARAVAH’ (verse 6).

‘And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it *shall be* for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err *therein*’ (verse 8).

Isaiah 35:1-6. Read the words again.

‘The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and **the desert** shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly ... for in the wilderness shall waters break out (baqa), and streams in **the desert (the aravah)**.’

This excerpt taken from Isaiah 35:1-6 is well known, for these words have been frequently quoted in some quarters. The desert blossoming and the streams in the desert pertain particularly to the Aravah. This Hebrew word occurs twice in the paragraph.

Some among the Lord’s people seem to treat Isaiah 35 as if it is a sudden passionate and poetic outburst of the prophet – a passage which makes for beautiful reading, but has little real sense.

They are mistaken. Chapter 35 is not even a stand-alone prophecy but it is closely and vitally connected to the chapters preceding it. It especially stands in contrast to Chapter 34 where the theme includes mention of the judgments which are to fall upon the Gentile nations hostile to Israel. Chapter 34 has a message for the ungodly; Chapter 35 a message for the Redeemed of the Lord.

This part of Isaiah foreshadows apocalyptic events set to be enacted at the end of the age.

The little bit of history inserted in chapters 36-39 highlights a very distressing period during the siege of Jerusalem in Hezekiah’s lifetime, but it also leads the believer to reflect on the assault of the nations upon Jerusalem, to take place at the time of the end.

These ungodly hosts will be wholly determined, like their ungodly counterparts from the past, to do away with the nation of Israel. They are in revolt against the God of Heaven. Their mission is doomed. Remember God has long ago declared, ‘And it shall

come to pass in that day, *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem' (Zechariah 12:9).

These chapters in Isaiah lead on to Isaiah 40. Isaiah 40 with double Comfort for Jerusalem, foretells the coming Day of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ will come to this earth in mighty power, with strong hand and in Kingly glory, to be so revealed unto men, that **all flesh will see Him together**. The whole earth will see Him at once! Now that has never happened yet; but it will take place as God has said.

He will be 'revealed' in the Day of His return, in all His divine Glory. He will be revealed and 'all flesh will see Him' – they will see Him together, in one unit, as the world's population.

'All flesh' did not see Him at His first coming. Those who did, did not see Him together.

The treble 'behold' in verses 9-10, which follows in this connection, must be kept in mind as well. 'Behold the Lord GOD will come' (verse 10). He will be revealed and we will indeed behold His Glory in the fullest sense.

Read the verses from Isaiah 40:

5. 'And **the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together:** for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.'

... the word of our God shall stand for ever....

9. 'O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift *it up*, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, **Behold your God!**'

10. '**Behold, the Lord GOD will come** with strong *hand*, and **His arm shall rule** for Him: **behold**, His reward *is* with Him, and His work before Him' (See the whole passage in verses 1-10).

STREAMS IN THE 'DESERT' then, is a reference to THE ARAVAH, in Hebrew (Isaiah 35:1,2 and 6.). The word aravah occurs twice in this passage from Isaiah 35, and appears as 'desert.'

The radical transformation of the aravah is only a part of the stunning things God will do at the time of the Lord's return.

One of the things thought 'impossible' which God will do, is this remarkable and overwhelming renewal of the aravah.

The ARAVAH is specifically identified in the passage above, and in both occurrences is translated 'desert.' This desert will undergo a truly marvellous change. It will become a fragrant garden, blossoming as the rose.

Moreover it will blossom abundantly. These streams will break out, making the desert a super-abundantly fruitful place. Look out for the word 'there' in this and in the previous chapter.

That there should be a breaking forth of waters in the Aravah, should not be thought preposterous, for every Bible believer already holds that something very similar has been done before, only this bursting forth of the waters in the Aravah is going to be permanent and in addition will cover a much wider area than the prototype in the desert where Moses called on God, back there at the beginning of Israel's history.

Psalms 78:15,16: 'He **clave** the rocks in the wilderness, and gave *them* drink as *out of* the great depths. He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.'

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The Lord **clave** the rocks. There is the history of the same sort of thing. This is undoubtedly what God did in the past.

This word '*baqa*' appears in Scripture, to describe the splitting of a piece of wood, and also the dividing of the Red Sea. Again, in Noah's flood, it is there in the violent upsurge of waters from the hidden reservoirs of the great deep (Genesis 22:3. Exodus 14:16. Genesis 7:11).

However, verse 15 in the Psalm provides not only an important detail of the past, in the record of Israel's history, it also prepares the reader for the future. It runs in parallel with the prophecy of Isaiah 35.

Psalm 78:15 draws attention to the same word (BAQA, as in Isaiah 35:6.) used in the record given of the supernatural supply of water in the desert in the days of Moses. God let Moses have the miracle supply of water, to preserve the nation in that hostile desert terrain. He did so also, in order to give them a preview of something even greater still, and more marvellous, and this in the coming Kingdom of Christ.

I am persuaded every Christian already believes that wonderful thing has already been done in the days following the Exodus, and the words of Moses were literally fulfilled back then. A spiritual message is conveyed by it all, but not without the literal fulfilment. The spiritual message is not intended to displace the literal fact.

A Christian may insist the Bible is true historically, while he has great hesitation, even difficulty, in believing this same word to be equally true prophetically. (Is there a danger that in a coming day they may be troubled by Luke 24:25?).

So many features of the coming Kingdom have undeniable links with the past, like this one, where God surely obliges the Christian to accept His word in regard to the future without hesitation. He is virtually saying to the hesitating believer, 'Look there, I have already done this in the past and you believe it. Be persuaded therefore, I will do it again, in that coming day.'

That there is a highway there, leads one to think of that major road which in the past and then again in the present, runs from the Red Sea to (eventually) Jerusalem. It reminds me of the way, even the highway shall be there, and the redeemed of the Lord shall walk in it. PERHAPS THE LITERAL ASPECT OF THIS WORD is to be looked at in terms of the future too. Personally I believe it has a relevance.

**It is to be Noticed in the Prophecies for the Aravah, God has a Liking for Detail, Detail Which Some Will Have to Work Hard to Ignore
Isaiah 41:18-20. In verse 19, the word 'desert' is Aravah:**

18. 'I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

19. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in **the desert** the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together:

20. **That** they may '**see,**' and '**know,**' and '**consider,**' and '**understand**' together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.'

After the LORD's Return

Great changes will occur when the Lord returns to this earth.

Israel as a country will be changed. The people themselves will be changed. The earth

will be changed. We, as believers, shall be changed, changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, when the Lord comes back.

An incredible change is to occur in the Aravah. I think the Lord anticipates our reluctance to take Him at His word, in this reference. Hence: The point is, seven types of tree will grow naturally, besides all the other kinds of produce in this desert, when it begins to blossom abundantly.

Out of the seven, three types of tree especially will flourish there - the Pine, the Fir and the Box tree – trees, which need a lot of water. The Lord knows that. He created them that way. These trees cannot grow there at all unless they have plenty of water all the time. The Lord has deliberately chosen trees which **MUST** have an abundance of water. Needless to say, this kind of forest has never grown there in the way described, **IN THE DESERTS OF ISRAEL** – yet; but it will. That such a change could occur is looked on as an astonishment. These trees will **NOT** grow naturally in the desert. The desert will be rejuvenated to accommodate this. This is amazing! It has to be said, the **ARAVAH WILL BE CHANGED** – totally changed. In the wilderness, the waters will break out, with rivers in the high places and fountains in the midst of the valleys (Isaiah 35:6 and 41:18).

It is so staggering certain of the saints will not take it in. They insist that all this must be spiritually understood, but, I make the point, even spiritually, the like of this has never taken place.

You are back at square one. The like has never been, no matter what way you take it, that the aravah should blossom, naturally, and abundantly, like the rose – beautiful, fragrant, and fruit-full.

GOD, WITH WHOM NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE, WILL CAUSE THESE TREES TO GROW IN THE ARAVAH. THE DAY WILL COME, COINCIDING WITH THE DAY OF CHRIST. MEN WILL SEE IN THE ARAVAH, THE GLORY OF THE LORD AND THE EXCELLENCY OF OUR GOD.

In verse 20 a combination of four verbs appears. This is most important.

Mark them, each one. ‘See,’ ‘Know,’ ‘Consider’ and ‘Understand.’ There is a progression in these terms, which should be noted. A distinct order is followed. A growing comprehension is perceived.

All these verbs of discovery are being used for the reader to recognise, and indeed for the people alive at the time, to recognise what has been done is spectacularly God’s own work, and nothing short of a stupendous and mighty miracle. The inescapable conclusion is, the hand of the Lord has done this. They have now a wonderful comprehension of what the hand of the Lord can do.

First of all, people will **see** this. Secondly, having seen this marvellous event for themselves, they of all people will **know** of its reality, the aravah has blossomed abundantly like the rose. Thirdly, they have then some **considerations** to make. One of these is, God Himself has done this mighty work. Another is, God can do the things thought impossible. And yet another, He has so changed the aravah, and other deserts, as to make them each one a beautiful garden. This too is how the gospel will work in the heart of man. God has fulfilled His word. The glory of the Lord is revealed in this way also. Fourthly, having carefully considered these things, they will come to **understand** what God has done. They will understand how precious the Word of God

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is, how sure of fulfilment it is. They will understand as to be wholly committed, wholly reliant on the Lord, in a way which before could never have been achieved.

The inescapable conclusion is, the hand of the Lord has done this. They have a wonderful comprehension of what the hand of the Lord has done.

The Aravah to be Like Eden's Garden, but With No Serpent in it

Note further, in Isaiah 51:3 this desert, the Aravah in particular, is to be like the **Garden** of the Lord.

THE LORD HAS SURELY SAID SOME WONDERFUL THINGS ABOUT THE ARAVAH.

The saints who travelled on the bus that day, through those three hours could begin to take in, as few others, the sheer immensity of this statement about the aravah, and the grandeur of what God Himself will yet do there (Cf Ezekiel 36:35-37).

3 'For the LORD shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her **desert** like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.'

In verse 3, 'desert' is the translation of ARAVAH, once more. The Aravah will become like the Garden of the Lord. These things are so clearly taught in Scripture. It is with joy we anticipate their fulfilment.

**The Waters Which are to Irrigate and Renew the Dead Sea Valley,
Will Do the Same for The Aravah,**

in Addition to the Other Waters Which Flow There (Ezekiel 47:8-10)

8. 'Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into **the desert**, and go into the sea: *which* being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed.

9. And it shall come to pass, *that* every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.

10. And it shall come to pass, *that* the fishers shall stand upon it from En-ge-di even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a *place* to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.'

The waters from Jerusalem will flow into the desert, (i.e. into the Aravah, Hebrew) and into the Dead Sea.

Thus the whole Country including the Dead Sea will change dramatically. The waters are populated with fish of a list of varieties. 'And there shall be a very great multitude of fish.'

Verses 9 and 10 both begin with the strongest emphasis, in a reference to the Aravah and the Dead Sea in future times.

There is the required reiteration in regard to both of these details, 'AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS,' whether you can yield to believing it or not – It shall come to pass! ... In the mouth of the two witnesses let every word be established.

IT SHALL COME TO PASS – THIS IS SAID IN REFERENCE TO THE RIVERS OF WATER IN THE ARAVAH (verses 8-9)

IT SHALL COME TO PASS – THIS IS SAID IN RELATION TO THE MULTITUDE OF FISH IN THE SEA OF THE ARAVAH, THE DEAD SEA (verse 10).

By mentioning the Aravah as well as the Dead Sea, the Lord lays claim to our attention, and surely shows His intention of doing what He says. He is talking of definite places.

Even in the face of that reiterated voice of certainty, good men still falter and hang back, and cannot see anything of that kind coming to pass. What does the Lord have to say to us, on top of all this, to persuade us?

Thankfully – Praise the Lord, the Day shall declare it.

(In this article, 'Aravah' has been spelt throughout with a 'v' instead of a 'b' to help the reader with pronunciation).

The Gospel of the Grace of God

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By Dr Cecil Yates Biss

(Continued from page 14)

The expression 'the preaching of the Gospel' is one which must be employed with discrimination, according to the exact meaning which is intended in each case. It is certain that the phrase is not always used with the same meaning: it is probable that different persons might be unwilling to use it in the same way: that by some it might be held to include more, and by others fewer of the truths intended to be conveyed. With some, to preach the Gospel might mean simply to declare the invitations of the Gospel, and to speak only of those aspects of it which the soul grasps when seeking peace with God; and this is very generally the case: with others it would be taken to include a wider range of truth – the righteousness of the Divine Character, the claims of the holy Law of God, the inability of man to meet those claims by his own efforts, the need of a Redeemer, the nature of Sacrificial Atonement, the simplicity of faith, the assurance of eternal salvation to those who believe, the awful perdition awaiting the unpardoned – all these might be held to be truths lying within the testimony of the Gospel.

In the Scriptural use of this expression, as, for instance, when Paul says that the ministry which he had received was 'to testify the Gospel of the grace of God' (Acts 20:24), it is clear that a much larger range of truth is intended than is commonly included in the phrase 'preaching the Gospel.' Indeed if these words, according to the Scriptural use of them, be analysed, it will be seen that they contain of necessity a reference to four distinct branches of truth: first, **Instruction:** truths which explain the necessity and nature of salvation; second, **Declaration:** truths in which God publishes, authoritatively, His will and purpose toward sinful man: third, **Invitation:** truths which are spoken to draw souls to the Saviour; fourth, **Warning:** truths wherein are set forth

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the responsibilities of sinners. The preaching of the apostles sometimes contained a portion, and sometimes the whole of these constituent truths of the Gospel. For example, the preaching of Paul at Athens (Acts 17) contained Instruction: 'Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you;' Declaration: 'God commandeth all men everywhere to repent;' Warning: 'He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness;' but in this preaching there was no Invitation, for the unbelief and impatience of the hearers stopped the preaching before the testimony could be developed in such a way as to render the invitations of the Gospel comprehensible, or indeed possible. Again, when Paul and Barnabas preached to a Jewish audience in the Synagogue at Antioch (Acts 13) and declared unto them 'glad tidings' we find the same elements of Instruction, Declaration, and Warning solemnly combined, but no direct Invitations are included in the address; though we may suppose that they were extended to the Jews and Proselytes, mentioned in the 43rd verse, who appear to have been savingly affected by the preaching, inasmuch as they were exhorted 'to continue in the grace of God.'

The fact is, that while the declaration of the Gospel as 'glad tidings' does not necessarily import in that phrase the inclusion of truths which are solemn and humbling to the soul of man, there is implied, of necessity, a reference to these; for the Gospel could never be 'glad tidings' to anyone whose heart had not been penetrated by a sense of sin under the convicting power of the Holy Ghost, humbled in its proud rebellion against God, convinced of its need and helplessness, and thus prepared to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as its Righteousness and Strength. Would that this were ever remembered by all who preach the Gospel! We might indeed rejoice if as much care were taken to proclaim the nature of salvation, and man's need of it, as is often taken in explaining its invitations and urging its promises.

(To be continued)

Book Reviews

Watching and Waiting Bound Volume, No 29, price £9, from ourselves.

(www.sgat.org).

This volume contains the magazines (and some other publications) from 2017-2020, and that includes the period of the centenary of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony. It is a very useful volume to have and it is well indexed, including a Scripture Index. We recommend all our readers to obtain a copy. We would mention that we also have some past volumes, which cost £9 each. We encourage friends to include these volumes in their libraries.

Valiant for the Truth, published by the Bible League, 46 Bulbridge Road, Wilton, Salisbury, SP2 0LE, 332 pages, price £15. (www.bibleleaguetrust.org).

The Bible League Council is to be congratulated for making this volume available to

the Christian public. It is a collection of works by the late Bishop D A Thompson, but understandably, not all his writings could be included. After introductory remarks giving useful information about the Bishop, the book is divided into four parts - (1) Biblical and Devotional Subjects, (2) Bible Translation, (3) Textual Matters, and (4) Book Reviews. Although the Bishop was no mean scholar, he sets things out very simply and the chapters are very easy to read; and, needless to say, these are subjects on which true believers should be informed, particularly in these days of abounding apostasy. Mr John Thackway, editor of the Bible League Quarterly, has assembled all the articles and there is no doubt that he has done this very well. He mentions in the introduction that he has made a 'few alterations' and we do not consider that every one of these is helpful. There are two footnotes which we are sorry to see as they cast doubt on prophetic truth so faithfully maintained by the learned Bishop. Suffice it to say that, in the revelation of prophecy, God is not the author of confusion and the Bible does not teach more than one prophetic programme. However, we do commend the editor for all the time and effort he has put into this great work and, inasmuch as there is such a store of important information in this book, we heartily recommend the volume to our readers. It is a valuable purchase for only £15.

Perhaps we could say that the first SGAT secretary, Mr George H Fromow (a member of the Bible League Council for many years), was very friendly with the Bishop and amongst other things, served on the advisory council of the Banister Theological College. The Bishop regularly spoke for the SGAT and definitely believed historic pre-millennialism. He built up an extremely interesting museum concerning Jerusalem and its Temples, which contained various magnificent models of the City, the Temple, the High Priest, etc., - there were various other exhibits. All these items formed a basis for a very informative and instructive lecture. He subsequently published a book on the subjects illustrated by the models; and in the publication, after describing features of the city of Jerusalem and its first three temples, he concluded as follows in the next article.

Jerusalem and Its Temples

By Bishop D A Thompson

(This article gives the concluding remarks in a book with the above title).

After the First World war, Palestine was made a National Home for the Jews. After the Second World War, Israel asserted and won its sovereignty. Her sons are returning, but, sad to say, few know the Lord Jesus as their Messiah. Thus part of the prophecy given by Jeremiah (chapters 30 and 31) has been fulfilled before our eyes (30:3).

This is a study of Ancient Jerusalem and its Temples, so it remains to draw attention to the fact that the Prophetic Scriptures, in the judgment of many godly expositors (such

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as Dr Tregelles, B W Newton, Adolph Saphir and David Baron), indicate that there will yet be a Fourth followed by the Fifth or Millennial Temple.

The Fourth Temple

Our days have all the features foretold by our Lord in His Olivet discourse – wars and rumours of wars and the declension of the Church (Matthew 24:4-14). We must therefore be on the eve of that time of dreadful trouble for Judaea and all the world delineated in this Olivet prophecy (Matthew 24:15-26), and in the books of Daniel and Revelation.

These and other Scriptures seem very definitely to imply that there will be a Temple standing in Jerusalem, with sacrifices being offered; that the Antichrist who will arise will make a treaty with the Jews for seven years but break it after three and a half (Daniel 9:27); that he will enter Jerusalem and defile the Temple by erecting an image of himself in it, and also calling for the worship of himself (Daniel 12:11; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4; Revelation 13:11-18). It will be the time of Jacob's Trouble (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21-22). But in the very darkest hour the Lord will maintain a testimony to Himself (Revelation chapters 11 and 12; Zechariah 13:8-9). All this wickedness and sorrow will be brought to an end by the Second Coming of the Messiah (2 Thessalonians 2:8-12; Hebrews 9:28).

Those who understand these prophecies thus will not, therefore, be surprised if one day they read that Israel is erecting another Temple. Perhaps the Jews will secure, in conflict or by purchase, the Mosque of Omar and build a new Temple on the old site. Some Jews feel that a new Temple will one day be raised in another part of the city.

The Fifth or Millennial Temple

This is foretold and described by Ezekiel (40:1-48:35). It will evidently be built on the instructions of the Lord, after His return, at the commencement of His millennial reign (Zechariah 6:12). It is larger, and in many, but not in all respects, similar to its predecessors. In the Holy of Holies there is neither ark nor veil, but the Shechinah Glory, which Ezekiel saw leave Solomon's Temple, has returned to this Millennial House (43:2-5).

In the Holy Place there is neither Candlestick, Table of Shewbread nor Altar of Incense, but just a plain Table in the place of the last-named (41:22). The Altar is very different from those of Old Testament days and points back to the atoning sacrifice of Christ even as they pointed forward. There is no Laver but instead a river flowing from the threshold eastward to the Dead Sea (47:1-12). Wherever it flowed there was life (cp. Revelation 22:1). This is evidently one of the rivers of which Zechariah prophesied (14:8), caused by the earthquake on the return of the Lord. To this Temple the nations of the millennial earth will flock to learn of the ways of the Lord, and to worship Him (Isaiah 2:2-4; Zechariah 14:16-21).

The absence of these pieces of furniture which adorned the first three Temples, and the presence of the Shechinah Glory and the flowing of the river, indicates that in the

Millennium spiritual reality will predominate. The living waters issuing from the threshold, ever deepening and widening as they flow, with fruit-bearing trees on either side, point to a great and worldwide activity of the Spirit of God in that golden age. This is in accordance with the prophecy, 'For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea' (Habakkuk 2:14), and also the promises given by Joel, of which Pentecost was but a foretaste (Joel 2:18-27 and especially verses 28 and 29).

Those desiring a more detailed study of these chapters in Ezekiel would be well advised to secure 'The Millennial Temple,' by James Payne, supplied by the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony (*still available from ourselves – Ed.*).

As we owe so much under God to the Jews, and to all the truths to which the Tabernacle and the Temples point, we ought, feelingly, to say with Paul, 'Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved' (Romans 10:1).

Booklets by Bishop D A Thompson: We still have available some copies of Bishop Thompson's 'Should There Be a Line-up With the Church of Rome?' and 'Our Bible, The Divine Story of its Making.' If any friends would like a copy of one or both of these, please apply to the SGAT secretary.

Called Home

Mrs Ruth Sowton was taken to be with the Lord on 13th March, 2020, age 83. She was a loyal supporter of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony for many years. Sadly, she had an accident from which she did not recover. She fell heavily and fractured five ribs and punctured her left lung. Mrs Sowton came from a family with long associations with the SGAT. Her mother, Mrs Secrett, some years ago, arranged for meetings in her home at which prophetic truth was expounded. Her grandfather, Mr Thomas Parkes was a link in the chain of the commencement of the SGAT (see Volume 29, pages 86 and 129).

Dr Alan Cairns was called home on Thursday, 5th November, age 80. He was born in Belfast during the second world war and came to Christ in salvation as a child through the influence of his godly parents and the ministry of the Salvation Army evangelists. He was a minister in the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster for 60 years; firstly, assisting Dr Ian Paisley on the Ravenhill Road in Belfast, and then ministering in Dunmurry (a suburb of Belfast), Ballymoney in North Antrim, and Greenville in South Carolina. He had written several books including his widely-used 'Dictionary of Theological Terms,' and a very profitable booklet now entitled, 'A New Beginning,' which has been translated into a number of other languages. Mr Cairns was supportive of the witness of the SGAT and received Watching and Waiting magazine. He highly recommended

