



"Meditate
upon these things;
give thyself
wholly to them;
that thy profiting
may appear unto all"

I Timothy 4:15

Journal
of
Theology

Church of the Lutheran Confession

VOLUME 13

DECEMBER 1973

NUMBER 4

A STUDY OF JOSHUA

(Part I)

God showed very clearly through Moses what the life's mission of Joshua was to be. After Moses was no longer the leader of the children of Israel, Joshua was to bring them into the Promised Land. He was to lead them in conquering the land, and then also portion it out to them.

Joshua died at the age of 110 years (Josh. 24:29). If Josephus was right (Antiquities V, 1, 29), then Joshua was leader of Israel for 25 years. Thus he was 85 years old when Moses died, and was 45 years old at the exodus from Egypt. Early in the wilderness wanderings, there is described in Ex. 17:9-13 a victory over the Amalekites at Rephidim, a victory of the prayer of Moses and the weapons of Joshua. He served as Moses' "minister," or attendant (Ex. 24:13), while Aaron and Hur stayed behind with Israel at the foot of Mt. Sinai (Ex. 24:14). He then accompanied Moses on the mount of the Lord and saw how Moses broke the first two stone tablets of the Law on the mountain when he descended near the camp of Israel. As Moses' right hand, he did not depart from the tabernacle when it was necessary for Moses to leave it (Ex. 33:11). He revealed mistaken zeal as a young man when he advised Moses to put to silence two men who prophesied in the camp (Num. 11). But Moses said to him: "Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!" (v. 29).

Up until this time Joshua, the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim, was known by the name of Oshea. He is called this in Num. 13:8, where he together with eleven others (including Caleb of the tribe of Judah) were sent to search the land of Canaan. It was on this very occasion that Moses changed his name (Num. 13:16). The fact that he was called Joshua already before this time is easily explained in this way, that Moses didn't write until later on when the son of Nun had already become known among Israel by his official name, while Num. 13:8 very appropriately lists his genealogical name. After returning from this spying mission, he and Caleb presented a report that was the direct opposite of the evil report

of the other spies. They urged the people not to rebel against the Lord nor go back to Egypt. But they were almost stoned by the people (Num. 14:10). Like Caleb, he clung to the Lord's promise (Num. 14:24,30). Thus he was exempt from God's judgment upon the murmuring congregation of Israel, according to which the carcasses of all who were 20 years of age and upward would fall in the wilderness. Joshua would come into the Promised Land, and would lead Israel into it. The Lord Himself characterized him as being filled with the spirit of wisdom (Deut. 34:9), "for Moses had laid his hands upon him." In ceremonial acts before all of Israel (Deut. 31:7,14, 23), he was chosen by God to be Moses' successor and was entrusted with his work. Moses then ascended Mt. Nebo to view from there the Promised Land and then to die.

The Book of Joshua can be divided into three sections: I. Preparing to Conquer the Promised Land, Ch. 1-5; II. The Conquest of Canaan, Ch. 6-12; III. The Distribution of the Land and Joshua's Last Days, Ch. 13-24. This will be the outline for a proposed series of three articles. May the Holy Spirit richly bless the study of this Old Testament book!

I. Preparing to Conquer the Promised Land, Ch. 1-5.

Chapter 1. This chapter shows us Israel still encamped on the land east of the Jordan. There Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh had already taken possession of the land allotted by Moses. God now commanded Joshua to cross over the Jordan, and also gave him the promise: "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given you. From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast" (v. 3-4). Only be strong and of a good courage! "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage" (v. 9). That was the first instruction Joshua received from the Lord. He immediately carried it out by spreading the message throughout the camp: "Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan!" (v. 11). Then he commanded Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh to have their mighty men of valour take part in the conquest of the land west of the Jordan. From all sides they solemnly promised him willing obedience.

Chapter 2. Even before giving this command, Joshua showed himself to be a wise general by secretly sending two spies from Sittim (v. 1) to view the land and especially Jericho. It was absolutely necessary to capture this city immediately after crossing the Jordan, in order that Israel might have free access to further advances. There is no reason to interpret this sending out of spies as sinful willfulness on Joshua's part, as though he had no divine command to do this. Joshua was not commanded to expect all military orders directly from God. He was not commanded to leave unused the usual rules of warfare in the conquest of Canaan. Joshua was to judge all things according to the "Book of the Law." This contained many statements about carrying on warfare, but there were no paragraphs against the use of spies.

In Jericho these spies entered into the house of Rahab, a harlot. (Some old commentators attempt to change the harlot into a landlady in order to take the offensiveness out of the situation, but this is not justified grammatically.) No doubt their reasoning was that anyone seeing them enter into this house would suspect them of this indecency, but not of espionage. Perhaps also the location of the house on the wall of the city (v. 15) would assure them of a favorable view of the city and nearby vicinity. The spies returned after Rahab told them: "Neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you" (v. 11). After they had hidden in the mountain for three days (probably the one towards Jerusalem), they went back across the Jordan and reported to Joshua: "Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us" (v. 24).

Chapter 3. The next important event was Israel's crossing over the Jordan through a river-bed that had been dried up in a miraculous manner. There have been many attempts to explain this crossing in a natural manner, without accepting a miracle. It is suggested that the river probably had a flat shore and was shallow in depth, and that it might have been quite passable on its fords. Just suppose that the spies did not swim across the Jordan, but knew of the ford mentioned in Josh. 2:7 and used it on the way over and back. Even in the driest time of the year, this would surely have been highly unsatisfactory for a crowd of people numbering over a million, including many women and children. Such a

crossing-over would have lasted a whole month, not to mention unavoidable accidents that would happen in spite of all precautions. Later on there were times when the Jordan was not swollen, and yet large numbers of Israel's enemies were drowned in its waters when they retreated from Jerusalem and were compelled to cross the Jordan, but did not know its few fords. But right at the time of Israel's crossing-over, the Jordan "overfloweth all his banks" (v. 15). To cross the river at this time would be considered an act of heroism (1 Chron. 12:15). One commentator reports that in the vicinity of Jericho the Jordan is 120 feet wide, and so deep that horses could scarcely wade through it during the month of February. But at the time of harvest, in late March and mid April, the Jordan is always much fuller. And this was the time of harvest. The river not only filled its banks completely, but even flooded the Jordan valley, as it still does to this day in April.

Thus the encamped Israelites stood on the eastern bank of the Jordan, which was flooding its banks. In spite of its fords, it was impassable for people on foot and for animals. On the evening before the crossing, the officers went through the camp (v. 2) and informed the people how things were to proceed the next day. The Ark of the Covenant was to be for them a sign, and to some extent a guide. It was to take the place of the cloud and the pillar of fire, which are no longer mentioned after the death of Moses. The priests of the Lord were to take up the Ark of the Covenant and pass before the people. But there should be a space between them and the Ark of "about two thousand cubits" (v. 4), or about 3000 feet. That was the way it then happened. When the priests before all the people came to the Jordan and their feet touched the water, then "the waters of Jordan were cut off from the waters that come from above; and they stood upon an heap" (v. 13). A great wall of water is not pictured as being immediately above on the north side of the Ark of the Covenant, but much farther north from it, "very far" (v. 16), near the city named Adam (which is not otherwise mentioned in Scripture), "that is beside Zaretan." But the water which flowed down to the Dead Sea simply flowed away, so that all of Israel passed over on dry ground toward Jericho. During this entire time the priests stood in the middle of the stream (v. 17) with the Ark of the Covenant. They did not leave

the river-bed until all the people had crossed the Jordan. This could very well have happened in less than 12 hours because "the people hasted" (4:10) and could go over in a wide procession, since everything was dry to the south.

This obvious miracle of God's omnipotence had more than just one purpose, as the text in Josh. 3 shows us. For one thing, it was to magnify Joshua before all Israel, so that "they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee" (v. 7). Thereby Israel, in turn, would know "that the living God is among them" (v. 10), who will without fail drive out the heathen from the land of Canaan. This was to strengthen Israel's faith. But the Canaanites would be terrified before the might of Jehovah, the God of Israel.

Chapter 4. The children of men forget nothing more quickly than God's great deeds of kindness. Unfortunately, Israel was no exception to this sad rule, as its continual murmuring against the Lord during the forty years of wandering in the wilderness shows only too clearly. Therefore Joshua commanded that a double monument be erected in commemoration of the miraculous manner in which the crossing of the Jordan was made possible. One of these monuments was to be on the west bank of the Jordan, according to God's command. Joshua erected the other one in the river itself. "Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day" (v. 9). Concerning the other monument, we are told that twelve men, one from each tribe, were chosen. Each was to take up a stone from the middle of the Jordan, carry it over to the other side where they would lodge the first night, and lay it down until Joshua "did pitch them in Gilgal" (v. 20). He then said to Israel: "When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over: That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever" (v. 21-24).

The question has been asked: What would be the significance of twelve stones, even when laid on top of each -

other, as "a memorial for ever"? (v. 7) And of what use would they be in the water, where people would not see them? -- It is quite possible that the top stones were visible when the water level was low. And even when the water was high, the place could be marked by the whirlpool caused by the water swirling around the rocks. Surely, when our Lord God directs that a stone be erected, then all those people who never "know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty" (v. 24), will take offence and be angered also "unto this day."

Chapter 5. Israel had crossed the Jordan. All the kings of the Amorites, who lived on that side of the Jordan toward the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites on the Sea heard about it. They heard, and the inhabitants of the cities located near the place of the crossing-over also saw, that a miracle had there taken place. The people to the north saw that "the waters stood upon an heap," while the people to the south all the way to the Dead Sea saw the bed of the Jordan become ever more empty and then remain dry for hours. And now Israel stood and camped on the west bank of the river. They had crossed unhindered. The Jordan miracle lasted just as long as it took them to cross over. Now the stream again "flowed over all his banks, as it did before." Israel's God, Jehovah, must have done this, for Israel's sake. The Canaanites could come to no other conclusion. For that reason, "their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them anymore, because of the children of Israel" (v. 1).

This fact is noted for good reason. Rahab already had spoken to the spies concerning the fearfulness and terror that had overtaken "all the inhabitants of the land" because the waters of the Red Sea had dried up before Israel (Ch. 2:10-11). The impression caused by the new miracle that had just taken place must have paralyzed completely the energy of the Canaanites. They quickly forgot any thoughts of going on the offensive, and decided to wait and see what would happen to them behind strong, high walls.

God sent this fear upon Canaan, in order that Israel could more quietly and easily carry out His command of circumcision. This made the large majority of its men incapable of carrying on war for a few days and, humanly speaking, would have held promise of great success to any powerful surprise attack by the Canaanites upon the Is-

raelite camp. In Gen. 32 we read of how Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, made good use of the pain brought about through circumcision and with cold calculation treacherously made a murderous raid upon the children of Hamor, and slew all the men in the city. What if the Canaanites had learned of the mass circumcising taking place in the camp of Israel and had attacked the camp at that time when the majority were unable to take up weapons? Therefore the paralyzing fear which weighed upon Canaan provided rest for Israel. This give also us in the New Testament Church the comforting assurance that God can provide it with rest from its adversaries in times of danger. Although God crippled the arm of Israel through His command to circumcise, He also crippled the courage of Canaan, so that it did not venture to raise its arm.

So "at that time," when Canaan was despondent, "the Lord said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time" (v. 2). We now hear how this command was carried out. At first glance, we can hardly imagine a more unsuitable time for circumcising the Israelites in large numbers than this particular time. Right now the Israelites were no doubt inspired and uplifted by a great miracle of God, and opposed to them were the otherwise strong, but now despondent, Canaanite people. What would seem more natural than an immediate devastating attack by Israel on Jericho, before the fears of its inhabitants would diminish and it would resist more energetically? Surely Joshua would have ordered such an attack, if the command of the Lord had not occurred to prevent it. But Joshua promptly obeyed this command without listening to the objections which his military instincts might have urged upon him. E.g. it is only half the work when you can fight as a courageous people against a discouraged people. If there had been no hurry about circumcising for so many years, then why would it make any difference if it was postponed for another 6 months? Keep moving ahead courageously and use to good advantage the present favorable circumstances. There might not be an opportunity like this again. -- Not so Joshua! He obeyed the Lord in simplicity of heart, just as he had obeyed at the crossing of the Jordan, where too all the instructions given him must have seemed very strange, unreasonable and impractical. "And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the

foreskins" (v. 3), that is, on the hill which afterwards received the name of Araloth ("hill of the foreskins"), obviously because it was there that the severed foreskins were buried.

Before entering into a study of vv. 4-9, we might be inclined to express our surprise that such a mass circumcision could have become necessary. This ceremony -- yes, this sacrament -- had been strictly commanded in Israel, not only from the days of Abraham, but also from the mouth of Moses, the servant of God. All male children were supposed to be exterminated from among God's people if they were not circumcised on the eighth day (Gen. 17:14). Moses must personally have suffered enough for failing to circumcise his son (Ex. 4:24-26). Should not Moses have insisted with an iron hand that circumcision must be carried out, even when he would otherwise need to permit many things because of the hard-heartedness of the constantly complaining people? Must we not consider Moses to be an unfaithful servant, since he had not insisted that circumcision be carried out? -- We see that it is necessary for Holy Scripture to come to our assistance with an explanation as to why circumcision on such a large scale had become necessary. This explanation is in vv. 4-7.

Some have wrongly concluded that the command to circumcise (and we might add, the Passover command) did not apply and was not meant for the time of wandering in the wilderness, but only for the time when Israel would dwell in the land of Canaan. Then the omission of circumcision and of the Passover during those forty years was nothing wrong in itself. The thinking here is that the Passover was not observed simply because there were insufficient paschal lambs at their disposal in the wilderness, and circumcision was not observed because the health of a tender child would have been endangered by circumcision while the people were constantly wandering about. But it would be wrong to think of the forty years of wandering in the wilderness as a daily march of so and so many miles, with daily changes in their quarters. Holy Scripture directs us rather to think of it as occasional marches and longer permanent quarters. Moreover, the circumcision of a newborn infant involves only a little loss of blood and carries with it little danger. No, neither the Passover nor circumcision belong to the permanent part of the Mosaic ceremonial Law, which would be

in force only after entrance into Canaan. Since they were of a sacramental character, they belonged to the chief laws of Israel. So, better reasons than these will have to be offered to explain the omission of such important acts during those decades.

All males that came out of Egypt were circumcised. But only those came into the land that flowed with milk and honey who were not yet twenty years old when Israel fell. We are not to think of the fall of Israel as being the time they prayed to the golden calf (Ex. 32), but rather the occasion recorded in Num. 14. Over 38 years had passed since that occasion, when the spies returned from Canaan and told of the strong people who lived in the land. They reported: "We are not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we" (Num. 13:31). Then the whole congregation lifted up their voice and cried, and the people wept that whole night and wanted to make a captain and return to Egypt. They cried: "Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!" (Num. 14:2). Attempts to calm them down were of no avail. When Joshua and Caleb tried to do so, the people wanted to stone them. It was then that the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel, and the Lord said: "How long will this people provoke me, and how long will it be ere they believe me?" (Num. 14:11) He wanted to smite Israel with pestilence and make Moses into a mighty nation. He had sworn to Israel in His wrath that they would not enter into His rest and into the good land. Then Moses, as on so many previous occasions, fervently prayed that the Lord would forgive the people. "If Thou shalt kill all this people, then the Egyptians shall hear it. Then they will say: The Lord was not able to bring the people into the land, therefore He hath slain them in the wilderness. Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people." And the Lord said: "I have pardoned according to thy word. But as truly as I live, as ye have spoken in my ears, so will I do to you. Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. And all that were numbered of you from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, shall not come into the land, except Caleb and Joshua. Your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your

whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness, that you may know what it is like when I alter my purpose."

Here lies the key to understanding just what happened in the great circumcision at Gilgal. The reason is not to be found in any wilful neglect or disobedience of Moses, nor in the impossibility or inadvisability of circumcising in the wilderness. It was a judgment of God upon Israel, who by its unbelief and murmuring had put His patience to a severe test and almost exhausted it. It was a judgment of God's wrath that henceforth in the wilderness no more circumcision would take place, which until then had taken place in the wilderness as well as in Egypt. -- The Lord could surely say: "I have pardoned," and He did what He said. But Israel must learn what it is like when He withdraws His hand. Therefore God took the covenant-sign, circumcision, away from the covenant people from that time on, for a long time. He allowed His Word to remain, and allowed it to be confirmed through Moses and Aaron and after that through signs and wonders. He gave visible assurance of His presence in Israel in the pillar of cloud and of fire. But He took the Sacrament of Circumcision away from the people for a while, until He Himself would again order it to be restored. So from that time on, those who were born in the wilderness remained uncircumcised. All who had been circumcised at the time of this murmuring and were twenty years of age and beyond (except for Joshua and Caleb) must die in the wilderness. They were not condemned to eternal damnation, for the Lord said: "I have pardoned." But they were unfit to enter the land that had been sworn to their fathers and which was originally intended also for them. What a fearful punishment it is when God takes away only one Sacrament, even though He allows His Word to remain! And of course, those who were uncircumcised could not celebrate the Passover either.

But now the people had crossed the Jordan, and the time of this wrath and visitation was past. The Lord showed that by leading the children of Israel through the Jordan in just as miraculous a manner as He had once led their fathers through the Red Sea. Now He permitted the old sign of the covenant of grace to be restored again through Joshua, and said to the people through Joshua: "This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from

off you" (v. 9). He referred to that reproach, that Egypt had been able to point their finger at Israel for forty years now, and could mock them saying: See, see, they are still in the wilderness. "The Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which He swore unto them" (Num. 14:16). For wherever Israel was during those forty years, the Egyptians knew their location, as did also the people in Canaan. A nation numbering over a million people does not disappear very easily. After the drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea and the rescue of Israel, sorrow took hold of the Philistines, the dukes of Edom were amazed, the mighty men of Moab trembled, and cowardice came upon all the inhabitants of Canaan (Ex. 15:14-15), these last awaiting with terror the advance of Israel. What else could they think but that the same thing would happen to them? Their trading caravans would now and then have a glimpse of the camp of the Israelites during those forty years in the wilderness, and they would bring the report: They have not yet come into the land which their God promised to give them. -- But now they were in that land. This disgrace and reproach no longer lay upon the children of Israel, for they had crossed the Jordan. In order to roll this reproach off them, this place was now called Gilgal ("rolling").

So it was at Gilgal that God allowed the bright sunlight of His grace to shine over Israel again. We are told that Joshua circumcised the children of Israel, i.e. he gave the command that this be done. There was no lack of people who were able to carry out this command. Surely there were many circumcised men in Israel who were over 40 years of age. They could easily carry out this sacramental act in just one day upon all males who were not circumcised. Joshua was to carry this out with stone knives. According to v. 4, all the men of war had died in the wilderness. Nevertheless, Joshua did not hesitate for a moment to carry out the Lord's command. "When they had finished circumcising all the people, they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole" (v. 8). No enemy touched them.

Many archeologists now regard it as almost certain fact that the stone knives of Joshua have been found. Back in 1863 a Frenchman named Victor Guerin was convinced that he had found the grave of Joshua, and he describes it in detail, thinking it to be the same as

described in Josh. 24:30. In 1870 a certain Abbe Richard visited this grave and also found many stone knives, just as he had also found a number of them at Gilgal. They were looking for these knives because of some words that are inserted in the Septuagint text after Josh. 24:30, these words not being recorded in the King James Version, which read as follows: "There they put with him into the tomb in which they buried him, the knives of stone with which he circumcised the children of Israel in Galgala and there they are to this day." Perhaps some of our CLC travellers to the Holy Land in recent years could provide us with more up-to-date information on this detail of Old Testament history. For now, we shall let the matter rest. We might only mention the fact that the Septuagint has a very similar interpolation right after Josh. 21:40.

In direct connection with the circumcision, Israel now celebrated also the Passover in Gilgal. According to v. 10, the time prescribed by the Law of Moses had come. Only those who were circumcised were permitted to take part in it. But since all males had now been circumcised, all Israel could participate in this joyous festival. "On the morrow after the passover" (v. 11) they could still eat unleavened bread and parched corn from the supply which they had provided for themselves according to Josh. 1:11. Then, in accordance with the command in Lev. 23:11, sheaves of the new grain were presented to the Lord. From the very next day they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan (v. 12), and the manna ceased.

While Israel was still camped at Gilgal near Jericho, a man appeared to Joshua "with his sword drawn in his hand," thus having a warlike appearance. In answer to Joshua's question: "Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?" the answer was given that "a captain of the host of the Lord" stood before him. Joshua fell on his face before Him and said to Him: "What saith my Lord unto His servant?" The entire answer we hear is the command: "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy." (Josh. 5:13-15.)

One might think that this captain over the host of the Lord was a created angel. But this angel, unlike the angel in Rev. 19:10, accepted the honor of being addressed in prayer. Therefore this must have been the uncreated Son of God, who had led and guided Israel from Egypt.

Now Joshua knew that an invisible host of angels was accompanying the visible host of Israel. Jehovah "had now come," not belonging to Israel's enemies, but to Israel. Holy is the place where Joshua shared in this revelation. And to Jehovah, holy is the land which He Himself helped His people to possess. Therefore Joshua obediently took off his shoe, as was the custom when one would give up a right (Ruth 4:6-8). As was the case with Moses (Ex. 3:5-6), so Joshua now received instructions from the Lord as to what he should do. Just as in Ex. 3:10 the general command to lead Israel out of Egypt was later on broken down into a great number of separate commands, so Joshua would receive directions from time to time from the invisible captain over the host of the Lord, as he carried out his general assignment (1:3-5). Right now it gave him courage and joy to know who was fighting for Israel.

Gilgal -- surely a place for remembering great miracles! Here feet passed through the dried up Jordan and men erected twelve stones. Here the circumcision of the uncircumcised took place. Here the first Passover festival in the land of promise was celebrated. Here the heavenly captain over the Lord's host appeared. How holy was this place! Later on under Samuel the tabernacle was located here (1 Sam. 10:8; 11:14; 15:21,33). Here Samuel would judge each year (1 Sam. 7:16). -- But in spite of all the blessed events connected with Gilgal, the prophets later on tell of the idolatry and wickedness and spiritual adultery that occurred at this very same place (Hos. 4:15; 9:15; 12:11; Amos 4:4). Now, at Joshua's time, Israel maintained in Gilgal a fortified camp, from which it would carry out its military operations (Josh. 4:19; 9:6; 10:6). God willing, these operations will be discussed in the second article of this series.

A. Schulz

THE GREEK ARTICLE
AND THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S DEITY

(Part II)

It has been said that each generation of Christians ought to rewrite its creeds. The intention surely is not that we ought literally to throw out those confessions which our believing fathers have formulated from Holy Scripture, and which have demonstrated their worth in instructing Christians in sound doctrine and in refuting those who oppose it. But we must "rewrite" our creeds in this sense, that we in our generation become convinced directly from the Bible that what we confess is in fact the pure truth of God's Word. Only when our faith rests solidly upon Scripture itself will it be safe from the temptations of Satan, who never ceases to tempt mankind with his subtle "Yea, hath God said?" (Gen. 3:1)

The doctrine of Christ's deity has been a special target of Satan throughout the generations. In the ancient period of church history we find the Monarchians and the Arians, who sought to reduce the mystery of the Trinity to the level of human reason by "confounding the Persons" of the Trinity on the one hand, or by "dividing the Substance" of these Persons on the other. (*Athanasian Creed*) In the modern period, we find sects such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, and a goodly number of rationalists in various Christian denominations as well, who continue to deceive many with their reintroductions of the ancient heresies.

And we have so much to lose if our confidence in the person of Jesus Christ as "true God, begotten of the Father from eternity" is shaken. Our sin is so deep and deadly a thing, that redemption could not be obtained by one who was merely human. "No man can by any means redeem his brother, Or give to God a ransom for him -- For the redemption of his soul is costly." (Ps. 49:7f., *NASB*) But now Scripture assures us that our Redeemer was equal to the task of delivering us from the death-verdict of the Law, for the blood of His own sacrifice which He brought into the holy of holies of heaven was the precious and availing blood of One who is in truth "the great and mighty God." (Tit. 2:13; Is. 9:6)

The present series of articles in the *Journal of*

Theology is dedicated to a Scriptural defense of the doctrine of Christ's deity. This study is focusing particularly on several passages in which the presence or absence of the Greek definite article is a significant factor in the exegesis, and in which a correct understanding of the syntax of the article is crucial if we are to arrive at the meaning intended by the Holy Spirit. In the September, 1973, issue (pp. 12-28), I presented at some length a principle of Greek grammar discovered in the latter part of the eighteenth century by an English philanthropist and philologist, Granville Sharp. It was Sharp's contention that a failure to recognize this principle had deprived many people of several significant proof passages for Christ's deity, particularly through weak or faulty translations in the *King James Version* of the Bible.

Among the passages cited by Sharp are the following verses, the readings of which are so well attested in the manuscripts that we can profitably study them in connection with his rule of syntax. I am citing them first from the *KJV*, underscoring those words which are significant to our study:

Ephesians 5:5. "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

2 Thessalonians 1:12. "That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Timothy 5:21. "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality."

Titus 2:13. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

2 Peter 1:1. "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

It will be noted that in each of these verses the translators used a wording in English which would suggest that the term "God" is not to be applied to Jesus Christ, but rather to the person of the Father. It was Sharp's con-

tention that, according to a correct understanding of the syntax of the Greek article, the term "God" would have to be understood of Christ, and he therefore proposed the following alternate translations for the words underscored above:

Ephesians 5:5: "of the Christ and God," or "of (Jesus) the Christ and God," or "of Christ, (even) of God"

2 Thessalonians 1:12: "of the God and Lord of us, Jesus Christ," or "of Jesus Christ, our God and Lord"

1 Timothy 5:21: "Jesus Christ, the God and Lord"

Titus 2:13: "of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ"

2 Peter 1:1: "of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ," or "of Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour"

Sharp recognized the important variant reading in the Timothy passage, and he was willing to accept this variant in the following sense: "the God and Christ, Jesus," or "Jesus, the God and Christ."

It must be stated quite frankly that not all Greek scholars since the time of Sharp have been willing to accept his principle, and we therefore find numerous grammars and commentaries which do not recognize these verses as proof passages for Christ's deity. Even our Lutheran dogmaticians have seemed somewhat reluctant to use them in their discussions of the divine nature of Christ, no doubt because of the cloud of uncertainty which has surrounded the exegesis of these passages. If, now, Sharp's principle can be defended as correct, we would have several additional passages -- and significant ones at that -- which we could use in our defense of the truth and our refutation of error in the matter of Christ's deity.

It seemed to me, therefore, that an evaluation of Sharp's conclusions would be a useful and important endeavor, and I have consequently examined his principle in the light of the entire body of New Testament writings, using for convenience one of the modern critical editions of the Greek Testament, the 20th edition of Nestle's *Novum Testamentum Graece* (1950). The results of this study appear on the pages which follow. All citations in the Greek are from this text of Nestle. For the sake of readers who are unfamiliar with the Greek, English translations are uniformly given. Unless otherwise in-

icated, these translations are from the *New American Standard Bible*, which itself has followed the text of a later edition of Nestle.

A Restatement of Sharp's Rule

It is time to restate that principle of Greek syntax which has come to be known as the canon or rule of Granville Sharp, or simply "Sharp's Rule."

When two personal nouns of the same case are connected by the copulative καί ["and"], if the former has the definite article, and the latter has not, they both relate to the same person.

It is essential to note the general syntactic form covered by the rule: definite article + personal noun + καί + personal noun. It is important, also, to understand what Sharp means by a "personal noun," which he carefully distinguishes from a proper name. According to his definition, personal nouns are nouns which are descriptive of personal relations, qualities, offices, ranks, and such like. The term would thus include such titles of office so significant to our study as "God," "Lord," "Savior," and even "Christ," but it would not include proper names like "John," "Paul," or "Jesus." This distinction between personal nouns and proper names becomes clearer if we note how they differ in actual usage. Proper names are seldom if ever used in the plural number, but personal nouns are commonly so used. Compare the following examples of plural personal nouns from the New Testament itself: "For false christs and false prophets will arise" (Matt. 24:24); "there are many gods and many lords" (1 Cor. 8:5). Furthermore, in English usage we generally do not use a definite article with proper names, while we often do so with personal nouns. For example, we would not say: "That man is the Jesus" -- "Jesus" functioning as a proper name. But we could say: "That man is the Christ" -- "Christ" being a personal noun, a title denoting an office.

Sharp, now, affirmed that his rule applied uniformly to personal nouns when they were used in the singular number, and of course when they occurred in the general form: definite article + personal noun + καί + personal noun. He specifically excluded plural personal nouns and proper names from the rule. I have, however, not restricted this study to singular personal nouns. In order

to test out his distinction between personal nouns and proper names, and to verify his exclusion of plural personal nouns and proper names from his rule, I am treating separately all three of these broad groupings: personal nouns in the plural, proper names, and personal nouns in the singular.

Before proceeding, it should be noted also that Sharp uses the term "nouns" in the broad sense of the word, so as to include substantives (nouns proper), and also adjectives and participles when they are used as substantives. Further information concerning the life or the rule of Granville Sharp can be found in the first article of this series.

Personal Nouns in the Plural

Sharp rightly recognized that his rule did not apply uniformly to passages which contained personal nouns in the plural. In tracing his rule through the New Testament, I found sixty verses which contained phrases of this general form: definite article + personal noun + καί + personal noun, where both nouns were in the plural number. Of these, in twenty-three cases (38%) the two nouns seemed to refer to the same group of people -- and were thus in a sense illustrations of Sharp's Rule. In thirty cases (50%) the two nouns appeared to refer to different groups of people -- the exceptions which led Sharp to exclude plural nouns from his rule. In the remaining seven cases (12%) it was not so readily apparent whether the pair of nouns referred to the same group of people or to different groups. Illustrations of these three categories follow.

Both nouns of the pair refer to the same group. The first example in the New Testament occurs in Matt. 5:6: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness" (οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες). In Matt. 11:28 Christ invites: "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden" (οἱ κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι). In connection with the story of Palm Sunday we read in Matt. 21:15 of "the children who were crying out in the temple and saying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David'" (τοὺς κρᾶζοντας ... καὶ λέγοντας). In Mark 12:40 Christ portrays the scribes as those "who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers" (οἱ κατέσθοντες ... καὶ ... προσευχόμενοι).

The Gospel of Luke provides more examples in this category than any other book of the New Testament. There is Luke 6:35, in which Christ seems to be speaking of a single class, namely, the unbelievers: "He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men" (τοὺς ἀχαρίστους καὶ πονηροὺς). In Luke 8:21 the Lord refers to those "who hear the word of God and do it" (οἱ ... ἀκούοντες καὶ ποιοῦντες). Luke 11:28 is similar: "Blessed are those who hear the word of God, and observe it" (οἱ ἀκούοντες... καὶ φυλάσσοντες). In Luke 12:4 Christ tells His disciples: "And I say to you my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do" (τῶν ἀποκτεννόντων ... καὶ ... ἐχόντων). In 20:46 He again refers to the scribes, here as those "who like to walk around in long robes, and love respectful greetings" (τῶν θελόντων ... καὶ φιλοῦντων).

Four examples are found in John: 1:40: "One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother" (τῶν ἀκουσάντων ... καὶ ἀκολουθήσαντων); 11:31: "The Jews then who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her" (οἱ ὄντες ... καὶ παραμυθούμενοι); 11:45: "Many therefore of the Jews, who had come to Mary and beheld what He had done, believed in Him" (οἱ ἐλθόντες ... καὶ θεασάμενοι); and 20:29: "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed" (οἱ ... ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες).

Paul's writings exhibit six examples where both nouns in each pair seem to refer to the same group of people. Gal. 1:7: "There are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ" (οἱ ταρασσόντες ... καὶ θέλοντες). Eph. 1:1: "to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus" (τοῖς ἀγίοις ... καὶ πιστοῖς). Phil. 3:3: "We are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh" (οἱ ... λατρεύοντες καὶ καυχώμενοι ... καὶ ... πεποιθότες). 1 Tim. 4:3: "those who believe and know the truth" (τοῖς πιστοῖς καὶ ἐπεγνωκόσι). 2 Tim. 3:6: "those who enter into households and captivate weak women" (οἱ ἐνδύνοντες ... καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντες). Titus 1:15 likewise seems to be referring to a single group of people: "those who are defiled and unbelieving" (τοῖς ... μεμιασμένους καὶ ἀπίστοις).

One example is found in the remaining epistles of

the New Testament, 1 Pet. 2:18: "Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable" (τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς καὶ ἐπιεικέσιν). The final three occur in the Revelation: 1:3: "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it" (οἱ ἀκούοντες ... καὶ τηροῦντες); 12:17: "who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus" (τῶν τηρούντων ... καὶ ἔχόντων); and 18:9: "And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament" (οἱ ... πορνεύσαντες καὶ στρορνιάσαντες).

The two nouns of the pair refer to different groups.

Most examples of personal nouns in the plural, again arranged in the form: definite article + personal noun + καὶ + personal noun, are found in this second category. And in the large majority of these, the nouns denote members of the various Jewish sects or ecclesiastical offices. The first such example occurs in Matt. 2:4, where it is said of Herod: "And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he began to inquire of them where the Christ was to be born" (τοῖς ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ γραμματεῖς). Compare also Matt. 3:7, 5:20, 12:38, 16:1, 16:6, 16:11, 16:12, 16:21 (three nouns: "the elders and chief priests and scribes"), 20:18, 26:47, 27:3, 27:12, 27:41; Mark 15:1; Luke 9:22 (three nouns), 14:3, 22:4; John 7:45; and Acts 23:7.

Four times in the Gospels we find the phrase "the publicans and sinners" (τῶν τελωνῶν καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν), which groups again are not identical. Compare Matt. 9:11; Mark 2:16 (twice); and Luke 5:30. Twice in Acts, 15:2 and 16:4, the ministers of the Jerusalem congregation are referred to as "the apostles and elders" (τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ πρεσβυτέροις, and τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων). From Acts 15:4, 6, 22, and 23, where articles are found before each of the nouns, we learn that the apostles and elders at Jerusalem were distinct groups.

Several examples remain. Matt. 21:12: "those who were buying and selling in the temple" (τοῖς πωλοῦντας καὶ ἀγοράζοντας); Luke 14:21: "Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame" (τοῖς πτωχοῖς καὶ ἀναπήροις καὶ τυφλοῖς καὶ χωλοῖς); 1 Tim. 5:8: "But if

any one does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith" (τῶν ἰδίων καὶ ... οἰκείων); and Rev. 21:8: "the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters" (τοὺς ... δειλοὺς καὶ ἀπίστοις καὶ ἐβδελυγμένους καὶ φονεῦσιν καὶ πόρνοις καὶ φαρμακοῖς καὶ εἰδωλολάτραις).

Uncertain cases. Seven examples of personal nouns in the plural remain, and in each of these cases it is more difficult to determine whether the pair of nouns refers to one group of people or to two. In some of them the commentators themselves are not agreed, and I shall not take the time here to enter into an exegesis of them. A simple listing will have to suffice. Luke 15:9: "she calls together her friends and neighbors" (τὰς φίλας καὶ γείτονας). 1 Cor. 5:10: "the covetous and swindlers" (τοὺς πλεονέκταις καὶ ἄρπαξιν). Eph. 2:20: "having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν). Eph. 3:5: "it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit" (τοὺς ἁγίους ἀποστόλους ... καὶ προφήταις). Eph. 4:11: "He gave some ... as pastors and teachers" (τοὺς ... ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους). Heb. 5:2: "he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided" (τοὺς ἀγνοοῦσιν καὶ πλανημένους). 2 Pet. 3:16: "which the untaught and unstable distort" (οἱ ἀμαθεῖς καὶ ἀστήρικτοι).

An added comment. In all sixty of the foregoing examples of personal nouns in the plural, an article is found only before the first noun of each pair or series. They were included in this study inasmuch as they have the general syntactic form described by Sharp's Rule: definite article + personal noun + καὶ + personal noun. We can clearly see that Sharp was correct in excluding plural personal nouns from his rule.

But there are many pairs or series of plural personal nouns in the New Testament where the identical article (the same number, gender, and case) is found before each of the nouns. Compare, for example, Matt. 21:15: "the chief priests and the scribes" (οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς). Is there any significance in such a repetition of the article in a series of nouns? It would seem that there is. For the article retains in the New Testament some of its original demonstrative

force. The basic function of the article is to point out individual identity, to distinguish individuals from individuals, classes from classes, and qualities from qualities. When, therefore, an article is used with each noun in a series, the members of the series are thereby distinguished from each other. But when the article is used only before the first noun, the members of the series, even though they may not be identical, are for some reason treated by the writer as a single group. In Matt. 27:1 the apostle distinguishes "the chief priests and the elders" as two distinct classes, for he uses the article before each noun (οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι). But in verses 3 and 12 he treats them as if they were a single group, "the chief priests and elders" (τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσιν καὶ πρεσβυτέροις, and τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων), since they are in fact acting as one in their designs to dispose of Jesus.

Proper Names

Sharp stipulated also that proper names were not to be included in his rule, for he rightly recognized that there would be exceptions. In my perusal of the Greek Testament I located a total of fourteen such exceptions. Compare the following: Matt. 17:1 and Mark 5:37: "Peter and James and John" (τὸν Πέτρον καὶ Ἰακώβον καὶ Ἰωάννην); Luke 24:10: "Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James" (ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ Μαρία καὶ Ἰωάννα καὶ Μαρία ἡ Ἰακώβου); John 11:19: "to Martha and Mary" (πρὸς τὴν Μάρθαν καὶ Μαριάμ); Acts 4:13: "the confidence of Peter and John" (τὴν τοῦ Πέτρου παρησίαν καὶ Ἰωάννου). In 2 Pet. 1:2, a personal noun with article is joined by καὶ to a proper name without article: "of God and of Jesus" (τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ). The remaining examples are found at Mark 9:2, 15:47, 16:1; Acts 4:19, 13:2, 13:50, 15:22, and 16:30.

It will be noted that in all of the above the article is used before only the first term in a pair or series of proper names. But obviously the proper names in a given series do not all refer to the same individual. Sharp's Rule, therefore, does not apply -- as he himself recognized.

An added comment. We find in the New Testament a great variety in the use of the definite article with

proper names. There are passages in which no article at all is used, others in which the article is used before only the first of a series of names, and still others in which the same article is repeated before each name in the series. Compare the following passages where the names Paul and Silas are found: Acts 16:25: Παῦλος καὶ Σιλᾶς; Acts 16:30: τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ Σιλᾷ; and Acts 17:4: τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ τῷ Σιλᾷ. It would, it seems, be safe to make the following generalizations. Proper names, since they are in their nature particular rather than general, do not ordinarily require the article. When the article is used with them, it therefore probably retains much of its original demonstrative force. We find that John generally introduces a proper name without the article and thereafter uses it with that name. In such cases the article would have an anaphoric use, pointing back to an individual previously mentioned. When it is used before only the first name in a series, the individuals are probably treated as a single group, as in the fourteen examples cited above.

But it must be admitted that it is often difficult to state a reason for the presence or absence of articles with proper names. I do not believe that the usage of the holy writers in this area was random and meaningless, but the reasons for their usage may frequently elude us.

Personal Nouns in the Singular

We come finally to the passages which contain personal nouns in the singular, once again in the general form: definite article + personal noun + καὶ + personal noun. Sharp claimed that his rule applied uniformly to such passages, and I indeed could not find a single exception. Let us examine the evidence, which includes, apart from the verses bearing on Christ's deity, a total of eighty-nine examples.

Examples with participles. This category contains forty-eight of the total number (54%). The first example is found in the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 7:26: "And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand" (ὁ ἀκούων ... καὶ ... ποιῶν). Mark 16:16 contains the following familiar illustration of the rule: "He who has believed and has been baptized shall

be saved" (ὁ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθείς). In Luke 12:21 we read: "So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (ὁ θησαυρίζων ... καὶ ... πλουτῶν). The Gospel of John contains more examples with participles than any other New Testament book. Compare John 6:54 and 6:56, which present identical clauses: "He who eats My flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life" (ὁ τρώγων ... καὶ πίνων). In his address to Cornelius, Acts 10:35, Peter says: "In every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right, is welcome to Him" (ὁ φοβούμενος ... καὶ ἐργαζόμενος). There are scattered examples throughout the epistles, such as this one in 1 Cor. 11:29: "For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly" (ὁ ... ἐσθίων καὶ πίνων). Compare also 1 John 2:9: "The one who says he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now" (ὁ λέγων ... καὶ ... μισῶν). The Revelation contains four examples, including this one at 16:15: "Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments" (ὁ γρηγορῶν καὶ τηρῶν).

The remaining illustrations of Sharp's Rule which employ participles are found in Matt. 13:23; Mark 15:29; Luke 6:49, 12:47, 13:34; John 3:29, 5:24, 5:35, 6:33, 6:40, 6:45, 8:50, 9:8, 11:2, 11:26, 12:29, 12:48, 14:21; Acts 15:38; Rom. 2:3; 1 Cor. 16:16; 2 Cor. 1:21, 5:15, 5:18; Gal. 1:15, 2:20, 3:5; Eph. 2:14; 2 Thess. 2:4, 2:16; 1 Tim. 5:5 (a noun and a participle); 2 Tim. 1:9; Heb. 7:1; James 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:21; 2 John 9; Rev. 1:5, 3:7, and 22:8. All of the examples involving participles agree completely with the rule, in that in each of them both participles refer to the same individual.

Examples with adjectives. These number far less, only six (7%). I shall therefore cite them all. Acts 3:14: "But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One" (τὸν ἅγιον καὶ δίκαιον). Philemon 1 (an adjective and a noun): "to Philemon our beloved brother and fellow-worker" (τῷ ἀγαπητῷ καὶ συνεργῷ). 1 Pet. 4:18: "And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner?" (ὁ ... ἀσεβῆς καὶ ἁμαρτωλός). The NASB would have been closer to the Greek if it had translated the underscored phrase with only one article: "the godless man and sinner," for both the singular number of the verb (φανεῖται) and the

preceding context indicate that both adjectives refer to the same individual. Revelation 3:14: "the faithful and true witness" (ὁ μάφτος ὁ πιστός καὶ ἀληθινός); 3:17: "You are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked" (ὁ ταλαίπωρος καὶ ἔλεεινός καὶ πτωχός καὶ τυφλός καὶ γυμνός); 6:10: "O Lord, holy and true" (ὁ ἅγιος καὶ ἀληθινός).

Once again it can be seen that Sharp's Rule agrees completely with the evidence.

Examples with substantives. The most significant examples, I believe, are those which employ substantives, or nouns proper. I found thirty-five of them (39% of the total), not including those which pertain to Christ's deity. The first in the New Testament is at Mark 6:3: "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon" (ὁ υἱός ... καὶ ἀδελφός). Compare also Mark 12:26: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (ὁ θεός ... καὶ θεός ... καὶ θεός). An example similar to this is found in Luke 20:37.

The Apostle Paul is especially fond of this idiom. In Phil. 2:25 he refers to Eraphroditus as "my brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier" (τὸν ἀδελφόν καὶ συνεργόν καὶ συστρατιώτην). Similar expressions are used in Eph. 6:21, Col. 4:7, and 1 Thess. 3:2. In a number of passages Paul refers to the first person of the Trinity as "the (our) God and Father." Compare 1 Cor. 15:24 and Eph. 5:20: τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ; Phil. 4:20: τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ ἡμῶν; Gal. 1:5, 1 Thess. 1:3, and 3:13: τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν; 1 Thess. 3:11: ὁ θεός καὶ πατήρ ἡμῶν. We find an expansion of this phrase in the common expression: "the God and Father of the (our) Lord Jesus (Christ)." Compare Rom. 15:6: τὸν θεόν καὶ πατέρα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; 2 Cor. 1:3 and Eph. 1:3: ὁ θεός καὶ πατήρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; 2 Cor. 11:31: ὁ θεός καὶ πατήρ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ. A significant inversion of the nouns πατήρ and θεός is found in 2 Cor. 1:3b: "the Father of mercies and God of all comfort" (ὁ πατήρ ... καὶ θεός). The last passage in Paul illustrating Sharp's Rule is 1 Tim. 6:15: "He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords" (ὁ βασιλεὺς ... καὶ κύριος).

Peter is fully as fond of the idiom. In 1 Pet. 1:3 he says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord

Jesus Christ" (ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατήρ). In 2:25 he refers to Christ as "the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls" (τὸν ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον). In 5:1 he refers to himself as "your fellow-elder and witness" (ὁ συμπρεσβύτερος καὶ μάρτυς). Four passages, very similar to each other, are found in the second epistle: "the (our) Lord and Savior (Jesus Christ)" (τοῦ κυρίου καὶ σωτήρος). They are found at 1:11, 2:20, 3:2, and 3:18.

I shall not extend the discussion by citing at length the remaining examples of Sharp's Rule which employ nouns. They can be found at Heb. 3:1, 12:2; James 1:27, 3:9; 1 John 5:20; Jude 4; Rev. 1:6, and 1:9. In these passages, as in all the foregoing, Sharp's Rule is found to be a valid principle -- without a single exception!

The Passages Involving Christ's Deity

We can surely understand why Sharp felt so convinced that Christ is referred to as "God" (θεός) in the five passages cited near the beginning of this article. For if his rule is applied to these passages, this would seem to be the inevitable result. In the paragraphs which follow, I would like to evaluate briefly his conclusions.

Ephesians 5:5: "in the kingdom of the Christ and God" (a literal translation of ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ). This clearly fits the pattern of Sharp's Rule (definite article + singular personal noun + καὶ + singular personal noun), and it would indeed seem natural to take both "Christ" and "God" as references to the same individual, namely, the second person of the Trinity. It is true that the phrase, "of Christ and God" is very brief, containing no modifiers. But it is no briefer than the phrase "to the God and Father" (τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί) in a very similar passage at 1 Cor. 15:24: "when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father." Or compare the phrase "the Lord and Father" (a literal translation of τὸν κύριον καὶ πατέρα) in James 3:9: "With it we bless [the] Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God." Nor does the fact that the noun "God" follows the copulative (καὶ) remove our passage from the application of the rule. For in 2 Cor. 1:3 we have the phrase "the

Father ... and God" (ὁ πατήρ ... καὶ θεός), and in this verse no one would hesitate to apply both nouns to the same individual, here God the Father.

It should be pointed out, moreover, that if Paul had not desired to call Jesus both "Christ" and "God" in Eph. 5:5, he could have accomplished this easily in either of two ways. He could, first, have eliminated the article from both of the nouns. For when in Greek two singular personal nouns of the same case are connected by καὶ and neither of them has an article, the first of them generally denotes a person different from the second. The examples of this in the New Testament are many. Compare the sentence with which Paul begins so many of his epistles: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) -- found in substantially this same form at Rom. 1:7, 1 Cor. 1:3, 2 Cor. 1:2, Gal. 1:3, Eph. 1:2, Phil. 1:2, 2 Thess. 1:2, 1 Tim. 1:2, 2 Tim. 1:2, Titus 1:4, and Philemon 3. Other significant examples are the following: Gal. 1:1: "through Jesus Christ, and God the Father" (διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς); Eph. 6:23: "from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ); 1 Thess. 1:1 and 2 Thess. 1:1: "in God the (our) Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (ἐν θεῷ πατρὶ [ἡμῶν] καὶ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ); 1 Tim. 1:1: "according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope" (κατ' ἐπιταγὴν θεοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τῆς ἐλπίδος ἡμῶν); James 1:1: "a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος). So, if Paul had wished to refer to two persons in our passage, he could have written ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ, with no article before either noun: "in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

There is a second way in which Paul could have kept us from taking the "God" of Eph. 5:5 as a reference to Jesus. He could have used an article before both of the nouns, for with this usage the holy writers often do refer to two distinct persons. Compare the following: 1 Cor. 3:8: "he who plants and he who waters" (ὁ φυτεύων ... καὶ ὁ ποτίζων); 1 Thess. 3:11: "Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you" (αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ θεός καὶ πατήρ ἡμῶν καὶ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς ...); 2 Thess. 2:16: "Now may our Lord

Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father ..." (αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς καὶ ὁ θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν); 1 John 2:22: "the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son" (... τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱόν); Rev. 11:15: "the kingdom ... of our Lord, and of His Christ" (ἡ βασιλεία ... τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ); 14:4: "as first fruits to God and to the Lamb" (ἀπαρχὴ τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῷ ἀρνίῳ); 20:6: "priests of God and of Christ" (ἱερεῖς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ). If, therefore, Paul had wished to refer to two persons in Eph. 5:5, he could also have written ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, with an article before each of the nouns: "in the kingdom of the Christ and of God."

But because Paul, now, in our passage employed an article before "Christ" and not before "God," we feel compelled to conclude that he wished thereby to refer both nouns to the person of Jesus: "in the kingdom of the Christ and God." And note well that the arguments presented in these last paragraphs would apply equally to the passages which follow!

2 Thessalonians 1:12: "according to the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ" (a literal translation of κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). If Paul had wished to refer to both the Father and the Son in this verse, how easily he could have inserted τοῦ before κυρίου. He is not at all reluctant to do so in other places of this epistle. (Cf. the first part of our verse, and also 2:1, 2:14, and 3:18.) The fact that the apostle omitted the article prompts us to refer both nouns, "God" and "Lord," to Jesus Christ. Note in this connection how the commentators have no difficulty in rightly applying Sharp's Rule to a similar passage like 1 Tim. 6:15: "the King ... and Lord" (ὁ βασιλεὺς ... καὶ κύριος), where both nouns also refer to one and the same person.

1 Timothy 5:21: "in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus" (ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ). In this verse I find myself unable to accept Sharp's exegesis. He takes the verse in this sense: "in the presence of Jesus, the God and Christ." To do this he finds it necessary to split the phrase Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ. But this seems a questionable procedure, inasmuch as the phrases "Jesus Christ" and "Christ Jesus" occur so commonly in

the New Testament in compound form. In the Nestle text (20th ed.) the former is found one hundred thirty-one times, and the latter ninety-four times. It seems, therefore, that we ought not divide the phrase as Sharp has here done, when he takes Χριστοῦ as a personal noun, and Ἰησοῦ as a proper name in apposition with τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Χριστοῦ.

One additional point can be made. The lack of an article after καὶ does not seem to be significant in this verse, as it indeed is in the two passages discussed above. For the phrases "Jesus Christ" and "Christ Jesus" are used almost always without an article in the New Testament. (I found only four examples that did have an article: Matt. 1:18, Acts 5:42, Eph. 3:11, and Col. 2:6.) It would seem that "Jesus Christ" and "Christ Jesus" had become compound proper names by the time the epistles were written, and for this reason also they would not be subject to Sharp's Rule.

I am therefore disinclined to agree with Sharp that the word "God" should here be referred to the same person as the word "Christ." Paul could well have had both the Father and the Son in mind, even as he certainly did in a similar passage at 2 Pet. 1:2: "of God and of Jesus" (τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ). And what is said here of 1 Timothy 5:21 would apply equally to 2 Timothy 4:1, which in the Nestle text presents an identical wording.

Titus 2:13: "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" (προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς δόξης τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ). If Paul had wanted to refer to both the Father and the Son in this verse, he could have readily inserted an article before σωτῆρος. We note how the noun "Savior" is generally used with an article in the Pastoral Epistles. (Cf. 1 Tim. 2:3; Titus 1:3, 1:4, 2:10, 3:4, 3:6; 2 Tim. 1:10.) The fact that the apostle did not use it in our verse seems significant -- he wished to apply both titles, "the great God" and "Savior," to Christ Jesus.

2 Peter 1:1: "by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). It is significant that this same genitive phrase occurs in two other passages of this

epistle, 1:11 and 3:18 -- with the change of a single word, κυρίου instead of θεοῦ: τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. (Cf. also 2:20 and 3:2.) I know of no commentator or grammarian who in verses 1:11 and 3:18 would hesitate to refer both nouns, "Lord" and "Savior," to Jesus Christ. But why, then, do some of them object when Sharp and others insist that in our verse both nouns, "God" and "Savior," be referred to Jesus Christ? For the syntactic construction of the three passages is exactly the same! The answer would seem to lie in some kind of dogmatic or theological bias. I myself confidently join Sharp in asserting that our verse must be taken as another proof passage for the deity of Christ.

The Conclusions of This Evaluation

After this somewhat lengthy evaluation of Sharp's Rule and his exegetical findings, I can afford to be brief in my own conclusions. Sharp's Rule appears to be a well-founded and accurate description of the usage of the article which it covers: *when two singular personal nouns of the same case are coupled by καὶ and only the first has the article, both nouns uniformly refer to the same individual.* And I am also very ready to accept the following verses as proof passages for Christ's deity: Ephesians 5:5, 2 Thessalonians 1:12, Titus 2:13, and 2 Peter 1:1.

I am, of course, aware of the fact that a number of grammarians fail to cite the rule of Sharp as a valid principle, and that many commentators refuse to accept his exegetical conclusions. It is my hope to discuss the reasons for this contradictory situation in the next article of this series.

C. Kuehne

GERIZIM AND EBAL

From earliest childhood "the Land of Canaan," "the Promised Land," "the Holy Land," Palestine with its cities and villages -- Jerusalem, Jericho, Bethlehem, Beersheba -- have been familiar household names. The wanderings of the patriarchs, the exploits of the judges, the careers of Saul, David, and Solomon, the mighty witness of the prophets, the tragic deterioration and destruction of the Northern and Southern kingdoms, the Gospel stories climaxing in the death and resurrection of our Lord, the first beginnings of the Church, the destruction of Jerusalem -- all took place on that parcel of real estate that is but 0.25 per cent as large as the United States, without Alaska and Hawaii. Without even consciously realizing it, one has formed a mental picture of that land -- from the biblical descriptions of the various places, from pictures in the Bible story books, from the maps and prints of archeological books. But what is it really like? A group of forty-seven were privileged to get the taste and smell and sight and feel of the land this past September while on the "Reformation Heritage Tour."

For the writer the first impression was one of disappointment. We didn't walk through the land as did Abraham or arrive by ship at Caesarea and then walk up to Jerusalem, as did St. Paul. No, we flew in from Cyprus to Lod International Airport at Tel Aviv. We motored by air-conditioned bus to the new resort city, Netanya, in the ancient Plain of Sharon. We were housed, not in some friendly tent or rock-built home, but rather in a high-rise hotel from whose window could be seen the symbol of progress, the ever-present crane for the construction of more and still more highrise buildings. It was all too modern! Would we find the land of the Old and New Testaments under the asphalt jungle of the modern city with its highrise buildings desecrating the skyline and in the country where modern agricultural methods are fast replacing and displacing the wandering bedouins?

We searched out the past and found traces of it. The State of Israel has restored the amphitheater that may well have been the place where St. Paul defended himself before Festus and King Agrippa (Acts 26). We stood

on top of battle-scarred Megiddo, that ancient fortress that guarded the caravan route from Egypt as it passes from the Plain of Sharon to the Plain of Esdraelon. We could see Mt. Tabôr towards the east. There is where Barak waited -- possibly a bit fearfully -- with his ten thousand foot soldiers as Sisera confidently approached with his nine hundred chariots of iron. But the Lord sent a flash shower that flooded the Kishon causing Sisera's chariots to bog down in the mud, thereby creating a wild equestrian traffic jam with all its confusion in the very midst of the plain, for "the Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword of Barak; so that Sisera lighted down off his chariot, and fled away on his feet." Judges 4:15. Imagine a Patton or a Rommel climbing out of his tank or command-car and running from the battle on foot! So Sisera ran, but he couldn't run far enough away. Jael got him. Judges 4:21. We could see the scenes unfold -- from the top of Megiddo, while the rubble of the stalls of Solomon's chariot horses lay at our feet, drinking troughs and hitching posts lying there as vivid reminders of bygone military might. But the Kishon is no more, except for a trickle, for it has become a victim of the insatiable thirst of modern irrigation.

We drove along the Carmel range and had lunch on top of the mount -- in the area where Elijah took on, exposed, and exterminated the four hundred fifty prophets of Baal in the power and might of the Lord, I Kings 18. Then we back-tracked through the length of the Plain of Esdraelon -- that bloody plain that has witnessed so many battles down through the ages that it has become the symbolic place for the final conflict, Armageddon, Rev. 16:16.

The traditional sites of many historical events have been kept alive down through the centuries by the construction of pagan temples to desecrate those places or Moslem mosques or Christian churches to consecrate them. We are indeed indebted to past generations for thus preserving alive in the memory of man the sacred sites, but we did feel that the efforts of past generations all too often cast a sickly pale of religiosity over places and events that live in the memories and hearts of Christians through the power of the Word in the biblical record. Our Arab tour guide expressed the sentiments of many of

us when we reached the final crest that revealed that marvellous panoramic view of the Sea of Galilee: "Thank God, they couldn't build a shrine or a church over this!" It was beautiful. From our hotel in Tiberias we could see the ruins of Capernaum to the north, the Golan Heights across the lake, and the south end where the Jordan makes its way down to the Dead Sea.

We spent a day examining the ancient ruins of Capernaum with its synagog, the traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount -- the city on the hill (Matt. 5:14), Safed (Zefat), perched in the background; we passed along the "Horns of Hattin" where the Turks once administered a bloody defeat on the Crusaders; we came to Nazareth and Mary's well -- the only source of water for the ancient village and so the very place where our Lord must have come with His mother to draw water; we passed by the Mount of the Precipice, the traditional place from whence His townsmen sought to cast Him headlong after His first sermon in His hometown, Luke 4:29; then around solitary Mt. Tabor and back to Tiberias -- after visiting a modern kibbutz along the way.

The next day we headed south passing by the Tel of Dothan where Joseph encountered his brothers (Gen. 37: 17ff), arriving at ancient Samaria whose ruins silently testify of her former splendor and whose geographic position bears witness to the military insight of Omri, I Kings 16:24. Farther to the south lies the modern city of Nablus, built by the Romans at the very time their armies were busy destroying Jerusalem in 70 A.D. The modern city lies near the site of ancient Shechem, between two rounded mountains, Gerizim and Ebal.

The modern tourist-visitor and biblical student must realize that while the archeologist's spade has unlocked many of the secrets of the past, there still remain countless mysteries and mystery sites. Shechem is one of them.

When Abraham first came to the promised land, we are told that he "passed through the land unto the place of Sichem (Shechem), unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land." Gen. 12:6. Abraham passed through the area, but it was occupied. Jacob later returned to the area, dug a well there -- still known by his name as "Jacob's well" -- and purchased a parcel of land. Genesis 34 reports the rape of Dinah by Shechem of that city and the craftily devised and cruelly exe-

cuted revenge of Simeon and Levi upon the city. The reaction of father Jacob was one of abhorrence: "Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house." Gen. 34:30. The fears of Jacob were not realized, but the memory of the cruel treachery of his two sons never faded from the patriarch's memory. On his deathbed he poured out his final reaction to the horror of that long-ago day: "Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." Gen. 49:5-7.

Thus from earliest times there was connection between the men of Israel and the inhabitants and area of Shechem. This may somehow account for the strange fact that Joshua did not have to conquer Shechem. After the fall of Jericho and the conquest of Ai, Joshua proceeded northward and came to the area of Shechem. The account reads as follows:

Then Joshua built an altar unto the Lord God of Israel in mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron; and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings. And he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel. And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses com-

manded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them. Joshua 8:30-35.

What Joshua did he did "as it is written in the book of the law of Moses." The consecration ceremony at Shechem had been spelled out in detail by Moses in his third oration, as recorded in Deuteronomy 27-30. Here is how Moses set forth in detail the renewal of the covenant, the rite of consecration:

And Moses with the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandments which I command you this day. And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaister them with plaister: And thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over, that thou mayest go in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, a land that floweth with milk and honey; as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee. Therefore it shall be when ye be gone over Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaister them with plaister. And there shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them. Thou shalt build the altar of the Lord thy God of whole stones: and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord thy God: And thou shalt offer peace offerings, and shalt eat there, and and rejoice before the Lord thy God. And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly. And Moses and the priests the Levites spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed, and hearken, O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day. And Moses charged the people the same day, saying, These shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin: And these shall stand upon mount Ebal to curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulon, Dan, and Naphtali. Deut. 27:1-13.

Perhaps as you read Moses' prescriptive description of that scene and then the fulfillment in the book of Joshua, you may be trying to visualize that solemn scene. Is there actually such a place where the entire congregation of Israel or even representatives of the twelve tribes could be gathered for a reading of the "cursings and blessings," without the aid of a modern electrical amplification system? Yes, there is, and it is still there! We were gathered in the courtyard of the church built over Jacob's well. Our tour guide was giving the historical significance of the area. Suddenly a voice boomed out amidst, but also above the noise of the modern city of Nablus. Someone was making his point, but the point is that he could be heard. The undersigned interrupted the tour guide to draw the group's attention to the fact that the cry of the man in the city could be so clearly heard.

On that day of the renewal of the covenant and consecration of the land six tribes took up their position on Mt. Gerizim, the south mountain that is wooded to this day. It was the Mount of Blessing. These tribes faced towards the fertile Plain of Esdraelon. On the other side, the northern mount of Ebal -- the Mount of Cursing -- which is barren to this day, stood the other six tribes, looking southward towards the barren hills of the central highlands. Down in the valley stood the priests and Joshua. There was a hushed silence -- broken only by the stentorian voice of him who read the ancient "cursings and blessings." What a day that must have been! How vividly one can picture it -- after having been there and seen the exact location of that event.

At the end of his career Joshua once again "gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem," Joshua 24:1. It was on that occasion that Joshua challenged the people to make a decision, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," leading the way by publicly declaring his own decision, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15.

Joshua 24:32 reports that the bones of Joseph, which had been brought out of Egypt, were buried in Shechem in a burial plot that father Jacob had purchased centuries before from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem. Again we take note of this mysterious, but compelling link between the patriarchs and this particular place.

Shechem is also one of the places that gives us a glimpse of the spiritual, moral, and political deterioration of the period of the judges. One of Gideon's sons was Abimelech, the son of a woman of Shechem. After the death of his father, Abimelech prevailed upon the men of Shechem, his mother's brethren, to make him ruler. He consolidated his power by murdering his seventy brothers, the sons of Gideon. Only one escaped, Jothan, who climbed to the top of Mt. Gerizim and proclaimed to the inhabitants of Shechem the ominous parable of the "Republic of the Trees." He could be clearly heard by the men of Shechem without any fear of interruption or capture. As Jothan said it would be, so it came to pass. Shechem was destroyed. Read the story in Judges 9.

The continuing importance of this area can be seen from the fact that after the death of Solomon, his son, Rehoboam, went to Shechem to be crowned king. What better geographical place could be found than this natural amphitheater? What place had more memories and national significance than Shechem where Israel had first gathered to consecrate the land? But Rehoboam was not to be crowned king of all Israel, for here at Shechem the kingdom was divided with Jeroboam taking the ten northern tribes, leaving but two to Rehoboam. Thereafter Jeroboam rebuilt Shechem and made it his capital, I Kings 12:25. Shechem remained the capital of the Northern Kingdom until Omri moved it to Samaria, I Kings 16:24.

We trust that this brief historical and geographical review of Shechem, lying between Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal, will help to fix this place as one of the sites in the Holy Land. But remember that one was the Mount of Blessing (Gerizim) and the other the Mount of Cursing (Ebal). The choice that confronted Israel as they entered the land under Joshua, that Joshua reminded them of in his farewell address, confronts all of us. What do we want? Wooded Gerizim with its blessings or barren Ebal with its curses? In this same place our Lord offered blessing to the woman of Samaria at Jacob's ancient well. She received the blessing of living water, as did "many of the Samaritans," John 4:39. Some three years later when our Lord made His way to Jerusalem, the Samaritans rebuffed Him, preferring cursing, Luke 9:51-56. After Pentecost Philip preached in Samaria bringing blessings, Simon the sorcerer preferred cursing, Peter and John brought blessing -- Acts 8.

It's always one or the other, blessing or cursing, Gerizim or Ebal. The geographical place isn't of ultimate importance, but the issue remains ever relevant to man. Our Lord said: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," John 4:24. It is only such worship, and none other, that brings the blessings of Gerizim.

Paul F. Nolting

XX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

The JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY is published at Eau Claire, Wisconsin, by authorization of the Church of the Lutheran Confession.

Subscriptions: \$3.00 per year, \$5.50 for 2 years, payable in advance. The month of subscription expiration is indicated on the address label.

Issues are dated: March, June, September, December.

Editor-in-chief: Prof. C.M. Gullerud
Immanuel Lutheran College
Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54701

Managing Editor: Prof. John Lau
507 W. Grover Rd.
Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54701

Contributing Editors: A. Schulz, C. Kuehne,
M. Galstad, P. Nolting.

All correspondence regarding subscriptions, renewals, and changes of address, should be directed to the Managing Editor. Correspondence regarding material printed in the Journal should be addressed to the Editor-in-chief.

THE PRINCIPLE OF ST. PAUL'S PREACHING*

Text: 1 Cor. 2:2,5: "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. ... That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

It is hardly possible to reckon the hundreds of millions of words that the wisdom of man has spewed forth throughout the centuries. Today, with the potential of microfilm, it is possible to store and make available almost everything that is written. The whole library at Immanuel College, for example, could be made to fit on a single shelf of microfilm. And yet, for all the wisdom and learning of man, we know that the only saving good-news is the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ, a message so clear that a small child can grasp it, but at the same time so profound that all the wisdom of the world cannot understand it.

In our text for this evening we hear the Apostle Paul speak to us about wisdom, and he puts it this way, "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." St. Paul was one of the most brilliant minds of the early world, a man trained in the great schools of his day, a man conversant with logic and rhetoric and philosophy. One need only read his epistles to appreciate the profound thought and expression that the Lord used to record this Word of God. Yet, in spite of his brilliance, St. Paul tells us he determined not to know anything save the Gospel; it was his choice, his deliberate intention to avoid the rational argument of the world, for he knew that the truths of our salvation exceed the highest wisdom of man; and conversely, that the wisdom of words could make the cross of Christ of none effect.

St. Paul summed up his whole message in the words, "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." Think about that! Jesus, the unique God-man, conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of Mary! No amount of wisdom can explain that.

* By special request this sermon, delivered at the Wisconsin Pastoral Conference, is herewith published in the Journal.

An unnatural event takes place that has never happened in history; a woman becomes pregnant, not by a man, but by the power of the Holy Ghost, as we confess in the Creed, "conceived by the Holy Ghost," and a son is born unlike any being the world will ever see, a son who is the Son of God and the Son of Man at the same time, a son who started life here as an infant though he is eternal, a son who was in all respects like you and me, who could feel pain and suffer, and yet was without sin. I say, no amount of wisdom can explain this, for this is not a matter of human wisdom but a matter of faith, a mystery that St. Paul says: "God revealed unto us by his spirit."

What is true about Jesus as a person is equally true about Christ, the anointed one, the prophet, priest, and king. What wisdom can explain this? -- that Jesus is a prophet who did more than preach a moral code, who pointed the hearts of men to himself, "Come unto me ... believe in me ... I will give you rest," or that Jesus is the priest and victim alike, who sacrificed himself, willingly shed his own blood on the cross to atone for our sins, or that Jesus is our king, present already at creation the very Son of God, who humbled himself and became obedient unto death for our sakes. Indeed, Jesus Christ, the God-man, the Anointed one. In this name our whole faith rests, for Christ in his office and person is the sum and substance of the good news of our salvation.

Not Jesus Christ, superstar, a non-conformist martyr, who stood for certain principles, whose purpose was to make the world a better place to live in, a rugged individualist who gave his life in defiance of the establishment and tradition, but Jesus Christ, the crucified Redeemer, the Son of God, who as Luther says, "Forsook everything to become a miserable, wretched man to atone for our sins," that believing in Him we may have the hope that makes our lives worth living, the hope of ever-living life.

It is important to us as professional men, pastors whose whole day and whole life is wrapped up in the public preaching of the Word and associated functions, it is important to us that we do not lose sight of the basic principle of St. Paul's ministry as he sets it forth: "I am determined to know nothing except Jesus Christ." St. Paul determined to know only Jesus Christ because that message and all it comprehended was the power of God unto salvation, it was all he needed to know, that mes-

sage was adequate for his total ministry. With that message alone he could refute the brilliant logic of the Greeks, among the most intelligent peoples the world has ever seen; with that message he could effectively counsel against the immoralities of the Romans; with that message he could answer the work-righteous claims of the Jews; with that message he found the essential answer to his personal problems, whether that be his "thorn in the flesh" or his ever-present fear that he himself was a cast-away. Despite all this, there are those who question whether the Gospel he preached is adequate for our ministry in 1973. There is so much other wisdom today; so much research has gone on in so many fields. As it is, almost every pastor's library is filled with tons of books, and new books come to our attention constantly. Any bookhouse catalogue lists hundreds of entries on a host of subjects of interest to a pastor from counselling to canvassing, from psychology to psychiatry, so that with all this wisdom, one might easily be led to question the adequacy of the message of a single book, the Bible; or to question his own personal competency for the ministry with only the Bible for his basic text. Perhaps the office of the ministry today is bigger than we are, perhaps it is too complex, too demanding! The scope of the ministry with pastor as counsellor, choir director, canvasser, coordinator of organizations as well as preacher and teacher presents an awesome picture.

Then we need to remember again the message of St. Paul. God has called us into this work and he has provided the necessary means for every function of our daily work. This means is his holy Word; it is as simple and as complex as the message of Jesus Christ and him crucified. When you read St. Paul's counsel to the Roman congregation, you see this message expressed in a sixteen chapter catechism that has absorbed the attention of the greatest theological minds; or when you read his words to the Philippians, your heart is captured by this splendid paean of joy. But no matter what we read of St. Paul or where we read it in the Bible, he preaches essentially Jesus Christ and him crucified. Do we need more?

Doesn't the message of Jesus Christ show the only way to heaven in our day, too, and refute the work-righteous doctrines of the world of scouting, or lodgism, or what have you? Doesn't Jesus Christ offer and convey

the only hope that a troubled soul needs in our complex civilization, a soul troubled by sin and the consequences of sin in our confused and immoral society? Doesn't the message of Jesus Christ get at the root of our counseling situations and give answers that all the wisdom of the world can not?

Yet as simple as the confession of St. Paul in this text is, the application of Jesus Christ and him crucified to our lives and the lives of others is not always easy. There are problems that we can't always fully answer and situations that we can't at the moment solve, but we cling to what we know and pray for the direction and guidance of God's Holy Spirit, being confident that when we deal with the Word of God, we are not dealing with the wisdom of men, but with a divine power, the power of God -- a savor of life unto life, and death unto death, the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

Just because this power of God, however, is handled by us, mortal men, earthen vessels, we need to be especially careful that we do not swerve from it, lest as St. Paul says: "The faith of our hearers rest in the wisdom of men rather than in the power of God." Some 22 years ago a young seminary graduate stood before a pastoral conference much like this one for his first time, and in the course of his sermon expressed a personal opinion on some implication of the text. On the following morning, when the pastors were discussing in session the service of the night before, one older pastor took the floor and said: "Young man, regarding your opinion in the sermon last evening, I don't really care what you think; what does God's Word say?" It was a strong and well-meant rebuke. And is not St. Paul telling us much the same thing here? Our wisdom, our opinion must ever let God's Word speak, for there is the power, and the faith of our hearers must be founded not in us, but in that power. What an encouragement these words of St. Paul are for us to trust the Word of God to do what we cannot do, to forgive sins, to bring people to a faith in Jesus Christ, to guarantee the hope of heaven.

But these words of the Apostle are also an exhortation, an exhortation for us to examine what we say in the pulpit, to be cautious and introspective in our use of the pronoun "I", lest we substitute our wisdom for the Word of God, or lest we talk down to our hearers, as if we

were the authority, the only ones who really understand what God tells us in His Word. It is well that we ask ourselves each time we preach whether our hearers understand the text better after we have finished than before we began, or whether we have hindered the power of the text because we have imposed on it a current problem, or covered it up with pious but correct generalities.

St. Paul was determined to know Jesus Christ and him crucified, not only for the sake of his hearers, but also for the sake of himself; and indeed, the power of God's Word must stand forth, not only to influence the lives of our hearers, but also our very own. It is in Jesus Christ the crucified that each of us daily finds the power of personal forgiveness, the power that renews our hearts, and gives direction and meaning to our lives. For it is only after we ourselves have experienced the power of the Gospel that we will not only know what to preach, but we will find the courage that it takes for us, weak vessels that we are, to preach it to others.

Robert Dommer

=====

=====**PANORAMA**=====

YMCA --
CHRISTIAN, YET OPEN?

The YMCA movement of today is impaled upon the horns of a dilemma. Desiring to remain Christian and yet not wishing to close its membership to those who are not Christian or have no faith at all, the YMCA has been trying to find a formula to satisfy these conflicting aspirations. Through the years, the World Alliance of YMCA's has insisted on maintaining a so-called Christ-centered unity "while acknowledging the very real differences that exist in theology, program and structure." The historic Paris Basis accepted in 1855 has served as guideline for accepting members into the World Alliance of YMCA's. These are the two fundamental principles:

- " (1) The Young Men's Christian Associations seek to unite those young men who, regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Savior according to

the Holy Scriptures, desire to be His disciples in their faith and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of His Kingdom amongst young men.

- (2) Any differences of opinion on other subjects, however important in themselves, shall not interfere with the harmonious relations of the Member National Movements of the World Alliance."

At the meeting of the World Council held in Kampala, Uganda, July 18-25, the Paris Basis was reaffirmed, with a strangely contradictory statement added, interpreting this fundamental principle as being consistent with an open membership policy that welcomes people into the YMCA "without regard to faith, age, sex, race, or social standing." Now the Council was immediately confronted with questions such as these: "Must all Y leaders, or at least all full-time directors be committed Christians? Can the Christian identity and integrity of the YMCA movement be safeguarded if members of other faiths -- or people of no faith -- are given a voice in decision-making?" No satisfactory answers were found to these questions. The matter was referred to the next council meeting for a resolution of the problem. Meanwhile all member movements are to study the questions that have here been raised. The answer actually should be simple and is simple to one who is truly committed to Christ and to His Word. This is what our Savior said in clear terms: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." Luke 11:23. But the Y is finding out that when you begin to compromise (and it has been doing this all along) then you are unable to give a straight answer to some of the simplest questions. The Y is proud of its so-called ecumenicity and this also was demonstrated at its July meeting. Hymns were sung by an African choir, accompaniment was by a German trumpet corps (strongly evangelical), and Bible study was conducted each morning by a member of the Vatican's Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. Furthermore the next president of the Council is a member of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

C.M.G.

C O N T E N T S

VOLUME 13

DECEMBER 1973

NUMBER 4

A STUDY OF JOSHUA (Part I) 1

A. Schulz

THE GREEK ARTICLE AND THE
DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S DEITY (Part II) 14

C. Kuehne

GERIZIM AND EBAL 31

Paul F. Nolting

THE PRINCIPLE OF ST. PAUL'S PREACHING 39

Robert Dommer

P A N O R A M A

YMCA -- CHRISTIAN, YET OPEN? 43

C. M. Gullerud
