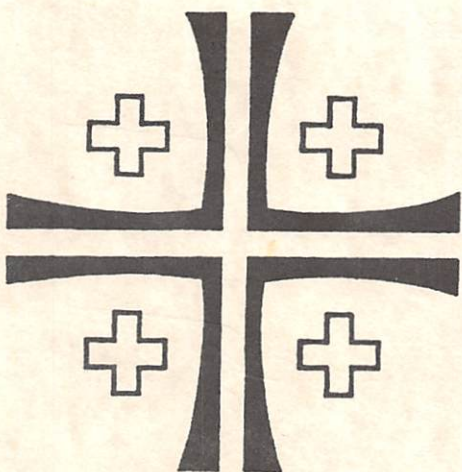


Wayne



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

I Timothy 4:15

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of  
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# Exegesis Of Paul's First Letter To Timothy\*

Prof. Dr. Joh. Ylvisaker

(Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1906.)

(Continuation)

## Chapter 4

With this chapter Paul proceeds to the **third** part of his letter, ch. 4:1-6, 21. Over against the bright picture of the great mystery of godliness (3:14-16), the apostle now presents a dark picture in the threatening apostasy from the faith. The apostasy is spoken of as coming in the future times but in such a way that we may understand that it is also near at hand, because the germ of it is present (vv. 1-2). The error is characterized as a false asceticism from which Timothy is to separate himself and his brethren (1) by instructing them concerning (a) the purpose of God's gifts (vv. 3b-6); and (b) the difference between godliness and bodily exercise (v. 8) by pointing to "the faithful saying" and the apostle's own example (vv. 9-10); and (2) by being himself a pattern for his flock and by a never-failing faithfulness in the performance of his office (vv. 11-16).

V. 1. *δε* points to the difference between the picture in the foregoing and that which is now about to be unrolled. *προς*, which is found only here in the NT, is *discertis verbis*, "with distinct words," "clear and definite." Some have held that the apostle is referring to prophecies lying at hand concerning the approaching apostasy, for example, as foretold by Christ in Matt. 24:11ff and verse 24. But if so, then we would expect that the apostle would attribute them to the Lord and not to the Spirit. More appropriately one might think of the prophecies which Paul himself pronounced, for example, in 2 Thess. 2:3 or which other apostles expressed (Cf. 2 Pet. 3:3; Jude 18; 1 John 2:18). But the most natural explanation would be to understand them in this way, that the apostle is pointing to the Spirit's communication through the writing of this letter.

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\* translated by C. M. Gullerud

The apostasy which the Spirit speaks of with these clear and distinct words will come "in latter times," *εν υστεροις καιροις*. In 2 Tim. 3:1 the apostle speaks of perilous times in the last days, *εν εσχαταις ημεραις*. These expressions have often been spoken of as being synonymous with reference to the inner thought (*indre tanke*). But this is not the case. The expression *υστεροι καιροι*, "in latter times," sets the thought in relation to the present, looks at the matter from the standpoint of the present. This points to the future in contrast to the present. This is the following, the coming time. *εν εσχαταις ημεραις*, "in the last days," refers to the end-time of the church's present and looks at the matter from the standpoint of the end. This is the specific time which lies nearest to the Lord's coming and the fullness of God's kingdom, "*tempus quod a reditu Christi et . . . regni divini proxime abest*" (Grimm). Consequently in the following, the coming times "some," *τινες*, (according to other passages, "many"), will depart from the faith. *πιστις*, "faith," must here be understood as referring to the objective faith, the Christian truth, the theme of which has been presented in the preceding. Through the revelation of the Spirit, the apostle sees a falling away from the fundamentals of Christendom, and this was fulfilled in the developed gnosticism. The participle *προσεχοντες* should not be rendered "and giving heed to," but "in that they were giving heed to." Paul is showing in this participial clause how it happened that they departed from the faith. *πνευματα πλανα*, "deceiving spirits," has been explained as referring to the false teachers. Precisely speaking it is not so. *πνευμα* in verse 1 is not an expression indicating a true prophet, but points to the Holy Spirit as the one who was active in and through Paul. These "deceiving spirits" are not the false teachers either, but this expression refers to the spiritual powers from the kingdom of darkness present in the activities of the lying prophets. With regard to the plural Huther says correctly: "*Der Irrthum ist ein in sich selbst mannigfach unterschiedener und so ist demselbe eine Mehrheit von Geistern zu grunde liegend, die aber doch auch wieder als eine Einheit aufgefasst werden koennen: το πνευμα της πλανης* (1 John 4:6)."<sup>1</sup> With reference to the subject matter we may here think of 1 Kings 22:22; Matt. 7:15. *πλανης*, "deceiving" (Cf. 2 Cor. 6:8). In agreement with this explanation, the expression, "doctrines of demons," must also be understood. These are not doctrines which originate from the demons and are truly works of demons—subj. Gen. (Cf. 2 Cor. 4:4; 11:14).

These doctrines are works of demons in the same sense as Paul regards idol worship as the work of demons (Cf. 1 Cor. 10:20-21).

V. 2. *εν υποκρισει ψευδολογων*, "speaking lies in hypocrisy." Neither from the standpoint of language or content can one consider this expression as a modifier of the foregoing noun, *δαιμονιων*, or of *διδασκαλια*, which is separated from it by *δαιμονιων*. Bengel joins it to *αποστηθουνται*, but this goes back rather far and the construction would be cumbersome. Our translation (The Norw. ed.) as well as the most recent one refers it correctly to the participle *προσεχοντες*. The prepositional phrase shows what caused them to cling to the deceiving spirits. At the same time it begins a characterization of the false teachers. A similar characterization of them is given by Paul also in 1:6; 6:5; and Titus 1:15. What coaxed them to fall away or to cling to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons was the foolish sham of holiness which the lying prophets knew how to use as a cover which in reality stood in opposition to their inner being. But some object that we here have *εν* and not *δια* or *ενεκα*; but we know that *εν* can sometimes have an instrumental meaning in the NT. *ψευδολογος* appears only here. This corresponds to *ψευδοδιδασκαλος* in 2 Pet. 2:1 and *ψευδοπροφητης* in 1 John 4:1. Of these lying teachers the apostle says that their conscience is seared with a hot iron. The expression is taken from the custom of putting a brand on a criminal's body for all the world to see. Such a mark, says Paul, these people bear in their conscience. But what does he mean by this? Theodoret and others have interpreted it as meaning that their conscience has become insensitive in the same manner as when the skin becomes insensitive where the hot iron has left its mark. But more in agreement with the context and far more powerful it will be to take it (with many of the better interpreters), as designating the lawless, the restless, the accusing and condemning conscience under the influence of hypocrisy, and a soul-destroying activity (Cf. Tit. 3:11). This mark in the conscience can even show its impression in the face and outer behavior, a sort of mark of Cain. A person cannot be in a worse condition than when, in seeking to uphold an error, he hears secret voices in his inner being telling him that it is an error. *ιδιαν*, "their own." With this word the apostle would strongly stress the sharp contrast between their inner being and the pretended care to lead others to a true holiness.

V. 3. This verse continues the description of the lying teachers and reveals their false spirituality in their false asceticism. The apostle gives the picture an up-to-date stroke, for the heresy is already present in its initial form, and with a prophetic spirit he sees its future evolvement (Cf. Tit. 1:15). *κωλυοντων γαμειν*, "forbidding to marry." *κωλυω* is *impedio*, *prohibeo*, and is construed with *τινα*, *τινος*, or with a following infinitive as is the case here (Cf. Acts 8:36 - *τι κωλυει με βαπτισθηναι*). *απεχεσθαι βρωματων*, "to abstain from foods"; we have here a so-called brachylogy. A mediate word is omitted in order to draw the clauses closer together. Out of *κωλυοντων* one must take a *κελευοντων* (*κελευω*, *iubeo*). The meaning would then be the same as if we would read *κελευοντων μη γαμειν απεχεσθαι βρωματων*. In the following relative clause Paul points out the error in the false teachers' asceticism. To prove that the eating of foods is permitted, provided no other commandment is transgressed, it should be enough to show that God has created food. But not only has God created food, He has created it with the purpose that it should be eaten. How can anyone dare to step forth to forbid its use? But the apostle does not only reveal the falseness of forbidding it; he also shows in what manner God's gifts are to be used and by whom they can thus be enjoyed. God would have His gifts to be received with thanksgiving. This takes place only among the believers. The purpose for which they were created is attained only among them. "Those who know the truth" is an addition describing "those who believe." The individual expressions are dictated by the false teachers' assertions. In answer to the prohibition of foods, Paul says they are created by God to be used. In answer to this claim by the errorists that only their followers can attain to true knowledge, the higher gnosis, by means of asceticism, Paul counters by saying that the believers who receive God's gifts with thanksgiving are the ones who have true knowledge of the truth. In commenting on this passage, Plitt says: "From the apostle's words we have been given an important moral precept. All things which I can receive of God with thanksgiving and with devotion and thoughts of Him. are not sins. Whatsoever you can do with prayer, you may do, but whatsoever you cannot do with prayer, this you should avoid."

Vv. 4,5. The assertion that God has created food to be received with thanksgiving is presented by Paul for the sake of those who were influenced by the false teachings. This he does

in these verses, when he counters the false teachers' arbitrary distinction between foods, by asserting that all of God's creations are good and therefore also the creation designated to be used for food. Paul does not here use the word *καθαρος*, as in Rom. 14:20 (*παντα καθαρα*); neither *ου κοινος*, in Rom. 14:14 (*ουδεν κοινον δι' εαυτου*); but *καλος*, because he is speaking in opposition to the false teachers' condemnation which stated that foods were not good, did not serve to the welfare of those who desired true godliness and the higher gnosis. In opposition Paul states that every creature of God is good. It is good in itself and therefore also contributes to the welfare of the believers. What folly to reject this! But at the same time Paul is expressing this truth—he repeats what he has said in the foregoing—namely, that all is to be received with thanksgiving if it is to serve as a blessing for the individual. He wants to nail down this truth. Gerlach says: "From this passage (Cf. Matt. 15:19) it can also be concluded that the food laws of the OT (Cf. Lev. 7:21; 12:11) did not declare certain foods unclean because they were unclean in and by themselves (neither Acts 15:20) but simply because in the time of minority the sanctified fear of the inner uncleanness might by degrees be awakened by such external commandments and that the inner man might gradually be strengthened thereby and also that all external things might be placed in connection with God's commandments."

V. 5 casts more light on what was expressed in verse 4. The food is not to be prohibited because it is in and by itself evil, unclean; for every creature of God is good and to be used for our benefit and not to our harm. Food is not sanctified like man, who is tainted with sin and as an unclean person needs to be sanctified after the fall. Food is not to be sanctified for its own sake but for man's sake. This takes place through God's Word and prayer. The Word teaches us how God's gifts are to be used so that they may be a blessing for us ("Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."), and we are sanctified by the Word, so that all becomes clean for the clean. By prayer divine blessing descends upon the gifts we enjoy and thereby also upon their use so that they may serve to our welfare. Calvin has made this striking remark: "It is making a prey out of God's gifts if we use them without thanksgiving to God. It is a brutish way of eating if one sits down to eat without prayer and then, sated, to arise

without thanking God." *λογος θεου*, "the word of God," cannot designate the word about God but the word from God, which speaks of the proper use of His gifts.

Can one find those events in history which Paul predicts in these words? Calov and others point especially to the Manichaeans and Eucratites. The Manichaeans' asceticism was divided into *signaculum oris* (Manichaean cleanness in speech and nourishment, abstinence from pork, eggs, milk, wine even in the Lord's Supper), and *signaculum sinus* (*coelibat*, celibacy). The "Euchraetaenism," whose founder was the noted Tatian (d. 174), was an anti-Semitic, gnostic sectarianism. Its adherents received their name from their strict abstinence, especially with reference to marriage, which they considered a work of the evil spirit.

V. 6. The prophecy regarding the coming apostasy forms the basis for the following exhortations to Timothy. From the future events the apostle now turns to the present time. From the presentation of what threatens in the coming days, Timothy will be led to a knowledge of what is necessary for the present time. Because the beginnings of the apostasy are already at hand (the evolvment lies in the future), this explains how the apostle can direct these exhortations to Timothy.

"If you instruct your brethren in these things . . ." What things? Heinrichs and others see verses 1-5 as a parenthesis and let the pronoun, "these things," refer back to 3:16. Gerhard has the reference referring both to the closing of ch. 3 and to the foregoing verses of this chapter. Wiesinger and Huther refer it to what was presented in verses 1-5. There the apostle had instructed Timothy regarding the nature and significance of the militant error. And over against the false teachers' asceticism he has instructed him on the meaning of earthly goods, their value, their rightful use. All of this Paul now wants Timothy to place before the brethren to hinder, if possible, the entrance of this apostasy into the Ephesian congregations. If he did this he would be judged to be a good minister of Jesus Christ. *διακονος*, "minister," is here used in the common sense as in 2 Cor. 3:6; 6:4. *ευτρεφόμενος*, "nourished," is a present and not a perfect participle, "being nourished." "Words of faith," the word about faith (Obj. Gen.), is to be a permanent means of nourishment for Timothy (Cf. 2 Tim. 3:15). At the same time that



he is bringing the words of faith to his hearers for the nourishment of their souls, he is to partake of them for his own benefit. From them he is to draw strength for the performance of his duties. "And of the good doctrine" - Paul adds these words as a closer definition of the preceding. "The good doctrine" is a definite term for the Christian teaching in opposition to the fables of the false teachers which Timothy is ordered to oppose. Hitherto he has faithfully adhered to the good doctrine. This the apostle can say and in this testimony of appreciation there is held forth an important paraenetic momentum: "May you now also continue to do the same!" *παρακολουθεω* is *ita sequor aliquem ut semper sim ab ejus latere*,<sup>2</sup> which you have faithfully followed, faithfully adhered to. The perfect here stands significantly over against the present participle in the foregoing.

V. 7. Already the choice of *καλη διδασκαλια* (v. 6) reminds us that the opposite, *ματαιολογια*, is to be opposed. Verse 7 is the antithesis to verse 6. In verse 6 we have the good doctrine which is to be defended and in verse 7 the false teaching which is to be contended against. Therefore the *δε*, "but." If Timothy is to accomplish anything against the false doctrine, then he must protect himself from being corrupted by it. Therefore the apostle delineates the error as it is presently showing itself. This he does in two ways, showing its false theoretical direction and then its practical thrust. *παραιτου* is the present imperative of *παραιτεομαι*, *precibus avertō, precibus impetro*,<sup>3</sup> as if we would say: I beg of you, that you spare me! In the form of a prayer, it is an utterance expressing the sharpest negation of the pertinent matter. Timothy is to reject and flee from "fables" which are pure human inventions and devices. These fables are "profane" since they reject God's holy truth. They are "effeminate," for the subject matters which claim their attention are not only untrue but for the most part are so petty that they could be appropriate subjects for idle old women, subjects which are more fitting for them to use as fairy tales for children than for men who are to teach others the way of salvation. The word *βεβηλος*, "profane," characterizes these fables from the religious and *γραιωδης* from the esthetic point of view. It is a thing not only to be rejected but is also a thing unworthy of intelligent human beings.

In contrast to being occupied with fables, false theoretical questions and dreams, Timothy is to be busy with the things which pertain to practical Christianity, γυμναζε δε. He is to exercise himself in godliness, in pursuance of another higher and more noble endeavor than those fables. It is to be an exercise in godliness in this manner that under a conscientious watchfulness over his inner life's purity and truth he is to strive, by regular self-sacrifice and self-control, to "let this receive a fuller and more responsive expression in the external life according to God's will" (Bugge). The exercise in such godliness will result in greater spiritual strength and preparedness for the discharge of all the works of Christendom. Paul very likely uses the expression, γυμναζειν, because the false teachers used it in their presentations of asceticism. προς, "to," *indicat finem ad quam illa γυμνασια vergat*<sup>4</sup> (Leo). The goal shall be an ever purer and more perfect godliness.

V. 8. The exhortation to godliness is now confirmed through the contrast which the apostle had in mind when he wrote verse 7. The external sanctifying piety and fear of God which came forth from the established inner godliness is presented as an antithesis to the asceticism which leads from the external to the internal and reaches a complete degeneration when it remains with the external. By the bodily exercise is meant the false teachers' commandment of abstinence. The apostle expresses himself in general terms to indicate that this represented a whole direction opposed to piety. Upon the bodily exercise he passes the judgment, "it profits little," in contrast to the following, "is profitable for all things." Such false commandments demanding abstinence "become destructive," says Gerlach, "as soon as one attributes to them a part in justification before God. But even if they do not lead to this aberration, they are nevertheless of small importance when the soul lacks fear of God. The subduing of the body which takes place in the Lord's service is recommended by Paul through his own example. 1 Cor. 9:27."

The following participial clause with εχουσα establishes and confirms the foregoing. But how shall the genitive ζωης be understood? Wiesinger calls it plainly an objective genitive. The object of the prophecy then becomes "life," which is here divided into the present and the future. ζωη νυν must then be understood of the spiritual life which is the beginning of the future life in the blessed eternity. But since there cannot be a

true godliness without spiritual life, we must here be thinking of progress and growth in the spiritual life as the object of the promise. Huther therefore regards the genitive as objective and thus translates, "for this life and for the future life." God has connected to godliness the promise of gifts here below and the promise of a full salvation hereafter. He wants His children to believe this promise, which is Yea and Amen in Himself. One does not honor God by doubting the truth of the promise, but one honors Him when, in spite of all, one depends on His faithfulness.

V. 9. The affirmative formula in this verse is to serve as a confirmation of the foregoing exhortation. Here the formula points back and not forward, as in 1:15 and 3:1.

V. 10. Verse 9 is a confirming addition to verse 8, and now verse 10 serves as an establishment of the aforementioned truth which says that godliness is profitable for all things. *εις τουτο*, "to this," namely, to this end which is stated in *ζωης μελλουσης*. "We both labor and suffer reproach to reach this goal to the end that the promise attached to godliness might be fulfilled." *εις τουτο* thus points to the preceding and not forward to the clause introduced by *οτι*, because *εις τουτο*, in contradistinction to *δια τουτο*, indicates the goal and not the purpose and can therefore not be connected with the following *οτι*. "We labor and suffer reproach with an eye to the promise attached to godliness." Tischendorf reads *αγωνιζομεθα*, while *textus receptus* reads *ονειδιζομεθα*. Both readings have good manuscript support, and it is not easy to determine which of these is the original. *κοπιωμεν* points to the laborious work especially in connection with sanctification and refers to the general consciousness of Christians thereof and not only to Paul and Timothy. Paul often uses this word when he speaks of the burden and labor involved in a task that he has undertaken (Cf. 1 Cor. 15:10; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:16; et al.). "Because we trust in the living God." Here is the reason why Christians, with an eye to the promise, are willing to labor and suffer reproach without complaint. *ηλπικαμεν* is the perfect tense with its effect in the present time. We have placed our hope in God where it remains. The presentation is to show that we are certain that the promise will be kept. The Christian's hope rests upon the living God as a firm foundation. For this reason, according to Scripture, the hope and the faith may be called a firm assurance,

a πληροφορία. Hope is really nothing else than faith in the promise. It is a faith directed to the future glory. The expression, *θεω ζωντι*, points back to *ζωη μελλουσα*. *επι* with the dative gives the ground for the hope (Cf. Rom. 15:12) just as *εις* and *επι* with the accusative give its direction (Cf. 1 Pet. 1:13) and *εν* with the dative, that in which one's hope rests (Cf. 1 Cor. 15:19). "Who is the Savior of all men." Only as such can the promise of life be grounded in Him. If He were not the Savior of all men, then I, the individual, could not have a true Christian hope; I would have to be in doubt about my eternal salvation; for then I would continually be thinking that perhaps I am among those whom God has not saved, and then there would be no hope for me. He who would have certainty of his salvation must hold fast to the doctrine of universal salvation.

"Especially of those who believe." God in a special sense is their Savior. Certainly He has saved all men without exception. In the objective salvation there is no difference. He also desires that all, without exception, should enjoy the gift of salvation through subjective acceptance thereof. Neither is there any difference in this regard. But His purpose is attained only in the case of the believers; only in them is His will of salvation realized; only toward them can He completely show forth His saving love. In this respect is He the Savior especially of those who believe. And so it is also true that to him who has shall be given, and the more one accepts, the more he receives.

V. 11. "Proclaim and teach this" [NKJV: "These things command and teach"]. The pronoun *ταυτα* does not simply refer to the conclusion of the preceding verse nor to everything from 3:15 on. When we look back to the beginning of verse 6, the most natural thing would be to refer *ταυτα* to what is contained from verse 6 to verse 11. These things he is to proclaim and teach. Huther renders *παραγγελω* with "command." Thus also the new Norwegian translation. But there is nothing in the foregoing which could provide subject matter for a straightforward command. The original meaning of the word is "to expostulate with authority." But what is the difference between "proclaim" and "teach"? To consider these words as synonyms (as Heydenreich does) is not possible. The first word refers mostly to the practical and more private proclamation, while the other word refers to the theoretical and public. Both words taken

together provide a full direction for his teaching activity, the private and the public. Thus Timothy is to present these matters to his hearers.

V. 12. In the preceding verses the apostle has instructed Timothy on the subject matter to be presented to his hearers. He now proceeds to exhort Timothy on matters concerning his conduct in office, namely, his pastoral behavior. Success in the area of responsibility, which verse 11 covers, will depend to a large extent on the example he sets in agreement with the instruction of verse 12. Huther maintains that the requirements, according to the sentence structure (form), are directed to the congregation, while the thought is centered on Timothy. But such a distinction between content and form is not permissible. The following statements will show that verse 12 in every respect is directed to Timothy, not in the sense that he should not let anyone despise him, but in the sense that by his whole behavior (which is covered in detail in the following) he should live so that he will be respected and honored despite his young age. His whole activity should cause his hearers and others to look away from the fact that he is a youth. Bengel: "*Talem te gere, quem nemo possit contemnere*"<sup>5</sup> (Cf. also 2 Tim. 2:22). Some have asked if indeed Timothy could be such a young man, especially if one is to presume that the letter was written after the first Roman captivity. According to Acts 16:1-3, one must gather that Timothy was a man of more than 30 years of age. The events recorded in Acts 16 took place during the apostle's second great missionary journey. At that time Timothy was scarcely less than 20 years old, since Acts 16:14ff tells us that he was entrusted with important business in the service of the mission. But now there are 10 or 12 years between acts 16:3ff and the apostle's freedom from the first Roman imprisonment. Timothy must have been 34 or 35 years old when this letter was written. Nevertheless he was comparatively a young man when you consider the office to which he had been called. Timothy was, indeed, not just an ordinary pastor of a congregation, but he was the apostle's successor. He was to be the overseer in Ephesus and surrounding territory. According to 3:1, he was involved in the installation of presbyters, and these, as a rule, were older and more mature men. According to 5:19 he was to receive accusations which might be raised against any of the elders. Many of his opponents may have had men to represent them who had the advantage of age.

No wonder, then, that Paul reminded Timothy of his youth and found it necessary to direct the designated words of exhortation to him. There are exegetes who have taken σου as a modifier of νεότητος with the translation, "your youth: let no one despise your youth." But the most natural interpretation would be to take σου της νεότητος as a double negative controlled by καταφρονεῖτω, the one referring to the person and the other to a closer determination (of the person) equal to δια την νεότητα. This type of genitive is infrequent; but Buttman in his *Gram.*, s. 143, says that neither the sense nor the linguistic usage stand as a hindrance to taking both genitives as dependent on καταφρονεῖτω. How he should gain such respect so that all will look away from his youth, this is shown in the following.

τυπος γινου, "be," not "become" an example; for "become" would presuppose that Timothy had not been an example before. "Be an example to the believers," this is the obvious meaning. The following gives the details of how this should be carried out. εν λογω, "in word." Since this stands without a modifier, it must refer to his speech, both public and private, whether he is functioning professionally or not. αναστροφή is his communication in the congregation, his whole conduct. αγαπη, "love," which reveals itself outwardly whether God and His will is the object or the neighbor and his welfare. εν πνευματι has some manuscript support. *Textus receptus* takes this reading, as do our older translations. Tischendorf has stricken it as a later addition and, with him, other new translations [NKJV retains it]. It is considered improper since one cannot very well speak of an example in spirit. But the same objection could be raised against being an example in love and faith, since these too belong to the inner life; but they are revealed externally. Thus also an ardent and burning zeal can be revealed outwardly (Cf. Rom. 12:11). And it is easier to assume that a copyist passed over it than that he added it.

αγνεα does not correspond to the Norwegian "kyskhed" (chastity), if you are to take the word in its specialized sense; but it rather refers to our "purity" (Norw. "renhed") and so both to the inner purity of thought and desire and to the outward manifestation in a decent life. "The apostle requires of a young bishop that he be like an elderly person in maturity and wisdom of speech, experienced in communication, reliable in love, steadfast in the faith, indifferent to the temptations of the

flesh; truly extraordinary, but the office is extraordinarily important" (Gerlach).

V. 13. *εως ερχομαι*, "till I come" (Cf. 3:14), *προσεχε* (Cf. 1:4; 3:8; 4:1). *αναγνωσις*, "reading." If we take note of such passages as Luke 4:16; Acts 13:15; et al., then we will understand that the reading is the reading of Holy Scripture for the congregation. The same may be gathered from following words. In the Jewish synagogues it was customary to read stated pericopal passages from the OT, both from the law and the prophets. This custom was also followed in the Christian congregations. To *αναγνωσις*, the "reading," is added *λογος παρακλησεως* (word of admonition and comfort) and *λογος διδασκαλιας* (word of instruction). The first was especially directed to the inner life of the hearers and the latter to their confessional life. Both parts correspond somewhat to our sermons. When the reading of the NT was introduced cannot be determined. From 1 Thess. 5:27 and Col. 4:16 it can be concluded that the epistles were read to the whole congregation, but here the question is when a regular reading of the NT pericopes similar to the OT readings in the synagogue was introduced. We understand that the apostle here is thinking of the OT. Although Timothy was not pastor in any individual congregation, nevertheless he was diligently to take part in the pastor's work in each place where he was present and was not to "neglect to participate with the excuse that he simply came to supervise" (G.).

V. 14. In agreement with the foregoing, Timothy is here exhorted to be diligent and faithful in the use of the gift of grace which had been committed to him. *χαρισμα* is in reality every gift of God's mercy and grace, therefore often a gift of grace which points to the reader's Christian calling to exercise himself in knowledge, faith, hope, etc. (Rom. 1:11). Yes, every spiritual blessing which is given to the believer by grace to render him capable for service in the Lord's vineyard (Cf. 1 Pet. 4:10f). If we look a little closer at the special use of the word in the NT, we will find that it is used (1) of a physical gift, e.g., abstinence (continence) (1 Cor. 7:7); (2) of a general gift of grace which points to the common Christian status (Rom. 1:11); (3) of a gift in office, a special fitness for a peculiar assignment (2 Tim. 1:6); (4) of the extraordinary gifts of God, gifts to perform miracles (1 Cor. 12). Here the apostle

points to the gift given in the call, which renders one capable for the work of the office to teach, exhort, lead, etc. *ο εδοθη σοι*, "which was given to you," not by Paul but by the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4). *δια προφητειας*, "by prophecy." Prophecy was the means whereby the Spirit communicated the gift of grace (Cf. 1:18). "With the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." The laying on of the hands was merely the accompanying sign. In 2 Tim. 1:6 we read, "the laying on of my hands." From all of this we understand that Paul was here pointing to ordination. This was performed by Paul in connection with the presbytery of Ephesus. Timothy was to exercise the gift of grace given at that time, and thereby the living power in the soul would be preserved. The word *πρεσβυτεριον* appears only three times in the NT, namely, in Luke 22:66; Acts 22:5; and here. In the two first passages it designates the Jewish high council. Here it is used of the office of the presbyters in the Ephesian congregations.

V. 15. In verse 14 Paul has called to mind the gift of grace given to Timothy. He now asks him to meditate on this and continue in it. These two thoughts stand in a climactic relation to each other. *ταυτα* and *τουτοις* refer back to the content of verses 12-14. *μελετω* is a word used only here by Paul and only in two other passages in the NT, namely, Mark 13:11 (in some mss.) and Acts 4:25; but it is frequently used in classical Greek. It means "to care for," "think on," "meditate," "study," "be busy with." *εν τουτοις ισθι*; *ειμι εν τουτοις* is the Latin *totus* or *omnis sum in aliqua re*.<sup>6</sup> *ισθι* is 2 pers. sing. imper. present of *ειμι* and must not be mistaken for the similar-sounding *ισθι*, which is 2 pers. sing. perfect active of *οιδα*.

"That your progress may be evident to all." The purpose of this addition may be seen from verse 12. According to the context, progress here refers to progress in the ministry. This progress shall be evident, not *εν πασιν*, "in all things," but *πασιν*, "to all." What Gerlach says is true: "All of a shepherd's studies, exercises, and progress must not be lacking in fruit, neither must their fruit be concealed. His word and his example belong to his congregation, for he is to be all things to all."

V. 16. This verse summarizes the contents of verses 12-15. *Duo sunt curanda bono pastori ut docendo invigilet et se ipsum purum custodiat* (Calvin).<sup>7</sup> Only when one is concerned



for his own salvation will he be concerned for the salvation of others. One cannot have any real desire for the progress of God's kingdom in the hearts of others if he is not concerned with its progress in his own heart. That he and others with him may stand at the last day as saved must be the leading and animating thought in the work of God's servant. But then the servant must have his attention riveted on himself and the doctrine, on his own and his hearers' salvation. A steady vigilance and regular self-examination will then not be lacking. The apostle is not here giving any promise that all the hearers of a faithful pastor will be saved. But he is telling him that the word which he brings from God will not return to him void. There will be those who will hear him not only with the physical ear but also in true faith through the Spirit. These he will save as an instrument in God's hand, and when he sees them as saved together with him on the day of reckoning, this will be a reward of grace. It will cause his heart to be filled with joy. He will understand that he has not lived in vain or labored and sacrificed in vain. *επεχω* (Cf. Luke 14:7; Acts 3:5), "take heed," "take care of." *επιμενω* with *επι* or *παρα* appears with the meaning "to stay with someone" (Cf. Acts 28:14); but Paul uses the word with that meaning only with *προς* (Cf. 1 Cor. 16:7, Gal. 1:18). In metaphysical usage, when it has reference to a thing, Paul uses *επιμενω* with the dative; and this usage is peculiar to him (Cf. Rom. 6:1; 11:22-23; Col. 1:23). It cannot be understood in any other way here. Paul is not, then, speaking of continuing with persons but of continuing in the things previously mentioned. *αυτοις* is therefore neuter and refers back to *ταυτα* and *εν τούτοις*.

(To be continued)

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Huther: "The error is one which in itself varies greatly and thus a plurality of spirits forms its basis, which, however, also again may be understood as one: the spirit of error (1 John 4:6)."

<sup>2</sup> "I follow someone in such a way that I am always by his side."

<sup>3</sup> "By prayers I avert; by prayers I attain."

<sup>4</sup> "Indicates the aim toward which exercise (training) turns."

<sup>5</sup> Bengel: "Conduct yourself as one whom no one can scorn."

<sup>6</sup> "I am totally or entirely in something [immersed in something]."

<sup>7</sup> Calvin: "The good pastor has two cares: that he is watchful in his teaching, and that he keeps himself pure."

# "LEARN OF JESUS CHRIST TO PRAY"

## A Sermon Study on Jesus' Sacerdotal (High-Priestly) Prayer in John 17 (Continued)

*Paul Fleischer*

### SERMON STUDY #7: John 17:20-23

*"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;*

*"that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.*

*"And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as we are one:*

*"I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that you have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved me." (NKJV)*

## A RELIGION FOR THE WORLD

In six previous sermon studies on this prayer of our Lord we have heard Jesus pray fervently for Himself, for His disciples, and for believers in general. We were a bit surprised to hear our Great Intercessor apparently by-pass the people of the world when, for example, He prays in the ninth verse: "I pray not for the world . . ." We noted at that point that this was not a sign of bigotry or selfishness of some kind on Jesus' part, but it simply indicated that the Lord's first and most natural concern was for those who had been brought to faith in Him, that they would continue in that faith against all the assaults of the evil one.

In that portion of the sacerdotal prayer before us now Jesus makes very clear His love and concern also for the world. He prays specifically: "I do not pray for these alone [disciples, believers] . . ." and proceeds to make intercession to His heavenly Father for the world. In this connection let it be underscored that Christianity is a religion for the world. Chris-

tianity is not limited to any particular nation, race, people, or tongue. It cuts across all of these. And the reason is simply this that Christianity alone has a message for the world.

And what is that message? "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). ". . . God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them . . ." (2 Cor. 5:19). Jesus' death on the cross was a sacrifice for the whole world, as John the Baptist exclaimed: "Behold! the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). Thus, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross some 1900+ years ago, all the world stands justified before God: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth to be a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness . . ." (Rom. 3:23-25).

It is up to believers, individually and collectively, to bring this universal, only-saving message to the world of men. Jesus said: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations . . . (Matt. 28:18f). And: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature . . ." (Mark 16:15). As old as the gospel message is, it is ever new. It alone can bring peace, comfort, and joy to the hearts and minds of the world of sinners. Even as in our current text Jesus prays for His future believers, so believers need to pray fervently in behalf of the world that many more, yea, all, may come to confess the crucified and risen Christ as Savior and King.

**"WHICH SHALL BELIEVE IN ME . . ."**

Jesus prays for "those who will believe in Me . . ." "IN ME!" This teaches emphatically what is to be the message which Christianity is to bring to the world. It is to teach that Jesus Christ is the **ONE AND ONLY SAVIOR OF THE WORLD!** There are those, even within the camp of the visible Christian church, who take exception to the so-called "exclusive truth" claim of Christianity. They tell us that we should not teach Jesus Christ as the only way to salvation, but that people of other religions, as long as they are sincere in what they believe,

shall escape the wrath and judgment of God. This idea may sound appealing and be popular, but it is not the answer, at least not the biblical answer, to the problem of how a sinner is saved. No problem is solved by suggesting false solutions, and this is above all true with regard to the "sin problem." No illness can be cured by prescribing diluted and poisonous potions and surely not the universal plague of "sin cancer." No service is performed by blindly leading people on a supposedly smooth path toward a supposedly happy destination when that path leads only to quicksand and a precipice at the end of the road!

There is only ONE ANSWER to the problem of sin and its wages, death. That answer was prescribed by Jesus earlier in this prayer when He prayed: "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." As the Seed of the woman, Jesus Christ overcame sin, death, Satan, and hell for mankind, something which no other person or thing could do. So it is that Jesus taught: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). So it is that the apostles witnessed to Christ, saying: "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). It is clear, then, that our prayer for the world must be that people of all nations, colors, tongues, and of all other religions—heathen, antichristian, or false Christian—come to confess Jesus Christ as their only Savior!

### "THROUGH THEIR WORD . . ."

As was just said, prayer is necessary for this great task. But something more is needed! Our great High Priest tells us how the world comes to believe on Him when He here prays for "those who will believe in Me through their word." That is, through the word of the apostles. Jesus foresaw the many who would be brought to true and saving faith through the Word of God as proclaimed by the apostles. After Pentecost the saving message was preached by these apostles in Jerusalem, in Judea, and unto the uttermost parts of the then-known world. Still today the same Word of God and His apostles is the agent for the transmission and dissemination of the only-saving gospel. Yes, the apostles still proclaim that Word, but it is done through ministers who faithfully preach their Word. Believers

are thus won for Christ across the world so that the word of Jesus comes to pass: "Many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 8:11).

What is needed, then, besides our prayers for the kingdom of heaven and its spreading here on earth? St. Paul writes to the Romans: "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?" (Rom. 10:14f). Boys and girls, men and women, are needed to devote their lives to the public teaching and preaching ministry of Jesus Christ! Needed as well are dedicated Christian laymen and laywomen who witness to Christ in their home congregations and home territory. Let Christian parents consider what is being said. Let them consider prayerfully bringing their influence to bear upon the children God has given them so that both parents and the children give more than passing notice to this great and crying need of the Lord of the Church! Yes, let us pray that the world come to know Jesus Christ as Savior, but know that such a prayer has a hollow ring if effort is not made to influence the young for the ministry. Know that such prayer has a hollow ring in God's ear if we are not willing to give to the point of sacrifice for the support of the ministry and the spreading of the gospel at home and at large.

**"THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE . . ."**

If the preceding is important, equally so are the words to follow. We come to a portion that requires most careful attention. In the next three verses of this prayer our Lord stresses (as He had earlier—Cf. v. 11) the oneness, the unity of believers: "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me."

Notice how the unity Jesus desires is compared to the oneness between Himself and the Father—a perfect oneness, a perfect

oneness in essence, and a perfect harmony of purpose. We know that this unity already exists in one sense. It exists in the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints. As St. Paul writes to the Romans: "We, being many, are one body in Christ" (12:5). The thrust of the Savior's prayer is that those who are now in the faith, and those who will be brought to faith in Him, will be preserved in that oneness, **not only** in a spiritual and invisible way, but also outwardly and in a visible way.

That Jesus has more than an inner spiritual oneness in mind here becomes evident when we note that He prays for a unity which **the world can see**: ". . . that the world may believe that You sent Me . . ." and "that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me." On this basis we can say that the unity for which Jesus here prays can be compared to that desired oneness expressed this way by the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians: "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10).

Think of it! Were it the case that such a wonderful, observable, outward unity existed among Christians, this would unquestionably have a healthy influence for good upon the world! As says the Psalmist: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the LORD commanded the blessing—life forevermore" (Ps. 133).

Indeed, where such an evident unity exists in a congregation and in a synod, it makes for love between members. It makes the work of the church easier for all concerned. It makes for a joyful, pleasant experience. How, therefore, we ought to cherish and work to further such a unity! Yet, isn't the opposite of this, sadly, too often the case among churches or synods comprised, as they are, of believing sinners? A congregation or a synod which is split into parties and factions is a faith-disturbing thing to church members involved. At the same time such disunity is—to put it mildly—a poor Christian

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Bell, John M. *Saints of Another God*. 2:41-43. (D.L.)

witness to the world. How often haven't we heard unchurched people, or people outside the pale of the church, decry the internal squabbling and splintered condition of the church? Many therefore conclude that they want no part in active involvement in the organized Christian churches. Yes, let it be underscored once more and for good measure: outsiders see and witness the disunity prevalent in so many Christian congregations and between synodical groups, and this evident disunity is a blight on the witness these churches present to the world of men!

But now we must be careful! More needs to be said! When talk swings to outward unity in the visible Christian church, there often goes out a cry—even from well-meaning Christians—that such unity should be brought about in spite of the fact that doctrinal differences exist. This is hardly the thrust of the Savior's prayer here. Jesus wants His believers to "beware of false prophets" (Matt. 7:15). By divine inspiration Jesus' apostles and prophets give abundant testimony to the disruptive nature of false doctrine. Jesus' Word is truth, as He prays earlier in this prayer, and that Word of truth is not to be compromised or added to or subtracted from. Here the familiar word applies: "Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17). This very day and season of the church year (Good Friday and Easter) we read again and again of churches of different doctrinal persuasions carrying on joint worship services and church work. These churches "agree to disagree agreeably" for the sake of an outward unity. On our part, we have always labeled such activity as sinful unionism in the church. And so it is! God-pleasing unity in the visible church on earth is **not** achieved by allowing a "latitude of theological opinion" to predominate so that churches can parade about as though they were one in Christ, but God-pleasing unity is brought about, and exists, only when there is a genuine oneness on the doctrines of God's holy, infallible, and inerrant Word!

Rather than imagining that sinful unionism brings about some supposed positive witness to the world, let us consider instead the insult and injury negative witness, such as, unionism makes on the world. In a world where people are seeking desperately for the truth and don't know where to find it, it does not give a God-pleasing witness to project a stance

which suggests that there is no such thing as absolute truth! (Please reread that sentence!) While those churches which take part in sinful unionistic services and church work make the claim that they are aiding the fulfillment of this petition of the sacerdotal prayer of the Lord, what in fact is the case is that their unclear and uncertain theological double-talk and their compromising of Bible doctrine for the sake of (a false) unity actually hinders the fulfillment of this part of our Lord's prayer! Please consider carefully what we are saying!

And lest we weaken in our resolve to stand firmly upon the Word with the small group of CLC churches in the world, perhaps it would be well to hear what the Formula of Concord authors had to say about this subject: "We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ" (Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, *Concordia Triglotta* 1095).

**"AND THE GLORY WHICH YOU GAVE ME  
I HAVE GIVEN THEM . . ."**

Before bringing to a close our study of this portion of Jesus' sacerdotal prayer there is one point calling yet for our attention. The Lord prays: "And the glory which [the Father] gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one." The true unity of the Christian Church is fostered when the glory of Jesus Christ is proclaimed to the world.

What is the essence of that glory? John put it this way in his prologue: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). And this glory Jesus says He has given to His believers. Think of it! Scripture teaches that believers are, by virtue of Spirit-wrought faith, "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4). What a glorious standing is ours by faith in our great High Priest! As John writes in his first epistle: "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2).

It only remains for us to remind ourselves regularly of our glorious standing under God in Christ so that we display this standing before the world through a life of daily repentance and faith. By so doing we shall be among those who help bring this portion of our Lord's prayer to fulfillment to the glory of His saving name and to the salvation of many other blood-bought souls. God grant it in Jesus' name, for His sake and to His glory! Amen.

#### OVERALL THEME: LEARN OF JESUS CHRIST TO PRAY

Theme for 17:20-23: "Jesus Prays For His Future Believers"

- I. He prays that many will come to believe on Him through the Word of God;
- II. He prays that an observable unity in visible Christendom might testify to the oneness He shares with the Father.

Liturgical suggestions: Antiphonal reading: Psalm 119, part XI;  
Hymns: 166, 170, 510, 159:3

(If this series is used during the Lenten season, this seventh portion of the sacerdotal prayer might well be used for a Good Friday meditation.)

(To be continued)

# **PANORAMA**

## **Another Update . . .**

*Daniel Fleischer, CLC President*

The Board of Doctrine met with representatives of the WELS and the ELS on January 31 and February 1. The meeting was held in Milwaukee.

It was the consensus of all present that encouraging progress has been made in understanding one another. Therefore it was agreed that three men from each synod meet in an effort to draw up a single document treating of the termination of fellowship between church bodies.

In his opening remarks, Professor Gawrisch of the WELS noted the purpose of the meeting, as well as the fact that it was being held outside the framework of fellowship. He declared what is our firm conviction also, namely, that complete agreement in doctrine and practice is a Scriptural requirement for establishing fellowship relations.

The discussion of the theses and antitheses of the CLC and the WELS/ELS was very intense and left all in a state of weariness by the end of the first day. Through this discussion it was concluded that such progress had been made to warrant the above-mentioned effort. At the same time, representatives of the ELS pointed out that they still have some questions of us. We will also have some to address to them and the WELS in the course of trying to formulate a single document. Efforts at trying to prepare a single document will be the first test of the validity of the judgment that there has in fact been some progress. Further, Professor Gawrisch recognized and stated that IF and WHEN there would be agreement in principle, it would be necessary to test such an agreement by looking at practice. Reference was made to fraternal insurance organizations. It is agreed that, in determining the orthodoxy of a church body, official statements and resolutions, as well as corporate actions or inactions, must be considered.

There is reason to believe that it is mutually recognized that admonition is not part of the essence of the "*skopein*" of Romans 16:17. It seems also that it is accepted by all that "conjecture" as to the possible outcome of admonition is not a determining factor in continuing or discontinuing admonition and that a "debt of love" dare not serve as an excuse to avoid the breaking of fellowship when such action is indicated.

The meetings have been carried on in a cordial fashion. I am sure that you will gather from the above that there has been no effort on the part of any of the parties to do anything but speak to the differences that stand between us. We all recognize that it is premature to suggest that restoration of fellowship is just around the corner. Until there is agreement in principle, and this is tested in the manners expressed above, and until agreement is recognized and declared by the bodies in convention, there is no agreement nor restoration of fellowship. What the meetings have shown to this point is that honest and face-to-face discussion does lend itself, at the very least, to understanding of one another's position. We of the CLC have always been ready to speak with those who are ready to speak to the differences that separate. To enter into such discussions with the preconceived idea that such efforts are useless would not be honest. On the other hand, the dangers of protracted meetings without results are well recognized.

We recognize that the WELS and the ELS have other activities that occupy their time. We, however, are looking forward to beginning the effort of the subcommittees as soon as possible. I believe that they concur with that hope.\*

We do not know who the ELS subcommittee will be. Professor Gawrisch, Professor Armin Panning and President Mischke will represent the WELS. The CLC committee is composed of myself, Robert Reim and Clifford Kuehne.

It was agreed upon that the theses/antitheses discussed would not be published at this time. Without the benefit of the discussion that was held there could be misinterpretation or

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\* Arrangements have been made for the subcommittee to meet on the campus of Immanuel Lutheran College on April 5-6, 1990.  
— J.L.



misunderstanding of expressions that were used. Further, one body or the other might prefer to make editorial changes or clarification based on the discussion. We concur that until and if we have something concrete to present, we continue to give a broad outline of what has been done. This we have tried to do in this letter. There is nothing behind the scenes. We are mutually agreed, however, that the delicate nature of such discussions, as well as the ultimate end—whatever it may be—is better served by abiding by the agreement not to publish the documents. All of us are asking the editors of our church papers and theological magazines to appreciate our concerns and not to editorialize on works yet subject to editing or clarification.



# PAIDEIA

## From a Pastor's and Professor's Notebook

*Roland A. Gurgel*

### IX

Over the past several years, we have been delving into our notes from "Balaam's prophecies" and from several of the so-called Minor Prophets, viz., Obadiah and Joel. It is our intention for the next series of articles appearing under the heading "From a Pastor's and Professor's Notebook" to spend some time researching our notes from the words of God set forth in Isaiah.

This will not be an exegetical endeavor. Who can begin to replace or improve upon the work of Professor August Pieper, so well translated from the original German by Professor E. E. Kowalke? Rather, this is intended to provide a bit of the flavor of this Old Testament prophet, whose work has been so aptly called the Gospel of the Old Testament. We will be zeroing in on the last 27 chapters of this book but not to the total exclusion of sections or passages from the first 39 chapters.

For me the entire book finds its summary or basic flavor in words found in the 26th chapter as such and in the 3rd verse of that chapter specifically: "Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

The promise of perfect peace is there to the people of God—to those who trust in the Lord's Messiah, Immanuel. As Isaiah unfolds that promise from chapter 1 through 66, it becomes very evident that that promise of perfect peace for the people of God is a promise of perfect peace in an imperfect world, as well as a promise of perfect peace in a perfect world yet to come.

The imperfect world is, of course, this world as it has been found from the time of the Fall until the time of its final and complete destruction at the second coming of the Messiah. It is the world as Isaiah knew it and described it during the years of

his lengthy life and as he saw it would be during the time of the Babylonian exile, as well as far beyond that day until the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. In this time period, surrounded by all the imperfection that sin ushered in, Isaiah cries out for the people of God to find peace—perfect peace—by keeping steadfast hold on the Lord Jehovah—the everlasting strength (26:4).

The perfect world in which the people of God will know perfect peace is that everlasting home spoken of in so many places throughout the book, perhaps well summarized in the closing chapter (66:12-14). "For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies."

**NOTE:** Don't overlook the last phrase of that quote, "and his indignation toward his enemies." It is developed more fully in the next verses. It is an essential part of the promise of perfect peace in a perfect, everlasting world. No one can destroy that world and bring that peace to an end. You might recall the words from Joel, chapter 3, discussed in our previous article (*Journal of Theology*, Dec. 1989). In that section you will recall the Lord demonstrating how all the combined efforts of His enemies end in total destruction for them, "multitudes in the valley of decision." You might also recall the words of the 2nd Psalm, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. . . . Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (4 and 9).

Again we would direct your attention to Isaiah 26:3-4: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Perfect peace in the perfect world of eternity, in the New Jerusalem, heaven.

We will be expanding on these two thoughts, perfect peace in an imperfect world and perfect peace in a perfect world, in articles to come. Both of these thoughts have immediate application to our own lives and the lives of those given into our spiritual care.

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Forgive, if you will, a personal note regarding these words of Isaiah 26:3. It has been our privilege to open our eyes each morning to behold ever anew these words which have been cross-stitched on aida cloth and framed. This was a gift from the ILC student body upon our retirement in 1986. It was the work of kind and thoughtful fingers and hearts, and it has been greatly appreciated.

(To be continued)

## **BOOK REVIEWS**

*America: The Sorcerer's New Apprentice; The Rise of New Age Shamanism*, by Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, ©1988. 294 pages plus notes and index, \$14.95 (paper, \$8.95). (The quotations below are from the back cover of the paperback edition.)

Those who are promoting the so-called New-Age Movement in the United States would have us believe that a new day of enlightenment, brotherhood, and peace is about to dawn upon our country and upon the world at large. The authors of this book do not share in this optimism. Rather, they believe that Americans, in their pursuit of higher levels of human potential, may well have opened "a spiritual Pandora's box."

The book is fully convincing in its contention that the New-Age Movement, which offers magical solutions to the problems of human existence, is fundamentally nothing else than Eastern religious mysticism in Western dress. By disguising itself in a garb of science and psychology, it has attracted the interest of large segments of our population—including even professing Christians. Should it gain widespread acceptance in our culture, it may prove to be "a Trojan horse that will eventually bring down Western civilization."

While the authors do not quote extensively from the Bible, they are surely correct in their conclusion that the New-Age Movement involves a rejection of the supernaturalism of Christianity and a return to nature religion. This has brought about an explosion of the occult in the very midst of a nation that has prided itself on its science and technology. In the words of one of the chapter headings, shamanism is indeed on the rise among us!

Hunt and McMahon are to be commended for doing their research well in the preparation of this volume. Their assertions are generally well documented, and extensive endnotes are provided for any readers who wish to study topics at greater

length. An index aids the reader in locating subjects of interest.

There were only a few statements in the book to which this reviewer had to take exception. Millennialistic ideas appear on page 242 (concerning the Antichrist) and on page 276 (concerning the return of the Jews to Palestine); and an Arminian conception of spiritual free choice is expressed on page 288.

Pastors and Christian teachers in particular should be encouraged to read this volume. The more that they know about the New-Age Movement, the better able they will be to give warning to the members of their flocks. And such warning is needed, since the adherents of the New Age are promoting their religion militantly, and they have succeeded quite well in concealing its unscriptural and satanic nature!

C. Kuehne

*Science, Scripture, and the Young Earth*, by Henry M. Morris and John D. Morris. Enlarged and revised edition. El Cajon, CA: Institute for Creation Research, ©1989. 95 pages, softbound, \$2.95.

This book is an enlarged and updated edition of *Science, Scripture, and the Young Earth*, written by Henry M. Morris and published in 1983. Dr. Morris serves as president of the Institute for Creation Research. He is a prolific writer, particularly in the fields of creation science and the exposition of Scripture. Joining him as coauthor of the current volume is his son, Dr. John D. Morris, who is professor of geology and administrative vice president at ICR.

The subtitle indicates the scope of the book: *An Answer to Current Attacks on the Biblical Doctrines of Recent Creation and the Global Flood*. The authors focus their attention especially on Dr. Davis Young, a professor at Calvin College and one of the most vocal opponents of Biblical creationism. According to the authors, Dr. Young, although he is an avowedly evangelical Christian, has rejected the literal creation and flood accounts of Genesis and has capitulated to modern-day evolu-

tionary thought. His position is a type of compromise known as "progressive creationism," which identifies the geological ages of evolution with the six days of creation and is therefore essentially the same as the well-known "day-age theory." Progressive creationism reduces the Creator to the level of a "god-of-the-gaps," who has periodically appeared on the scene during vast ages to overcome some evolutionary hurdle.

The authors rightly affirm that any compromising position, whether progressive creationism, process creation, or theistic evolution, is untenable in the light of the clear Biblical accounts regarding a six-day creation and a global flood at the time of Noah. Any accommodation with evolutionary theory inevitably involves a distortion of the intended meaning of Scripture. Furthermore, such compromise can easily lead to a rejection of other teachings of the Bible, including the doctrines of sin and of redemption. "The road of compromise, however attractive it seems, is a one-way street, which ends in a precipice, and then descends into the awful void of 'rational religion,' or atheism. Our advice is to stay on the straight and narrow road of the pure Word of God" (71).

The authors also show that such compromises with evolutionism are not required by true science. It is their conviction that the data of science can be fit far more successfully into a creation-flood framework than an evolutionary framework. They affirm that an appearance of age is something that one would rightly expect in a finished, fully functioning creation that God Himself regarded as "very good" (Gen. 1:31). Furthermore, they evaluate several of the methods by which evolutionists have arrived at their vast ages and attempt to show that these methods are based upon certain critical assumptions which can in no way be proved. Two chapters, for example, are devoted to the subject of radiometric dating, including the evolutionists' use of the isochron method. They cite an anti-creationist evolutionist as supporting their own conclusion: "It is obvious that radiometric techniques may not be the absolute dating methods that they are claimed to be. . . . There is no absolutely reliable long-term radiological 'clock'" (50-51).

Moreover, the authors present various scientific evidences which indicate a young age for the earth. The dramatic geological changes which took place at the time of the 1980

volcanic explosion of Mount St. Helens are cited as evidence that long periods of time are not needed to account for certain geological features of the earth. In an appendix they discuss recent ICR research on the age of the earth.

While the Drs. Morris are affiliated with the Baptist Church, they have refrained from including in this book distinctive Baptist doctrines. A lack of understanding of the Scriptural basis for fellowship seems to appear in a few places, such as in their reference to "the entire Christian brotherhood" (82). In general, however, the authors' confession of Biblical truths is to be commended. They manifest a high view of Scripture throughout the volume, and they include several fine statements regarding sin and grace. Compare the following, which refers to both the substitutionary nature and the universality of Christ's redemption: "Most of all, the price of redemption had to be paid—'the blood of His cross' (Colossians 1:20)—and that required nothing less than God Himself becoming Man, in order to die in substitution for man's sin. . . . On the cross, He shouted the great victory cry, 'It is finished!' (John 19:30), for the full price for the redemption of the universe had been paid" (14).

A book like this has a place on the shelves of a Christian pastor or teacher, or in the library of a Christian congregation or school. It shows the futility and the danger of any kind of compromise of the Biblical accounts of creation and the flood—the kind of presentation that can be placed into the hands of a Christian who has been disturbed by the false claims of evolutionists. While some of the discussions require training in science for full understanding, enough can be grasped by the average person to make the reading of the book a profitable endeavor. For the reader who desires additional information a second appendix with selected bibliography is included. Indexes of subjects and names are also provided.

The authors conclude their treatise with this confident assertion: "God's Word—in all its clarity and power—has stood through the ages and will continue to stand true after all the pretensions of modern scientism have been forgotten" (82).

*C. Kuehne*



***The Long War Against God*, by Henry M. Morris.  
Grand Rapids: Baker, ©1989. 344 pages, hardcover,  
\$21.95.**

This book represents the culmination of thirty years of research and publication by Henry M. Morris in behalf of Biblical and scientific creationism. Most of us are familiar with the *Genesis Flood*, which he co-authored with John C. Whitcomb in 1961. Since that time, Dr. Morris has produced some forty additional books in the fields of scientific creationism and Biblical studies. The wealth of quotations and bibliographic references on the pages of this volume indicates that the author has brought a broad background of reading and study to his topic.

The titles of the six lengthy chapters give an indication of the contents of the book: 1. The Evolutionary Basis of Modern Thought; 2. Political Evolutionism—Right and Left; 3. Evolutionist Religion and Morals; 4. The Dark Nursery of Darwinism; 5. The Conflict of the Ages; and 6. The Everlasting Gospel. The author demonstrates how evolutionistic-pantheistic beliefs dominate the thinking of modern man in virtually every area of human study and endeavor, including science, economics, philosophy, psychology, sociology, the humanities, political science, jurisprudence, education, morality, and religion. He traces this apostasy back through the ages to Satan's original temptation in the Garden of Eden, and he predicts that the situation will get even worse prior to the end of time.

The following quotation indicates the scope of the book: "I have tried to show in previous chapters that evolutionism has been made the foundation of all disciplines of study, as well as the pseudo-scientific rationale for all the belligerent politico-economic systems (communism, fascism, imperialism, etc.) and the harmful social practices (abortionism, racism, promiscuity, etc.) that have so tormented the world in recent generations. Worst of all, evolutionism has been the chief opponent of the saving gospel of Christ, undermining the faith of multitudes in the Bible and its promises. It is not too much to say that evolutionary theory, in one form or another, has provided the pseudo-rationale for all that is false and harmful in the world (the real cause, of course, is the innate sinfulness of the human

heart, with its rebellion against the Word of God). Furthermore, it has been shown that this has been true all through history. All who oppose the true God must always resort to some kind of evolution, for this is the only possible alternative to special creation by a transcendent God. Both modern ethnic religions and ancient pagan belief systems are essentially variant forms of evolutionism, and this is true of every variety of human-oriented philosophy. In the last analysis, Satan's long war against God is founded upon the premise of evolution and is implemented through a wide-ranging variety of applications of evolutionism in every area of human thought and life" (303-304).

The author affirms that, even as "evolutionism is the foundation of all that is false and harmful, so creationism must be the foundation of everything true and good" (304). He regards the doctrine of creation as the basis of every other doctrine and precept of Christianity, as well as the foundation of true science, true government, true education, etc. He emphasizes that a clear affirmation of the Biblical truth of creation is fundamental for any effective mission program by the churches.

Dr. Morris appears to be Arminian and millennial in his theological orientation. Numerous statements indicate that he would find in unconverted man at least some ability to respond in faith to the light that God gives in nature and in Scripture. While he does speak of natural man as "dead in trespasses and sins" (313), he nevertheless finds the answer to the question, Why some and not others?, in man: "No matter how dim the light, men who want to see it can see. No matter how bright the light, men who do not want to see it will never see" (297, emphasis by author).

The millennialism appears particularly in the last chapter. Morris holds to a futurist interpretation of the book of Revelation; he predicts the coming of a global, humanistic, totalitarian government—headed by the "man of sin" of 2 Thessalonians 2; and he looks forward to the arrival of Christ as the "coming King" and the establishment of "his coming kingdom" (312).

Within the book the author comments on numerous passages of the Bible. Much of his exegesis is acceptable, such as this

commentary on Genesis 3:15: "This protevangel (or 'first gospel,' as it has been called by both ancient and modern theologians) left the 'good news' that—despite Satan's victory over Adam and Eve in the garden—he and his spiritual posterity would eventually be mortally wounded by a coming Seed of the Woman, who would himself be seriously wounded in the conflict but would finally emerge triumphant" (264). His exposition of some passages is, however, questionable. For example, he finds in the words of Romans 1:21 ("when they knew God") a reference only to two brief periods in world history when "all mankind knew and believed the true God of creation" (262-263). Moreover, his expressions at times manifest a Reformed flavor (emphases added): "God **must** be worshiped first of all as Creator of all things. . . . he **must** also be received as Savior and Lord" (274); "Our **duty** and deliverance is simply to believe and **obey** his Word" (319); "Our **responsibility** is simply to believe, **o b e y**, and proclaim the inerrant, authoritative and plainly revealed Word of our Creator/Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ" (327).

The author is surely correct when he states that the awareness of God's existence has "continued indelibly, though faintly, in each soul everywhere" (291), and that God's creative power and providential goodness are evident in nature. Unfortunately, however, some of his remarks could be understood as ascribing saving power to this testimony of nature. For example, he urges Bible-believing scientists to do their research "also with the goal of using the testimony of science to support God's Word and to win people to faith in Christ as Creator and Savior" (302). Again, he speaks of nature itself "always silently witnessing to God's creative power and redemptive purpose" (303).

While such doctrinal and exegetical problems as those mentioned above are a serious matter, yet a cautious and critical reader can benefit from reading the book. For Dr. Morris brings a wide array of evidence to support his contention that evolutionism is not only "the basis of all the world's superficially diverse religions," but that it is, in fact, "the world's religion!" (232) The book well documents the age-long rebellion of mankind against the Lord and His Anointed, Jesus Christ, spoken of in the second Psalm. Moreover, it impresses upon the reader the vital importance of the creation account of

Genesis in the church's proclamation to the pagan world in which we are living.

In a book so filled with information, the presence of three indexes—subject, name, and Scripture—is a real help. Should the reader own the book, he can continue to use it as a source of information on topics as diverse as animism, the Big Bang Theory, education, Gnosticism, languages, the New Age movement, placentophagia, the tri-unity in nature, and Zoroastrianism. The breadth of Dr. Morris' interests is quite remarkable!

C. Kuehne

*Early Manuscripts & Modern Translations of the New Testament*, by Philip W. Comfort. Wheaton IL: Tyndale House Publishers, ©1990. 255 pages, hardcover, \$19.95.

Most readers of the Bible know that variant readings are found among the thousands of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. The marginal notations included in modern translations have alerted them to this fact. Yet, a Christian need not become alarmed at the presence of variant readings. For he has the promise of Christ that believers until the end of time will have His Word, as it has been recorded in writing through His chosen representatives. Moreover, a study of the variant readings soon reveals that no doctrine of the Bible has been brought into doubt by the existence of these variants. Whether a Christian uses the KJV, the RSV, the NASB, the NIV, or the NKJV—translations which reflect different choices of variants in many passages—he will still have all of the truths which he needs to know for his faith and life.

Even though the presence of variant readings in the New Testament manuscripts is not of doctrinal significance, yet a Christian scholar who has come to love the Bible as God's Word will be interested in these variants. Through the practice of textual criticism, he will attempt in each instance of variation to arrive at a decision as to which reading represents the original.

The book, *Early Manuscripts & Modern Translations of the New Testament* was written as a reference volume to aid

Bible students and pastors in their study of the text of the New Testament. The author is a senior editor of the Bible Department at Tyndale House Publishers and is also a visiting professor of New Testament literature and interpretation at Wheaton College. In this book he explores the influence of the early manuscripts both on modern editions of the Greek New Testament and on twentieth-century English translations of the Bible. He has included in his study the sixty-one papyri and five uncials which antedate the fourth-century uncials B (Vaticanus) and Aleph (Sinaiticus). That the author has put much scholarly research into his topic is fully evident.

In an introductory section, Dr. Comfort discusses the writing of the books of the New Testament, the copying and textual transmission of these books, the effect of the early manuscripts upon modern critical editions of the Greek Testament, and a method for analyzing the effect of these manuscripts on modern English translations. This reviewer was disappointed to find that the author holds to the theory, made popular by Westcott and Hort, that the Byzantine or Majority text type is late and secondary—the result of a revision by Lucian of Antioch about AD 300. There is simply no historical evidence of such a revision. Furthermore, papyri discovered since the time of Westcott-Hort, as well as evidence from the early versions, clearly show that many distinctively Byzantine readings go back into the second century, which fact gives them an antiquity at least equal to the Alexandrian and Western readings. Any book devoted largely to the evidence of the papyri, such as this volume by Comfort, should have given some recognition to this situation.

A second section gives very complete information on the papyri and uncials which are dated prior to the time of B and Aleph. This information includes a helpful discussion of their contents and their textual character.

In a third section Dr. Comfort lists all the passages from Matthew to Revelation in which the early manuscripts have had a significant influence on modern English translations of the New Testament. In some of his comments he manifests what this reviewer regards as an unrealistically high regard for the value of the papyri, especially when their readings agree with B and Aleph. Inasmuch as the papyri were all found in Egypt, and

most of them were probably copied there, their agreement with B and Aleph indicates little more than the state of the text in Egypt during the second through fourth centuries. For example, the author criticizes the inclusion of the words "in Ephesus" by the critical editions and modern translations in Ephesians 1:1. He believes that these words are not original, because "the three earliest MSS [papyrus 46, B, and Aleph] did not have the phrase, and later scribes added the phrase to Aleph and B" (153). This is rather meager documentary evidence for excluding these words!

A final section of the book presents concluding observations about the effect of the papyrus manuscripts on modern English translations of the New Testament. The author expresses the hope that "future editions of the Greek text will incorporate even more of the readings found in the early papyri when such readings can in any way be vindicated by the principles of textual criticism" (201). He is convinced also that "the papyri could and should be having more influence on future translations and revisions of the NT" (202).

This reviewer would not want to disparage the value of the papyri and other early manuscripts in the textual criticism of the New Testament. But he feels that their importance lies chiefly in the evidence which they offer that virtually all significant variant readings were in existence already prior to AD 200—including some readings which are distinctively Byzantine. It does not seem sound practice to base one's choice of readings almost exclusively on the combined evidence of the Egyptian papyri, B, and Aleph. Rather, one should consider all of the available evidence—including that of the later Greek uncials and minuscules, the lectionaries, the early versions, and the writings of the church fathers—in an attempt to determine which readings are both the most ancient and the most widespread in the usage of the early church. Such readings stand the best chance of being original.

The editors of the Nestle-Aland 26th edition state in their introduction: "The nineteenth century was the age of the uncials; the mid-twentieth century was the age of the papyri—this marked a striking advance over the nineteenth century. But now we are entering the age of the minuscules; their inclusion in textual studies contributes a new insight to the history of the New

Testament text, and makes it possible to reach a sounder judgment of its original form" (47\*). Studying the readings of the papyri has its value, but the papyri ought not be regarded as superior to all other witnesses in the choice of variants. We look forward to the important evidence which may yet be forthcoming from an intensive study of the minuscules and the lectionaries.

C. Kuehne

## BOOK NOTICES

*Concordance to the Book of Concord*, ed. and comp. by Kenneth E. Larson. Milwaukee: Northwestern, ©1989. 602 pages, hardcover, \$24.95.

The ad in *The Northwestern Lutheran* (3/1/90) says it all: "This is the only index of its kind! No other concordance exists for the Book of Concord. It completely indexes all the sixteenth century documents. There are over 112,000 entries indexing over 8,900 words, including all proper names. All scripture references are indexed, including those in footnotes. . . ."

Speaking personally, I only wish that this concordance had been available earlier! It is not too late, however, to make full use of this wonderful work! It probably could never have been accomplished without the advent of the computer age. Kenneth E. Larson, a Concordia Seminary, Fort Wayne, graduate, with the assistance of many others, including his wife, headed up the project.

Because the more recent graduates of seminaries are more familiar with it, the Tappert edition (*The Book of Concord*, ed. Theodore Tappert. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959) was used, with permission of the publisher. Those who are more familiar with the *Concordia Triglotta* (St. Louis: Concordia,

1921) will be happy to know that the English translation of the Book of Concordia in the *Triglotta* has also been indexed.

The Preface to this new concordance has much detail that will interest the more technical-minded among our readers. For example, an entry headed "Future Work" indicates the editor's fond hope that "suitable arrangements may be made to publish *The Book of Concord* on a set of computer diskettes" which "would allow those interested to use a specially designed, easy-to-use program to run extensive concordance studies on the original texts (English, German or Latin)." — As for me, I'm just mighty grateful to have the printed version!

J. Lau

*From Eternity to Eternity*, by Albert Sippert. P. O. Box 1913, North Mankato, MN 56002: Sippert Publishing Co. 419 pages, paper, \$12.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling (MN residents, add 78¢ tax).

In one sense, over twenty-five years were spent in preparing for and writing this book. For that long a time, Albert Sippert has been clipping and saving magazine and newspaper articles on evolution. In addition, he consulted over 125 books on both sides of the evolution issue. More than three years were spent in writing and editing the book. The result is a book which, in this reader's opinion, is eminently successful in achieving its intended purpose.

The book is subtitled: "The Song of Eternity"; the "song" has three parts: The Prelude, The Interlude, and The Postlude. In dealing with these divisions of material, the author is presenting "A Treatise on the Origin and Destiny of All Things" from the point of view of evolution and from the point of view of creation.

The Prelude presents all history from God's six-day creation of all things *ex nihilo* to the period after the Flood. The Interlude treats of "the turmoil the evolutionists have created with their no-god and anti-god ideas." In this section the author takes up the following subjects: Teaching, beliefs and ef-



forts of the evolutionists; the beginning of all things and the universe; energy forces and life on this earth; life; humanity in general; dating methods in general; the laws of thermodynamics; the history of modern evolution; evolution versus science; science; evolution is not scientific; evolution is an anti-religious creed, and at the same time a religion unto itself; the effects of teaching evolution; evolution in the public schools is contrary to the separation of religion and anti-religion and governments. The Postlude is "a tribute to our Creator-Redeemer God." Here Albert Sippert's love for the revealed truth of God's word shines forth in great beauty. It is apparent to the reader that for the author all things become clearly revealed when seen and understood in the light of the Gospel, which so lovingly shows God's will toward mankind.

Many have written in praise of *From Eternity to Eternity*. I am glad that Albert Sippert wrote it, and I hope that many more will read it.

J. Lau



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