

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY



Allan A. MacRae

Old Testament History¹

Dr. Allan A. MacRae
Faith Theological Seminary

With a Foreword and annotations by:
Dr. David C. Bossard [dcb]
Dr. Robert C. Newman [rcn]

© 2016 John P. MacRae

Published by
Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute
www.ibri.org

**Many other lectures and other materials by Dr. MacRae are available online
at macraelib.ibri.org.**

¹ These Lectures on Old Testament History are seminary-level courses taught by Dr. Allan A. MacRae, professor at Faith Theological Seminary, between 1948 and 1960.

About the Author:

Dr. Allan A. MacRae studied under the leading Old Testament and archeological specialists in the United States, Europe, and Palestine: R. A. Torrey at Biola; Robert Dick Wilson and J. Gresham Machen at Princeton Seminary; William F. Albright at the American School of Oriental Research; and E. A. Speiser at the University of Pennsylvania. He earned the A.B., A.M., Th.B, A.M. (in Semitic Philology), and Ph.D. degrees, and studied the ancient languages related to the Bible (including Babylonian Cuneiform, Egyptian Hieroglyphics, Arabic and Syriac).

Dr. MacRae taught nearly every course of the seminary during the span of a teaching career of six decades. He taught Old Testament at three seminaries: Westminster, Faith and Biblical; and was founding president of the last two of these. His students included Joseph T. Bayly, Arthur F. Glasser, Vernon C. Grounds, R. Laird Harris, Kenneth S. Kantzer, Gordon R. Lewis, Francis A. Schaeffer, and G. Douglas Young. He is author of *Nuzi Personal Names*, *The Gospel of Isaiah*, *The Prophecies of Daniel*, and *Biblical Christianity*.

Table of Contents

About the Author

Foreword

I. Introduction: What is OT History?

A. What is History?

B. Purpose of the course

1. To learn the main facts of OT history.
2. To study the meaning and bearing of some of the events in OT history.
3. To examine some of the arguments that have been presented against the reliability of the historical statements of the OT.
4. To learn sound methods of Biblical Interpretation.

C. The methods of the course

D. Basic attitudes toward the Bible

1. Our attitude toward the Bible is belief.
2. Our attitude is that the Bible is true.

Excursus: The Problem of Interpretation.

E. Remarks about Chronology

II. The World before Abraham (Genesis 1–11).

A. The Creation of the Universe.

1. The general teaching about God
 - a. God's existence is assumed.
 - b. Monotheism is taught.
 - c. God is omnipotent.
 - d. God works in orderly fashion.
 - e. God is separate from His creation.
 - f. The uniqueness of these ideas as compared with other religions and philosophies.
2. The general teaching about the material universe
 - a. It is not self-existent or divine.
 - b. It is not inherently evil, nor antagonistic to God or to man.
 - c. It came into being at the will of a divine creator.

- d. Its formation followed orderly stages.
 - e. Its essential character is pleasing and good.
- 3.** The general teaching about mankind
 - a. Man is not self-existent or divine.
 - b. Man comes at the end of the creation.
 - c. Man has divine authority for dominion over the animals of creation.
 - d. Man is separate from all the rest of God's creation.
 - e. Man was made in the image and likeness of God.
- 4.** A consideration of Genesis 1:1.
 - a.** Interpretation of it as an independent sentence
 - (1). It is a summary of the full account of creation.
 - (2). It is a complete story of a preceding creation.
 - (3). It is the creation of matter, including the elements.
 - b.** Interpretation of it as a subordinate clause
 - (1). When God began to create heaven and earth, then the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep.
 - (2). When God began to create heaven and earth and the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep, then God said let there be light.
 - c.** The word "Create," *bará*
- 5.** The Interpretation of Genesis 1:2.
- 6.** The meaning of the word "Day".
- 7.** The Fourth Day.
- 8.** The Seventh Day.
- 9.** How the knowledge in this chapter was imparted.
- 10.** The claim of Babylonian origin for this chapter.

Excursus: an introduction to the matter of archaeology.

B. Genesis 2.

- 1.** Is this another account of creation?
- 2.** Does Genesis 2 contradict Genesis 1?
 - a.** The difference in the situation at the beginning.
 - b.** The order of the events of creation.
 - (1) There is actually no mention here of the creation of vegetation.
 - (2) The planting of the garden precedes the creation of man.
 - (3) It does not state that the animals were created after man.
- 3.** The Garden of Eden.

- a. The Geographic Location.
 - b. The trees of the garden.
 - Aside: "Good" and "Evil"
- 4. The Creation of Woman.
 - a. The Needs Demonstrated.
 - b. The supernatural creation.
- 5. Spiritual Teachings in Genesis 1–2.

Excursus: What about Evolution?

C. Genesis 3.

- 1. Its Place in History.
- 2. The Details of the Fall.
 - a. The Nature of the Test.
 - b. The serpent.
 - c. The Process of the Surrender.
 - d. The Suddenness of the Result.
 - e. God's Questions.
 - f. The Effort to Evade.
- 3. The Curse which God Placed as a Result of the Fall.
 - a. The Curse upon the Serpent.
 - b. The Curse upon the Woman.
 - c. The Curse upon the Man.
 - d. The Curse upon the Animals.
- 4. Looking Ahead: Protevangelium.
- 5. The Seed of the Woman.
- 6. The Aftermath of the Fall.

D. Chapters 4–5.

- 1. The seed of the Woman.
- 2. Sin Brings Forth Death.
 - a. The First Murder.
 - b. Culture without Godliness.
- 3. The Antediluvian Patriarchs, Genesis 5.

E. Chapter 6–9: The Flood

- 1. Cause of the Flood (Genesis 6).
 - a. Sons of God took Daughters of Men as Wives.
 - (1) Supernatural beings marrying humans?
 - (2) Descendants of Seth marrying descendants of Cain?
 - (3) Believers marrying unbelievers?

Excursus: The Babylonian Flood Story (The Gilgamesh Epic).

Excursus: Textual Criticism and the Flood

- 2. Nature of the Flood (Genesis 7–9)
- 3. Consequences of the Flood 532
 - a. Blessing on the righteous.
 - b. Changed conditions.

F. Genesis 10–11

- 1. The Table of the Nations (Genesis 10).
- 2. The Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1–9).
- 3. The Generations of Shem. (Genesis 11:10ff).

Excursus: Palestine Archaeology

A. The Geography of Palestine.

- 1. The Coastal Plain.
- 2. The Shephelah (Low Hill) Country.
- 3. The Hill Country and the Jordan Valley.
- 4. The Trans-Jordan. [missing]

B. Archaeology in Palestine.

- 1. The Moabite Stone
- 2. Palestinian Research from 1890–1920.
 - a. Sir William Petrie.
 - (1). The importance of the Tell.
 - (2). The importance of pottery.
 - b. R. A. Stewart Macalister at Gezer.
- 3. The Stone Age, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age.
- 4. Other Excavations 1890–1914.
- 5. Palestinian Research since 1920; Three great expeditions:
 - a. Megiddo
 - b. Beth-shan
 - c. Lachish
- 6. The Presence of Specialists
 - a. Clarence Fisher.
 - b. William F. Albright.

C. The Relation of Palestinian Archaeology to the Patriarchal Period

III. The Patriarchal Age Genesis 12–50.

A. Historical Background

- 1. Mesopotamia.
Babylonians

Code of Hammurabi
Importance of the City of Babylon
Northern Mesopotamia
Rise of Assyria
Mitanni Kingdom (Hurrians, Horites)

2. Egypt in the time of Abraham.

- a. The Old Kingdom: 4th to 6th dynasties.**
- b. The Middle Kingdom: 11th to 12th dynasties.**
- c. The New Kingdom.**
 - (1) Hatshepsut (1479–1458 BC).**
 - (2) Thutmose III (Tothnes III) (1479–1425 BC).**
 - (3) Tothnes IV, Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV.**

3. History of Palestine.

B. Abraham

1. Material Aspects of his life.

2. Spiritual History of Abraham.

a. General outline of the material aspects of his life.

b. His call.

c. The altars.

d. God's Covenant with Abraham.

(1) Genesis 12: His original call.

(2) Genesis 15.

(3) Genesis 17.

e. The Seal of the Covenant.

(1) Philippians 3.

(2) Romans 4.

(3) Colossians 2.

f. The high point of Abraham's faith.

g. Abram's Lapses.

h. The Question about Hagar.

i. Melchizedek.

j. Abraham's Meaning for Us.

(1) He is the one through whom God gave us the promises and prepared the way for Christ.

(2) He is an example to us of faith and faithfulness.

C. Isaac.

D. Jacob.

1. General outline of the material aspects of his life.

a. His Youth in Canaan.

b. The Light from Mesopotamia.

c. The Return to Canaan.

d. His Life in Canaan.

- 2. Spiritual History of Jacob.
- 3. The Prophecies of Genesis 49.

E. Joseph.

- 1. General outline of the material aspects of his life.
- 2. The Spiritual History of Joseph.
- Figure 1. Ancient Mesopotamia.
- Figure 2. Ancient Canaan.
- Figure 3. Ancient Egypt.

IV. The Deliverance from Egypt.

A. The Background of the Deliverance. Merneptah Stele (Israel Stele)

B. The Course of the Oppression.

C. The Figure of Moses

- 1. The Preparation of Moses
- 2. The Call of Moses
- 3. Words about Moses' Character, and Life in General.

D. The Struggle with Pharaoh

- 1. The Attitude of the Israelites.
- 2. The Character of Pharaoh.
 - a. His Power and Authority.
 - b. His Personal Attitude.
The hardening of Pharaoh's heart
- 3. The Plagues of Egypt.
God's methods
 - (1) Intensification.
 - (2). Prediction.
 - (3). Discrimination.
 - (4). Orderliness.
 - (5). Moral Purpose.

E. The Passover.

- 1. The Meaning of the Word.
- 2. The Historical Purpose
 - (1) To Look Back to the Historical Deliverance in Leaving Egypt.
 - (2) To Look to the Present Situation Regarding Sin.
 - (3) To Look Forward to God's Deliverance from Egypt.
- 3. The Sacrifice
- 4. The Importance and Meaning of the Passover

F. The Departure from Egypt.

G. Escape through the Red Sea Red Sea Crossing (Robinson?)

V. Israel in the Wilderness.

A. The Importance of this Section.

1. Historical

2. Spiritual Lessons

a. For the Church as a Whole.

b. For the Individual Believer.

c. General Features.

(1). Foundation of Redemption.

(2). The Goal.

(3). God's Care for His People.

(4). The Giving of the Law.

(5). The Story of the Wilderness Journey.

(6). The Duration.

B. From Egypt to Sinai.

1. The Start.

a. The Mixed Multitude.

b. The Route Taken.

c. The Bones of Joseph.

2. The Divine Guidance.

a. The Pillar.

b. The Trumpets.

c. Hobab.

d. Note Regarding the Ark.

4. (Record Missing from '58 OT History)

5. Manna Given.

a. Murmuring.

b. Quails.

c. The First Manna.

d. A Day's Provision at a Time.

e. The Sabbath Day.

f. A Pot of Manna to be Preserved.

g. The duration of the Manna.

6. Water Provided. Exodus 17:1-7.

7. Victory over Amalek. 17:8-16.

8. Jethro's Advice.

C. At Sinai.

- 1. The Covenant, Ex. 9–24:8.**
 - a. The Covenant Presented, 19:3–8.**
 - b. Arrangements for the Declaration of the Moral Law, 19:9–25.**
 - c. The Moral Law Proclaimed, 20:1–17.**
 - d. The People's Fear, 20:18–21.**
 - e. Regulations for Worship. 20:22–26.**
 - f. The Judgments. 21:1–23:19.**
 - g. The Promised Conquest. 23:20–33.**
 - h. The Covenant Formally Ratified. 24:1–8.**
- 2. Kinds of Law.**
 - a. Moral Law.**
 - b. Civil Law.**
 - c. Ceremonial Law.**
- 3. Detailed instructions given in the Mount. 24:9–31:18.**
 - a. Moses goes up into the Mountain. 24:9–18.**
 - b. Directions for the Tabernacle. Exodus 25–27.**
 - c. Directions for the People.**
 - d. Workmen Provided by the Lord. 31:1–11.**
 - e. The Sabbath rest. 31:12–17.**
 - f. The Tables of Stone. 31:18.**
- 4. The Golden Calf. Exodus 32–35:3.**
 - a. The First Great Apostasy of Israel. Exodus 32:1–6.**
 - b. Moses' First Intercession.**
 - c. Moses' Return to the Camp. 32:15–24.**
 - (1). Destruction of the first tables of stone.**
 - (2). Aaron's Lane Excuses.**
 - d. Vengeance on the People. 32:25–29.**
 - e. Further Intercession. 32:13–33:23.**
 - f. The Covenant reestablished. 34:1–35:3.**
- 5. The Tabernacle Built.**
- 6. The Tabernacle Set Up. Exodus 40.**
- 7. Laws Regarding Sacrifice. Leviticus 1–7.**
- 8. The Consecration the Priests. Leviticus 8–9.**
- 9. The Rebellion of Nadab and. Abihu. Chapter 10.**
- 10. Other Laws. Chapters 11–27.**

11. Preparation for Leaving Sinai. Numbers 1–10:10.

a. The men of war numbered and positions assigned. 1:1–2:34.

b. The Levites numbered and duties described. 3:1–4:49.

c. Removal of uncleanness and defilement from the camp. 5:1–31.

d. The Nazarite Vow. 6:1–8.

e. Arrangements for the Religious Life of the Camp. 6:22–9:14.

(1). The formula for blessing the congregation. 6:22–26.

(2). The Offering of the Princes. 7:1–89.

(3). The Lamps Lit. 8:1–4.

(4). The Cleansing of the Levites for Service. 8:5–22.

(5). The Age of Levitical Service. 8:23–26.

(6). The First Passover after Leaving Egypt 9:1–14.

f. The Divine Provision for Direction and Guidance. 9:15–10:11.

(1). The Pillar of Cloud and Fire. 9:15–23.

(2). The Silver Trumpet. 10:1–11.

D. From Sinai to the Plains of Moab Lev. Numbers 10:11–22:1.

1. The First Stage of the Journey. 10:11–26.

a. The Departure from Sinai 10:11–28.

b. Moses' Request for Help from Hobab. 10:29–32.

c. The Ark and the Blessing. 10:33–36.

2. Rebellion and Dissatisfaction.

a. Disaffection in the Outskirts of the Camp. 11:1–3.

b. Trouble in the Midst of the Camp. 11:4–15.

c. God's Twofold Answer to Moses' Prayer. 11:16–35.

d. Rebellion among the Leaders. Chapter 12.

e. The Unsuccessful Repentance, chapter 14:39–45.

3. The Crisis at Kadesh–Barnea.

4. Laws after the Crisis. 15:1–41.

a. Rules of Sacrifice for Canaan. 15:1–21.

b. Provision Regarding Sins of Ignorance. 15:22–31.

c. An Instance of Presumptuous Sin. 15:32–36.

d. The Ribband of Blue. 15:37–41.

5. The Great Rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. 16: 1–50.

6. The Aftermath of the Rebellion. 17:1–19:22.

- 7.** Incidents on the Way to the Plains of Moab. 20:1–22:1.
 - a.** The Death of Miriam.
 - b.** The Sin of Moses and Aaron. 20:2–13.
 - c.** Edom's Refusal to Allow Passage through the Land. 20:14–21.
 - d.** The Death of Aaron. 20:22–29.
 - e.** The Victory over Arad. 21:1–3.
 - f.** The Incident of the Brazen Serpent. 21:4–9.
 - g.** The March around Moab. 21:10–20.
 - h.** Victory over Sihon. 21:21–32.
 - i.** Victory over Og, king of Bashan 21:33–35.
 - j.** Arrival in the Plains of Moab.

E. The Balaam Incident.

- 1.** The Summoning of Balaam. 22:2–40.
- 2.** Balaam's Prophecies. 22:41–24:24.
- 3.** The Aftermath of the Balaam Incident. Numbers 25.

F. Preparation for Entrance into Canaan. 26:1–36:13.

- 1.** The New Census, Numbers 26.
- 2.** A Special Problem Regarding Inheritance of Land. 27:1–11.
- 3.** The Appointment of a New Leader for the Conquest of Canaan 27:12–26.
- 4.** Laws Regarding Sacrifice and Vows. Numbers 28–30.
- 5.** Vengeance on the Midianites. Numbers 31.
- 6.** The Apportionment of Transjordan. Chapter 32.
- 7.** The Summary of Journeys 33:1–49.
- 8.** The Plans for the Division of Canaan. Chapter 33:50–36:13.

G. Moses' Last Days

- 1.** The Addresses in Deuteronomy.
 - a.** First Discourse: Historical Retrospective to God's Dealings. 1:6–4:40.
 - b.** Second Discourse: Exhortations to Fidelity and Obedience. 4:44–26:19.
 - c.** Third Discourse: Difference between Life and Death. 29–30.
 - d.** Moses' Song. 32:1–43.
 - e.** Marks of the Approaching Entrance to Canaan.
 - (1). They constantly mention towns instead of the camp.
 - (2).** There are minor changes of law.

(3). There is interest taken in the well-being of the poorer classes.

(4). There is an insistence on one central altar.

2. The Death of Moses.

VI. The Book of Joshua.

A. Introduction

1. Authorship and Type of Material

2. External Evidence Regarding the History

a. The El Amarna Tablets

b. The Israel Stele (Merneptah Stele)

c. Excavations in Palestine

B. The Entrance into Canaan

1. Joshua's Commission

2. The People Mobilize 1:10–18

3. The Spies into Jericho

4. The Crossing over Jordan

5. The General Circumcision and the Encampment at Gilgal.

C. The Conquest of Canaan 5:13–12:24

1. The General Strategy

2. The Divine Commander

3. The Conquest of Jericho. Chapter 6

4. The Attack on Ai

5. The Ceremony at Shechem

6. The Gibeonite Deception

7. The Conquest of the Southern Confederates

8. The Northern Campaign

9. Summary of the Conquest

D. The Division of the Land. 13–22.

E. Joshua's Last Days

VII. The Book of Judges.

A. Introduction

1. No Established Continuous Political Organization in this Period

2. The Law Existed and the Judges Ruled Irregularly

3. The Book has a Succession of Cycles

B. The Chronology of the Period.

C. The Completion of the Conquest.

D. A Few Points about Outstanding Judges

1. Deborah and Barak
2. Gideon
3. Jephthah
4. Samson

E. The Closing Chapters of Judges.

F. Ruth.

VIII. The Life of Samuel.

A. Ancestry and Youth of Samuel

B. Return of the Ark

C. The Victory of Ebenezer

D. Samuel's Circuit

E. The Selection of a King

1. The Request of the People.
2. The Selection of the People.
3. The Details of the Selection of a King.

F. Samuel Rejecting the King

G. Samuel's Death and Appearance to Saul

IX. The United Kingdom.

A. Saul

B. David

1. His Character
2. The Summary of His Early Career
3. The Summary of His Career as King

C. Solomon

X. The Divided Kingdom before Jehu.

A. The Disruption

1. Background of the Disruption
 - a. The Gibeonite Wedge
 - b. The Two Leading Tribes
 - c. Previous Divisive Tendencies
2. Solomon's Defection from God
3. Rehoboam's Foolish Attitude

B. The First Three Kings of Judah

1. Rehoboam
 - a. His attempt to reconquer Israel.
 - b. Relations with Egypt.
2. Abijah
3. Asa

C. The First Two Dynasties of Israel

1. The Dynasty of Jeroboam.
 - a. Jeroboam Becomes King.
 - b. Jeroboam Forsakes the Lord.
 - c. The Prophet from Judah.
 - d. Ahijah's Warning.
 - e. Nadab's Reign.
2. The Dynasty of Baasha
 - a. His Accession.
 - b. Wars against Judah.
 - c. Jehu's Prophecy.
 - d. Elah's Reign.
 - e. Zimri's Usurpation.
 - f. The Inter-regnum.

D. The Dynasty of Omri

1. The Reign of Omri
 - a. His Accession.
 - b. His New Capital.
 - c. His Diplomacy.
 - d. His Importance.
2. The Accession of Ahab
 - a. His Character.
 - b. His Leadership of Israel.
 - c. His Wife Jezebel.
3. The Menace of the Baal Worshipers
4. Elijah the Prophet
 - a. The Work of Elijah and Elisha.
 - b. Elijah's First Appearance.

- c. Elijah's Great Work at Carmel.
- d. Elijah's Flight.
- e. Elijah at Horeb.
- f. Elijah's Declining Years.
- g. Elijah's Rapture to Heaven.
- 5. Ahab's Reign
- 6. Ahab's Sons
- 7. Elisha the Prophet

E. Judah Under Jehoshaphat and Jehoram.

- 1. Jehoshaphat
- 2. Jehoram

XI. The Divided Kingdom from Jehu to Hoshea.

A. The Dynasty of Jehu

- 1. The Revolution of Jehu
- 2. Jehu's Failure
- 3. Jehu's Successor

B. Judah During the Century After 841 BC

- 1. Athaliah.
- 2. Joash.
- 3. Amaziah.
- 4. Uzziah.
- 5. Jotham.

C. The Assyrian Empire

XII. The Final Days of the Northern Kingdom.

A. The Assyrian Empire

- 1. Tiglath Pileser III. 743–723 BC.
- 2. Shalmaneser V. 723–719 BC.
- 3. Sargon II. 719–705 BC.
- 4. Sennacherib I. 704–681 BC.

B. Judah at this Time.

- 1. Ahaz
- 2. Hezekiah

C. The Downfall of the Northern Kingdom

- 1. The End of the House of Jehu.
- 2. The Dynasty of Menahem.
- 3. Pekah.

4. Hoshea.
5. The Coming of the Samaritans.

XIII. The Last Century of Judah.

- A. The Assyrian Empire
 1. Essar-Haddon
 2. Ashurbanipal
 3. The Fall of Nineveh and its Aftermath
- B. The Neo-Babylonian Empire
 1. Nebuchadnezzar
- C. The Last Kings of Judah
 1. Manasseh
 2. Amon
 3. Josiah.
 4. Jehoahaz.
 5. Jehoiakim.
 6. Jehoiachin.
 7. Zedekiah.
 8. Judah Immediately after the Destruction.

XIV. The Exile.

- A. The Beginning of the Exile.
 1. First Stage, 2 Kings 15:29, about 730 BC.
 2. Second Stage, 2 Kings 18:11, about 721 BC.
 3. The Third Stage, 2 Kings 24:1, about 604 BC.
 4. The Fourth Stage, 2 Kings 24:14–16 about 597 BC.
 5. The Fifth Stage, 2 Kings 25:11–12, about 586 BC.The Seventy Years.
- B. The Nature of the Captivity
- C. The Fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire
- D. The Rise of the Persian Empire
 1. The Medes
 2. Cyrus, King of Anshan.
 3. Succeeding Kings.

XV. Return and Rebuilding.

- A. Return under Zerubbabel.

[B.](#) Return under Ezra

[C.](#) Nehemiah

APPENDICES

A. [Map of Mesopotamia \(1200 BC\)](#)

B. [Babylonian King List](#)

C. Mesopotamian Archaeology

D. An Excursus on the Law

[Figures](#)

[General Index](#)

FIGURES

[Abraham's Rescue of Lot](#)
[Ashteroth and Karnaim Location](#)
[Ashurbanipal Mural](#)
[Assyria Map](#)
[Babylonian King List](#)
[Ben-Hadad Stele](#)
[Beth-shan Location](#)
[Boundary Stone with Sun god \(Marduk\) and Moon god \(Sin\)](#)
[Canaan in the Age of Joshua & the Judges](#)
[Cities of Ancient Palestine](#)
[Cities of Ancient Palestine](#)
[Cuneiform Amarna Tablet](#)
[Figure 1. Ancient Mesopotamia.](#)
[Figure 2. Ancient Canaan.](#)
[Figure 3. Ancient Egypt.](#)
[Gezer Calendar](#)
[Hittite Inscription at Hamath](#)
[Hittite Iron Tools](#)
[Jehoiachin's Rations Tablets](#)
[Jehu Panel of Black Obelisk](#)
[Joshua's Conquest of Canaan](#)
[Kingdom of David & Solomon](#)
[Lachish Letter](#)
[Lachish: Sennacherib's 'Consolation Prize'](#)
[Lascaux Bull Painting](#)
[Lascaux Sky Chart superimposed on Bull Painting](#)
[Location of Eden? Land of Havilah](#)
[Location of El-Tell, Bethel, and Kirbet El-Mukatir](#)
[Map locating Megiddo](#)
[Map of Canaanite Nations](#)
[Map of Mesopotamia ca. 1200 BC with Principle Archaeological Sites](#)
[Merneptah Stele](#)
[Moabite Stone](#)
[Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim](#)
[Ophir/Sheba/Punt](#)
[Prism of Sennacherib](#)
[Red Sea Crossing: Possible Location](#)
[Samaritan Pentateuch](#)
[Shishak Monument](#)
[Siloam Inscription](#)
[Solomon's Stables at Megiddo](#)
[Standard of Ur](#)

[The Black Obelisk](#)

[The Land of Canaan as Divided among the 12 Tribes](#)

[Topography and Inhabitants of Canaan](#)

[Walls of Jericho — site plan](#)

[West Bank of the Jordan](#), Opposite El Damieh, 1928

FOREWORD

by

David C. Bossard

Dr. MacRae explains in his introduction that OT history is not the history of how the Old Testament came to be, but the history that is in the OT; more specifically, a history of God's dealings with humanity. A very large portion of the OT is history of one sort or another, and that is what this course is about.

A going-in assumption that Dr. MacRae makes is that everything that the Bible says about any one of these fields is correct and true, for the Bible is inspired of God and free from error. Wherever the Bible touches on any subject, you can trust its statements. Because the God who made the world and who made the material which all these sciences try to describe would not describe them incorrectly in the book which he has given to us.

But the Bible makes no attempt to give us a complete picture of any one of these fields. And one reading the Bible must be very careful not to read in things that it does not say. This is a common cause of much disagreement in Bible interpretation and Dr. MacRae constantly warns against such misreading, and gives many specific examples. In the introductory lecture he says, "Please remember where your knowledge stops and don't try to go beyond that point; because if you do, you will go astray and you may lead others astray."

And to a lesser extent it can be said, the Bible is not a book of history. It is a remarkably faithful and true account as far as the facts can be determined, from the pre-history accounts and on through the historical accounts (that is, archaeologically verifiable) of the ancestors and descendents of Abraham. In this he brings in the archaeological evidence for the Biblical historical account that comes from the archaeological discoveries from surrounding cultures: in Egypt, Palestine and Mesopotamia. During the course of these lectures he included extensive side-excursions devoted to discussions of this archaeology. All of these excurses were part of the lectures given, but appear here separated out into Appendices. These lectures also include a general index on archaeological items of interest.

He occasionally worked with the archaeologist Dr. William F. Albright, "the dean of Biblical archaeologists"² who was the director of the American School of Oriental Research based in Jerusalem in the 1920's. In the course of these lectures he remarks on times in 1929 and the 1930s, when he accompanied Dr.

² [Wikipedia](#).

Albright to a number of active and potential archaeological sites within what was then the British Palestine Mandate established after the defeat of the Ottoman empire in World War I.

It is ironic that the foundations of Biblical criticism that is still promoted in many seminaries and secular institutions, are rooted in views that prevailed prior to the modern archaeological era. That era began in robust form in the mid-1800s with the new ability to read the ancient hieroglyphic and cuneiform languages.

It is clear that Dr. MacRae has a personal fascination with archaeology. That is robustly reflected in hundreds of points of these OT History lectures, in the form of personal anecdotes and remarks about that archaeological history.

Dr. MacRae frequently notes that many of the "assured results" of Biblical criticism find their root in demonstrably false conclusions and prejudicial views developed during the years before modern archaeology took root, including:

- That much of the early history of Israel is mythical;
- That writing didn't exist until long after Moses;
- That ancient people were largely illiterate;
- That the understanding and accuracy of science and technology was far below the "standards" that prevail in this modern scientific age;
- That monotheism did not exist until very late in Israel's history;
- That the temple was a political concoction to centralize worship in Jerusalem.
- That the great nations, personages, and locations mentioned in the Bible are mythical: names such as Sargon, empires such as Assyria, which figure essentially in Israel's history.

In short, that much of the "fact" stated in the Bible is actually not literally true and the Bible books are themselves compilations made up from several strains of fragmentary tradition long after the events reported, largely compiled by a priestly class for self-aggrandizement and used by the Judean kings to focus political and religious worship in Jerusalem and its temple.

In opposing this critical view, Dr. MacRae notes that of the hundreds of Biblical references to specific locations, all but a small handful have been located by archaeologists. A remarkable exception, he notes, is the location of Jeroboam's capital city Tirzah when the ten tribes revolted from Rehoboam to form the northern nation of Israel. This was the capital when King Omri established Samaria, which then remained the capital of Israel until it was captured in 721 BC. But that is one of the very few Biblical locations that is still unknown.

He cites many archaeological details showing the factual basis of the Bible's account at numerous points of OT history, quoting numerous authors who acknowledge the facts but still analyze the history from the viewpoint of this faulty critical scholarship. Reading between the lines, it is evidently a great frustration to him that so many points that confirm the Biblical account are nevertheless read within that old and faulty critical context.

The decades that Dr. MacRae worked were the high point for archaeological research if one takes the region as a whole. After the establishment of the modern state of Israel (at the dissolution of the Palestinian Mandate), Arab hostility has prevented much further extension in understanding of the works in major areas of modern Palestine and Mesopotamia. Many details have been verified, particularly within areas under Israeli control, but at present there appears to be a movement among the Muslim populations to suppress the historical evidence in the areas under their control.

To cite one instance, the numerous archaeological sites that exist in the region of the Jordan valley are even today largely unexplored. As Dr. MacRae notes, this is not just due to political and religious opposition or even hostility, but also to the fact that many of the Jordan valley sites do not appear to have the popular appeal of sites that are more conspicuous in Biblical history—however valuable they may be for an understanding of ancient history. This is, as Dr. MacRae notes from time to time in the lectures, because the source of funding for digs is often focused on matters of direct Biblical interest; thus, for example, many sites have un-explored cities known to exist much earlier than the earliest mention in the Bible, but they are left untouched due to lack of funding—or perhaps because other sites of more obvious Biblical interest are viewed as higher in priority for scarce funds. A gratifying exception to this is Jericho which has remained in Israeli control, and since the time of these lectures has been further excavated back to its original formation as a fortified town around 9,000 BC.³ It was originally an oasis with a marvelous spring that gave the town an inexhaustible water supply, and made the defense seem impregnable—until Joshua's conquest.

Finally, we should note that many footnotes are added by the editors to give supplementary information that may reflect their personal particular interests, or of matters that were not known at the time of these lectures. They do not necessarily reflect Dr. MacRae's views. Examples are: the note on the Antikythera Mechanism that demonstrates an advanced understanding of precise technology far earlier than is generally credited to these ancient cultures (a theme that Dr. MacRae himself spoke on at numerous places in these lectures); and the recent discoveries (as late as the 1990s) of ancient Art caves that push back the known history of modern humans many thousands of years into pre-history.

³ See [Kathleen Kenyon's article in Britannica](#).

Old Testament History⁴

Dr. Allan A. MacRae
Faith Theological Seminary

I. Introduction: What is OT History?

Our course this year is called Old Testament History. This does not mean the history of the OT. We deal with that more in the course OT Introduction, which the Middlers had last year and which the Juniors will take next year. We deal there with the questions: Where did we get the Old Testament? Where did it come from? What is its nature? Its content? We are interested in our course here not in the history of the OT, but the history that is in the OT. Not what the historians tell us about the OT, but what does the OT tell of history.

Now a very large portion of the OT is history of one sort or another. Some books are entirely made up of history. Other books, of course, are poetry or prophecy, proverbs, or some other type of literature, and there is only a little history in that, though there is some history in every book. But some books are almost entirely history. So this year we are going to try to look at some of these books that are mostly history and get an idea of their content and of their nature and their dependability.

A. What is History?

It is important that as we start a course like this that we have a little idea of what we mean by history and just what history is. I did not go into this particular question at all in the course on Church History. We will take a few minutes on it now and what we say will be equally important in that connection as it is with this.

People have the idea that history is a list of kings. Well, that's not history, that's annals; that's material from which to make history, but that's not history. Other people have the idea that history is everything that occurs. Well, that again

⁴ These Lectures on Old Testament History are compiled from transcripts of seminary-level courses taught by Dr. Allan A. MacRae, professor at Faith Theological Seminary, between 1948 and 1960.

would suggest annals. Nobody could ever write a history of everything that occurred in one single day. It would be just absolutely impossible; it would take you a thousand years to write down everything that happened today in Philadelphia. You couldn't get at them, but if you could, if you had an army of reporters, to get it for you, it would take you a thousand years to write it.

Well, somebody says history is what happened that's important. Well, that's a partial definition but not complete. But on that, let me say this: who knows what is important? There was a young boy born back in Kentucky, I believe, wasn't it? Born in Kentucky about 18 was it 10 or 20, sometime along there? And he was born in a very poor family, and as a young fellow he learned to read and he sat in front of a fire and studied, and there were many, many other people doing similar things. And he met a young woman, he became tremendously interested in her, she died rather suddenly, and there are things like that that happened in his life that happen to hundreds of other people. What importance was there—he was one of numbers of people having similar experience. But that man came to be one of the two or three outstanding characters in American History and today historians spend countless hours, trying to reconstruct those events about him, and discussing his love affair and what an effect it had on his life and some even deny that the thing ever happened, while others feel they can show where the burying place is of this young woman in his early life who made such a tremendous effect on his whole life, his relationships with her.

In American history, this Abraham Lincoln had such tremendous importance that anything that entered into his life becomes tremendously important to us, but no one at the time knew it was of any importance at all, and consequently nobody bothered to write it down, or paid any attention to it. And people at that time were writing down with much interest some of the things that some of the presidents of the United States were doing in those days, men who are now completely forgotten, and people today are a thousand times more interested in every little detail of Abraham Lincoln's early life than they are in the great events in the life of Franklin Pierce or James Buchanan or some of the other presidents of the United States at that time.

What I mean to say is, at the time when events occur it is very difficult to know what is important and what is not. History is not just an account of what's happened. You might say it's an account of the important things that happened, but nobody at the time knows what the important things are, except for certain ones. Because history is not just a list of things that happened or even a list of important things that happened. History is a consideration of vital movements and their significance. History is an understanding of how great changes have taken place. History is a study of how civilization developed to what it is today. And therefore individuals are of interest to us because what they did had important results.

A little incidental thing can affect far more than what anybody could ever imagine. And history is an attempt to understand how things have come about and what are the events that changed them. They say that one of the emperors of Russia, one of the Czars of Russia—this was maybe a hundred years ago—began to take quite an interest in the arrangement of the guards around the palace, and he noticed that the guards were very well arranged and planned to protect the palace. It was good system used, except there was one thing he couldn't figure out. There was a certain place out on the front lawn of the palace where the guard stood, he stood at attention with his gun beside him at that point on the lawn, and he stood there for eight hours and then another guard came and relieved him and stood there another eight hours and all the twenty-four hours, always a guard that stood at that exact spot.

And so he asked the captain of the guards, "Why do you station a guard here?" And he said, "Well that's part of our orders." "Well," he said, "where do those orders come from?" "Well, I was given those when I became captain of the guards." So he went to the higher-ups and asked. "Well, that's part of the orders for the guards around the palace, the guards are to be stationed here through the day to protect the Czar and his family, and this one always stands at this point and whether the emperor is here or a thousand miles away, there is always a guard at this point." But why? He couldn't find any reason.

And this man was interested why it was, and so he began going back and reading detailed accounts, and studying and eventually he discovered that one hundred and fifty years earlier the Czarina of Russia, a German princess who had married the Czar of Russia and who managed, after he died, to hold the power and continue as one of the great empresses of Russia, that this empress got a very rare shrub which was imported from a distant land and she placed it at this point on the lawn, and she wanted to be sure that this shrub would have a chance to grow and that no one would accidentally injure it, and so she gave very strict orders day and night a soldier must always stand at this spot on the lawn, stand there with his gun, and no one could get near who might accidentally injure the shrub. And within a few years the shrub proved not satisfactory for Russian conditions, the climate didn't suit; it died out, but the empress was busy with her great plans elsewhere and never thought to give a counter-order, and so a hundred and fifty years later they continued always having a soldier at that point.

Well, now, that seems silly to us. It seems silly to us but there is much in our lives that has just as silly a start as that. There was a member of Andrew Jackson's cabinet whose wife was accused of certain things and many of the members of the cabinet refused to be friendly to this woman and Andrew Jackson, having a very soft spot in his heart for the fact that his wife had died just before he became president, took her part very violently and the man who

was strongest against her was the one to be the next president of the United States. So Andrew Jackson who had absolute power in the Democratic Party as long as he was president, introduced the rule that no one could be a nominee of the Democratic Party unless he has a two-thirds vote in the convention, because he knew that Calhoun could not get a two-thirds vote, though he could have easily have had a majority. And that law was put in to carry out Jackson's idea of keeping Calhoun from getting the office, because Calhoun wasn't friendly to this lady whom Jackson felt was wronged. And that rule continued in the Democratic Party for one hundred and twenty years. Finally Franklin D. Roosevelt changed it. Woodrow Wilson would never have been president of the United States if it had not been for that rule because there were other men who received a majority in the convention but couldn't get two-thirds of the vote. Woodrow Wilson's being president affected the whole world.

And so history is an account of what is important, but it's an account of what is important because it had effect on great numbers of people or on changing conditions. Now then, a political history tries to show that which has caused political changes in the world. A history of art tries to show not just the names of the great painters but the account of the forces that have changed, and the ideas and the men who have been important, not merely for what they did but for the importance they had on others.

The Bible is a history of God's dealings with humanity. It is not a history of Israel. It is a history of the coming of God's revelation, not a history of the political events and results in the Near East. But it gives those things which God considers important in the development of the things which are more vital for our lives than the political events could possibly be; but political events are important in the background and in connection with these. And consequently we don't have a complete history of Israel in the Bible; we don't have a complete list of events anywhere during these periods. There are many areas which are left almost completely blank in our account. The Bible is written for one definite purpose, but we understand that imperfectly.

History as a whole, or history of any particular subject, is the account about that which is important and vital in connection with the development and change of that subject. Say you wrote a history of something; you try to understand something of its nature, and where it came from and where it is going, and what important changes have occurred in it; and you have to select those things that are vital in order to get this understanding of the subject. History is not merely a list of occurrences; it is an account of how something came into being, or of how particular changes have occurred, or of how situations developed. It takes a great deal of judgment to write history.

I'm told that in most of our universities today, American history is considered as in a state of flux. American History is being re-thought today. They are writing

entirely new history today and the probabilities are that the American History taught in our schools five years from now will be entirely different from the history of five years ago. From the thousands and thousands of facts, the selection made will be different because of the viewpoint is very different.

The old histories tell us of the great men who made America and of the great ideals and judgments these men had. The new histories will deal more with economic forces. The old histories told us how these men were filled with the love of God, and desired to serve Him and came over to this country desiring to establish a nation where they could worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. The later histories are going to tell us of these men and how they found it difficult to make a living in Europe; and they came over here to make a better living, and they had selfish motives in all that they did. It is a materialistic viewpoint which is affecting the history.

Now the result of this is that it is going to force Christians to take an attitude towards history which is a more reasonable attitude than in the past. Our attitude in the past has been "What is the history? Get the book and read it." History is not quite that simple.

I took a good bit of work in history in college, and then I took some graduate work in history. I earned one M.A. in American History, and then I took half of enough work to earn another M.A. in European History before I switched to some other subjects. And when I came into the graduate work, I began to sense an entirely different attitude towards it. Nothing is cut and dried in it as in the undergraduate work. Here is the History taken, which is the usual attitude of the undergraduate. Then in the graduate work: here is a great mass of facts. What are the facts that are important and how do they fit together to make up your history? And therefore it will be a very interesting and a very valuable thing to take the American history books of ten years ago and the ones that will be used ten years from now and put them next to each other and see what they say, and then go back to the facts and check on them and see which is proven true.

It is not a matter of presupposition; it is a matter of whether you deal fairly with the facts. But you can easily be led by a presupposition to deal unfairly with facts and to ignore those which are vital; therefore we check the facts to see which are presuppositions and which of course are the correct ones, so that history has a great element of interpretation.

You must gather the facts and then you must see what the facts are and you must examine them and see their relationship to one another and you must see which of them are vital in understanding the things with which you are attempting to seek.

Now the Bible is not a history of the world in the sense that it tries to tell us all about the world. It doesn't try to tell us everything that is important about the world. It certainly is not a history of Israel in that sense at all. It is a history of God's dealings with mankind. It is a history of how God established a universe in order to be a place on which he would put man. It is a history of how man fell into sin and broke his relation with God; and it is a history of how God went about restoring these relations. It is a history of God's relation to the universe and God's relation with man. Therefore that which we see clearly depicted and pictured through it is the progress of this very vital subject and those matters that are vital in this connection. Matters which are not directly related to this great central theme of Biblical history are brought in and presented if they are necessary in order to understand it. If they are necessary background they are brought in only to this extent. And so, if you are interested in the history of Israel; if you are interested in the history of chemistry; or if you are interested in the history of Creation; if you are interested in any particular subject which is not the subject of the Bible, you may find a great deal that is vital in the Bible about that subject, but you will not find a full history. You will only find certain sections of that history and if you take those sections and think it covers the whole thing, you are going to be misled and you will get an entirely wrong idea.

Everything that the Bible says about any one of these fields is correct and true, for the Bible is inspired of God and free from error. But the Bible makes no attempt to give us a complete picture of any one of these fields. It of course does not give us a complete picture of God's relationship with mankind. That would be impossible. That would take thousands and thousands of volumes, but it does give us a complete picture of God's relations with mankind in this sense, that it takes enough of the essential and vital facts in this relationship. Enough of the important turning points of events connected with this relationship that we can get a true picture of the matter as a whole.

And you know that in many cases, there are phases and factors of it we don't know about: we simply haven't enough revealed. We couldn't have that in one book or in a hundred books. But we know that we get a true picture of this, true in proportion, in relationship. As we put the things together we get a correct understanding of this and in all other fields we get an understanding only to the extent that we have the material dealing with it and not beyond.

And that is extremely important in the interpretation of the Bible or in any field; you've got to realize the fact it doesn't attempt to give us a complete geology, a complete chemistry, or even a complete history of the world, or a complete history of Israel. Those are comparatively incidental and in some of those fields we have a little material, in some of them we have a great deal of material, but it is incomplete and no attempt has been made to have it be harmoniously and fully proportioned because that is not the purpose of the Bible.

Personally I believe that for theological students, one of the most important things we can do is to learn what the Bible does *not* say. Not merely to learn what it does say, but to learn what it does *not* say, and not to try to make it say what it does not say. For a person who is merely going to have a little knowledge to go out to serve the Lord, the most vital thing of course is to learn a few great simple facts that the Bible gives. Learn John 3:16. Learn the great essential facts of Salvation. Go out and give them and the Lord will bless you in your effort, but please remember where your knowledge stops and don't try to go beyond that point; because if you do, you will go astray and you may lead others astray.

Now we are trying here to train people who will be leaders in Christ's name, people who will be able to lead the flock of God and avoid the pitfalls and keep from going off in incorrect and harmful interpretations. But in order to do that of course it is vital to learn what the Bible says; and the more we learn of what it teaches, the better; but is extremely vital to learn where what the Bible says stops and the point beyond which it does not tell us anything in connection with any particular part. And not to say, "Well, it must be this way." The Bible doesn't say, and we don't know unless we have some real evidence from some other source.

There is an illustration that I often give about this that some of you have heard me give in other classes, but I think that it is one that is worth repeating. Supposing that I say to you, "During the last two months I traveled from Jerusalem to Wilmington." What do you know from that statement? You know from that statement that I started in Jerusalem. You know from that statement that I reached Wilmington. You know that I started from Jerusalem, not earlier than two months ago and that I reached Wilmington not later than today. You know those facts. Beyond that you know nothing. And someone will say, "Well how did he come from Jerusalem to Wilmington? He must have come by boat. Of course; how else would he have come from Jerusalem to Wilmington? He would go right from Jerusalem to take a short trip by train to Joppa, and there he would take a boat; you can get the American Export Lines right from Joppa or go right straight to New York." And of course you can see that the man who does things in the most direct way, he would go and come by a direct route. He wouldn't go up this way and around that way and over here and back there, he would go in a direct way. So we know that's the way he came, he came by boat from Joppa or another port to this country.

Well, you *don't* know what way I came to the States. And I will tell you that I left Jerusalem and I started to the United States, and I didn't come direct at all; I went East. And I got in an auto with seven Arabs and we were jammed together so it was the most uncomfortable ride that I have ever had in my life. For three and a half hours we went directly in the opposite direction. And you say, "Oh, you went around the world, you came that way." Well, it looked like it when I

started, but I only went a short way in this car and I changed to another car there and I found it a more comfortable car with another group of Arabs from the North and on up to Damascus. And when I got to Damascus I took a plane, and you say, "Oh, very nice, of course you took TWA, because TWA comes directly from Damascus to America." Well this statement doesn't say what line I took. And you say, "Oh well, then of course you continued with BOAC on to America." No, I took a sleeper from Rome up to Milan and then from Milan I took a train to Geneva and then I took a plane back to Italy and then I came back to Switzerland again, and then I took a plane from Geneva and then I didn't land in New York as almost all the planes do, I landed right here in Philadelphia.

Detail after detail of that you could never guess from my original statement and any guess that you made about it would be more apt to be wrong than right unless you knew the many, many particular details that went into it. If anybody 5 years ago had left Jerusalem to come here and had gone over to Damascus, you would know that he was completely crazy. It would be absolutely senseless, there would be no purpose in it; but today if you stood with me in Jerusalem and you saw a barbed wire entanglement for a block, and on the other side of that there was another barbed wire entanglement, the other side of the block and there were a lot of destroyed houses between and men marching on both sides with guns; and if you started to walk across there, whether the Jew or the Arab would shoot you first would depend on who saw you first; you could readily understand why instead of coming in the natural direction, I went up to Damascus. That situation didn't exist three years ago. That exact situation has never existed there in the history of the world. It may never exist again for all you know and a person reading five years ago about me making that trip or a person reading fifty years from now about my making that trip will think that it is perfectly preposterous to start from Jerusalem to Wilmington and go in the opposite direction, to go over and up to Damascus and all that disagreeable tiresome trip which I made up there. There are factors that enter into it that you could not possibly know from my statement.

And that is true of every single statement in the Word of God. In fact, it's true of every single statement that anybody can possibly make. There are things that are absolutely clear and definite in this statement but when you get beyond those and you attempt to determine what method of transportation was used and what line you went on or what direction you started in, or whether you came straight through or broke your journey at some place and in a hundred other questions, the statement doesn't say. And I believe that 99% of the disputes of most Christians, and 99% of the heresies and of the misunderstandings and difficulties that arise in the Christian world will come from people reading into statements and drawing conclusions about matters with which the particular statement does not deal.

Now this at first sight might seem rather negative, and when we take up a study of some of these statements in the Scripture, it may at first seem rather negative to you to take up the statement and spend a lot of time on what it doesn't say, but I think that you will see as we go on that it very vital; so learn what it does say and stand by it, but learn what it doesn't enter into and don't make a point of matters which it does not reveal. God knows these matters. God could have explained them all to us. God could have given us an encyclopedia of volumes that would fill every room in this house and a hundred other houses, and explain everything in the world if he chose. He didn't choose to do it. He gave us a book of sixty-six books in which he crowded a tremendous amount of knowledge. You can study it the rest of your life and not get anywhere near all that is in it, but there are hundreds and thousands of matters that He naturally couldn't go into, and it probably was not important for us to know or He would have gone into them. And there's no objection to our guessing about them, but label our guess as a guess. And there is no objection to our trying to reach conclusions about them, but don't say that your conclusion is based upon the Word of God. If you find some evidence, or hear a conclusion of one of these things, say so, and present it as a theory, but don't present it as the teaching of the Word of God.

Now that, then, is a large part of our purpose this year. It is to get the vital facts of what the OT teaches us about history; and we have a great many of them to look at; and some of you know a great many of those already, and some of you know only a few of them already; and we can't take too much time going over facts that anybody can get from reading the Bible or from looking into a Bible dictionary. We'll have to take some time on that. We will take some time getting facts that very few of you know; but we will have to take a great deal of time examining statements in order to see how far does our knowledge go; and where does it stop from this statement, in order that we can develop that attitude of studying the statements of the OT and the Bible as a whole which will keep us from getting into all sorts of error as we study different sections of the scripture. This will perhaps come out particularly in the very beginning of it because it is especially important in connection with the study of Genesis 1, our first major topic.

B. Purpose of the Course.

Now we are interested, then, in this course in the contents of the OT and especially in those which relate to the events of past time, which relate to historical occurrences. We are interested in knowing what these contents are and what they teach and what they do not go into. We will look at some of the vital problems that come up in connection with it during this year. We cannot but make a start in this field in this course, but we will look at a good many in the course of the year.

I have arranged this under four heads.

1. To learn the main facts of OT History. It is an absolutely necessary thing to know the main facts of Old Testament History. However, for this it should not be necessary to have a separate course. Anyone who has graduated from college should be able to take the Old Testament or should be able to take a Bible Dictionary or *Halley's Pocket Handbook*, or some book like that, and get the main facts. In our class we will give a minimum of attention to this purpose, but we will have assignments which will divide it up into different sections and by the end of the year you should all be familiar with the main facts of Old Testament History.

As far as seminary courses are concerned, I like to think that this purpose of simply ordering you to do a job which you can just as well do by yourself, is at a minimum. We are here, not simply to tell you to do things like that but to help you to get inside and understand and to take the insight which we have gathered, to teach a sound message. These are matters in which the teacher can be of help, the class can be of value. It is to that that we try to give the main stress in our class. For that reason, we do not have any cuts in attendance. When you are taking a course in college for which you have a good textbook with everything that you need for that particular course in the textbook, very often it can be said you have so many cuts. Yet, some people feel very bad if they don't get all of the cuts to which they are entitled; but we feel that our classes should pass on to you certain understanding and certain insight which you would not be ready, as yet, to work out for yourself and having seen them worked out you are ready to work out others later.

Therefore, we expect in the seminary everyone to be present who has signed up for a course, whether as taking it or as an auditor, to be present at every class which is held in the course. We expect everyone to be present, unless of course you are prevented by illness. We do not have cuts in class. If you find that certain classes are not worthwhile, if you feel you're wasting your time, please come and tell me so because it is also possible that I or anyone else may drift into bad habits which means that certain classes are a waste of time, and in such a case we want to find out about it right away, and remedy it; but we do not expect these classes to be a waste of your time to the extent that you are just as well off if you do not attend them.

We expect everyone to attend all classes, and we want you to be at them promptly. We want our class to start promptly. It's a bad time for me to say that today because I was a couple of minutes late this morning. But I try not to be late and I want all of you to try not to be. And if, during the year, everyone is late once or twice, it is understandable. We certainly don't want to get in the habit of being late.

I very frequently in class give a little quiz. It will start at the very beginning of the hour and if you are not here when that clock says 8 o'clock or whenever the class starts, I don't want you to take longer on the quiz. You just lose that part as if you were not here. You'll probably want to start on it right on the dot.

2. To study the meaning and bearing of some of the events in Old Testament History. This is far more important than the first, though the first is naturally important. The walls of the house that keep out wind and rain are much more important than the upright beams, the central structural beams, the skeleton of the house. Without the skeleton, however, the other would not stand. You have to have the skeleton. You have to have big beams, though the others may be more important. We have to know the facts of Old Testament History but for this class we are jointly interested in studying their meaning and their bearing, because they are not simply isolated facts, they are facts which fit together, which have a meaning, which have an importance to the whole.

Sometimes it is said that the Bible is not a book of science, and that is an absolutely true statement. If you wanted to write a textbook of physics or chemistry or biology, you cannot do it from the Bible. The Bible does not attempt to give you a comprehensive picture of all that is important in these domains. But wherever the Bible touches on any one of these, you can trust its statements. Because the God who made the world and who made the material which all these sciences try to describe would not describe them incorrectly in the book which he has given to us. He could have given us a textbook in every one of these subjects far better than any textbook man can write or ever will be able to write, but that was not his purpose. He only incidentally touches it.

To a lesser extent it can be said, the Bible is not a book of history. Our histories in the ordinary sense try to tell of the rise and fall of nations and show the facts which have entered into it. They tell of great kings and tell us what is important about them from a political viewpoint. It is possible to say, to a lesser extent than we said about science: the Bible is not a book of history. Because some of the kings who are most important from the viewpoint of political history are little discussed in the Bible; and some, which from the viewpoint of political history are of comparatively small importance have much said about them in the Bible. And some events of a great deal of interest from a historical viewpoint are not even mentioned in the Bible. The Bible does not attempt to give us a complete textbook of the history of the world, or even of Israel. The Bible tells us about man's relationship with God. And so it tells us as much of the history of Israel as is helpful and necessary for our understanding the history of man's relationship with God. And therefore we cannot get a complete history from the Bible. We may gain from archaeology or from other sources, yes, further light on important aspects of history which will fill in very important gaps in the Biblical account. We must study the meaning and bearing of events in the Bible and see what we learn in secular history from them but, more

important, see why God selects these particular historical events to be the ones about which he would tell us. And how it is that they fit together, and what their importance is in the history of redemption, which is the purpose of the writing of the Bible.

In Bible history, as in every other field of religion, it is natural for the human being—we're all of us naturally quite lazy—to take all of our ideas from those with whom we come in contact rather than to go directly to the source for that; and so all our churches, and in fact every one of us, have many ideas in our minds which we have simply taken over from other people, which may trace back originally to someone's misunderstanding of a Biblical statement. We're anxious to see exactly what the Bible says, and what does the statement actually mean, and what the bearing is of these different events, and how they fit together in the historical viewpoint of the Bible. That's the historical aspect.

Now, of course, everything is history in a way, because everything is an account of something that has happened; but in this course we are not specifically interested in Biblical law though we'll touch on it. We're not specifically interested in Biblical poetry; we'll touch on it some but there'll be another course which has two hours through the year on that. We're not particularly interested in Biblical prophecy; there's another course that has three hours on that. We will touch on all of them but we are interested in just about everything else in the Old Testament which does not come under one of those specific headings. But to see their meaning and bearing is the purpose which we'll have in mind all through the year.

3. To examine some of the arguments that have been presented against the reliability of the historical statements of the Old Testament. During the past hundred years, the higher criticism has had its rise. And the tendency in many books today, and in many textbooks that have been published which have nothing to do directly with the Bible—the tendency is to minimize the dependability of the Bible; to cast doubt on the source of events; and even to deny a great many of them. This sort of denial is very widespread. It is not actually the central thing in the higher criticism. The higher criticism has mainly been a matter of the study of the time in which the books were written, dividing them up into sections according to various theories of compilation. We will have to touch on some of those theories to some extent in this course; but only very lightly, because there's another course that deals with that, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*, and to some extent, the *Introduction to the Poets and the Prophets*.

So we will touch only incidentally on the direct higher critical theory of the documents of the Bible; but those theories rest upon, to some extent, arguments that the historical facts are incorrect; and also they lead people to believe that still more than just historical facts are incorrect. In this class we will look at the evidence for the historical accuracy of statements and we will see

much value in the form of evidence that will, I hope, buttress your own faith and increase your ability to show others that the Bible is true, and to help them to resist the attacks that are made upon it. This is a purpose which will take up—it's not a major purpose in this course—but it will take up a fair amount of our time because it is a very necessary thing to do in preparation for Christian service.

And then what I like to think of as of even more importance than any one of these three purposes is this fourth purpose, a purpose of most importance in the seminary.

4. To learn sound methods of Biblical Interpretation. The Bible, as anything else in life, has to be interpreted. It isn't just a group of words which you quote in themselves and receive blessing just from the sound of those words. There are many to whom that seems not to be the case.

When the New Testament, the Revised Standard Version, first came out, there was a church in Wilmington, Delaware, where we were then located, which had a minister who constantly preached marvelous sermons. He was denying the Word of God right straight down the line. He was tearing into Biblical teaching about the deity of Christ. And the New Testament came out in the Revised Standard Version, and he began to read it from his pulpit for the Bible reading, and he almost had a revolution in his church. The people would not stand for this new language; they were accustomed to the glorious beauty of the King James Version. They almost had a revolution.

Now most of the Revised Standard Version contains much that is terribly perverted and contrary to the truth. The New Testament only a little. But the amount of modernism in the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament was nothing—one-fiftieth the amount that they were getting in his sermons. It was not that they objected to the Word of God. But they were accustomed to those majestic words of the King James, and had the feeling of something magical about those beautiful old words. That's absolutely false loyalty to the Bible.

That was also true in the days of the Reformation. People listened to the Bible read in the services in that beautiful Latin—and it's a far more beautiful language than English, even the English of the King James Version. People heard that beautiful, sonorous Latin and then when one group or another wanted to read the Bible—not from the Latin which was so beautiful, but none of the people understood a word of it, but to read it in the German or the English that they all understood—many people rose up in horror against it.

Yes, the events of the Reformation prove that it wasn't the sonorous beauty of the language but it was the thoughts of God that were sent that were vital. And

even though a translation is never as accurate as the original—and cannot be—one of the great providences, the great push forward in Christianity at the time of the Reformation was putting the Bible in the language of the people.

If only the Revised Standard Version had been an accurate translation of the Bible, what a great help it would have given to all Christians to have it to use that people could understand so much better than any translation into the language of three hundred years ago. I think it is good to read any translation—even if it may not be a good translation, even if it may not be a particularly well-expressed translation—I think it is helpful to read a different translation just to break your mind loose from those words you're accustomed to and see if perhaps you've forgotten the meaning in your being accustomed to the sound of those words.⁵

Do not trust any translation that is not a thoroughly accurate translation. Better still, don't trust any translation; go to the original and see exactly what it says. But if you're accustomed to certain words it's very, very easy to say them over and over and never once think of what they actually mean.

Well, if you're going to understand the Bible you have to learn sound methods of interpretation and that's exactly like any other science. The big thing in any science is to get into it and learn how to understand its features; learn how to know what these things mean; learn how to interpret evidence in it. And the interpretation of the Bible is a subject to which you can devote your whole life and be constantly improving and increasing in it.

For the Juniors in this class, it is my hope that you will learn a great deal, make a very large stride in understanding how to take a Biblical passage and understand what is in this book. For the second and third year students who are here, who already have a large start, it is my hope that you will take a very large step forward from the position which you have reached in your understanding of the methods of interpreting the word of God. And if you have a full understanding of the methods of interpreting the word of God, and know nothing about the first and second purposes, of course you could go on and study for yourself and could work them out. If you have no understanding of sound method and you learn a great deal about the first and second purposes,

⁵ [dcb] At the time of these lectures (the 1950s) the Revised Standard Version was one of the very few available modern translations. The American Standard Version had been prepared in 1901; it was a more accurate update of the King James Version but it was dated and lacked in readability, and so the King James continued to be preferred—in large part perhaps because of the wide popularity of the Scofield Reference Bible based on the KJV. This is about two decades before the arrival of the modern faithful and readable translations such as the NIV and the more recent ESV. So at this time the KJV was still the main version used in evangelical circles, and it is the one used here for Bible quotations. On several occasions in this course, Dr. MacRae regrets the lack of a modern translation by conservative scholars who accept the inspiration and authority of the Bible.

you just reach that point and you stop there. In fact, you don't stay still, you go backward; because you inevitably forget a great deal of what you already know in any subject if you are not moving forward and making further progress in it.

Well, those are the four purposes of our course. And to do those through the entire Old Testament is a very large task and it is always difficult to know what to select with which to deal. The tendency is to start at the beginning and go just as far as you get and leave the last half perhaps untouched. That is not good. But the opposite tendency would be to run over the whole and do it superficially. That would not be good. It's necessary that you take certain facts from the Old Testament and study them rather thoroughly or you don't get far enough in it to really learn its meaning and bearing, and to really learn how to interpret it.

Our treatment must of necessity be somewhat uneven. In some parts we'll have to move rather hastily and hope that you will study further into them later on. In other parts we can move quite slowly as I think we ought to, in order to get the real meaning out of it. So much then for the purpose of the course.

C. The methods of the course.

First a mention of the fact with which our upper classmen are by this time familiar, even though not perhaps all of them entirely, but which may be new to some of the new students, and that is the question, what is a credit, what is a credit hour? This course gives 3 credit hours each semester. When I was in college I remember going to one or two classes in which you came to class and listened to a man talk on something that didn't seem very interesting, unless you really paid very close attention. My observation was that if you did pay strict attention, you might get quite a bit out of it. Most of the class didn't. They sat there, thinking about other things, say two hours a week through a term, and at the end of the term they spent two or three hours skimming over some notes that someone else had taken, and got a very creditable mark in the course and received two credit hours. That was true of very few courses.

But there were a few courses at the opposite extreme where you would have two hours of class and yet you would get an assignment that would take you eight, ten, twelve, sometimes fifteen hours a week. And students would work day and night getting ready for this course, for which they would receive two credit hours, exactly the same as for the other course. And if these didn't happen to be required courses, very few people would ever take them. But they were required courses, and involved much more work in it because people had to take it. And an elective course which people wouldn't take if they thought it was hard, perhaps would have many fewer takers.

And thus some got the idea that a credit hour meant that someone had sat in a room one hour a week, that that is what constituted a credit hour. Well, it's very easy to get that idea if the matter isn't very carefully studied, but it's not a logical right idea. We try to think of it this way: that a credit hour is approximately three hours of worth-while endeavor each week during the course of one semester. In college, when I was there, there were laboratory courses, in which you had two or three of the three hours in class and hardly any outside work. In other courses you had maybe one hour in class, the understanding was that you had considerable studying to do outside.

It isn't fair for a person to sit in one class an hour a week and do nothing else and receive one credit hour, and in another class for him to be in class an hour and also have a great deal of other work to do. And so we are trying hard to standardize it and to have one credit hour represent three hours. Well now, in this class, the three credit hours represent nine hours of work a week. But whether nine hours is to be spent, one of them in class and eight in study; or three of them in class and six in study; or six in class and three in study, makes very little difference to the fact that it is approximately nine hours of work. And naturally with different portions and different sources of material, there is a difference as to what way you will get the most value out of how many hours in class and how many hours in your own study, as your own work.

So in this course it will vary somewhat during the semester from week to week, how much time is spent in class and how much time is spent outside in your work; but there will be weeks, in which out of the nine hours, five will be spent in class; we hope it will never be more than the nine hours. Naturally, if we have five in class I'll try to give you much less in outside assignments than if we have only two; but it will vary in different weeks. But it's hard to do that sometimes, because naturally you have more to suggest to do in connection with it, but I'll do my best to keep it so that the total is nine hours a week and if in some weeks it runs over, you are perfectly free to stop at the end of the nine and to leave that to do in other weeks when we have less than nine. As I say, that will vary somewhat, but that is very important, to understand that, what a credit hour is.

We sometimes call a class a section rather than a lecture hour and some people have a tendency to think of a section as less important than a class. Thus in this class I will give the lecture with all the students together and then we will have each week, as a rule—not every week, but approximately every week—we will have one section which will be only the Juniors. And we will have one section which will be the Middlers and the Seniors.

The difference is made this way because there are some things that are certain basic concepts in this course which the advanced students, I believe, are all familiar with from previous work; some are more familiar than others, but all

Middlers and Seniors are at least somewhat familiar with these certain basic concepts. We will have to touch upon them in class here: they are important to stress for everyone. But my observation in the past has been that the advanced students simply accept these concepts because they're already familiar with them from other courses, while some of the others have a tendency to have a very considerable resistance to some; and I'm glad to see that they do because I don't want you to take anything just because I say it; but I want you to see the evidence and to be convinced yourself of the facts of anything whatever that you accept.

But it would be wrong to take a lot of time in class that I found that the first-year students would need, and when we spent a great deal of time in class answering these questions, some of the second-year students would come to me afterward and say what a lot of time you wasted in class today—why of course we already know that. We're already acquainted with that once you've stated the facts. This is because they'd had the drill in other courses dealing with the same problem. While to the new students it was a very vital matter.

For some the course comes in their second year; but if it comes in the first year, we're going to have a section with the Juniors in which you are free to discuss very fully any of these problems which bother you. And we don't want the Middlers and Seniors to have to listen to that unless they feel an interest to come and hear it.

Juniors are just beginning Hebrew whereas the Middlers and Seniors are already quite adept in Hebrew. Possibly we can give them assignments and discussion in the Hebrew material that we cannot give the Juniors. So for these two reasons, we will have the sections separate, one section of Middlers and Seniors and one section of Juniors.

Now the method of the course includes under our first purpose, naturally, a fair amount of memorization. These are skeleton facts which must be known, a hitching post with which to connect the other matters, or they are verses which are necessary because they sum up a great deal of valuable material, or some other reason, something that has to be just simply known, memorized. This should not take much time in class; most of you will take on this task as a given assignment and then conduct perhaps a three-minute quiz at the beginning of the hour to see whether they have yet been mastered or not, and these quizzes together will make a very substantial part of the year's mark.

Then a valuable part of the course is discussion, my presentation of the Biblical material with which we deal and discussion in class of the ideas that occur to you which may advance my understanding and be very informative as they nearly always have, and also which would help to clarify my thinking on occasional points where it is difficult to make it clear. There will be a certain

amount of drill in the section—it might be a matter of memorization but sometimes it's a real aid to memorization, sometimes you can memorize much more quickly with a certain amount of drill than if you had it all to do by yourself, and of course in the method of the course, Hebrew is of necessity a very important thing in this course.

I mentioned in our discussion of the curriculum to the Juniors the other day that it would be ideal if you could spend three or four years just studying languages, get the language as a foundation before we have took up any study of the meaning of passages. We cannot do that. We have to start with the meaning of passages right at the beginning or we would never get through our three year course.

But our purpose is—the course's—is that we have a very substantial amount of practice and effort in interpreting the Bible in the original.

There will be matters in this course that the Juniors will have to take on my say—so because they're not yet equipped to examine the Hebrew for themselves; though as the year goes by there will be more and more material that they can examine for themselves. But with the upper classmen I will not want you to take anything on my say—so, but to examine the Hebrew for yourself. And therefore, the upper classmen will be expected to have a little stronger muscles in this class than the Juniors because it will be necessary for the Juniors to bring to this class only one Bible, an English Bible; and I would like everyone also to have an English Bible with you. But an upperclassman I will wish to have in this class an English Bible and a Hebrew Bible, because I may call on you at any time for a discussion on a particular Hebrew word or Hebrew vowel. And in the quizzes at the beginning of the class, for upperclassmen there will be interpretation of Hebrew verbs, or the translation of these verbs.

So please always bring your Hebrew Bible with you. We will try to confine a great part of our discussion of the Hebrew to the Middler and Senior section, but there will of necessity be some of it here, because of the substantial purpose of interpretation will necessarily hang on the precise word that is used.

D. Basic Attitudes toward the Bible.

One time when I was—I think it was my third or fourth year of teaching, way back in the dark ages—I was giving a course in Old Testament Introduction; and there was a student who had had a year at a modernist seminary and had been prevailed upon by his relatives to switch to a conservative seminary; and he had come to the seminary at which I was then teaching. And he was in my class in Old Testament History and it was most stimulating to have him there. His mind was filled with denials of the facts of the Bible and he was constantly raising the most stimulating questions which stimulated the rest of the class to an interest

in these matters and made it much easier to prepare them to deal with them properly and to know the answers to them. I wish we had someone like that in this course, but I fear we do not.

But I must say this, however, that as to our basic attitudes toward the Bible in this course, this is not a course in which we start in with a blank mind and endeavor together to know what attitude we should take. This class begins with the assumption that the Bible is true.

1. Our Attitude toward the Bible is Belief. An attitude of belief, in this course, is an attitude that whatever the Bible says, we believe is true.

I am not a pre-suppositionalist. I do not believe that the proper way to make progress is simply to assume the truth of the Bible. But the reason I believe the Bible is true is that I believe that Christ is my Savior, that he died for my sins and he is my Lord; and I should follow whatever he says; and he sets the seal of his approval upon the Old Testament. And therefore it is on the authority of Christ that I accept the Bible as truth, and as dependable. Well, we go into that quite a bit in the class in Old Testament Introduction. We do not duplicate it by going into it here. I merely state that fact at this point. We do not assume simply out of the blue somewhere, but for the purposes of this course we assume that the Old Testament is true.

Now we are interested in noticing points at which people believe it is untrue, but our purpose here isn't to prove the Bible is true, it's to interpret the Bible. And in interpreting, to know the evidence to show its truth. So that in interpreting, that is our basic attitude toward the Bible. And therefore I'm much more interested in having a student of the type I mentioned in certain other courses than this one. But if any of you in any of your previous contacts, in your reading, or in your own thought, have come up against problems in connection with acceptance of the historical statements of the Bible, please bring them up, for I am anxious to at least touch upon them or to give a brief résumé of them. It would make the course much more interesting if some of you happen to have particular portions to which you don't know the answer.

But that's number 1; our attitude here is, if the Bible makes a statement we believe that statement. That's the attitude of this course and it's mostly in other courses that we examine the reason why we consider it a reasonable attitude. But number two to our attitude toward the Bible,

2. Our attitude is that the Bible is true. And what it says is dependable, but not that it is a collection of magical sounds, which the mere hearing of gives you blessing.

When I was in Princeton Seminary we had an Episcopalian student from England, a minister of the Church of England, I believe he was conservative; he was a very fine chap I believe, but I remember when some of our people would read I Corinthians 13, "love suffereth long and is kind," he would always insist on reading "charity suffereth long and is kind." He said we should stick to those words in the King James Version. "Well," we said, "it doesn't mean charity, charity today is giving something to somebody that's poor; that's not what this is talking about." "Well," he said. "I know it doesn't mean charity and when I read it I always explain to the people that charity isn't what it means. Charity happens to be there, not because the King James translators didn't know what it meant but because they took over the Latin word for love and simply anglicized it instead of using an Anglo-Saxon word." But from that Latin word we have developed a word that has a different meaning than the original Latin word, which was simply love. And consequently that is a mis-translation in English.

But he insisted you lose the beauty of the writing if you don't read "charity". Well, we want all the beauty and the resonance you can get, but not at the expense of misunderstanding. But for this class it is important to know that the Bible is the presentation of ideas, not simply a group of sonorous phrases, and we are interested in knowing what those ideas are. I believe everyone here—unless it's some Junior who missed my discussion the other morning—I believe everyone here has heard me stress the fact that words are not points but areas. And words do not ordinarily have the same area of meaning in different languages; therefore it is important to know exactly the area covered by a particular word in a particular passage.

You may have two synonyms and one of them will fit perfectly into a passage and the other one would not fit there at all because the words have different areas, overlapping areas rather than identical areas. And so to learn the purpose of words is a very vital factor. Another thing that makes it vital is the general difference in language, not merely in words but in form. In English we'd say "I have been here since last Thursday." In German you would never say that. You would say, "I am here since last Thursday." Your very form is quite different. The meaning is the same thing and if we used the same verb form it might have a third different meaning. There are profound differences in language. And not only that, but there are differences in approach, differences in methods in presenting them. And the way to learn what it says in the Bible is to compare scripture with scripture and learn how to interpret different types of expression. Learn the concept and then apply it to other matters. I know some people—some very, very religious people, very orthodox people on the whole—people who, I believe, are completely wrong in some of their views. And when I present what I believe to be the clear teaching of scripture from Isaiah, they say, "Oh, but that's a prophetic book. We must base our eschatology on the didactic portions of this book." And when I say something from Revelation they say, "Oh, that's an involved book. We must base it on the didactic portions of

the New Testament." Well, I believe that is a false approach to the Bible. Revelation pronounces a curse on whoso takes from the words of this book. And to say Revelation is "an involved book" and not pay any attention to it, is not taking substance from it, is throwing the whole thing over; it is, I believe, un-Christian and wrong.

But, they say, "Look at this difficulty in the prophets; here's something very hard to understand, here's something you have to study a long time before you see what it means. Look at all these symbols in Revelation." Yes, I agree. Revelation and the prophets are harder to interpret than is the book of the Psalms. But there are sections of the Bible that are harder to interpret than almost anything in Revelation or in the Prophets. We cannot take one section of the Bible and say we build on that. We must build on the whole Bible. But we go through the whole Bible and there's not a book in it but what you will find matters in it that may take you years before you understand them and you may never understand them in this life.

And there's not a book in the Bible but you will find some matters in it so plainly stated that "a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein." And the way we make progress in this, as in any science, is to go through and take the things that are plain and clear and stand upon them, and then go through and in the light of what's been clear, interpret more, and get to understand that and then go through with the light of that and interpret more, and get to understand that. And never try to explain away the Bible obscurities. But take the clear, wherever it is, and use it as a basis with which to explain that which is less clear and thus we move forward in our understanding and in this as in any other science, move forward in our understanding of the Bible as a divine book. It is infinite in its content, infinite in its depth, and you can never peer entirely to the bottom of it in its depth.

Excursus: The Problem of Interpretation. Well, I wish—in this general discussion preceding our specific examination of Old Testament History—I wish on this point to take up an example from history of this problem of interpretation—an example which helps in giving us certain general principles but which will, in addition to that, be laying a foundation for certain vital matters that we will discuss very soon.

And for that reason I wish to call your attention to the very first book of the *New Testament*: The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Now most of you have read that, I hope. Please open your Bibles to Matthew 1:1. I expect that all of you have read that so many times that it just is common to you and you don't even stop to think what it means. But let us think what it does mean. The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

My mother had a great-great-grandfather who was the Rev. Joseph Sumner, in a little town in New England; and he preached 70 years in the same pulpit and only missed seven Sundays altogether in the 70 years. He was my mother's great-great-grandfather, and what would people think if someone said Dr. Allan MacRae, the son of Rev. Joseph Sumner, is teaching a class in Old Testament History? You would say it is utter nonsense, wouldn't you? You would say, "Why, Joseph Sumner died two hundred years ago; how could Dr. MacRae be his son? It's absolutely impossible." And yet here we read the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Well, what does it mean? Well, this Christ is the eternal God. When Abraham was living, Jesus Christ was living. Yes. But was he then the son of Abraham? No. He only became a son of Abraham by being born of the Virgin Mary. He only became a son of David by being born of the Virgin Mary. Consequently, Jesus Christ was not then a son of David or a son of Abraham; he came a thousand years after David, and a much longer time after Abraham. Well, is this verse nonsense? No, it is not nonsense, but it shows us that the word "son" in the New Testament has a different meaning than the word "son" in English. And if you go through the Old Testament you will find that the word "son" is sometimes used in a rather broader vein; it means more like a successor; like Jehu, an Israelite king, killed the descendants of Omri, who had started an Israelite dynasty; but in an Assyrian inscription, it refers to Jehu the son of Omri. He was the successor, he killed the descendants of the man who had lived a hundred years before him but he became the king; he was the successor.

The word "son" is occasionally used in the Bible for a pupil or for a successor, but this is rather uncommon. The common use of the word son expresses a physical relationship, but this physical relationship is a relation which we today would represent by the word "descendent" rather than by the word "son." "Son" is ordinarily a descendant in the next generation, but not necessarily. Son may mean one who is a son of a son of a son of a son of a son and so forth. He is a "son" as the word is used in Hebrew and in Greek. Well, I don't want you to take that, take my say—so just from the one verse; there are many other verses at which we could look to find clear evidence of it.

We have here [Gospel of Matthew 1:1] the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. And we notice that you would never say that in English. Our English word "son" here is used but what is meant is the Greek word, and the Hebrew word, and they here indicate a descendent rather than one in the next generation. You will find many such cases in the Scripture where the word "son" does not mean the next generation. In English we would say "descendant." Now we go down further [in Matthew chapter 1] and we find that Abraham begat Isaac. And this means that Abraham had a child and this child was called Isaac. That is no problem at all. Abraham was the father of Isaac. Isaac was the father of Jacob. Jacob was the father of Judah and his brethren, and so on. When you get down to Asa in verse 8 you read that Asa

begat Jehosaphat. And in II Chronicles 16:13 you'll find the statement made that Asa died and Jehosaphat his son became king. Then you'll read in verse 8 that Jehosaphat begat Joram, and you read in II Kings 8:16 and in II Chronicles 21:1 that Jehosaphat died and his son Joram became king. But when in II Kings 8:25 and II Chronicles 22:1 you read that Joram died and Ahaziah his son became king and in II Kings 13:1 you read that Ahaziah died and he was succeeded by his son Joash after an 8-year insurrection and in II Kings 14:1 you read that Joash died and was succeeded by Amaziah and in II Kings 15:1 you read that Amaziah died and was succeeded by Uzziah.

Well, now, the passage in the Authorized Version has the Greek form of the word; the Revised Version of 1901 put them all in the Hebrew form, which I think is reasonable to do. You read "Esaiah" in the New Testament and "Isaiah" in the Old, and the person who speaks English doesn't know why it should have a Greek form in this case and a Hebrew one in the other; in some parts they have the Greek form, in other parts the Hebrew form. It seems to me that it is surely much more sensible to stick to one form throughout the Bible whether it be the Hebrew form or the Greek form. And that is what the Revised Version does when it says Joram begat Uzziah. But in the list of kings, you find that after Joram came Ahaziah and then Joash and then Amaziah and then Uzziah. And consequently it says here that King Joram begat his great great-grandson. Well, now is this a mistake on the part of the writers of Matthew? I don't think anybody can feel it is a mistake. The only thing somebody might say is that it doesn't mean Uzziah but it means Ahaziah who was the first one, but if you do that you only move the problem along because it then says that Uzziah begat Jotham. Jotham was the son of Uzziah as is shown in Kings and Chronicles. So here in Matthew you have three kings omitted and the word "begat" indicates the relationship of a man to his great-great-grandson. It cannot possibly be a mistake because these names are not ordinary people, these are kings; every Jewish child certainly knew the names of the kings of the Jews. Since they were looking forward to the re-establishment of the Jewish kingdom, they would not forget the names of three of their kings.

I have read statements in various books that described them, and pointed out their sins to show why their names are omitted from the genealogy. I don't think such arguments are much good, because there are others who are included in the genealogy who had the same sins and other sins perhaps worse than those. But we do know that they had the same word "begat" used for the great-great-grandfather as for father.

Now I gave you the illustration in our session with the Juniors of the difference between the word "friend" in English and in German. In German a friend is a very close intimate one with whom you have a very close relationship, while in English a friend is anybody with whom you're on speaking terms, perhaps even some you're not. If you've been introduced to them you call them a friend. So

now the word is perfectly legitimately used in one sense in German and another in English. In English it is used in a wider sense; in German it has a narrower sense. The same is true of begat. In English, a narrower, In Hebrew a wider sense.

There is another very interesting point. After it gives this genealogy, verse 17 notes that they have given fourteen names to each of the three divisions. Fourteen names. We don't know why these names were chosen but the thing I'm trying to bring out now is that the word "begat" was a word which was used to indicate the relation of a man to his great-grandson. There are other people who note that this word is used that way. So we have to say this: that the meaning of the English word "begat" is a little circle and the word "begat" as used in the Bible is a big circle. The meaning of the word is a little circle in the English and a big circle in the other language. And so we have to learn that in making our interpretation. Now this is easy.

Now in Bible interpretation, our attitude toward the Bible: for the purpose of this course, we take the attitude that everything the Bible is true. But "everything" needs interpretation; we have to see what it means. Now if somebody wants to say "I take everything in the Bible literally." Well, that doesn't make sense, because you can't take everything literally. But there are people who say that. They take everything literally. If the Bible says that yesterday came after tomorrow, I wouldn't believe it. Well, of course the Bible doesn't say this. But in a case like this, the Bible says that Joram begat Uzziah. And the Old Testament says that Joram had a son Ahaziah who had a son named Joash who had a son named Amaziah who had a son named Uzziah. And so unless you're going to say that a man can at the same time be another man's great-grandson and also be his son, you have to recognize that in the Bible the word "son" may cover a wider area. You have to recognize that.

And all the statements in the Bible are true if you interpret them as they were meant to be interpreted. Now of course this is a dangerous matter because some people interpret it in such a way as to get rid of the gospel; but the danger means there's no need for us to avoid examining and seeing what the key to it is.

When I was a student in Princeton Seminary, there was a group of students from our seminary and from a number of others who went together to consider the forming of an organization: the student bodies of the various seminaries. And in this meeting, which the boys were forming, the question was raised in the first meeting, "now let us make a platform for our association of student bodies," and so they began discussing legal points; and they found then that some of the various seminaries didn't agree on just about every legal point they wanted. And, so finally one of them said, Well, let's just make it on John 3:16, let's forget everything, let's make our union on John 3:16.

And a student from one of the liberal seminaries immediately spoke up and said, "I can't do that; I can't accept that idea that Jesus was the only begotten son of God." And a student from one of the other liberal seminaries immediately said, "Well, now don't worry about that, you can get rid of it—that he was the only begotten son of God."

Now that is an example of the long reach of the church of Paganism: to interpret so as to get rid of an idea because you don't like it. And there's a great deal of that done.

But the right purpose of interpretation is to interpret not to get rid of something you don't like or get something you do like, but to find what's there—to find out what the original author meant. And you have to interpret. I was thinking the other day, I go down the street and I meet someone and he says, "It's a nice day," and I say "Yes, only it looks as if it might rain." "Well, I don't think so," and we go on. Well, now what did we mean, what was the interpretation of what we said? Our words were "It's a nice day but it looks as if it might rain." But all that was perfectly obvious to me, I didn't need to tell him, it was perfectly obvious to him, he didn't need to tell me. Neither of us was interested in the fact about whether the other thought it might rain. What we were interested in, what we really were saying, was "Glad to see you and we have a friendly feeling towards one another." The other said "I reciprocate the friendly feeling toward you." That's what we were saying. That's what we meant. But what we said was something different. There our words expressed one thing that from the literal statement of our words was not true, but it was absolutely unimportant because it wasn't what we meant at all. The interpretation of them was something quite different.

Well, there aren't many cases, though there are a few, where interpretation is that different from the direct words themselves. But in practically all of these, you have to think, what do these words mean as "What was the divine meaning of these words?" You have to interpret to find out what the answer is. And the way that you learn what the Scripture means isn't found by thinking what seems reasonable to you but it's by studying the Scripture to see what these words mean and how they are used elsewhere. And it's studying the Scripture to see what is talked of, where and what light is thrown on the sacred passage. Here we find that Kings teaches that there was a king and he had a son who was a king, he had a son who was a king and he had a son who was a king and he had a son who was a king. And we find that Matthew says the first king begets his great-great-grandson. And so we find that in Biblical usage the word begat means, not to become a father, but to become an ancestor.

Now when does one become an ancestor? He becomes an ancestor when he has a child born. So that if you have a child born who is the great-great grandfather

of a future president of the United States, you become the great-great-great grandfather of this man when your child is born. You beget him; you become his ancestor, even though there are other steps which other people have to take in the begetting of that president of the United States. Now that idea may seem a little bit obscure, a little bit difficult to us. Difficult, but nevertheless important; and this can have a considerable importance in our interpretation.

Turn to Genesis chapter 11; and there we read "these are the generations of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood." All right. Here's Shem and let us say that Shem was, say it was the year 2500 [BC] when Shem was born. And Shem begat Arphaxad. Here then Arphaxad was born in 2400; but is that true? Does that follow? Shem was 100 years old when he begat Arphaxad. How old was Joram when he begat Uzziah? Was Joram a hundred years old when he begat Uzziah? I haven't got the figure here and I'm not going to take the time to give them to you, but suppose Joram was thirty years old, supposing he was thirty years old, when Amaziah was born. And suppose that Ahaziah was twenty-five years old when Joash was born. And suppose that Joash was twenty-seven years old when Amaziah was born. And suppose that Amaziah was thirty-eight years old when Uzziah was born. Now, the book of Matthew tells us that Joram begat Uzziah. How old was Joram when he begat Uzziah? You add these together you get fifty-five, ninety, a hundred and ten. How many of you would say that Joram was a hundred and ten years old when he begat Uzziah? Would you raise your hand? He was a hundred and ten years old when he begat Uzziah and he died when he was forty three? How could he beget Uzziah fifty years after he died?

The one himself became a descendent when he was born but the other became an ancestor when the child was born to the line of kings. Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood. Maybe an immediate father, we don't know. But we go on through these and we trace them down one after the other until we get to Terah and we read in verse 26 that Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran. How old was Terah when he begat Nahor? Seventy when he begat Nahor? Well then how old was he when he begat Haran? And how old was Arphaxad when Salah was born, and Salah when Eber was born, as proof that the chain goes straight on and that as a result it gives us the figures which you find in the Ussher chronology; and it's very puzzling to say the least. And according to these figures you will reason that when Abram was married, Shem may very well have been a guest at his wedding.

Well, now if you read the history you will find that at the time of Abram the world had forgotten God. It was a heathen world. Abram was almost alone in the world in his knowledge of God. Now do you think of its being a natural thing that these patriarchs who were born and raised in the immediate vicinity,

were all living at that time? That it could be, but it certainly seems reticent on that, there's a certain hesitancy about accepting that.

I tell you what gives a much greater hesitancy, it is this: that for at least a thousand years before the time of Abram, or maybe fifteen hundred years, we have in Mesopotamia successive waves of civilization and of king lists that give the successive reigns of kings for at least a thousand years with no place there, no place at all, for the flood to have occurred. And before that in Mesopotamia we have further records for a long time.

The ordinary chronology will tell you that it was about 2500 BC that the flood came, and about 2100 that Abram was born. They will give you those dates and if those dates are true, our archaeology is very, very, very inaccurate, because we have successive accounts of rulers in Mesopotamia for a thousand years before the time of Abram. But I would say that we do not know whether these people came one after the other or whether there were big gaps between them; my personal guess is that the flood was about ten thousand BC That's my personal guess. Maybe it was twenty-five hundred BC I personally think it extremely unlikely that it was twenty-five hundred, extremely unlikely. The only reason for putting it that length would be to say there are no gaps here: that "begat" always means the father of the very next generation, and the result of this is what we have found in the world.

Now if the Bible makes a statement which contradicts any science in the world, I don't care what it is, I'm ready to take the Bible statement and stand on it and say let's wait for the scientists to learn more. I'm ready to do that, if I'm sure of the interpretation of that Bible statement.

But when I find in Matthew that begat can be used of a man's great-great-grandfather, when I find in other places that begat is used of an ancestor rather than of an immediate father, I feel on the ground of Biblical interpretation I have reason to say that when it says that Shem begat Arphaxad, it means that either he had a child that was either Arphaxad or an ancestor of Arphaxad; and I do not know which it was unless the Bible explicitly tells me; any more than when I tell you I came here from Rio de Janeiro you know whether I flew, walked, rowed a boat, or swam.

(Student: re. Nahor being 70 when he begat Abram and his brothers). We find evidence for the statement made a few minutes ago that Abram was not the oldest of the three sons of Terah. And I appreciate you're bringing that up, though we don't want to go into matters about Abram at the present, we take them up a little later, but at present we're interested in this matter of interpretation; and that is very helpful for stressing this, that when it says Terah lived seventy years and begat Abram, Nahor and Haran, it means that Terah was not under seventy when any one of these three was born. It means that. But

would seem from that comparison factor that he was a hundred and thirty-five when Abram was born and so, though it says he lived 70 years and begat Abram, in the context you must take it, he lived seventy years and after he was seventy years old he had three sons. And probably the oldest of his sons was born when he was seventy but it's not stated here which of the three that was. As far as this is concerned, we do not know. But from this other evidence we feel quite certain that Abram was not the first one; it is a guess, of the sort of point I'm trying to get across.

What I'm trying to get across now is not specific information about Abram, because we take Abram up definitely later, but what I'm trying to get across is the point to see what the Scripture says and stand upon it. And if the Scripture makes a statement and the interpretation is clear, all the scientists and all the historians in the world can say something else, I will say let us wait till we have more evidence because the Scripture is true, but let's not read into the Scripture—let's make sure that we have what the Scriptures do mean. And if we see the word "begat" does not necessarily mean that the next one comes immediately after, and so we do not know how long before Abram the flood was. The order, the matter of order there, is a very important thing. We do not necessarily know why they are placed in that particular order. It may be alphabetical, it may be chronological, it may be in order of importance; it may be in order of the particular purpose which it reviews at the time.

Now, of course, in these names, in this genealogy here, we know that these people came in this order, we know that. That Arphaxad came after Shem and that Arphaxad came before Salah. That is absolutely true. When it says Arphaxad begat Salah, Arphaxad did not come after Salah. But how much space there was in between we do not know, whether they came immediately, whether there was a long period. We do not in the Bible have evidence on which to tell the length of time between the Flood and the birth of Abram. We don't have it. If we had it, I would be ready to stand on it; but we don't have it. And I said that seventy percent, maybe ninety percent, of differences between Bible believers are based upon people reading into Scripture something that isn't stated.

=====

[Review] I was thinking about the matter of the genealogy and I'd like to have somebody now give me the answer to the question that I asked on your quiz. How old was Abraham when he begat Levi?

He begets all those whom he begets at the time when the child is born through whom they come. That's what Hebrews says. it says "When he was still in the loins of Abraham, Abraham gave tithes." Well, the fact it says he was still in the loins implies that a time came when he was no longer in the loins. We would not say that Levi was in the loins of Abraham when Levi was walking around. He

was then not in his loins. While he was still in the loins of Abraham, Abraham did something. And once he was no longer in the loins he might use another term. He might say Abraham, as head of the family, gave tithes; he might have said that. But this terminology would seem to mean that Levi was still in Abraham's body, as the word loins is part of the body.

I'm not meaning to discuss emphasis but meanings of Hebrew words: that this Hebrew "beget" means to perform one's part; for a man to perform his part in the bringing of a child into the world, that's what "beget" means. But as used in the Bible, beget means not merely the bringing into the world one individual who is the next generation, but of any individual who came through that way, as shown by the fact in Matthew that a king is said to beget his great-grandson and also that there are other places in the Old Testament where this is mentioned.

When Abraham was leaving that wicked heathen city of Ur of the Chaldees and going up through Mesopotamia, was it at a time when the very people who'd been in the Ark were still living? Well, now that's not impossible but it certainly seems unlikely. But then in addition to that it means that in Mesopotamia, where we have one layer under another from about 4000 BC up till 2000 BC or later; and where we have accounts of this king having a son; and what happened when the two reigned together; and what happened when the son was reigning; and so on, tracing right straight through from 3000 BC, and that right in the middle of that there came a flood. It completely contradicts tremendous amounts of archeological material that has been found. Now if the Bible clearly said it, I would stand upon it; I would say the archeological findings are completely wrong; someone will discover sometime that it is completely wrong. Well, it is foolish to say that if it is not necessary. And if "beget" here means what it means elsewhere in Scripture, then that is certainly not necessary. And then, instead of saying the flood occurred at 2500 BC, we say we don't know when the flood was; and my guess is that it might be 10,000 BC; it could be 50,000. I just don't know anything about it. But my guess is that it certainly was not later than 10,000 BC; that's my guess. But if it was later than 2500 then all the evidence that archaeology can offer is completely false. That could be true; scientists often err; it could be true, but it's very unlikely to be true when there is so much evidence; and it is not necessary because that's not what the word "begat" means in Scripture.

Well, there are two possibilities: one possibility, the word "beget" here means what it means elsewhere in Scripture. And that the flood occurred at least 10,000 BC, that's one possibility. The other possibility, "beget" does not mean what it means elsewhere in Scripture; "beget" means what it would mean in our English language today. You can add these dates right through, therefore, the flood was at 2500 BC and then, if you're not going to just throw the archaeology out, you say: "Yes it must be that the flood was a very localized

small affair, and when the Bible says the waters covered the tops of the mountains it just means it went over some little tiny hills somewhere and didn't go up over any real important mountains; it was just a little bit of thing which would mean that you have to interpret—instead of interpreting one word "beget" in a way contrary to our usual modern English usage; instead of doing that, you stand rigidly on "beget" as meaning in the Bible what it means today in common language, but we take thirty other words and we twist them all to make what is described as a great cosmic, tremendous event, in which the waters covered the mountains, into a little local flood. Now as between the two, I don't think we have to decide, because the question is: what do the words mean? And to me it's quite clear, this is what "beget" means. But as to whether the flood was a little local affair or whether it was a cosmic thing, we must choose.

Yes, to give an idea of the change in conditions of life, you notice how Shem, right after the flood, he was a hundred years old before having a child. That is very probably before the flood, to have people retain their strength for a great period. But after the flood, longevity rapidly decreased; and the Bible gives us an idea of conditions by showing how old they were when they had their children. If it was the purpose of the description to give us a precise chronology from which we could tell what date everything occurred, there wouldn't be the gaps left. Yet there are later on; for instance we're nowhere told how long Saul reigned; and there are many points in the history of the Judges where no dates are given.

Well, we don't want to take too long on this because this is all introductory. But in this matter of chronology, I want to indicate the fact that the Scripture does not give us everything we need in order to know the exact date of every event that occurred.

E. Remarks about Chronology.

Now while I am still on this introductory material, I want to say just a brief word now—we will deal it much more later—about the question of chronology. We who have had studied other subjects of history are accustomed to open the book and to see the statements "In 44 BC Julius Caesar was assassinated. In 1492 Columbus discovered America. In 1937 Faith Seminary was founded." And we are accustomed to thinking of these and other great outstanding events of history of being immediately connected with some particular date; we get the impression that if it is true history, you can immediately say just when it happened, what is the date on which it happened. But this is an attitude of mind; a good attitude of mind when you have the data from which to get this material; it is an attitude of mind that is engendered in us from the very way in which we find history from the chronological data that has been available to us

for some centuries, and then we have worked it out to some extent for earlier purposes.

Our present idea of chronology is something which would not be in the minds of people when the OT was written, and which God did not consider important enough to put in their minds; and I think this is rather vital for us to recognize.

It is not something that just stands to reason. It is not just the most natural thing about anything to find out just what date did it occur. If I were to pick one of you at random for instance and ask you where you had lived during your life and find that you had lived in three different places and I were to say in what year did you move from this place to that, you might know right off, and you might not. You might have a little difficulty thinking of it.

I was talking with two alumni of the Seminary a few days ago, one of whom graduated 9 years ago and one 2 years ago; and as I talked with the two of them, I thought it hard to realize how much difference there was between the time in which they had graduated. The time of the one 9 years ago—it seemed like yesterday when he had graduated from Seminary; and it seemed just like last year he was walking around here and attending classes and I couldn't have told you in which year he had graduated unless I looked it up or asked him about it.

Thousands of events in our own lives, we do not connect right up with dates particularly; we have to look it up, and use some means to find out what that date is and this despite the fact that every time you write a letter we put down a date on it; that we have calendars all over that have the date; we have all these kind of things to impress those dates on us.

Now in ancient times people did not have this particular attitude to chronology. Somebody tells us of finding an ancient coin over in Greece somewhere, and they found the date on it to be 326 BC. We immediately recognize that that is impossible. But what would you say if somebody told you that they found a coin and it had on it the date 325 AD; what would you say to that? I wonder how many of you would realize that that would be just as ridiculous as the other, because it was not until the 5th century AD that people began to use our present system. It was not until the 5th Century AD that a monk sat down and tried to figure out just how many years it was after the birth of Christ and he studied and gathered all the data available and he made a mighty good job of it and he came to the conclusion that it was a certain number of years ago and he was just 4 off.

So now we say, Christ was born in 4 BC which is ridiculous, of course. How could Christ be born four years before Christ? And there is a big argument, when does the second half of the 20th century begin? Does it begin in 1950, or

does it begin in 1951. Why it is a perfectly silly argument because actually it began in 1948. There are 1950 years since the birth of Christ in 1946 or 47 (I forget exactly which) and the next year began the second half of the 20th century and it is utterly ridiculous to say that it began in 1950 or 1951, the monk was just 4 years off.

And so our present system is an artificial system. It is absurd to say that it is 1950 AD: it isn't, it is approximately 1950 after Christ. It's actually 1954. It is only approximate. It's a convenient system. After all it doesn't mean anything to say that this is 1950 years after the birth of Christ, because it isn't. It is the year 1950 in a series of years to which we have given arbitrary numbers. We have established a useful system of dates and it is very, very handy and it would be very foolish to make a change in it; but they didn't have that system in ancient times, and that particular concept which seems so simple to us because we are used and accustomed to it is a concept that they didn't have.

Yet it is like the woman in Berlin when I was studying there; I told her of an experience I had at one time when I came out of the mountains in California and came down into a little town and I wanted to get into Los Angeles, about 30 miles away; and I went to the railroad and found that there was no train for two hours and I didn't want to wait around so I went up onto the street and I waved my hand to a driver, and the man said, "Come on jump in." and I told her about it and I said, in German, that he said "Kommst du hinein" and the woman was astounded. Oh, she was thunderstruck. You could see, I thought, "Well, did she never hear of such a thing of a stranger giving a person a ride like that on a public highway?" She said, "What?" He called you "du?" He used the simple familiar term "du?" She was shocked; why of course it was plain that you would say "Sie" which Germans use for strangers; only to an inferior, or to a member of your family, or to animals would you say, "du".

Well now to the German, the difference between the "du" to be used to the members of your family, intimate friends, and to small children and animals—and to God by the way—it made a distinction that they are used to from their very childhood up. It seemed so very natural to them, but when I said that this man said "du" she was utterly flabbergasted. And to me of course, this concept was not familiar, anymore than it is to us here or anywhere in this country; and when you get used to a concept that way and it just seems perfectly natural—and there are many concepts that we become used to, and one of these concepts that we are used to is this idea that you can give every year a number and so that you can tell immediately when a thing is. Well now these books from Bible times were written before people had that particular concept; and God did not consider it an important enough concept that it need be revealed.

This matter of counting by years, once you get it, it seems so simple you imagine everybody had it forever. But it is a fact about archaeology, there has

never yet been found, discovered, an inscription anywhere that said, "This was written in 792 BC" or any such number. But nobody thought of such a system until 312 BC when Ptolemy, the Greek general, conquered Babylon; and his followers dated years after that; and that date was kept up by a small group of his followers for over a thousand years; and if you get a Hebrew manuscript that ever has a date on it, even from the Middle Ages, it's apt to be from the time Ptolemy conquered Egypt in 312 BC That was the first use of such a system. But it wasn't very widespread. Dionysius introduced it for our calendar about 500 AD, with the Christian figuring—that is what he thought was Christian though he was four years off, and we still use it; but we're so accustomed to this that to us it seems natural to say, well, now what year did that happen?

And then you go to the encyclopedia or to a list of dates and you find it. This happened 792 AD, this happened 1347 AD, and so on. But it is a comparatively recent development; it was not known in ancient times. Even among the Romans, through the whole of the Roman Empire, they would say this is the year when Caesar and Pompey were consuls and that's the way they named the year. When was the year that Caesar conquered Pompey? Well, that's the year after Sicily and Alexandria were conquered. And that's the year after Folius and Julius were consuls. And so on. And you have to make a long list in order to find out when they were. And they did not think of this simple system we have.

Among the Babylonians or among the Egyptians, they would say, this happened in the third year of Ramses II, this happened in the twelfth year of Ramses II. Well, Ramses died and you start all over again. And then the question comes up, shall we start right when he died or shall we say that finishes out this year and we start the next year? And sometimes they did one and some times the other. But they started a new one every time. So this modern idea we have, that you can figure exact years of chronology is a very, very helpful idea, but it is a comparatively recent idea. God could have revealed it to Moses if he chose. He could have said to Moses, Here's the way to make an airplane, Moses. I want you to make one so people will get more advanced. And I'll also introduce you to chronology; and I'll show you how to number the years one after the other; and then you put it down in the book. But God didn't choose to do that; he didn't explain atomic energy to Moses. There are a thousand other things God didn't explain to Moses, and we've discovered them since; and then we go back and try to read them into an earlier time. And so this matter of telling what year a thing happened is a recent development. And these dates weren't put in to enable us to enable us to figure the years when they happened because that was a thought that they didn't have, they never thought of it.

I have a very fine book at home, *Ancient Times* by Professor James Breasted of the University of Chicago. It is a splendid picture of ancient history; he was a very fine student of ancient history. In this book, which is a standard text book

of high schools, he makes this statement. "In the Delta, civilization rapidly advanced, and the calendar year of 365 days was introduced in 4241 BC, the earliest fixed date in the history of the world as known to us."

That was the year in which the Egyptian calendar was begun, 4241 BC. Well now, I'm sure that if he was living today, he would take it out, because there is no scholar of any standing in the world today, I believe, who even think that the Egyptians calendar was originated as early as 3000 BC, Although just recently (about 20 years ago) it would be easy to say 4241 was the year that the Egyptian calendar was established.

Here is a very interesting development. Today I do not believe—I can say this absolutely—that if a fellow today were to say that he could prove that anything near 3000 BC was the year when the Egyptians established their calendar, I would say that I could prove that he was not a scholar. I would say that because the evidence is so conclusive that there is no writing anywhere in the world previous to 3000 BC;⁶ so that if a man today were to make that statement, he would immediately lose his scholarly standing. Now of course, for people who are not interested in scholarship, that would be of no matter. But how he came to fix upon this particular date of 4241—that was a very interesting inference that looked like mighty good evidence at that time, but today is very clearly not evidence at all.

And today no Egyptologist, I believe—I don't believe any scholar believes the Egyptians had a calendar previous to 3,000 BC; and yet in that great textbook used all over the country by this noted scholar he said 4241 BC was the earliest fixed date. There are no fixed dates in history back in the time when we began counting years 1, 2, 3, 4. Now I've mentioned that they did that after Seleucus' conquest of Babylon in 312 BC, but that was only in a small area; and their numbers were kept up for a thousand years by some people, but not this excellent system of numbering years one after the other. It was not adopted until 500 AD.

⁶ [dcb] See Walter Maunder, [*Astronomy of the Bible \(Annotated\)*](#) (2nd Ed., 1922). He asserts that the constellations record a form of history. After analysis he concluded that "The constellations, therefore, were designed long before the nation of Israel had its origin, indeed before Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees. The most probable date—2700 BC" (p.102). However from more recent information than was available to Maunder, it appears that the constellations actually date much earlier than this. In particular, the Lascaux cave paintings (dated about 15,500 BC) depict at least four (some say many more) constellations that are identical to well-known constellations: Taurus, Hyades, Pleiades, and Orion's Belt. See Lascaux figures nearby. Maunder's reasoning, which appears quite valid, would apply equally well at intervals of about 13,000 years—about half the period of Earth's precession of the North Pole (called "precession of the equinoxes"): thus, for example, at 15,700 BC (the date of the Lascaux paintings) or 28,700 BC. See evidence presented below for human existence at both of these dates because of recently discovered cave art evidencing very high skill.

The length of year which we have now was not introduced until about 400 years ago by Pope Gregory, although Julius Caesar had a year of three hundred and sixty-five and a quarter days which was only about half an hour off. The Egyptians were only about five hours and twenty-nine minutes and seventeen seconds, or something like that, off. But still it was definitely off.



Constellations at Lascaux Cave 15,300 BC: Orion's belt; Taurus; Hyades; Pleiades⁷



Same, superimposed on Star Chart of 15,300 BC at Fall Solstice (Sept. 21).⁵

And in addition to that, as the earth goes around the sun, the length of the year is gradually changed, so the length of the year two thousand years ago was

⁷ [dcb] Figures from Lascaux.19thpsalm.org (reduced size). See the webpage for further figures and animations.

different by a number of minutes from the length of the year today.⁸ So you don't need to look for absolute dates previous to the time when this system was invented that we have today.

Now scholars are trying to get the dates as accurate as they can, and we are getting a great deal of creative action; but if you will take almost any two Bible dictionaries or books on the Old Testament written within the last thirty years, you will find their dates for most of the events will differ, considerably, in the time of the divided Israelite kingdoms, because they are not given for the purpose of being sufficient to enable us to establish a complete chronology. Now we have other statements on the basis of which we are getting more and more accurate. But that's only during the first thousand years before Christ, before that everything is an approximation. If you get within a hundred or two hundred years you're doing very well. And when you get back of three thousand BC there would be no writing and so anything back of three thousand... The dates are not absolute, but they give us a relative relationship. And so the establishment of chronology on these ancient times is an open thing.

With each of us ourselves, our knowledge goes back actually for a very, very brief distance, of our own family, I mean. Let me just pick somebody in here at random. Mr. Cook, we'll pick you just for an example. I want to find out how much you know about your family. Would you tell us the name of your father? Would you tell us what year he was born in? 1908? Would you tell us your mother's name, before she was married? Hazel what? And what year was she born? Very good! Now would you tell us your father's... see that's one generation back; we're still in this century, back to 1908 now. Now we'll go back one more generation, second generation back, each of your parents had two parents. So you have four grandparents. What was your father's father's name? And when was he born? What was your father's mother's name? You don't know that? Just your grandmother and you don't know her name? That's bad, isn't it? Now, how about your mother's father, what's his name? And when was he born? You don't know that? And what was your mother's mother's name? You don't know that. All right, there are your four grandparents. Now we go back one more generation; each of them had a parent. What was your father's father's father's name? You know that. And of course you don't know when he was born. And what was your father's father's mother's name? You don't know that. And your father's mother's father? And. your father's mother's mother? You don't know. All right. And your mother's father's father, what was his name? Your mother's father's father's last name, if you could make a guess at it. How's that? Well, wasn't your mother's name Campbell before she was married? Your mother's father was Campbell and your mother's mother was ...? All right, then your mother's father's father was Campbell, the last name, but you don't

⁸ [dcb] This is in error. See "[Variation in the length of the year and the day](#)." The length of a day increases about 1 second per 100,000 years. So 400 million years ago, a day was about 22 hours long and there were about 400 days in a year.

know his first; you don't know when he was born. Your father's mother, you don't know her name at all? And your mother's mother's father would be Stecker, but you don't know her first name. And your mother's mother's mother, you don't know at all. Well, there you are.

Here's Mr. Kurtz. But you go back just seventy years and it dissipates into thin air. We don't know the names of any of his ancestors that far back, except we do know the one grandfather, George Kurtz, the rest we don't know, we don't know the names or when they were born or anything about them. Well, every one of you over five hundred years had perhaps thirty or forty ancestors living and how many could you name, perhaps none.

I traced one relative back once to 400 AD But you figure that that year, 400 AD, if I had two parents, four grand parents, eight great-grandparents, by four hundred AD I would probably have about a billion and a half ancestors, and I know the names of three of them; of the billion and a half, most of you don't know the names of any of them, of your ancestors that far back. It just shows how little we know about the background even of our immediate family.

And the Bible could have given us lists of full details, of dates, of all these people. But that wasn't God's purpose. Well, now, chronology then is an interesting thing, it is important for a skeleton, it is very, very helpful for that purpose. It is useful, it is vital that we know that Abraham was before David. And it is good for us to know about how long before David he was. And it's good to know the relationship of David and Solomon and which came first. It's good to know how long they reigned. We have relative dates of that period on which we can stand fairly definitely, the chances of their being revised later still exists but not greatly.

Dates are a skeleton, a series of tags to hang things on, but when you get back of Abram—when you get back of David even—you have nothing very definite. There is "about" dates; guesses differ within two or three hundred years today, and we may one of these days get the date when we know Abraham's exact date; today we do not know it. Archbishop [James] Ussher, a very Godly man, took the Scriptural dates and such dates as were available to him from practical sources, and on the strength of it made up a system, guessing where he did not have evidence; and he made a very good system in the light of the evidence he had available. We now have more evidence available, enough to tremendously improve his dating on many points, and enough to know certainly that before the time of David he had insufficient evidence to make a decision at all.

II. The World before Abraham (Genesis 1–11).^{9 10}

I hesitate between, "the world before Abraham" and "the primeval history". I think I'll call it the world before Abraham. This is a section of the Bible which deals with events prior to recorded history, let's say that. We have nothing in recorded history outside of the Bible about Abraham. But Abraham is at a time at which we have history from other sources. We know a great deal about the general period of Abraham, and we know of events for many centuries before him, from archeological sources.

And so we are getting into a different area once we come to Abraham. Before that we have nothing except the Bible, to tell us about events. Our material from archeological sources throws a great deal of light on the time of Abraham and also on events going back many centuries before Abraham. Before Abraham in the Bible, we have a list of names, till you get back to the tower of Babel. That's the last event, in that part of Genesis till we get to Abraham.

Now the tower of Babel is before any archeological evidence, that is, there is no archeological evidence bearing on it in any way, shape or form. And before that, everything you have in the Bible is from a period before any archeological evidence that is in the Bible.

Now if you say there's no archeological evidence before Abraham, it's not right, because we have much archaeology before Abraham; but there's no archeological evidence regarding anything mentioned in the *Bible* before Abraham.

Another reason why Abraham is an important person, is that the Bible is dealing with the whole world before we get to Abraham, but from Abraham on it concentrates very, very largely on one family—the descendants of Abraham—and we trace that family and the nation which came from it, through the Old Testament. And then we trace the outworking of the blessing of Abraham upon his seed in the New Testament. So Abraham is a very vital turning point in the Bible, and we will take everything before him under a separate head.

Now it is an important dividing point also because from Abraham on, we have what for us is of tremendous importance: God's relation to Abraham and his descendants, with his promise of the seed through which the world would be blessed. That's of tremendous importance to us from our religious viewpoint. But before that we have the account of the establishment of the world, the

⁹ [dcb] Maunder, *Op. cit.*, asserts that the constellations, which appear to have been first defined around 2700 BC appear to record this history before Adam: (p. 102). See previous notes relating to the period of the North Pole's precession.

¹⁰ A helpful recent publication on Genesis 1–11 is Hugh Ross, *Navigating Genesis: A Scientist's Journey through Genesis 1–11* (2014).

beginning of civilization, and all this which vitally clashes with current secular ideas in this field.

I spoke at a Christian college about two years ago and I had to speak in this college in chapel in the morning. It was arranged some weeks ahead and about a week ahead I got a phone call, and they said could you come up a day earlier and have a public meeting the night before, and speak to us about the dependability of the Old Testament? Well, I said I'll be glad to do that, but I was interested in why they arranged the meeting on such short notice. I found that the reason was that they had had a speaker there at a public meeting the week before—a man, a young man who had received a reputation as a scientist who was a very ardent Christian. He was a very fine Christian fellow, very much interested in Christ and a good personal worker, and he gave them a talk in the evening at a public meeting which they advertised rather widely; all their students were out to it, and when he got there, he started in to the Bible in the beginning of Genesis and he says, "I believe what is in the Bible, the account of Christ is very important in the preparation for life," but he said when you get the first chapters of Genesis, that's just myths and legends; and he went on and spent half an hour giving the reasons why he considered this was unscientific; it was just myths and legends. We do not take it for any historical, or scientific truth.

Well, this man's mind seems to be able to have a division. Over here from Abraham on, this is true. He believed it. But this part before Abraham, that's just myths and legends. Very few people can keep their minds divided that way, and the effect on most people who are logical is: "Well if that's myths and legends, this probably is too." And it is a position which cannot last; you must go one way or the other. The first chapters of Genesis give us the *foundation* of the Biblical view of the universe, of civilization, of human society, of the problems which face us; Christ gives us the answer to these problems. He gives us their solution. But the first chapters of Genesis give us the problem. And if we don't have the problem, how can we properly apply the solution?

To a great extent, it is not necessary that we go to everybody out in the world and try to convince them of the correct understanding of these early chapters. No, we present Christ to them. But in our larger area of the progress of Christ's Church and of the future of the people of God, there will not continue a situation in which people believe in Christ and do not believe in that which Christ considered to be the Word of God. Not only that, but the whole of Christ's teaching interjected itself to some extent in relation to the world in which we live; and that world is either the world the secularist considers it to be, or it is the world that the Bible teaches. And therefore these first few chapters of Genesis are the vital foundation in our whole attitude.

Now we could take a whole year on this with great interest and great profit. It is very, very much worthwhile; but we have only three years in the seminary course, and in this course we have one year to cover Old Testament History; and consequently it is necessary for us to run through these first chapters rather rapidly. But I want to call your attention to some of the main problems; to give you the solutions to some of them; to give you some of its main aspects; because that is extremely vital and absolutely necessary. And then maybe the other parts of it we can get to them later on in some other way. But as far as this course is concerned, this is an extremely important portion of the course—this portion of these first chapters of Genesis—but one in which we will have to leave many things unstated, undone.

Now, so much then for introduction to this section, II. the World before Abraham. Under that,

A. The Creation of the Universe.

You read about the creation of the universe in the first chapter of Genesis. The second chapter of Genesis is mostly talking about this world. It is talking about man on this world. Some people say we have two stories of creation in the Bible: which do you believe, the first or the second? One's in Genesis 1, one's in Genesis 2.

Well, what do you mean: two stories of creation? You might say we have a dozen stories of creation, because you have the story of the creation of man, the story of the creation of heaven, the story of the creation of animals, the story of the creation of birds, and so on. But if you're going to take it as the matter of the creation of the universe you have one account of that: that is Genesis 1. You have one account of the creation of the universe. The account in chapter 2 is dealing with man upon this earth.

The story of the creation of the universe is the first chapter of Genesis—in other words it runs from Genesis 1:1 to 2:4a. Now is that tampering with the word of God? I think Genesis 1 runs from 1:1 to 2:3, but you open your Bible and Genesis 1 ends with verse 31 and chapter 2 starts with what follows.

Well, one of our vital concepts we want to get across in this class is that the Bible as it came from the hands of the writer is free from error. It is true; it is dependable. But we do not today have the Bible as it came from the hands of the writer; what we have has been passed down to us over a long period; and it has been translated into English; and along the way, some valuable helps have been introduced; and these helps are very good to have, but they are not inspired; and one of those is the chapter divisions and the verse divisions in the Bible. They are a tremendous aid to us because we can find the place quickly and when we want to discuss something we can immediately turn to it. That is

very, very helpful to have, and I wouldn't change it for anything; but we must remember they are uninspired and they are very faulty. They are not a part of the original Bible.

That clock is moving a little faster than I wish it would, so I won't take time now to give you evidence that some of the verse divisions are perfectly terrible. But I will sneak in about chapter divisions at this point.

The chapter divisions—we don't know when they were put in for sure but it seems highly probable they were put in by an English Archbishop, Archbishop Langton, in the 13th century, AD. It is said that the Archbishop put them into his Latin Bible as he was riding on horseback on his pastoral calls, and the roads were very rough; and some people say that when the roads got rough his mind got confused. Well, whether that's true or not, I don't know; but I do know that for some reason they were later taken from the Latin Bible, put into Greek and into Hebrew. But they didn't change what had been started in the Latin Bible. Now whether it was the roughness of the road or something else that confused the good Bishop, I don't know; but it is certain that at the end of chapter 1 he was quite confused.

I asked you to make me an outline of chapters 1 to 11 and I mainly was interested as a test of your intelligence, to see how many of you made the first division of your outline including the first three verses of the second chapter and how many made it chapter 1. Because if you read chapter 1, you will find that chapter 1 tells what happened the first day, second day, third day, fourth day, fifth day, sixth day, and stops there. And chapter 2 tells what happened on the seventh day. Well, here you have an account of seven days; don't they belong together? Then you go on to another day. So that the first division should surely include all seven days; and so our account of the creation of the universe runs into the first three verses of chapter 2.

Now that's not very important for the understanding of the creation because on the seventh day all God did was rest; so you don't understand the universe a great deal better by including the seventh day. But it is part of the account. And that is a vital thing in studying the Bible—seeing what the contents are and where the divisions naturally come. Don't be misled by the chapter divisions. Chapter divisions are merely an aid to finding places and nothing else. I think it's a good rule when you read the Bible, whenever you start with a chapter other than the beginning of a book, glance at the verses before it, and whenever you finish a chapter, glance at the verses just following it. Otherwise you may make some vast error through not noticing a very close relationship. And then again there are places where the most important divisions in some of the books happen in the middle of the chapter. That is confusing but once you understand that, it's no longer a source of confusion, but merely something about which to be careful.

Now, the account of the creation of the universe, then, we should consider as a whole, running through the first chapter and at least three verses of the next. Most interpreters think it includes the first part of the fourth verse, because that says, these are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, and that seems to be a summary of the whole of chapter 1; while chapter 2 says nothing about the creation of the heavens, and therefore it seems that chapter 2 starts in the last part of that verse. Well, that we don't have to worry about now, but we do need to realize that at least the first three verses belong in the previous chapter.

Now under A. The Creation of the Universe, I have four headings:

- 1. The general teaching about God,**
- 2. The general teaching about the material universe,**
- 3. The general teaching about mankind, and**
- 4. A consideration of Genesis 1:1.**

All these are matters that we simply cannot leave to the realm of "myth and legend," because they are at the very roots of our faith. Now let's begin with

1. The general teaching about God.

a. God's existence is assumed. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "And God said let there be light." It does not tell us where God came from. It does not tell us anything of the beginning of God. It assumes God's existence. Now that's quite different from the Babylonian story of creation. There is what is generally called the Babylonian story of creation, a poem which in Babylon was recited on seven successive days of a festival. On each day they had a section of the poem which they read, and the poem is often called *Enuma Elish*. The title is taken from the first two words in the Babylonian story, *Enuma Elish*. It means "When from above". But the poem goes on something like this, "When from above there were no gods, when no earth had been created, when nothing existed except just the primeval darkness and chaos, then gods come into existence." It goes on and tells how the gods were formed; how they came into existence; how the earth was formed; how man was formed, and so on. It tells of a great fight between the Babylonian gods. But the Babylonian story tells how their great gods came into existence.

The Greek mythology tells you that Jupiter is the great leader of the Greek Pantheon. You read who his father was, who *his* father was, who *his* father was. He just had an origin. But there is no such thing here in Genesis suggested about God. It is different from these mythologies. God's existence is assumed, just taken for granted. No attempt is made to tell you where He came from. His existence is assumed in the beginning of Genesis. The book title "Genesis" means beginning. We read of the beginning of all the different forces in the

creation, in this book, but we do not read of the beginning of God. We simply assume that God was there when everything began.

b. Monotheism is taught. In mythologies of different lands you have accounts of gods squabbling among one another and arguing about what they're going to do. In the so-called Babylonian story of creation you have a great fight between two groups of gods. And one group overcomes the other group and they take the leader of the other group and they cut him in two and they stretch his body to make the stars. And then they take his blood and they mix it with earth and they make human beings. And thus it is a result of a squabble among gods. They are fighting, they are arguing, they are discussing.

But Genesis is altogether different. It starts with God, tells you what God does. The word for God is a plural word, *elohim*, but it is used with a singular verb. God did this, God did that. There is a definite plan and system whereby this one God proceeded to establish the creation of the universe. So monotheism is taught very clearly, right here in the first chapter of Genesis.

Not only is no other god mentioned, no other god is possible because His activities are such that they could not occur if there were another god. In the Babylonian story of the flood, the leading god of the Babylonian pantheon becomes angry at mankind and decides to destroy it. A secondary god has pity on mankind and he speaks to a wall of a reed hut and says to the wall, "When this man comes you tell him this." So then when Enlil, this god of the Babylon pantheon, asks, "Has anybody told any man that I'm going to cause a flood?" they all said no; none of them had. He'd just told the wall of the hut to tell the man, he didn't tell the man. So then this hut told the man to prepare a boat. The man prepared a boat and he and his family got into it. Enlil sent the great flood, all the rest of humanity was destroyed; and after the flood was over, to the surprise of the greatest god in the universe, these men came walking out of the boat. He was surprised, amazed, and astonished. But then the other god interceded for them, said, "Well, they've escaped your flood, let them live." So he let them live.

Utterly different from the whole spirit of Genesis 1 which has monotheism, one God making his plan, doing his deeds in a way that would be impossible if other gods were even thought of. So monotheism is taught,

c. God is omnipotent. He only speaks and it is done. This is definitely taught in what God does in Genesis 1 here. He says, "Let there be light," and light comes into existence. He says, "Let the waters be gathered together, let the dry land appear," and it is so. He has only to speak and what He desires is done. He is omnipotent.

d. God works in orderly fashion. You do not have pictured here an arbitrary, whimsical sort of a being, who lashes out wildly in this direction and the other, but you have an orderly method of procedure. He does one stage; he does the next stage; and the next stage. It is all fitted together in an orderly procedure, divided into various sections which are here called days. He works in orderly fashion.

e. God is separate from His creation. There is no suggestion in Genesis 1 that God and the creation are identical. There is no hint of pantheism. There is no hint of the attitude that some take today, that God is the spirit of the universe; just as our soul is of our body, God is in the universe. Anything like that is absolutely excluded in the teaching of this chapter, which teaches that God, who creates the universe, is distinct from the universe. It does not say he takes any part of himself and makes the universe out of it; it simply says that He commands that the universe come into existence. Then,

f. The uniqueness of these ideas as compared with other religions and philosophies. This chapter of Genesis has a picture of God, an idea of God. He is utterly different from anything that you have in any other religion I know of. There are atheistic religions like Buddhism in which there is just a world course that accomplished things, just a system that goes on. There are pantheistic religions; there are polytheistic religions; there is the dualism of the Persians, with the fight between the good god and the evil god. But here we have pure monotheism, a teaching which is the teaching of the Bible, Old and New Testaments, but which we don't find in any other religion I have ever heard of anywhere. It is a very definite attitude toward God which we find already right in this first chapter. One could spend a long time elaborating these points, but that is not necessary in Old Testament History. But it is very vital to know the uniqueness of the views of God presented right here in this very first chapter.

2. The general teaching of this section about the material universe.

a. It is not self-existent or divine. The Babylonian story has the universe the great deep existent, and out of that great deep there come—gradually—gods come into existence, and gods take various parts of it and fashion this earth. But here in the Bible the universe was created by God. He brought it into existence, he established it, it is not divine, it is the product of the activity of a divine being, but it itself is neither divine, nor personal, nor self-existent. Then,

b. It is not inherently evil nor antagonistic to God or to man. There have been many philosophies which teach this, and there are certain Christian groups which have twisted their thinking to the point where they hold this, and there are certain sects which are nominally Christian who hold this, that matter is evil and the thing to do is get away from matter, to get rid of matter, that the universe is bad. There are philosophies today which hold an attitude toward the

universe, toward matter, that to get rid of its shackles is the great good. That is the view of Buddhism, that the goal is to sink into a nirvana of non-existence, to get rid of matter, to get rid of all desire for anything material. But that is not the teaching of Genesis 1. Genesis 1 has no suggestion anywhere that the universe in itself is evil, or that it is antagonistic to God or to man. We have not only the absence of any suggestion of such a thing but we have frequently such statements as "it was good." God saw what he had made and it was good. It was a good universe which God created.

c. It came into being at the will of a divine creator. The average scientist today, the average philosopher today, leaves out of his thinking completely any idea of a divine creation of the universe. But Genesis 1 teaches us that everything which is the work of God is simply that which God has made. It came into being at the will of a divine being. Then,

d. Its formation followed orderly stages. God could have said, "Let the universe be in existence in the year 1958." And all of a sudden there would come into existence a world with oceans and cotton and mountains and rivers and people walking around and talking about what they had done thirty years ago. He could have done that in one instant if He chose. But there is not the slightest evidence that that is what God chose to do.

There was a big argument in one of our magazines a few years ago between two men, one of whom is now the President of a great theological seminary; and these two men argued over this: Did God create trees with tree rings in them? And the man to whom I just made reference insisted in the article that God *must* have created trees with tree rings in them. Well, certainly God *could* create trees with tree rings in them if he chose. God could have said, "Let the world be covered with trees: some of them two hundred years old, some of them a hundred," and so on. That is, like they would be if they were that age; he could have said that. But the Scriptures don't say. Instead this argument, like too many arguments, rests on human speculation, human philosophizing, instead of going to the Bible to see what it says.

This we find clearly taught in Genesis 1: that the creation of the universe was done in orderly stages, with one event following another. Now of course the fact that it mentions one, then mention another, does not necessarily show that they follow. You can say that someone built this house and that house and the other house and the other house and the other house, and yet he might have hired two hundred people to build all those houses simultaneously. But when you say he did this and it was evening and it was morning one day; he did this and it was evening and morning the second day, you've made absolutely clear that these events come in a certain sequence, in a certain series with a space between them. And so the orderly progress of the activities of the making of the universe are clearly taught in Scripture.

Now, there have been people who assume that all the universe just came into existence like that, just one flash; God waves his hand and everything is just there like that, and that to assume any progression, any progress, any change, is contrary to the Bible. It may be contrary to their philosophy but the Bible clearly teaches that there were stages in the creation of the universe. So much then for d.

e. Its essential character is pleasing and good. And so many, many different religions or philosophies hold the idea that its essential character is evil. It's amazing how if you talk with the average worldly person today, you don't talk to them very long before you're apt to find that their attitude is that everything is bad, everything is harmful, everything is evil, everything is disappointing. Even the people who seek to be just giving themselves to hilarity and to lightness of thought and activity as if there was nothing that mattered but eat, drink and be merry and enjoy yourself; it's amazing how often you'll find that they're trying to forget reality by what they're doing, and that they're feeling that everything is sad and gloomy and doleful.

I was once interested in going to climb in the Sierra Nevada mountains. I took the train out to Mojave, California, and there I got a bus, and the bus would take me north about two hundred miles to where I would get to the eastern side of the Sierra Nevadas and climb the highest mountain in the United States, Mount Whitney. That was about one hundred and fifty miles north to get to Whitney. And I climbed other mountains up through that area. But the bus which I caught at Mojave to go up into the Sierras was a bus which left Los Angeles two or three hours before it reached Mojave, and which after I got off would go on another five or six hours and reach Reno, Nevada. And the bus was fairly well-filled with people, so I had a seat toward the back in the center where they raised these little seats and just behind me there were two young women sitting, and these two women had ridden from Los Angeles and they were getting rather tired of riding and they were talking a good bit and then they began singing. And they were on their way to Reno to get, to seek a divorce, each of them, and they were talking about each other. One of them said to the other, for instance, "My," she said, "I remember when I first saw you, so-and-so; my, I felt, how did he rate like that? That was before I knew you." And that was their general attitude, but after they had sung these dolorous songs one after the other, one turned to the other and she said, "Aren't there any happy songs?" And I was impressed with the question they asked, that coming out of a light and frivolous background of just what people would call gaiety, the greater part of the songs they sang and the things with which they dealt were what they would consider gloomy, sad—aren't there any happy songs?

Well that is not the teaching of Genesis One. Genesis One teaches that the universe, in its essential character, is pleasing and good; and for almost every one of these days, it says that God saw what he had made, that it was good. God looked upon his creation and saw that he had made a good world. In fact, at the end of the sixth day it said, "He saw what he had made, and behold it was very good." Here, then, is a whole philosophy of the nature of the material universe, taught in this first chapter of Genesis, which is different from the philosophy of other groups than those who hold to the teaching of the Bible. It is a philosophy which has come into our civilization from the Bible through those who know it. It does not strike us as strange as it might be because we're accustomed to hearing reference to it and seeing it sort of assumed. But it is a sharp contrast to other viewpoints. But we don't have to go very far in the Bible to find it; it's right here in the first chapter of Genesis. Now,

3. The general teaching about mankind.

a. Man is not self-existent or divine. Non-Christian thinkers seem to oscillate between two extremes: one thinking the world is bad and gloomy, everything is miserable; the other that man is practically deity himself and that there's no end to what he may accomplish. The deification of humanity is an attitude which is taken of either individual men or mankind as a class—what man thinks he may be able to accomplish in changing this world, changing this universe.

It's an interesting thing. If you would think of all space as this blackboard here, our earth would be such a fine pinpoint you could hardly see it and the furthest planet from it would be another pinpoint so near that you could hardly see the difference between them.

And now that we are talking of this, perhaps we might be able to find the furthest planet not so different from one of the nearest planets some time in the next fifty years; and the way they talk, why you figure that all the universe was about to be conquered and man would come to hold everything in the hollow of his hand. And if we got from here to the sun we certainly wouldn't have covered but a tiny bit of the universe and, great as the difficulties might be in getting from here to the sun, they probably would be thousands greater to get to any other sun, or to any other solar system within our galaxy, to say nothing of the billions perhaps of other galaxies. But the attitude that there's nothing man cannot do, man is practically divine, is certainly not taught in this chapter. It teaches that man is not self-existent or divine. It teaches that man owes his existence to a divine plan.

b. Man comes at the end of the creation. There's a definite order here; and in that order, in the sixth day, in the latter part of the sixth day, man is created at the end of the creation. And it is very interesting that the geologist, finding fossils of human bones or human skulls, and arranging their findings—I heard a

geologist say that if all that they can reconstruct of the history of this world were a series of about twenty very large volumes, of what they find from the very earliest times to the latest, all they'd find of any evidence of man on the earth would just be the top page, which of course exactly fits with what Genesis One teaches, that it was the latter part of the sixth day that God created man. Man comes at the end of creation. Then

c. Man has divine authority for dominion over the animals of creation. That is clearly taught in this chapter. Some think that man is just another animal, a little bit better, a little bit stronger than some of the other animals perhaps. But here we find that God creates man and God says that man is to have dominion over the animals created. He says, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, over every living thing that moves upon the earth." He has divine authority for dominion over the animals of the earth.

d. Man is separate from all the rest of God's creation. In this account here, man is sharply separate from the rest of creation. We are told of the creation of the vegetation, we are told of the creation of sea animals, told of the creation of land animals, and then we are told of the creation of man. And so "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." This word "create," I believe, is used four times in the chapter and two of them relate to man. "And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He him." He is separate from the rest of God's creation.

e. Man was made in the image and likeness of God. God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Three times we are told—it is stressed—that man in contrast to the rest of creation, is made in the image and likeness of God. Of course, that does not mean a physical likeness, but it means that there are personal qualities; it means that there is a spiritual existence; it means that there is a capacity for morality, for spirituality, which is similar to the nature of God. Man is created in the image and likeness of God.

So much then for the general teachings, now

4. A consideration of Genesis 1:1. I want to say that there are five ways that I know of, in which Genesis 1:1 is interpreted. These five ways divide into two, according to whether you think of it as an independent sentence or as a subordinate clause, introducing what follows. The first three deal with it as an independent sentence. The other two as a subordinate clause.

The independent sentence, the view of the first three, is the view which is contained in all the ancient translations—every one of them—into every translation of the Bible made in ancient times, whether Aramaic, Greek, Latin, or

any other language. All translate this verse, "In the beginning God created heaven and earth" as an independent sentence.

Today most critical scholars say that this sentence must be a subordinate sentence, "When God began to create the heaven and the earth..." Most of the critical scholars take it that way today, but it is very strange, if that's the way it should be taken, that no ancient translator translated it that way.

As a matter of fact, the translation of it as a subordinate clause is not impossible. In the pointing as we have it, "beginning of", and then having a clause after it instead of a word, does occur maybe fifteen or twenty times in the Hebrew Bible; it's not a common construction, but it is a construction that occurs.

The difficulty with it is this: it makes a very long complex sentence such as is quite uncommon in Hebrew. Wellhausen, the great founder of the higher critical school today, said that it was a terribly confusing interpretation. But today, practically all the critical scholars take this interpretation, that it must be a subordinate clause. I believe they are wrong in it; I believe we are justified in taking it as an independent sentence, especially since it is the way it was done in all the ancient translations through the ages.

But if you take it as an independent sentence, as we've noticed, we still are not sure what it means. Does it mean in the beginning God created heaven and earth: this is the whole and complete creation, everything done, and then we go ahead to repeat the story and tell the details of it?¹¹ That is a method which I gave you a few references to; it occurs in the Bible; does it occur here? That's one interpretation. A second interpretation is that this a complete creation of a complete organized universe but then that everything else in the chapter comes afterward, in the reconstruction of the universe, with complete creation described in the first verse.

And the third interpretation of it is that heaven and earth in the first verse is a phrase to mean the material which make up heaven and earth, rather than heaven and earth in a completely organized state. And therefore that this indicates the creation of matter. I've read a statement that some scientists today have said, that from an original bit of matter, all of the elements which we have, could have been made in half an hour by a process in which they would have been made out of the one, and then everything since would have

¹¹ [dcb] This is the view of St. Augustine, interpreting Ecclesiasticus 18:1, "*Qui vivet in aeternum, creavit omnia simul.*"—He Who lives in eternity created all things together. He had it that Genesis 1:1 is the entire creation *in potential* or "formless" as in Genesis 1:2, with the realization or "form" taking place in the Days of Creation. See St. Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis* Book IV, Ch.33–34 "God created all things simultaneously."). St. Thomas Aquinas generally supports this view in *Summa Theologica* in Question 66, [Whether formlessness of created matter preceded in time its formation?](#)

been a recombining of those elements. And that that could have come within half an hour. Whether that's a pure conjecture or a pure theory, certainly if it did ever happen that way, nobody ever saw it happen. But at least that would fit with this interpretation of this verse, that it is the creation of matter, the creation of the elements, the creation of that out of which the universe is built, and then the creation account proceeds to describe the steps.¹²

Let us see what the Bible teaches so clearly that there is no question whatever what it is talking about; and then let us stand upon that; let us absolutely stand without wavering, on that, even though all the people in the world, say something else. If the Bible absolutely, clearly teaches something, I believe it is true; and I believe that when all the evidence is in, we will find that there is no evidence against, but it is all for what the Bible teaches. Let's take that stand on whatever the Bible absolutely, clearly teaches.

Now let us try to go beyond that; and let's understand all we can of what the Bible teaches, but not have the same dogmatism on that on which there is some question of interpretation. And let us remember that in many parts of the Bible, it's going to have many, many things on which it touches, on which we are not sure exactly what the answer is, because we have not gone far enough into it to give us an answer, or because we have not yet studied as far as to have a clear knowledge of what the answer is. And on these, let us not be dogmatic but let us be charitable to those who take another view of them.

In my opinion, one of the greatest injuries that has come to the Christian church through the ages is that people have taken a superficial interpretation of the Bible and said this is it, this is what it says, and they've presented this when the Bible did not clearly state it, and then when people have brought evidences that it was wrong, they said, "Oh, you're attacking the Bible." And then if that view was proven to be wrong, many people have had their faith wrecked because they have thought that the Bible has been proven untrue, when it was not the Bible at all, but people's interpretation of the Bible that had been proven wrong.

I do not say that you should preach in a manner that says "Well, I don't know whether it means this, or this, or this." That is not the purpose of preaching. The purpose of preaching is to take what you know, what the Bible teaches, and present it, and you may incidentally help people to understand the Bible better.

¹² [dcb] This appears to refer to the view originated by Fred Hoyle but not yet generally accepted in the 1950s, that essentially all of the Hydrogen and Helium in the universe were created within a short time in the beginning, and that these primordial elements were later fused in stellar processes to form all of the heavier elements. Today this is generally accepted by astrophysicists.

But take what is clear in preaching and present it strongly; but do not present strongly that which the Bible does not definitely teach.

In fact, I find some theologians will take that which everybody knows to be true—or everybody who has studied it knows to be true, though others don't of course—and will present it in a very mild fashion so that the outsider immediately thinks "Well I guess there's some evidence for this" but then they'll come to some point on which they stand all alone against everybody else and they will just hammer away at it and try to drive it home until this is the one thing we can be sure of, this is what we really ought to know. But they're all alone in that.

So it is not my purpose to tell you here are five views of Genesis 1:1. This is the right one, we stand on this. That is not my purpose. My purpose is to say there are certain views here, perhaps we can say there is one which we believe is right, but here are two or three on which the evidence is more or less balanced. One of these three is correct but they have certain things in common.

Remember the illustration I gave you about my coming here from Chicago? I came here from Chicago; if I say that, you know it's absolutely true—if you believe that I am a man of my word, and you depend on it. But how I came, when I came, whether it was a continuous journey, I have not stated this and therefore you should not be dogmatic.

"In the beginning God created heaven and earth," the first three interpretations say; the last two say, "When God began to create heaven and earth, then..." Well, any one of the five teaches that heaven and earth are not eternal, that they were created and they had a beginning. Any one of the five teaches that God created heaven and earth; any one of the five teaches heaven and earth are distinct from God. They are not part of himself but something he created, something distinct from Him. He was before them but He brought them into existence; now that's a tremendous lot. That is a great deal that's very important; if true; it is the vital foundation of every science and most everything we think in life. And that is so, whichever of the five views I mentioned you take of the verse. So we have a great deal in this verse that we can stand upon and be absolutely sure of, regardless of which of these five views we take; and, in my opinion, that is one of the most important Bible interpretations, if you get that habit of seeing what's absolutely clear and standing on it and not being dogmatic about that which isn't clear.

Now, let's look at the five views. The five views we notice divide into two groups, according to whether the verse is an independent clause or whether it is a subordinate clause. I hesitated a little whether to discuss the difference between the two groups right away at the beginning or to take up the difference as we take the last two. I think I'll do the latter. I'll merely state at

this point that I personally think it's an independent sentence. I believe the evidence is better for that, but I don't think it's absolutely overwhelming. So we cannot consider the other as impossible. There are good grounds which may be advanced for the other. We'll look at that later.

But now, with that much introduction, we will now look the first three and compare them one with the other.

a. Interpretation of it as an independent sentence, which I think it is, and which is the way it is translated in all ancient translations, then what does it mean? "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." What does it mean? There are three possible ways:

(1). It is a summary of the full account of creation. A newspaper article will often start, something like this: General Brown died at 6 o'clock last night in the Memorial Hospital. Then it will go on to say about two months ago General Brown was taken ill; they found it was such-and-such a thing; he went to the hospital; he's been there so long, and so on. They'll go on and tell you about him in more detail. Then they go back and tell you about his early life. But they often have a first sentence that summarizes all the following.

As a newspaper man once said, the Bible has the greatest newspaper lead in history, because it has the first verse which summarizes the whole chapter. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

I could give you later—well I'll just mention it now. Genesis 18:1a, Exodus 40:17, and 1 Kings 18:30 are examples of a general statement in which a thing is told and then it goes back and tells it in more detail. It occurs in the Bible. Is that what is meant here? Is Genesis 1:1 a summary statement telling the whole story, and then you go on and give it in more detail? Now that's the first interpretation.

Against this view, I would raise one serious obstacle, which I hope all of you mentioned in your papers. If that is it, then verse 2 following, tells the whole story all over again, and verse 2 does not say God made a universe which was without form and void. It says the earth became or was, whichever way you want to take it, it means activity, it means change. It does not mean a static state, without form and void. Now, God created heaven and earth, and then your next step you find heaven and earth without form and void. That sounds as if before he created it, it was without form and void.

Now it may be that you can interpret the second verse to say God created heaven and earth; how did this happen? Well, the first step of it was that there came into existence an earth without form and void; that's the first step and we'll go on and give the others. That may be possible but I think unlikely, so to

my mind that is a serious objection against taking this as a summary statement. To my mind, if this were a summary statement, I would expect it to go on then and say God created matter and He proceeded to make some changes in it, rather than and the earth was without form and void. So that, I feel, is a very serious objection to this first viewpoint: that the first verse states the whole thing and then the second verse starts all over again to tell the story.

Well, you could make your summary statement; you'd have to decide how long it would be; but at any rate, however you decided, it is pretty hard, to my mind, to draw a sharp line between the summary statement and the starting right from the beginning. For me, that is a very serious obstacle to its being taken as a summary statement. The second verse does not have a dynamic verb. It says "And the earth was or became without form and void", and it sounds as if you're starting your account of creation there; it's not telling of the creation of it, but telling how it was. That is my objection: that it does not seem to me that that is a proper start for telling the whole story: to tell it the way it is stated with the use of the perfect verb.

I don't think it's a serious enough objection to rule it out because I do believe it might be possible to interpret it, God created the heaven and earth. Now what happened when he created heaven and earth? Well, it started and came into existence, an earth without form and void, and then he proceeded to do different things about it. But it does seem to be much more natural a summary to say, "And God brought into existence a world without form and void, and then he said let there be light and so on," rather than "And there came into existence that which was without form and void." Now that, it's not conclusive at all, but to me it's a rather serious objection to take verse 1 as a general summary. That would seem a bit strange, to have your summary quite as brief.

Well, that's the first view. I don't think we can disprove it but I incline against it for the reasons mentioned by different ones but most particularly because it doesn't seem to me that it starts quite right for a summary, that it seems to assume an earth already without form and void, rather than to say he created an earth which was without form and void.

Now the second suggested interpretation is

(2). It is a complete story of a preceding creation. It describes a complete universe with everything in orderly fashion created in Genesis 1:1. And then everything later follows this creation, so that what follows is not an account of creation but a reconstruction, an account of events that came after the creation, and the whole creation is told in Genesis 1:1. That is a second suggested interpretation.

And for this view, one previous objection is probably a point against this one also. That if this is a complete story of a creation of a world, with intelligent beings walking about on it, and so on, it is very, very abbreviated. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." If this is the whole creation of what follows in later events, it's pretty much condensed for that.

Now I don't think that disproves it, but I do think that it's a point against it, definitely. But it could be taken that way. This is a complete creation. God created heaven and earth, with everything complete in them. There were the sun, moon and stars; there were clouds; there were lakes; there were intelligent beings on it; there was a complete creation. And then verse two tells us of something that happened long after the complete creation: that the earth became without form and void.

Now according to that interpretation then you have a complete creation in verse 1, then in verse two you continue with an event that happened later. There was a great catastrophe; this earth became without form and void; and then the succeeding verses are not an account of creation—according to this view—but an account of a reconstruction of an earth which had fallen into tremendous difficulties.

Now in a way, the discussion of this should wait for the discussion of verse 2, but perhaps we'd better discuss verse 2 here instead, because it comes right under this to know what verse 1 means. If that is the interpretation, one objection raised against it is that it goes on to say, and the earth was, not the earth became—you will find in many books that given as an objection to this view but it is in my opinion an objection which is without foundation.

I saw a book—it was the American Scientific Affiliation book—discussing various sciences and I was sent the chapter on theology to look over and the man who wrote the chapter on theology spent a good part of his space attacking this reconstruction theory and in his attack he said the second verse cannot mean that the earth became without form and void because there's another Hebrew word that means "became". This word means "was".

Well, he was a geologist, not a Hebrew scholar. He'd picked up a little Hebrew and on that point he'd picked it up wrong. Because the word which is there is not a word which means it was. It is a word which shows movement rather than a static situation. It was pointed out to him that that is a word that means become and he changed his statement to say there is another construction instead of another word. Because the fact is that this word, when it means become, usually has a preposition "He became to something." "He was to this", is the technical phrase for "he became" and there's no preposition in this sentence. But, in my opinion, that is like when you say "he came in the room" and "he came into the room". Technically you would say "he came into the

room", you wouldn't say "he came in the room." Yet if he was outdoors and you said he came in the room, everybody would know what you meant; it would be slightly abbreviated, but it would serve the purpose. And if you look it up in Brown, Driver and Briggs' Hebrew dictionary, you will find the verb in Hebrew means "to happen" or "to become". It does not mean in Hebrew "to be". It may have developed at a later time to mean "to be", but in Hebrew ordinarily the idea of "to be" is expressed by putting the two nouns together with no verb at all.

I went through Genesis 1 in the English and I found that in our English Bible there are maybe forty or fifty cases where the verb to be is used in Genesis 1. Like it says, it was evening and it was morning. It says that God saw what he had made and it was good. And there are maybe, I forget the number, but maybe it might be forty or fifty. Anyway I counted all the cases in Genesis 1 of the use of the English verb to be. And then after listing those I looked at each verb, omitting this second which is the one we're discussing, I looked at all the rest of them in order to see whether it was dynamic or passive; that is to say it was evening, that doesn't mean simply that that was the situation, it means it became evening; and it became evening and it became morning. The Authorized Version puts the two together: it says the evening and the morning were. The American Standard has it more literally, and it was evening and it was morning, one day. That is a dynamic thing, it means it became evening and it became morning. Half of them express a change like that. God said let there be light, and it was light. That's dynamic. It doesn't mean God looked up and everything was light, it doesn't mean that at all. It means it was dark and then it was light. It's dynamic. It means it became light even though the English word used it was light. Well, half of them are dynamic, meaning the same thing as our "became," he said let it become light and it became light. Half of them are static, he saw what he had made and it was good. It doesn't mean it became good, it means it was good. When he looked at it that's what he saw, but the other means it was something one minute and he caused that it be something different the next minute.

Well, about half of them are one and half are the other. Then I looked at the Hebrew and I found that in every case where it was dynamic, where there was a change, like let it become light and it became light, the verb is used. And in every case where it was static, like God saw that it was good, there's no *hayàh* used. Just "he saw that good," in the Hebrew. The *hayàh* is not a copula. It is a word which expresses a change as a rule. Perhaps in very late Hebrew—in Chronicles—it may sometimes be used as a copula, but never in early Hebrew. Well, then, the verb *hayàh* here is well-translated "became," but that does not prove this second view in this sentence, because it can be that God created heaven and earth, and the earth had come into being without form and void. When he created this, here is what happened: the earth came into being without form and void. It can be that—dynamic; it's in the Hebrew perfect, so I think

"had become" is a very good translation: "had come into being without form and void." Or it can be, he created heaven and earth, and then something happened as a result of which the earth had become without form and void. The form of the verb is rather one which shows a transition, than an action. The "earth had become" rather than "earth became," would be more literal. And I think this fact that it's the Hebrew perfect rather than imperfect fits a little better into the idea that this is a situation produced by the first verse than that it is something which came after the activity of the first verse.

However, it is entirely possible to interpret verse 2 as a result of a great cataclysm which came to pass upon the earth. There are a couple of verses in the Prophets which are advanced by those who believe in the great cataclysm to show that such a cataclysm occurred. I do not believe that these verses prove it. It seems to me, in one or two cases, the context shows that it had nothing to do with that, but they deal with a different situation; in other places they're not clear. I do not believe there is anywhere in Scripture any greater statement that can be interpreted to mean there was a great catastrophe between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. If that is to be believed, it must rest on just taking Genesis 1 and interpreting it that way.

Well, to me, this is a pretty tremendous thing to assume that without further evidence; and yet that doesn't prove it isn't true, because God's purpose isn't to give us the history of the universe; it is to tell us of his dealings with our race, not with the previous race if there was any. And so my personal feeling on the reconstruction theory is that it is entirely possible that Genesis 1:1 and 2 ought to be interpreted this way. It is entirely possible, but that there is not evidence enough on which to have any certainty; that it is equally possible that it is not true. That is my feeling on it. To me the greatest argument in its favor is that in the Garden of Eden we find Satan there—already fallen—so Satan must have fallen sometime before the Garden of Eden. It would seem that Satan—we are not told of the creation of Satan or the creation of angels—but they certainly are created beings. It would seem to me that either Satan fell before the creation of the world, or he fell after the creation of the world and before the garden of Eden; and we are not told in Scripture when it happened, so that, to me, is an argument in favor of the reconstruction theory but not a conclusive argument.

And my own inclination is in the lack of any definite evidence that such a catastrophe occurred to this earth at that time to consider it as a possibility but by no means a certainty and, in fact, I would think that the balance of the evidence is slightly against it rather than—I certainly could not prove it not true, but I don't think we have enough to prove it true.

Well, that's the second argument then. Some of you may have been particularly familiar with a catastrophe view and gave it in connection with that. I don't know that we should take time to look into the details. If somebody has one of

them that seems to you to be quite conclusive on it, then let's bring that up in one of the sections and we'll discuss it there at some length rather than in the whole group.

(Question about the use of "made" and "created") The word "boys" is a smaller word than the word "people;" it includes less. I could say with equal truth, there are fifty boys in the room or there are fifty people in the room, but you could infer more when I said boys than people. Now I would say that "made" and "created" are exactly that situation, that creating is a way of making and consequently if you say that he made it you don't say how he made it, whether he created it or whether he transformed something already there into it; either one could use the word "made." God creates the world; I make a desk; they're altogether different but they're both made. God made the world, I made the desk. But God created the world, I simply put together matter he's already created and made the desk. So, to me, if you use made it doesn't prove that he didn't create or that he did, it just leaves both possibilities. I don't think you could take "make" to mean in this passage that it does not refer to a creation. Those who hold the reconstruction theory hold that the catastrophe was the result of the fall of Satan; and I would think that there is no doubt that the fall of Satan took place prior to the garden of Eden, but whether it took place before the creation of the world, after the creation of the world and before the first day or sometime during the creation days, I don't think we're told in Scripture. So I don't think we can be dogmatic.

Now a third suggested interpretation is this about Genesis 1:1:

(3). It is the creation of matter, including the elements. Under this interpretation, the phrase "heaven and earth" is used to mean all of the elements of the universe, of heaven and earth; this is formed in Genesis 1:1. You read on a little further that he made a firmament and he called the firmament heaven. So that sounds as if heaven was made later, that would fit with this suggestion, that heaven and earth here means the universe simply as matter—the universe in an inchoate state. The original creation of the elements out of which everything was made. That is what Genesis 1:1 says, and that what follows is still a part of the account of creation, but goes on and tells us this which he created in this inchoate state simply as matter and elements and so on, and then how he took and rearranged it and fashioned it and established life upon it. Now that is the third interpretation of Genesis 1:1.

Personally I incline rather strongly toward this view, the third view. I feel that when it says God created heaven and earth, that is not a summary of creation, either a summary of what follows or a story of a complete creation which then was followed by a catastrophe that's not mentioned, but that that is the first step in God's creation, that he created the elements. He created the inchoate matter which he formed into an established world.

That, I incline to think, is the more probable interpretation of it. We have frequent references to the creation later in Scripture which refer to events of the later part of the chapter, which seems to me to fit with the idea of creation rather than a reconstruction.

I would think that "heaven and earth" is just a statement for the totality of the elements. There was not a completed world. You see, the oceans were not separated from the dry land, the firmament was not made, the sun, moon, and stars were not visible. To my mind that is what this first verse probably is: that the first step in God's creation was to bring the building blocks into existence.

Now God could have snapped his finger and said, "Let the world be standing here, with Faith Seminary standing here already, and students sitting: that's that." He could have done it. He could have said, "Let the world be here with all its trees, a thousand different types of trees, all standing here." He could have done it, if he chose. But does Genesis 1 present him as building the world by stages in an orderly process with one thing after another? Now, if he did it by orderly stages, instead of just suddenly giving the word and it's all complete, then the first step should have been the creation of the blocks out of which the other things were made, the creation of the elements. Now, how far he went in the creation of the elements, assumed from these statement, we're just not told, but the fact is essentially what the verse says.

In English "earth" has two meanings: one is this globe, the other is a bit of soil. Now in Hebrew "earth" never means a bit of soil; there is another word to mean a bit of soil, but in Hebrew earth has two meanings: one of them is this whole globe, the other one is a particular land, like the land of Egypt, the land of Italy, the land of Israel, that is.

So, in Hebrew the word *eret*^z—which we translate earth—may also mean a substantial portion of the earth. I would think it quite likely, that wherever this Hebrew word is used it does not simply mean the dirt involved, but means the dirt and the water and the air above it; it means that section of the globe, or else the globe itself. I would think that quite likely, but I doubt if it could be proved absolutely. I think it's very likely.

It can also be used as a figure of speech for the inhabitants of the land. I don't think the word earth includes the inhabitants but I think it can be used as a figure of speech for the inhabitants. And that, of course, brings us to this point: some people say to take the whole Bible literally; and anybody that says that has never read the Bible literally, because you cannot take any point entirely literally that ever was written: it wouldn't make sense.

But I would say this: we should take most of the Bible literally. We should interpret something that's figurative only where it's clear from context it should not be taken literally. When people take it "figuratively", often they mean they so interpret it as to explain it away and have nothing left. That's a false kind of interpretation, but it will include figures of speech, not all literal by any means.

Well, now, better move along. The main thing I want at this point is for you to have in mind what these three views are, to see the difference between them, to see arguments for and against each of them. I feel personally the third is the correct one, but I do not feel that the preponderance of evidence is so strong that I would want to urge it upon any one. I would feel that if any one inclines towards either the first or the second, I would not feel it particularly important to try to persuade them that the third was better. I do think that for the purpose of this course you should know why I think the third is better, but your conclusion on this might be different and might be right, only it probably will take a bit longer to study before you have evidence enough to prove conclusively. But I'd like you to see the evidence for all three, and whichever is proven right, there is much that is in common among the three and on that we can stand absolutely without fear. Everything was created by the Lord. It is God's power that made us. What we have on this earth here is God's great creative act which established it. God is separate from it. Those are great vital points, not which of these three is right.

b. Interpretation if it as a subordinate clause. The fourth view is that verse 1 is subordinate to verse 2 and the fifth is that verse 1 is subordinate to verse 3.

(1). When God began to create heaven and earth, then the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

(2). When God began to create heaven and earth and the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep, then God said let there be light.

Now I don't think it makes an awful lot of difference in meaning. They both of them seem to me to imply an earth without form and void here in existence before God began his creative activity, and I don't think that is true. It is the claim today of most critical scholars that the Hebrew *must* be interpreted this way; but you take the best critical scholars of forty years ago and they would say—some of them, they would say—well, we can't be sure which is the way to interpret this. And all the ancient versions take it as an independent clause, which does not seem to me to fit this. It seems to me that people knew more about Hebrew back in those days than we do today, and at least somebody would have taken it as a subordinate clause if it properly had to be a subordinate clause.

Now the fact they all take it as an independent clause doesn't prove it had to be an independent clause. To me it makes better sense as an independent clause. To me it fits into the context better. If it's a subordinate clause and if it's the fifth view, you have a very long, involved sentence which is quite uncommon in Hebrew which usually is made up of short, simple sentences. Personally, I incline quite definitely against the fourth view, but as I say, most critical scholars today are very dogmatic that the fourth is necessarily true.

Now the fifth view, which is held by practically all critical scholars today is that verse 1 is subordinate to verse 3. In other words, when God began to create the heaven and earth, then God said let there be light. That is the sentence, but it has a parenthesis in it consisting of the second verse. When God began to create heaven and earth, and at that time the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, then God said let there be light. And you see that would seem to allow for pre-existent matter. But when he began to create the earth it was then without form and void. And so it does not fit with the view which we find taught in many parts of the Bible that God created everything and there was nothing before he created it, and consequently it is not a satisfactory view from our Scripture viewpoint. But it is the view which most critical scholars hold today. It has this objection to it, grammatically, that it makes a very involved sentence, with this long parenthesis in the middle, something that, while not impossible, is extremely rare.

Now, let us look at

c. The word "Create", *bará*. This word in the Hebrew is *bará*, to create. There is a statement here by Professor Heide. Dr. Alexander Heide, of the University of Chicago, died about five years ago I believe. He was a Missouri [Synod] Lutheran, very strict in his orthodoxy according to the Lutheran viewpoint, and a very definite believer in the absolute dependability of the entire Scripture.

But Heide, in his book on the *Babylonian Genesis*, in which he's made a very careful study of the Babylonian story of creation, and of many things in connection with the Biblical story, has this statement which he makes.

The Chaldeans say that the substance of the world is eternal, and that it neither had a first beginning nor that it will at a later time suffer destruction.

Genesis, chapter 1, on the other hand, predicates a creation out of nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*), that is to say, it asserts that by the sovereign will and power of God matter was brought into existence from vacuous nothing at the creation of the universe.

This concept, however, cannot be deduced from the Hebrew verb *bará*, "to create," as it has been done. ...there is no conclusive evidence in the entire Old Testament that the verb itself ever expresses the idea of a creation out of nothing... Hebrew *bará* has about the same meaning of *asáh*, with this difference, that *bará* contains the idea of a new and extraordinary or epochal production, never necessitating toil on the part of the Creator, while *asáh* is used in the general, colorless sense of 'to do' or 'to make.' But the idea of a creation out of nothing is a connotation which has been read into *bará*; the same applies to Latin *creare*, from which, of course, the English verb "to create" is derived, and to the German *schaffen*.¹³

He says the idea of a creation out of nothing is a concept which has been read into *bará*. I don't know whether he's going a little too far in that statement; I think you can say that create, as a general rule, indicates making something out of nothing, but certainly it does not always mean that because man was created, God took the dust of the earth and breathed into it, there was something in it, there was a brand new creation, something that had not existed before. But this did involve a certain amount of pre-existent material.

So I question whether "make completely out of nothing" is a fair definition, but *bará* is used in the Scripture only of God's activity. Create is used of great acts of God which resulted in the production of something that is a tremendous change from what had existed before. And it is the sort of divine power that no human being could ever evoke, which is involved in the word create. So naturally, in many cases it does amount to making something out of nothing. He causes it to come into existence, when there either was nothing there before, or what there was there before was so different that it really is a new thing altogether.

The term "create" is used in common language today. People speak of a dress or a hat which they say is a creation of a certain designer. Well, now if that word is at all legitimate to use in that sense, what it means is not simply that the designer has taken and has rearranged things, but that this designer has put into it such a brand new idea that you have something there that just wouldn't exist if it weren't for the brilliant mind of this designer, who has originated this great innovation and created it. I think that—I'm not sure—it's really right to use it in that sense; but if it's used in that sense it is because it approaches *bará*, which is the real idea. It is that which the ordinary person could never do, which no person can do, but only God can do. It is the effortless, supreme activity of God whereby He brings to pass, brings things into existence, something so different from anything that happened before that only God could possibly have done it.

¹³ Alexander Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis: The Story of Creation*. 2nd. Ed. (1951) p89–90.

Well, so much then for this word create which, by the way, is not used in every one of the days. As a matter of fact, I don't remember the exact figure on how many times the word create is used in the first chapter of Genesis but it is not a great number. Several of the days do not have the word create in them at all. So I think when the word create is used, it stresses the tremendous nature of the particular act of God which was done, but when it doesn't use create it does not mean that there may not have been a similar activity on some of those cases also. The word "do" is a large word, do or make, which could include create but create is a special kind of making and do or make may be used for create. But we are specifically told that God created the heaven and earth. In verse 21 we are specifically told he created the great creatures of the deep, and we are told in verse 26 and 27 that he created man, and in verse 27 the word is used twice and that's three times in the one verse to stress the creative activity in connection with man. It is stressed perhaps more than all other creative activity in the whole chapter. But "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created be him, male and female created he them." Three times it is stressed in this one verse. The creative activity of God in connection with the coming into existence of man. So much then for 4. the interpretation of Genesis 1:1. The next heading I'm going to take very little time on because we have of necessity already had to discuss it.

5. The Interpretation of Genesis 1:2.

This is a rather difficult verse to interpret. As for the earth, it had become or it was as a result of this happening, without form and void, As a result of what was happening; as a result of being treated that way; or as a result of there having been a great catastrophe which changes that situation from the original—either one is perfectly proper as far as the grammar of the verse is concerned. The earth was without form and void; it was in this chaotic state; it was not in a final state, not in a fully usable state as yet. Had it been once and then changed back, or is this the way they were made and from that they were going to go on? Well, we can't be sure which it was, but it is dynamic. It is either the result of the catastrophe or the result of the activity of God In bringing the earth into being so that there came into existence an earth without form and void.

But you see it doesn't fit at all for the beginning of creation, to begin with verse 2, to say verse 1 is the whole creation and then you go back and start over again because you start when the earth already had come into this situation. To me that's a rather strong general summary. And the next phrase, darkness was upon the face of the deep, is a rather difficult phrase; what exactly it really means, I don't think anybody knows. Darkness was upon the face of the deep, the word here translated deep is the Hebrew word *tehom*, which is not a common word in Hebrew but it's very similar to the Babylonian word *tiamat*

which is used for the great *tamtu* of salt water in the Babylonian story.¹⁴ But whether there's a relationship there or not is pretty hard to prove. There's a big argument both ways. "And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters." This word moved, *rachaph*, here is one which is not a common word. And sometimes it is translated *cherish* and sometimes translated *hover*. Sometimes it is taken like a hen *brooding* over her nest—the spirit of the Lord brooding over the face of the water.

Other times this word *Spirit*, which is exactly the same as the word for wind, is taken; you will find some critical translations say wind of God, in other words a mighty wind was rushing over the face of the water. I don't think that's what it means. But exactly what it does mean is something that we do not have knowledge of. There was certainly—we can say—a divine interest there, a great divine interest. God had not cast off the world and forgot it. The Spirit of God was there, the Spirit of God was taking an interest in it, but exactly what the relations were, I don't believe we can be sure, with the amount of evidence we have.

So much then for verses 1 and 2. That will take us to 6, which leads us into a very interesting problem.

6. The meaning of the word "Day". Well what does the word day mean? All you have to do is to go up to the first man you see on the street, and ask him, "What is a day?" He'll say twenty-four hours. He knows when the Bible says day it means twenty-four hours.

Unfortunately, you cannot determine the meaning of Biblical words that way. That is a step in the finding the meaning of an English word, to ask what it means; but the first man you come to may be completely wrong as to what it generally means, because language is a peculiar thing which passes from mouth to mouth, and from mind to mind, and it's always changing, and the result is that with just about any word you want to take in any language you will find some people who are still using it in the sense it was used a hundred years ago and some people that have moved on to the sense it will be a hundred years from now. It is in state of flux, and you have to check it with many different people to know what the word really means in that language.

In making up a dictionary it is customary to go through a lot of books and from the books examine all the different contexts where a word comes and see what light can be thrown on how it is used at that time in that language. A language is a difficult thing to think up, and in this case we are not interested in what the English word means. If we know that, it only tells us what the King James

¹⁴ Alexander Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis* (1951), p.98, "In *Enuma elish* it is the word *Tiamat*, in Genesis the word *tehom*, which occurs in 1:2 and is usually translated with 'the deep'. ... Rarely does [tiamat] stand for *tamtu*, a generic word for 'ocean,' 'sea,' or 'lake.' "

writers think. What we are interested in is what does the original mean. The Hebrew has a word *yom* which it so happens is regularly translated day.

Now in some cases one Hebrew word is translated various ways in English, but in this case I think you can just about say that any time you find the word *yom* it's translated day, and just about any time you find day it's a translation of *yom*. So to find out what this Hebrew word means we can check how the word day is used in the Bible. How it's used in English proves nothing, but how it's used in the Bible.

Well, now, is there anybody here who will be ready to say that you believe that every time the word day is used in Genesis 1, it means twenty-four hours?

Well let us say that every time the word day is used in this chapter it means twenty-four hours. Now let us look at verse 4: "and God saw the light that it was good and God divided the light from the darkness; and God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." Now what does this word day mean in verse 5? God called the light day. Was that twenty-four hours? I think we would all easily agree it was not. We would all agree that the first use then of the word day in the Bible is not twenty-four hours. It is a period of time in which it is light, which is called Day. How long is the day? If you're up near the north Pole it may be six months long. You may have six months of day and six months of night. If you are fairly near the Equator, it may mean twelve hours most of the year, with slight variations. If you are in Northern Scotland the day will be twenty-three and a half hours long in August. It certainly varies tremendously over the earth, the length of the day.

But that is the common way the word day is used—not for a twenty-four period but for a period in which it is light, that is the daytime. And when we say that Christ was in the grave three days and three nights we don't mean he was in the grave three days of twenty-four hours each, plus three nights. We mean three cycles, or a portion of three cycles, each of which cycle, day and night together, is twenty-four hours. So the first usage of day here is a usage which is probably a great deal less than twenty-four hours, unless this chapter is written from the viewpoint of somebody who was within a few miles of either the North or South Pole. In that case it may mean six months. But at least, there's no reason in the world to think that the word day, in its first usage, is twenty-four hours.

All right; then we have our present creation passage which I think we could say runs from Genesis 1:1 to 2:4. So that the last time the word day is used in the passage would be in verse 4 of chapter 2. "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens." Well, how long is that day, the day when the Lord made the earth and the heavens? I don't think that anybody would feel that this refers simply to the making of the original elements, but rather to the

whole creation period. Or, if you take it as the start of the second chapter, the same thing: "In the day when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens" as meaning the whole of the creation which is described in the six days.

And consequently the word day here means the same as the whole six others put together. The day when the Lord made the earth. Or if you take it that it refers to when the original elements were made, then that would be the "minus-one day" because the first day is when he made light, after the original elements were made. But I don't think anybody takes it that way, as the minus-one day. I think everybody takes it as the combination of the whole six. So the first usage of the word day is probably much less than twenty-four hours and the last usage is at least six times twenty-four hours.

So here we have these two varied uses of the word "day", and then in between we have usage of it in relation to the six days, which is the problem we're interested in. What does this mean in those instances?

Now the first usage of it in the beginning of verse 5, the light period, is something that is very common in our language. Probably we use the word day in that sense far more than in the sense of twenty-four hours—in the sense of period of light. We read in the New Testament that you should "work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." That doesn't mean a twenty-four hour day for many people. It either means a specific day of light or it means a long period of time which is similar to the period of light. In any event, it is certain that nobody will interpret that phrase as meaning a twenty-four hour day. So we find that the word day may be used for quite a short period of time bound together by one feature, of being the light period separated by darkness on both sides.

Or it may be used for a long period of time. This use of the word day—for a long period of time—is certainly not the commonest use in the Scripture, yet it is used a good many times. We find in the New Testament a good many instances where the word day is used for a period, a long time. I believe John 8:55, if I recall correctly, is where Jesus said, "Abraham saw my day and was glad." Well, which day did he mean? Did he mean a particular twenty-four hour day? I don't think there's any question here that he meant that he saw the period of Jesus' life, which would be about thirty years. Five verses before the verse I gave you, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad." How long was the day that Abraham rejoiced about? Certainly much longer than a twenty-four period. In 2 Peter 3:8 we read that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as one day. Here is something much longer than twenty-four hours which is here called a day. There are many references in the Scripture to the Day of the Lord, and nobody believes that is a twenty-four day. There are a very respectable number of instances—though not a huge number of instances—where the word day

undoubtedly means a long period. So I think we can summarize that the word day in the Scripture is a word which means a period of time; that this period of time may be singled out by the fact that it is light as compared with darkness on both sides, and in such cases it means daylight; or that it may represent a very long period of time which has something that binds it together and makes it one period, like the Day of the Lord, or Jesus' Day, and so on. In between these two is a very common use of it to indicate one type of day, as the earth turns around on its axis, a period of light plus a period of darkness. There are then those different uses of the word "day".

Now, which of these uses is used in Genesis 1? We have no right to assume in advance that it will be only one of the three. But we have a duty to examine the passage and see what it indicates. And if we do not find enough indication to make it certain which it is, then what we have to do is to say it *does not state* whether this day was ten minutes long; whether it was ten hours long; twenty-four hours long; or two hundred years long; or ten million years long; we are not told, and we don't know, unless we find a definite answer. But we cannot assume what it is; we have to look into the passage and see. We have the day used in a short interval, used in a long interval. Now in the other places in the chapter, is it used in the sense of a twenty-four hour day, or isn't it? What is the answer?

Well, we look then to see: how did they measure time in those early times? And we are told in verse 14 that God said, "let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night." Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven; that's what he said the fourth day. Does that mean there was no sun, moon, or stars before that, and God just created them in the fourth day? The light came from some other source previous to that? Possibly. Or was it that they were in existence before, and for some reason not visible on this earth; that there was, for instance, a great cloud around the earth, which would equalize the light at different periods of the cycle; or some other reason they were not visible? We cannot be sure. It says God made, but that may mean he *had* made and now makes visible. We can't be sure. We know God made them, but did he make them in the fourth day? Well, he made them visible; he certainly did that. Perhaps he made them on the fourth day. But what is the vital thing about the fourth day? Is it the sun, moon, and stars coming into existence? No. That's not the vital thing. The vital thing is that they then become measurers of time. He says, "Let these lights be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, and it was so." He says "Let them be for signs, for seasons, and for days and for years. And so he made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, the lesser light to rule the night, he made the stars also." He made them to be measurers of time.

Now whether these were made in the fourth day, or whether God had made them earlier and caused them to become visible in the fourth day, in either

case, they were not measurers of time until the fourth day. That is when it is definitely placed down as a command that they become measurers. So we certainly can say that there is no ground before the fourth day for saying that a day was twenty-four hours. Now it might have been twenty-four hours, it might have been ten hours, it might have been ten million years long; but we have no ground to say it was twenty-four hours, because a twenty-four hour day is simply a division we make into twenty-four sections of the time that the earth turns once on its axis in relation to the sun; and the sun was not yet a divider of time until the fourth day. So that for the first three days it is entirely possible that the length was twenty-four hours, or just as possible that it was twenty-two or twenty or eighteen or twenty-nine or ten million years; we just are not told, before the fourth day.

And are we right in assuming that it means a twenty-four hour day these particular last three days when certainly the word day is used of the first three in such a way that the sun cannot be the determining factor as to its length. I think we can safely say, then, that we do not know from the word day in itself, how long it is.

Now, when I say that, immediately somebody raises an objection. They say, "Yes, but the Bible says it was evening and it was morning the first day. It was evening and it was morning, a second day. It was evening and it was morning, the third day."

Now one thing we know is: it does not say "the first day": that is a mistranslation in the Authorized Version. It says "one day." The American Standard Version has it more accurately. It is not the word for "first," it is the word "one". It was evening and it was morning, one day. It was evening and it was morning, a second day. There is no article. It was evening and it was morning, a third day, a fourth day, and having made four like that, then it says the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh. But it is a day in the first, it's just a second, a third, it's just a day. So that it is not the first day but it's the first day in our description after creation; certainly that we'll agree on.

Now, it was evening and it was morning, what does that mean? Well, that is the Hebrew way of figuring a day. Our modern western way is to say, we take the time when the sun sets and the sun rises and we find the point halfway between the two and we call that midnight. And at that imaginary point, because nothing happens then any different than an hour before or after, we say that's the beginning of a new day, but that is strictly an imaginary thing. The Hebrews had a system which the ordinary man without scientific instruments—without modern clocks or anything like that—could determine. They considered that when the sun set a new day began. The Jews still use that.

Once, coming from California on the train I got talking to different people on the observation car on a train and one of them was a young Jewish woman from New York City. And she told me that they had a Jewish theatre in New York City where they put on specific Jewish plays; and she said that they gave them on Saturday evenings; but she said, we have to start rather late in the evening, because our people who come to us from Brooklyn cannot travel on the Sabbath. So she said, on Saturday—which they call the Sabbath—they have to see the first star appear; and when they see the first star visible in the evening, that means that the day is over; it is now no longer the Sabbath; then they can take the subway and get into Manhattan where these plays are shown. So to this day, the appearance of the first star after the sunset indicates the beginning of the new day.

Now, when did the first day begin? Did it begin when Adam saw the first star in the evening? It couldn't be, because there had been no day before. There was only darkness before, so there was no point at which to start. How could you have an evening without a preceding day? This is the Hebrew terminology. Evening and morning makes one day, in Hebrew terminology. It's just their way of saying a day, and so it is a figurative expression indicating beginning and end of a day, evening and morning. It does not mean literally morning, because for the first day there would not be a literal evening at all. And the first day, the sun was not a measure of time; nor were the stars measures of time. And in addition to that, on the first day, where was Adam or where was Eve? They were not in existence.

The first chapter of Genesis is told, not from the viewpoint of an individual man at some point on the earth, but from God's viewpoint, who covers all space. And therefore, from his viewpoint, when it is morning in Philadelphia, it is evening in Persia. And when it is morning in England I expect it's evening in Japan. I don't know the exact relationship but there is no instance today when it is not morning in half the world and evening in another half the world. Morning and evening, in a literal sense, are terms which relate to the time you are at a place on the earth. They are not divisions of absolute time, but of relative time; and they are purely figurative here in this chapter because this chapter is not written from the viewpoint of a man upon the earth at a specific point, but from the viewpoint of God the Creator, creating the universe.

And so morning and evening are here very definitely figurative terms simply to mean this period we call a day began and ended like a Jewish day begins and ends, but it's a figure. It means one period of time, there was a beginning and an end to this period of time, and this period of time may have been twenty-four hours, but if it was twenty-four hours I don't think the words evening and morning are literal terms referring to a change in the light conditions of the world, but, because that is going on all the time. They are simply a figurative term to represent this period, whatever it is, whether it is twenty-four hours,

whether it is ten hours, whether it is ten million years, this period had a beginning and end. The stress is on the orderly method of creation, that there are successive periods, which come one after the other, and which run their course, and within which God performs certain acts.

But did it take God twenty-four hours to get light created? He would do that in one second, probably. We are told he said "Let there be light and there was light." But what the length is we are not told. But we are shown that there is a progressive activity of God in regular order divided into logical sections, but how long the sections are, if somebody wanted to believe they are twenty-four hours, the word day does not deny it, but neither does it prove it. Certainly God could do it in twenty-four hours, if he chose to. And maybe he chose to, but it does not say that.

But the point here about the days is simply that I do not feel that the Scripture tells us how long the days are. It seems to me it is very clear that the Scripture doesn't tell us how long the days are. And that doesn't mean that they may not be twenty-four hours. If a person likes to think of them as twenty-four hours I see no reason why he shouldn't. I don't think the Scripture specifically says they're longer than twenty-four hours but neither does it say they're shorter. It just doesn't say how long they are. I'm trying to see just what the chapter says and not to read anything into it. That's what I'm trying to do. I see it as very foolish to take the Bible and try to twist it to fit anything that comes from outside. But I think it is proper to take it and see what are the areas of possible interpretation with it. And then when we see those areas; then when we take things from outside; we say this can fit within this area, this can fit within that area. But this other can't possibly fit within the area of Scripture; therefore I'm sure it's wrong and will be proved to be so eventually. No matter who thinks it today, if the Bible clearly denies it, I think it's wrong.

But I don't think we should read into the Bible our ideas from outside. I think we should try to see what the Bible teaches. And I would say the Bible teaches definite periods within which God performs his great creative acts. It teaches an orderly creation, it tells what was done each time so that we know that it is giving something of what was done. The terms are rather general at times, the precise details we don't know; but we know a good bit about what happened in each of these periods. How long were the periods? We are not told. God could have put them all together into one section and said let it all be done and it be done like that. But did He? Did He? That's the question. What does it say specifically? And it seems to me that specifically, it just does not say how long the periods are. How long was the period within which he created light? Well now certainly I would say, there's not the slightest evidence that that period was a twenty-four day because before you had light you certainly couldn't have a twenty-four hour day, and before you had the sun as a measure of time there was no indication of a twenty-four hour day; and yet it could be twenty-four

hours, it could be anything the Lord chose to make it. As far as what he did is concerned, for all we know, it could have been one second. On the other hand he could have done that and he could have left ten million years for that light to circulate, to spread around, to become established the way he wanted it.

I don't think that the deep problems of the Scripture are solved by the simple-minded; I think they are solved by comparing the words of Scripture and how they are used. It is true that Carlstadt, in the early days of the Reformation when Luther was in the Wartburg area, Carlstadt read that the Lord had hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes, so he put on a pair of overalls and went down the street and he would come to a man digging a ditch and he would say, would you please explain to me the meaning of this Greek passage here, the Lord has hidden them from the wise and prudent like myself.

The way to find out what the Scripture says is to study it carefully in the light of the whole Scripture, comparing words with words, passage to passage, and realize that for any particular question we raise, God may not have chosen to give us the answer. But we can hunt and see if He has given us the answer. And when we do that, I am quite certain that on this point we will find that has not given us the answer as to how long these days are. We just don't know. But if we want to think of them as twenty-four hours, there's certainly no harm in doing so. But if you want to think of them as ten million years, there's no harm in that, you just don't know, so why argue about it? Nobody knows.

I think we should take the Scripture and compare it with what we find in the sciences, but I think we should do that after we first look just at the Scripture to see what the Scripture says, because that's the vital question: what does the Scripture say? Not what does man decide, from one method of research of another. What does the Scripture say? But let's not reach any conclusion unless it's absolutely certain in Scripture. Well, let's say that "day" within this limit—I would say the day is not less than five minutes long and not more than two hundred billion years long—somewhere within these limits. I look at the third day and I find that on the third day the Lord said, "let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear, and it was so." Now does that mean that the Lord said, all of a sudden, now let all the waters be there and all the dry land here. Just like that, it's done, or did it move until it got that way? I don't know. It sort of gives a little the impression that it's saying let them be gathered rather than let them be in one place, and the dry land in another. But the latter part of the day, he said "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth, and it was so, and the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind, and God saw that it was good.

I do wish the Theological Seminary Professor who wrote the article I referred to a couple of days ago, in which he said that we must believe—in view of Genesis—that God created trees with tree rings in them, had read this first chapter of Genesis and this verse in particular. If he ever read it, he didn't pay any attention to it; it just went through his head like wood. Because it could very easily have said, "Let the earth be covered with trees." The earth would be covered like that; and whether they'd have tree rings in them or not, I don't know. But at least they'd be covered with trees like that, some of which we would consider trees a hundred years old as far as their size and strength are concerned. But that's not what Genesis said. God said, "Let the earth bring forth fruit. Let the earth bring forth grass and herbs and trees, yielding fruit after their kind. Let the earth bring it forth. And it was so." Well, this day then was a day in which the earth brought forth all kinds of vegetation. Now God certainly could cause the earth to be covered with things all of a sudden, but it doesn't say that. That's not what he did. He caused them to come up out of the earth. No question of that. But now you can take a moving picture camera and you can take picture now and another picture five minutes from now and another five minutes from now and you can run them straight along and you can see the way that the sun comes up in the morning, taking an hour or two, you can run it in five minutes. You can easily do that. And if the Lord chose to, he could do the same thing. The Lord could say, now, let the trees grow up fast and within the course of ten hours—the daylight in the midst of that twenty-four hour day—great big oaks and strong sequoias would come up; what would now take two thousand years to grow, could have grown up in ten or fifteen minutes, could have grown up like that, the Lord could cause that if He chose. And maybe he did choose. And if it was a twenty-four hour day, that is what he chose; but it doesn't say so there, and consequently my guess would be that what it means is that during this day, they grew up more gradually and that it was a long period.

But now let's look at another day. Let's look at the fifth one. In the fifth day the Lord could have said, let the sky be full of birds, and the ocean be full of all kinds of fish. He could have said that; and all of a sudden, you could have great big whales in the water, you would have great big eagles flying in the sky, you would have all this all of a sudden just like that. The Lord certainly could have done that if he chose. But does the passage say he chose to do that? What the passage says is—in verse 20—God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that has life. And God created great whales and every living creature that moves which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind, and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth." Now maybe this means that all these birds and fish were one day old at the end of the fifth day. So that at the end of the fifth day the trees were three days old, and the fish and the birds, covering all over the earth, were one day old. That's possible. But the general impression I

get from it is rather that there's a process that went on here whereby these came into existence and grew and spread, and spread over the earth and had offspring and so on; that the third day was a period in which this happened. Now I don't want to be dogmatic as between those two possibilities; but this I would be dogmatic about, that God did not say, "Let the sky be full of birds," he said "Let it bring forth birds."

The question is what does the Bible teach? And the Bible definitely does not teach that God said, "Let the earth be covered with large trees." It does teach that he said, "Let the earth bring forth trees and the earth brought them forth." That much we can say definitely. Now as to the relationship between these, that is a matter that we should look at under a separate heading. But now we're interested in the length of the day, and as far as the length of the day is concerned God could have speeded this all up so that it just would go so fast that it would just make you dizzy to look at it. In twenty-four hours it's all done. He could have done that if he chose and maybe he did. But we don't have any hints that he did in the passage, there's no statement that he speeded up the process.

=====

[Review] When I was in Seminary, I studied under Professor Robert Dick Wilson, who was at that time one of the leading scholars in these early Semitic languages, a man who was a great defender of the Word of God. I also, when I began teaching, was his assistant for my first year. I remember lectures Dr. Wilson used to give on the dependability of the Word, in which he gave some very excellent illustrations of it. But at one point he used to tell about having given a popular message dealing with a certain verse in the Psalms; and he brought out the interpretation of the verse as he found it in the Hebrew; and he said that a man came up to him afterward and said, "Yes, but that verse doesn't mean what you said, it means such and such." Dr. Wilson said, "No, the way I gave it is the way the Hebrew has it." Well, he said, "Look here; look at the English; see this colon here? That proves it means this." Well, Dr. Wilson said, "Yes, but that colon is not in the original." He said the man saw what he meant and assented to what he said. "Oh," he said, "that's been a very dear colon to me."

And this illustrates the attitude it's very easy for any of us to fall into: that our affection is attached to something which is a part of the translation, or which is part of—you might say—the external wrapping, or which is even part of the tradition, that is the interpretation, that we've heard other people give. Satan is very anxious to get us to defending something that is not part of the actual Word of God, and thus divert our attention from the Word which God actually has given. We have to have punctuation. They're part of our English language; it wouldn't make sense to us without them. We have to have chapter divisions; we

have to have verse divisions. As we study the Word, we have to pass it on to others; and so there are all sorts of external things that go along with it; and this is all legitimate and proper, but we should distinguish in our minds between this and what is the actual Word of God. The attempt of the man who put in these externals—which even include the translation into a language other than Hebrew or Greek—he is doing his best to present what the original had. And your mark of punctuation may be necessary; it may be that your translation wouldn't bring out the original without your mark of punctuation. But even so your mark of punctuation is your attempt to present what you find in the original. If someone is going to be a real interpreter of the Word he must go to the originals themselves, and see whether the external things that we have are justified.

I heard of a teacher in a class some years ago who used to use the Scofield Bible regularly in the discussion in class; but one time, she stopped it altogether. And the reason that she stopped it was because one of the students, when a question was raised, said, "Let's open the Bible and see what the note is, find out what the answer is." And she thought that they were not distinguishing between the Bible and the human notes at the foot, in the margin, and the headings. And therefore she wanted to use a Bible that did not have many notes, even though she felt that most of the notes in the Scofield were very helpful. I think she was taking a very fine attitude in distinguishing between human interpretation and God's Word. But if she carried that out strictly, she would have use a Bible that had no chapter divisions, no verse divisions, no punctuation marks, in fact no translation which wasn't in the original. When you have a Bible that has notes in it and that has headings, and so on, you simply have someone's interpretation. And it's very important to learn to distinguish between interpretations and the Word of God. But it is equally important to learn to distinguish between the interpretation that the translation represents, or the interpretation of the chapter that is represented, or that the punctuation represents. So I'm not at all sure that her objective—excellent objective that it was—was much advanced by insisting on using a Bible without human notes. I think it would be better to teach the students to distinguish the importance of what is the actual Word, which we must take because it is God's Word, and the human notes which can be very, very helpful but which must be examined to see whether we feel that they are on a merited foundation. And any human note, including translation, is going to run the risk of considerable error.

Now we're speaking still about the meaning of the word day, number 6. And this we have already noted, that day in the Scripture is a term which indicates a period of time. That it is used for periods of time of various lengths. That its most common use in Scripture is for that period of time when there is daylight separated by two periods of darkness on both sides. That is the most common; and the length of these periods varies greatly in different parts of the world, and different seasons of the earth. That it is also used in the Scripture a very

considerable number of times to indicate a very long period of time of undesignated length. And then of course it is used a very considerable number of times to indicate not a period of daylight alone but the period of daylight together with that period of darkness which immediately preceded. And this naturally would run approximately twenty-four hours although our present hour division is a matter of comparatively modern times, the adoption of the clock such as we have and so on. They had a different system of hours. The Hebrew usage starts the day at sundown. We of course today, with a more scientific method, start it at midnight, but a method which would not be applicable unless you had machinery which the ancients did not have to determine the start of a midnight watch.

Well, then, a day is a period of time of indeterminate length. That does not say that it may not be twenty-four hours. But we have to examine this in order to find out what the evidence is. There is no evidence in chapter 1 to lead us to say these must be twenty-four hours whatever. A person thinks they're ten hour days, someone else thinks they're twenty-four days, somebody else thinks they're two-billion year days. As far as Genesis 1 is concerned, it does not say.

But we notice that in the third day, it did not say, "Let the world be covered with trees" but it said "Let the earth bring forth trees." And it is possible that on that day the trees began to grow and at the end of the sixth day they had grown up maybe three-eighths of an inch. That is possible, but it seems to be very unlikely, particularly if man when he was created was put into a garden in which there already were trees large enough to have fruit. It would seem to be much more likely that this third day represents a long process of beginning to grow of all sorts of shrubs and of grass and of trees. And then we notice that in the fifth day God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly, the birds and the fish, and the waters brought them forth abundantly." This again might mean that they all began as little tiny infants and were three days old at the end of the sixth day, but it seems the more natural interpretation of it that they came to a very considerable number and of maturity during the fifth day.

Now on the sixth day the Lord said, not "Let the earth be covered with lions and elephants and tigers roaming about and enjoying the vegetation that God has established there" but, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the earth after his kind." And so these animals on the earth came not on the fifth day like the fish and the birds, but on the sixth day, and thus we see that some animals came one day and some animals came another day, and there is a progress in the order in which God brought the animals into existence. First, on the fifth day he brought the birds and then the fish, and then on the sixth day he brought larger animals; and so there was cattle after their kind, everything that creeps on the earth after their kind; the reptiles were later than the fish and the birds. God saw that it was good. Usually after it says God saw that it was good, he proceeds and

says it was evening and morning that day. Here it says instead, then God said "Let us make man in our image." So be created man in his image on the sixth day.

Now as we see then, these are the words of Scripture. This is what it says. Not let the earth be covered with, but let the earth bring forth. It seems to most naturally to present a long process in each of these periods. It hardly seems to me satisfactory to think that in each of these periods they just *began* to grow. There would be so little difference in the age of the grass and of the cows, that the cows would hardly have any grass to live on, three days later when they came into existence.

It just wasn't started three days earlier. It would seem to me that it was longer. But it's not at all impossible that God may have caused them to grow at a tremendous rate. Dr. Bloch, one of my seminary professors, had us as a guest at an eating club, and I remember one time he—he came from Holland—told the story of a man who was on the train in Holland and somebody gave him some medicine to make his hair grow, and he put a couple of drops of the medicine on his hair and he said the hair just began to grow right up and reached out through the window and it got snarled up around a tree, and just then the train began, and he was afraid it would pull the hair out by the roots or pull him out the window, so he began pouring it on his head and it grew and kept growing faster and faster so that the hair grew as fast as the train went, and the train was moving along to the next stop, the hair was growing and just barely keeping pace with it and he was afraid of his life that he would run out of the medicine and get his head jerked off or something, and he said he got down to the last couple of drops in the bottle, and just as he put the last couple of drops on the hair the train came into the next station. So fortunately it stopped before his head got jerked off of his shoulders and now he was able, when they stopped at that station, to get ahold of a pair of scissors and clip it off before the train started again.

Well, of course, it's a crazy sort of a story but it's not inconceivable: the possibility of things that may grow at so tremendously accelerated a rate. And certainly God could do it if he chose, and God could choose to have a tree grow in twenty four hours to be the size and maturity of a tree a hundred years old. He could choose to do that if he wanted to. But if that is what he did, my inclination would be to think that he would have given us some hint in the chapter. I don't believe he didn't. I do not think anyone is wrong who says that I, personally, think these are twenty-four hour days. But to me the difficulty in speaking of them as twenty-four hour days and accepting the wording of the Scripture exactly as it stands with no reference whatever to anything we find anywhere else, is much greater than taking the word day in the sense in which it has in many places in Scripture, that it is a period of time of indeterminate

length but separated by the fact that it is a distinct period of distinct divine activity and that the Lord separates the two.

How could vegetation come before insects? Because the insects have to carry the pollen from one plant to another in order to cross-fertilize them. How could you have them before then? They said, when I was in a class in Botany, I remember the Professor was telling us about how plants grew and he stressed how all these plants needed nitrogen. And I asked where they got the nitrogen. He said that the air is full of nitrogen, but no plant can take it out of the air except the peas and the beans, and plants like that; none of the others did. Did the nitrogen do any good? The very word nitrogen means life-giving. Without nitrogen everything would die. And we get all our nitrogen from something that grows in land which peas or beans or something related to the legumes have lived in, because they alone have the power to take the nitrogen.

So I said to him, "Well, now in your scale of evolution, the peas and the beans come rather late in the scale. How did anything live before without any nitrogen, before they had beans and peas? Who fixed the nitrogen? Well, she said, a little bit of nitrogen can be fixed by lightning. And maybe, for all we know, if their theory is true, there may have been a period in which they had constant lightning at tremendous rate in order to make it possible for things to grow. But when you come to how the Lord produced the nitrogen, I think we just don't know; we can say this seems more natural than the other but we can't say it's necessarily like that.¹⁵ But the language here doesn't sound like that; it sounds like a gradual coming out; let the earth bring forth, let the waters bring forth, not let it be covered with, let it suddenly be there.

Why did God, who took one day to do all this multiplicity of animals—tremendous variety, it only took him one day—why did he need a whole day just for making light? He said make it and in one second It's done? It seems to me a rather peculiar way of working, on one day to do things that's just hard for us to imagine and on another day to do something in one second and it's done. But I wouldn't be personally at all surprised that in the whole creative process there is tremendously more to it, far beyond what any man knows anything about. God directed it, God planned it, God ordered it, but as for details, we're just given a few highlights. Just a sketch of it is all we're given. And the Lord didn't give us the Bible so we could understand the whole situation, but he gave

¹⁵ [dcb] Lightening fixing of nitrogen appears to be woefully inadequate to provide a reliable source of available nitrogen. Informed scientists today believe that nitrogen was "fixed" by the very first living species (photosynthetic bacteria, probably similar to cyanobacteria), using special cells called "heterocysts". This process is exceedingly complex, but it appears that for almost half of the entire time that life existed on earth, these bacteria were at work building up organic matter worldwide which incorporated this fixed nitrogen (or nitrates derived from this organic matter), and at the same time building up atmospheric oxygen which was a "waste byproduct" of photosynthesis. Only after this buildup of both oxygen and nitrogen could plants and animals find food.

us the Bible in order to enable us to know how to be saved. And in connection with that he gives us a few hints.

I was up at Cornell University about three years ago and the fellow whose guest I was lived in a house there in which quite a group of the brighter students in the University, lived together in this house, and he had me as a guest there, and there they had some very outstanding speakers. And it just happened that when I was there they had the head of a philosophy department in a university; and he gave a talk on religion; and he told them how in the middle ages the world was very, very simple; there was the earth and then there was an area around the earth that had the clouds in it; and then there was an area around that which had the planets and the sun, and then he showed all round that, the next area had the stars, and then around that there was God.

Then he said, "Now, astronomy has discovered that the earth is not the center of the universe at all; the sun was the center of the solar system. So the sun is there and the earth just goes around it." "But," he said, "they have found that the other stars are other suns, many of them far larger than ours." And now he said that we have found there are a couple of billion of these great suns which are—most of the stars we see—which make up one galaxy. And then there are millions of other galaxies just as great as this; and so you fill all space and there's no room for God any more. God's outside the stars, God has just disappeared completely. And that's the modern feeling: there is no space for God any more since we have found all this out.

Well, the Bible nowhere says the earth is the center. No one ever thinks the sun goes around the earth. It nowhere says anything of the kind. And when astronomers first said that the earth goes around the sun, some people were shocked: "Why we've always heard sermons in church talking about the sun going around the earth, this is contradicting the Bible." Well, the Bible nowhere says any such thing. And the same thing's even true of the earth being round. There's not a word in the Bible saying the earth is flat, not a word. But, as a matter of fact, we know that a good many of the Greek philosophers and astronomers considered the earth to be round. We know that before the time of Christ one of them worked out a geometrical system whereby he measured from the relation of the Sun the distance around the earth, and got it very near to the correct distance. We don't know just what the Hebrews thought in the time that the Bible was written, but we do know that many at least of the Greeks thought the earth was round.¹⁶ But during the Middle Ages everybody thought it was flat and they took for granted it was flat.

¹⁶ [dcb] St. Augustine in his *Literal Interpretation of Genesis* clearly accepted it as a well-known fact among the scientists of his day that the earth was spherical. This was in writings around 400–430 AD In his discussion of the creation of darkness in Day One he noted that Darkness cannot mean night time. In Book I, Chapter 10 he remarks, "[I]f I make such a statement, I fear I shall be laughed at both by those who have scientific knowledge of these matters and by those

Now we find out that the earth is round because we've actually been around it, so we have no question. Many people thought that destroyed the Bible. It doesn't because the Bible doesn't say it. But many people took for granted that that was what the Bible means. Now we know that in the universe there is a complexity far beyond what people ever dreamed of in the middle ages. But the Bible doesn't enter into this complexity, It does not attempt to give us a whole account of the universe. But it gives us an account of our relation to Christ.

But, where it touches upon the universe it will touch upon it correctly. What it tells us about the universe is dependable. And when the Bible says that God did this and the next day he did that, and then the third day he did that, we know that these happened in this order. But we're far from understanding all the details; and personally I've just been thinking the last few days, was this earth the first planet God created? The Bible doesn't say anywhere. May there not have been, between the original creation of matter and the establishment of this earth as the place on which man might live, a very, very long period? May not He have been very active in connection with other areas? The Bible doesn't say. The Bible gives us an account which touches upon certain main features of the universe as a whole, but the attention is focused upon this earth, and these things which it tells about this earth do not rule out what he may have said for another planet or another sun.

7. The Fourth Day.

And so we come to this fourth day. And on this fourth day the Lord said, "Let there be light in the firmament of the heavens." Now, many people insist that this word "firmament" shows that, according to Genesis 1, God made a thing around the earth, that "firmament" means something firm, something hard. The word here is related to a word that suggests the idea of powder—some light powder that you get from bright brass—is the general idea in this word. It's not a common word in Scripture. Exactly what does firmament mean? Does it mean something firm, something big, something solid out there? Or does it mean something that looks sort of shiny and polished, like when you look at shining brass, which is a picture of what it means when we look into the sky, that expanse around the earth? Conservative scholars have nearly all interpreted it as an expanse rather than a fixed solid thing, this firmament. Well, God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven." Now that is speaking of the

who can easily recognize the facts of the case. At the time when night is with us, the sun is illuminating with its presence those parts of the world through which it returns from the place of its setting to that of its rising. Hence it is that for the whole twenty-four hours of the sun's circuit there is always day in one place and night in another." So Augustine clearly understood that there is always day and night somewhere on the earth—i.e. that the earth was spherical, which was the accepted view of many Greek philosophers from the time of Pythagoras (6th Century BC). Its circumference was estimated by Eratosthenes in the 3rd Century BC to within 1–2%.

relation of those lights to us as we look at them. We look up and God said, "Let it be that as you look at the firmament of the heavens you see light." He's not saying in this particular verse let light be placed in this firmament because we know perfectly well that firmament just means sky. Let this be visible from this earth. He's not talking here of the relation among stars and among planets, and among the visible parts of the solar system. Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the days of the year from the nights, and let them be for signs and for seasons and days of the year, introducing these as measures of time. And it was so and God made two great lights.

But did God necessarily make the sun and the moon on that day, or did God on the fourth day cause the sun and the moon to become visible from this earth, to take a place in the firmament, visible about the earth? I don't think we know. I don't think it's stated. I think it is entirely possible that God made the moon and the sun on that fourth day. He could just say like that, "Let the sun be there." He could do that if he chose. But I think it is equally possible that the sun was there long before this earth ever came into existence, and that what happened this fourth day is that God caused that they become visible to this earth, and that they become available as means of determining time. That seems to me is the more probable interpretation of this fourth day. God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. That's a very brief statement to cover millions of galaxies, each of them having millions of great suns. It is a very brief statement. It is sufficient, because God is not giving us a full account. He would need several encyclopedias if that was the purpose. But he does not give us anything here which contradicts any true facts that man will discover. He gives us a few glimpses of the great universe that he's made. He made the stars also and God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth. God taught that from the earth, as you look up, you see these in the firmament above us. He didn't set them in the firmament of the heaven in the sense that he put a big wall around and he put a star here and a star there and a star there. We know that this situation is altogether different from that, and there's nothing here to contradict the situation as we find it here.

8. The Seventh Day.

Certainly the seventh day belongs to this picture. The Archbishop was a little bit burdened when he began this task; he was probably was intending to make chapter divisions for a long time until he couldn't put it off any longer. He said, "I'm going to do it this morning," and then he got a sudden sick call. So he jumped on his horse, and as he went, he said, "I can't put this job off any longer, I must do it immediately." And his Latin was a little bit rusty, so he looked down there and he saw the words, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and the host of them." And he said, "Well that must start a new chapter," so he started chapter 2.

Actually he should have started with verse 4, "These were the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created." The two mean substantially the same thing. But verse 1 is concluding the six days of activity and leading up to the 7th day, while verse 4 is concluding the seven days and going to another section with a distinct subject. And so I just wish that that person's illness had come a day later so the Archbishop had gotten this more accurately here. Because people often read the first chapter as a unit and then they leave the 7th day to belong to the second chapter where it doesn't belong. It belongs with the first chapter. But on the other hand, maybe in the providence of God it was best to be this way because it calls to our attention—right at the beginning of our Bible—the fact that the chapter divisions, convenient as they are for us, are only a human device and extremely fallible.

G. Campbell Morgan said, in one sermon I heard him give, that he believed the chapter divisions in nine cases out of ten were in the wrong place. I think he was much too hard on the Archbishop. My personal guess is that in many, many cases they are very well placed. But there are many cases where they are very badly placed, and this is one of them, right at the beginning of the Bible. But the 7th day then, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, and on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made, and God blessed the 7th day and sanctified it because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." God was so tired after this heavy activity of these six days that he just had to lie down on the seventh and take it easy for one day. Then on the eighth he got up and began going again.

Of course, I don't think that's what it means at all. As it says further on in the Scripture, "Shall the creator of the earth grow weary, shall he be tired?" I don't think God is tired, I don't think God needed rest. But I think that God gave us a picture here to give certain lessons for us. God finished the work in a creative order and then he ceased from his labor. He spent a time in contemplation of what he had done, in rest, in cessation from his labor, as an example to us of the fact that he had made man in such a way that after six days of work, it was the proper thing for man to take a day and rest; to take a day and to look back over the week and to contemplate what he had done; to contemplate the works of God and to think of the meaning of it.

He gives us here an example for our lives—of a recurrence of six days of work, and one of ceasing. Not only that, but he gives us the principle of life: the eschatological principle, as Professor Bloch used to say. He said the seventh day here was given as an introduction of the eschatological principle: that creation moves toward a goal; there is an end; there is a terminus; there is a day of rest; and that God has a plan, His plan moves toward a goal; and when we stop on our seventh day, we remind ourselves of the fact that life is not—as the old

Greeks thought of it—just a cycle that goes round and round and round indefinitely forever, but that it is a progress toward a goal; that there is a purpose in life; that God has a plan, and that He is moving forward toward that plan. And so God directed everything in the Old Testament times looking forward toward the completion of his spiritual work with us—even as he completed his physical work here of creation—and then since Calvary, we still look forward to God's work that He is going to do, but we also to an even greater extent look back to what Jesus did at Calvary by His death and His resurrection.

And so we observe the Sabbath day on the first day of the week and we look back too. We have the two ideas here: we look on to God's finished work until He comes, but we look back to the foundation of it, which He did by His work on Calvary. There is then, in this seventh day, not so much a revelation of specific things that God did, as there is a revelation of certain lessons that God wants us to have. And I think that all through this there is much we can learn about what God did and how He did it. But perhaps even more important for our lives, on what we can learn about our lives, and what we ought to know.

=====

[Review] Did God rest for one day and then start working again? God is always working; He holds all things together by the word of His power. God is not a man that he gets tired and needs to rest. It is not rest in the sense of human rest. It is cessation from his creative activity. He ceases the creative activity and rests from that. We do not believe the universe would continue without God holding it together. God is always working. But he ceases from the creative activity.

Does he cease from creative activity for one day and then go on further? Or do we have six periods in which he carried on creative activity and then for the following period he ceases? How long is that period? Are we still in the seventh as far as the days of creation are concerned? Or has God again started a cycle of creative activity? Those are questions which we merely mention. It is not necessary for the purpose of this course to find answers to them. The big thing that I believe is most important in our Bible study, if we're going to be interpreters of the Bible, is to learn that fundamental matter of seeing what the Bible definitely says and standing on that. Then, where there are possibilities of different interpretations, recognize the possibilities; saying, "I personally feel this is the more likely, but I may be wrong." But what the Bible is clear on, on that we stand. So to make a distinction between what is clearly taught in the Bible and what is a matter of interpretation; a selection between two or three possible interpretations, all of which may be possible and true in relation to what it states, that is what we must be clear on. But I think it's extremely vital in all our understanding of the Word and of our interpretation of it too.

Unless there is some question on the seventh day, we move on to a much more difficult problem.

9. How the knowledge in this chapter was imparted.

How did we get the material in Genesis 1? Well, now, briefly to summarize an important section of the course in Old Testament Introduction, is necessary at this point. Our knowledge of God has come to us in two ways. You might say three, because we see God and his works of creation in the world generally, we see God, we see His activity, we learn something about His works. We learn of His goodness, we learn of His power. Most that we know about God comes from one of two ways.

The first of these is by revelation. And when I say we receive revelation from God it's exactly the same as if I said, "I received a communication from one of you." If someone were to ask me when was Mr. Millheim born, I would look at Mr. Millheim and I would examine the appearance of his face, the amount of hair he has, the number of teeth he has, and so on, and I would try to make an estimate of how old he was. My father used to be able to—he'd look at a man and he'd say—well, he'd say his shoulder looks like a man of about 46, but from his back he looks more like a man of 45; I don't know whether he's 45 or 46. He could estimate just about within a couple of months a man's age, by his physical structure. Personally, if I get within 10 years I'm doing pretty good on that basis. But I don't think even my father would've been able to look at Mr. Millheim and tell you what month he was born, I'm sure he wouldn't. There's only one way in which I could find out what month Mr. Millheim was born. That is to have been present myself when it occurred and thus know about it by observation, or to have somebody tell me. This would be communication. Mr. Millheim could tell me what month he was born, I would then know. There has to be a communication, giving me facts that would not otherwise be available to me.

Now, when God gives a revelation to you and me, he does exactly the same thing that everyone of us does when we give communication to one another. We give them, we transmit to them some knowledge, and they take it from us. And nine-tenths at least of what any of us know about anything comes by revelation in this way. Well, now revelation then is God transmitting, and I mean by some sort of a communication to us human beings; and the Bible contains revelation. The Bible tells us that God said to Moses: "These are the ten commandments." He gave them to him. That God said to Isaiah: "Go out into the region outside Jerusalem and speak to Ahab." It was revelation which God gave to a human being. So much of the Bible came by revelation. But not all.

The second way that we know about God is through Investigation. There are many sections: you take the book of Luke. Luke says that he has investigated the details of the story he writes—talked with those who were connected with Jesus at various stages of his career, gathered evidence, compared it, arranged it, and presents you the conclusions about it. He has gone at it in the scientific method of gathering evidence, examining, checking it, and giving you the results. He tells you what the eye-witnesses told him of what they saw and heard. When Matthew says that Jesus said this is the way you are to pray, God did not have to reveal to Matthew that Jesus gave the Lord's Prayer. Matthew may have been right there present and received it from the Lord as a communication just as I receive a communication from one of you. When John tells us that Jesus went into the Temple and he drove out the money changers, God does not have to reveal to John that Jesus drove out the money changers. John may have seen it happen and he writes down what he saw. So there are many parts of the Bible which were not given to a writer by a revelation from God. The writer wrote down something that he had gained a knowledge of in some other way than by a revelation.

But we believe that the Bible—all of it—was inspired of God. And that is a different thing from revelation. Inspiration is the activity of the Holy Spirit in leading the writers as to what they're to write and keeping them from error in what they wrote. Jesus said the Holy Spirit will guide you; He will remind you of what I said; and He will lead you into further truth. The Holy Spirit gave the writers revelations, but we believe that He led in addition in other ways. And one way was to inspire them and to keep them from error as they wrote the material down. John might have thought that at a certain location there were ten men present. But John may have been mistaken; there may have been eight men and two women. In such a case the Holy Spirit would lead John, instead of saying there were ten men there, to say there were ten people there. People would be true; men would have been a mistake, because two of them were women. If the ten were men, people would still be true, but the Holy Spirit would have led him to use the word which would avoid putting into it an erroneous idea that would be in his mind.

In inspiration, God keeps the writers from error. The result of that is, that no matter how the man got that idea, no matter whether he misunderstood somebody, no matter whether he thought he saw something and really something different happened, no matter whether he made a mistake, as I'm sure everyone of the writers of the Bible made many, many mistakes in his life. I've never seen the person that didn't make mistakes frequently. I get disgusted with some of the mistakes I make myself and wonder how any sensible human being could make them. We all make mistakes but the Holy Spirit kept the writers from incorporating their mistakes into that which He would have as part of the Word of God, so that the Bible as it came from the hands of the writers was free from error. Now that is inspiration.

Well, now, that being the case, then as far as I personally am concerned, it doesn't make any difference to me whether God dictated the first chapter of Genesis to Moses by giving it to him by revelation, or whether Moses was there and saw the whole thing happen and just described what he saw. Because in the latter case the Holy Spirit was keeping him from error, and the result is that to me it is a revelation from God, even though to Moses it was in such a case merely a writing down of what he saw, or what he heard someone else say.

Well, now this is a very important distinction to have in mind. The whole Bible is then a revelation to me from God. If the Bible says "The coat that I left at Troas bring to me" where Paul writes that to Timothy—if the Bible says that, that is a revelation from God. I know that the Lord sets the seal of his approval upon the fact that Paul left his coat at Troas and that Paul asked Timothy to bring it to him. That is a revelation of God to me. As far as Paul is concerned it is not a revelation from God, it is a remembrance of the fact, a realization that winter is coming on and he stayed here longer than he expected and that therefore he asked Timothy to bring it with him in order that he wouldn't have to do a week's extra tent-making in order to buy a new coat. He could spend that much on preaching the gospel instead of having to do that much extra tent-making. So then it is a revelation from God to me, but it is not a revelation from God to Paul. So now with those considerations in mind, the question of how the knowledge in this chapter was imparted is not a tremendously important question. Because as far as I'm concerned, it is a revelation of God to me. I know that this chapter, correctly interpreted, is true. I know that whatever is said corresponds to fact. But how did Moses know? Well, the Holy Spirit kept him from error as he wrote it down. Yes, but where did Moses get the ideas?

Personally, I do not believe that Moses was there when it happened. I don't think he heard the Lord say, "Let there be light." I don't think he saw the light come into existence. I do not believe that he is writing as a personal eye-witness in the things he tells us in Genesis 1. Well, then, did God say, "Moses I want you to write down these words, 'In the beginning God created heaven and earth,' and go on and dictate Genesis 1:1–3?" Maybe he did. I don't know. But the Bible nowhere says he did. Therefore, I do not know that he did, and I do not know that he did not. I have absolutely no grounds on which to make a judgment, whether God dictated the first chapter to Moses or not. Maybe God caused Moses to see a vision. Maybe God said to Moses, "Now in writing this book that is going to be so important for the people you are leading up into the land of Canaan, I want you to have an idea of how the world began, so I'm going to give you a vision." Maybe up there on the mountain—in between giving him the various laws—God gave him a vision; and Moses went into sort of a trance, and heard God's voice; and he saw changes take place and then he described what he saw. That's possible. If he did, we know at least the Holy Spirit kept him from error in what he wrote down, so that what he wrote down,

by being a description of what he saw, is a description of what actually happened in the creation. Even then there is much of it we may not know—between two or three possible interpretations—which is right; yet whatever is clearly stated there is true because the Holy Spirit kept him from error as he wrote. Maybe then that is the way that Moses got it. Maybe Moses, when he was a little boy and the Egyptian princess had hired his mother—not knowing she was his mother—to be his nurse, maybe she told him a story. Moses, the little boy, looked up and he saw the sky and the clouds and he said, "Mommy, where did all this come from?" And his mother told him the story she remembered, how she thought it had come into existence. And Moses, years later, remembered this story; and the Holy Spirit caused him to write down an account of how it came into existence, in which those parts of what his mother said were true, were included, and in which the Spirit would change those that were not in accordance with facts.

It's not a complete story of creation. That would take several encyclopedias certainly. It only touches upon certain things. But what it touches on is true. Maybe that's where Moses got it from. Now where did Moses get the account of Abraham? Did God say, "Moses, here's what happened to Abraham?" I don't think that's so. Did the account of Abraham come from what mother had told him? I don't think likely; it's too detailed. My guess is that Moses had manuscripts that Abraham, or someone of Abraham's family, wrote down what happened. And these had been passed along and Moses took these manuscripts and used them. Were these manuscripts free from error? I don't think so. They might have been. But I have no reason to think that the writer of these manuscripts was inspired. But Moses was inspired, and so Moses was led of the Spirit to select from the manuscripts about Abraham those matters which God was desirous of having in the sacred Scriptures; and to omit from it any portions of them which did not fit with God's purpose in Scriptures or which were untrue.

Consequently, it is possible that Moses utilized writings from someone connected with Abraham and maybe that included an account of creation, I don't know. Of course, that just pushes the problem a little further back then: where did Abraham get it? The answer to this is we do not know.

Now suppose a man comes to me and he says here we have discovered in Babylonia an account of creation. And he says this account of creation which we have discovered in Babylonia was written long before the time of Moses and it is so similar to the account of Genesis that it must be the source from which the account of Genesis was developed by abbreviating, omitting quantities of details, rearranging and making a story out of that, and that's where this came from. I will not accept his statement that it came from such a source as provable without a very, very careful and thorough examination of evidence. I'm not going to take an important thing like that on just a light off-hand

superficial conclusion of somebody, or even of one that rests on a good bit of study. But, I will say this, if it should be proven, if this could be proven, that Genesis 1 was a condensation of a Babylonian heathen narrative, with the polytheistic details omitted and certain things changed around by the writer, if that could be true, I would be ready to say, well, maybe that's the way that God brought it about. That contained in the Bible here, God enabled Moses or someone before Moses to take this Babylonian material, to select what was right and what was true, omit what was wrong, to make certain changes, and give a correct account. But the thing that matters is that the Holy Spirit who inspired Moses kept him from error, so that what I have is God's word to us. Now, for me to say this is the way it came into existence would be very foolish. I would need very, very definite evidence before I'd say such a thing, but what I do say is that it is not impossible that it could have come into existence that way. The vital thing is that the Holy Spirit inspired the writer and kept him from error.

Now, there are many people today who become very much excited about verbal inspiration—and are very much against it—but who are real Christians and who believe what we do about the Bible; but they are against verbal inspiration because they interpret verbal inspiration as meaning dictation, and they say how terrible to think that the Bible was given by dictation. Well, verbal inspiration doesn't *mean* dictation; it means that the words of the Bible are the words God wants there. The term verbal inspiration deals with the results, not with the method of producing them. But suppose it were given by dictation, what's wrong with that? I can dictate a letter to a secretary; nobody thinks anything wrong with that. Why couldn't God dictate the Bible, if He chose to do so? Now I don't think He chose to do so because we have great variation in the style of different books. We have evidences of the human personal touch so as to lead me to feel convinced that when the writers describe a thing and see a thing, it is in their own language; their own personality shows through. I see nothing wrong with the idea of dictation, but I do not think that it's an idea that is taught anywhere in Scripture, or required by Scriptural teaching; and the facts as I find them in the Bible do not fit with it; therefore, I do not believe that the bulk of the Bible was given by dictation, but I do believe that all is verbally inspired; and part of it is by dictation, wherever we have precise words dictated, put down, we have that given by dictation. Where Jesus gave the Lord's Prayer, and they wrote it down, that was certainly given by dictation. Wherever we have dictation in the Bible—but I think it's a comparatively small part of it—but I believe all of it is verbally inspired.

Well, then I believe that as Christians we can say that Genesis 1 is entirely true as is any other part of the Scripture, provided that it's been correctly transmitted. There's always the possibility of error in copying; but leaving out that possibility, it is entirely true; it was entirely true as it came from the hand of the writer in the original manuscript, and I believe it because it was inspired

of God, not because I know how Moses got the information. Now, I think that's going to save us a great deal of difficulty, if we have a clear understanding of this concept. There are those who talk about the Old Testament as being a derivation of Babylonian myths and legends, and I'm sure that the faith of many Christians is wrecked upon that. Well, it is not a derivation of Babylonian myths and legends. There are many parts which certainly have nothing in the world to do with Babylonian myths and legends and many parts which sharply contradict them. But if at any point, it should be proven that the information came in this way, that does not injure anyone's faith, provided you keep a firm hold on this point, that what was actually written in the Bible was inspired the Holy Spirit from heaven, free from error and true.

Well, so much then for a rather rapid survey of this very important question, how the knowledge in the chapter was imparted. I hope that it's not too much for some of you to take in a brief space, but I hope that you've gotten at least some of the main thoughts. If some of you haven't gotten them, don't worry too much, because we'll touch upon them again from time to time, they are so important.

(student. What is plenary inspiration?) Well, the word "plenary" literally means full, sufficient. I would say that plenary, sufficient, means that it is sufficiently inspired to be true, and verbal inspiration means that what is inspired is the word. And I don't think inspiration applies to anything but word. God revealed something, but He inspires the writer to put down the correct thing. So to my mind, neither term is an altogether satisfactory one. But if somebody is terribly upset by the fear that verbal inspiration may mean dictation and prefers to use plenary, I have no objection. To me either term is fine. And there are people—there are some good Christians who believe in plenary inspiration but are very, very much shocked at the idea of verbal inspiration, and I believe that is a misunderstanding; what we mean by them, but I don't think we should try to overcome it, I think we should try to get to the reality of what we mean.

Well, so much for this 9th point then, and I think probably the best thing to do is to ask you folks to explain it to me one of these days, and then I will find out just how far short I came of getting this across; the whole understanding of this very complex matter, and I'll know what points I'll need to repeat or stress again, But we'll go on to

10. The claim of Babylonian origin for this chapter.

And here I am in a little bit of a dilemma as to the proper method of handling this subject, the claim of Babylonian origin for this chapter. The Babylonian material, that is material from Mesopotamia, Babylonia and Assyria, when first discovered related mostly to the books of the Kings and it was only later that material was discovered relating to Genesis. And this is so important for the

understanding of the relation of archaeology to the Bible that, at least one year when I gave this course, I changed the order around, starting with the book of Kings, and then the second semester I went back to the beginning of the Bible. There's much to be said because the understanding of Old Testament History, of the subject as a whole—not just the very vital question what does the Bible mean—is in these things closely bound up with the understanding of some of the main features of Biblical archaeology. And Biblical archaeology is easier to understand if you start with the period of the kings and then go back to Genesis. Well, this year I'm going through in the natural Biblical order—which I think is better to deal with Old Testament History—but we must deal with some of these matters of archaeology. And therefore, at this point, under this subheading, the claim of the Babylonian origin for Genesis 1.

At this point I'm going to take an

Excursis: an introduction to the matter of archaeology.

We won't go into any great detail on this; we'll do that later. But I want you to have an understanding of the importance of archaeology for Biblical study in Genesis, and an understanding of how the relation of archaeology to this chapter fits into the movement of archaeology. So let me say that 120 years ago, practically everything we knew of ancient history, aside from the Bible, was subsequent to 500 BC. Now somebody says, well, everybody knew about the conquest of Troy by the Greeks, and that was at least 500 years earlier. Yes, a hundred and twenty years ago, every educated person had heard the story of Homer's *Iliad*, of the conquest of Troy; but nobody believed there was much truth in it, because it was a story in which the gods of Greece enter in, fighting against one another in the most grotesque ways imaginable; there's so much of myth and legend mixed with it, that 120 years ago everybody considered that the conquest of Troy was the product of the imagination. Maybe there was a city called Troy; maybe it was conquered; but we didn't know anything about it, because the story we have is so mythical.

Well, it was toward the end of the last century that a German butcher—who did not have a great deal of education but was self-educated, an excellent business man who had made a fortune for himself—was self-educated and read Homer's *Iliad*, and was greatly interested, went over to Troy—or to the regions which are mentioned in Homer's *Iliad*. And he began to excavate; and the scholars who saw what he was doing laughed. He wasn't educated; he wasn't trained to do anything like this; they thought it was nonsense; but he believed there was a solid foundation back of the story of the conquest of Troy and of the great civilization in southern Greece; and so he carried on the excavation, and he found buried the remains of a great city with a civilization similar to that described in Homer's *Iliad* and different from that of later Greece. And it was recognized that that was what he had discovered.

And everyone knows now that there was an actual Troy; and there was a civilization in Greece at that time very different from the later civilization of which we find echoes in *The Iliad*. Well, this of course puts the story of Troy on an entirely different footing than it was before, but it does not mean that we believe that Jove or that Venus and Juno and Athena offered an apple to Paris and the Trojan War came as a result. It doesn't mean we accept any of the Greek mythology, but we do believe there is a historical background for these events. And that is the part that denotes the progress of archaeology. We begin to find the remains.

Well, one hundred and twenty years ago, that not been found. And at that time the events in the ancient world were practically unknown before 500 BC, except for the Bible. A few mythical stories that we didn't pay much attention to; that was all we had.

But a hundred and twenty years ago, we had in the Old Testament an account of many kings who lived before 500 BC We had an account of great cities otherwise unknown, destroyed before 500 BC We had an account of whole nations otherwise completely unknown. And one hundred and twenty years ago, there naturally were unbelievers; they would say, "Well, this is just a mythical story made up; there's no truth to it; there's no background of fact to it."

Then about a hundred and sixteen years ago now, a French Vice-Consul named Emile Botta¹⁷ went to Mosul. He was Consul at Mosul on the upper Tigris River; he went across the River and he began to dig there into a mound in the desert, and there he found the remains of an ancient city. And he dug for a long time, but he didn't find any evidence of what the city was; but a young Englishman named Henry Layard came along and he began to dig in a different part of the mound and there he found the evidence as to the actual name of the city, and something of its greatness. It was the city of Nineveh, described in the book of Jonah as a city of three days; and here was Nineveh, destroyed before history began, completely forgotten. People questioned there ever was a great city like Nineveh. And now he had actual proof of it; and they brought to the British Museum and the Louvre in Paris, statues and steles from Nineveh. They were made in those days with inscriptions on them telling about the kings who made them. And pretty soon they began to find inscriptions in Nineveh and the area, making reference to Israelite kings who are named.

There is a new book that just came out—actually, it's not out yet. The title is *The Ancient Near East*, edited by James Pritchard, to be published October 31 this year.¹⁸ As I say, I hope we can get it ahead of the deadline. They sent me a

¹⁷ [Paul-Émile Botta](#) (1802–1870)

¹⁸ James Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East*. (1958), Now Vol. I of a two-volume set. The second volume was published in 1975.

free copy on Saturday because I had advised them what text to include in it, to be sure it will be of most value to our course.

Well, now, this book—we will probably use it more next semester than this one, because it has the text which touches on the history of the later Israelite kings, and we'll look at many of them. This semester we will look at a few of the type which relate to earlier things in the Bible. There aren't so many relating to that as there are the later ones, but the study of them is in a way more important than the later ones; and the bigger one is in the Library. You can find the complete Babylonian creation story in it; this has the last half of the creation story in it. That's one place Dr. Pritchard didn't follow my advice, I urged him to put in the whole creation story, but he put the last half of it in, but he has a very good collection on the whole. If he didn't follow my advice on the one point, I think on most points he pretty well followed what I would think is the best collection for the purpose.

Now it is impossible to make a translation of anything without your background affecting it to some extent. But I don't think that it affects this book to a great extent, for this reason: most of the texts are not just discovered now; most of them have been known for some time. Various people have made translations. When poor translations have been made, others have jumped on them, and criticized them; and while there are places where a theological pre-supposition would affect these translations, I think they are comparatively few in the book. I believe that the book is a very good presentation of the text; though it is a translation and any translation is not exact, can't be, and their theological ideas would affect it in some places, but I don't think a great deal. It is better than any other book on the subject I know of; because for one thing it's more complete, for the other it's much more up-to-date.

But in the years from 1840 until about 1855 or 60, archaeology resulted in the discovery of many evidences of the existence of the Israelite kingdom and of other individual cities and nations, mentioned in the Old Testament, that they actually existed and that they existed at the time that the Bible mentioned. That is to say, the Bible mentions an Assyrian is conquering Israel; here you have an inscription by the Assyrian king, naming the Israelite conquered. That shows they were at the same time, and it's pretty difficult over a long period to just use the names, if you didn't know anything more about them—to get them correct in that way.

There was very good evidence of the dependability in general of the historical accounts of the time of the later Israelite kings in those evidences which came to light before 1860. Now of course, many more have come to light since. They've been studied over; I understand they have been proved; they have a tremendous amount of evidence—not to prove the Bible is true—we could never prove a book the size of the Bible is true, too much detail of course. But it

disproves attacks made upon it, and it shows a background fitting evidence with the statement that wherever we have sufficient evidence to fairly test the statements of the Bible, the Bible stands the test. That's what I was trying to say. Wherever we can test the light it stands. If you could test it everywhere of course you wouldn't need it, you'd have the whole thing from some other source.

But this was a great progress of archaeology and in 1870 it took a further step. In 1870 a man in the British Museum named George Smith, who was studying cuneiform text there, sent a letter to a newspaper in London. Excavation had just about stopped for about ten years. People had stopped giving money to it; they had so many tablets, so much already dug up that they couldn't study it all. What was the need of spending a lot of money to get more? Interest had lapsed. But George Smith gave a report in his letter to this London newspaper of the tablets he had found in the British Museum; they had, he said, a Babylonian tablet which described the flood, very similar in many ways to the account in the Bible, and that aroused tremendous interest.

Here was actual evidence of the flood. George Smith found a Babylonian tablet telling the story of the flood. Well, the London newspaper gave a sum of money to George Smith, to go to Mesopotamia and look for more texts to be dug. What he had actually found was about six broken tablets, which he was able to fit together, and got an account of the flood very similar in many ways to the account of the flood in the Bible, in this Babylonian cuneiform—the wedge-shaped writing.

Well, George Smith rushed to Mesopotamia and began excavating, hunting for tablets; he found more flood tablets, and then he found some tablets which told about a creation; and he said here we have evidence not only of the truth of the flood but of the truth of the Biblical story of creation. And in 1876, George Smith published a book which he called *The Chaldean Account of Genesis*. This book that was published contained the description of the creation, the deluge, the tower of Babel, the destruction of Sodom, the times of the patriarchs and Nimrod, Babylonian fables, and legends of the gods, in the cuneiform inscriptions, by George Smith. And he found evidence of the story of creation from Babylonian showing that Genesis was true. And then he went back to Mesopotamia and began more excavation, and he caught fever and died. And the whole world was excited by the death of George Smith; and the result was that several nations immediately raised money to send their own groups to begin excavation; and that excavation has gone on more or less ever since. And George Smith contributed to the interest in archaeology tremendously by his discovery of the flood tablets in the British Museum.

Now we'll look at further details of these things later, but what I'm trying to do now is to give you the general progression of thought. You see, first, evidence

found that the statement about the kings of Judah and Israel were true. Monuments put up by Babylonian kings or by Egyptian kings refer to these men mentioned in the Bible in some event, recorded in the Bible. Now that is wonderful corroboration of the dependability of the Biblical account of the kings.

Then we find evidence of the flood story, and evidence of creation. And it reached a point where there were Christian people who were ready to grab a word out of any Babylonian tablet that looked like a word in the Bible and say, "Look at here, marvelous proof the Bible is true. Here's this word here that corresponds to this and proves the Bible is true." In other words, they just kind of went overboard and forgot everything about sound reason, because the first discoveries proved the accuracy and dependability of portions of the Bible. Anything you find, anywhere in Babylon that has a similarity to something in the Bible proves the Bible is true. And when you have this attitude—this attitude continued among some Christian people for a long time—you had some unbelieving people who were very disgusted with it, very much against it, though there wasn't anything much they could do about it,

And then, was it 1905 or 07—it was just about that time—that the Germans decided to start a great excavation in Babylon; and they decided to raise money for the German Orient Society, to carry on excavations in Babylon. They held a big meeting in Berlin, for the purpose of which they had the noted Professor Friedrich Delitzsch, son of the great Biblical commentator, Franz Delitzsch, to give the great address. And Friedrich D came to that meeting; and the Emperor of Germany, Kaiser Wilhelm, was there at the meeting, with the leaders of his court; the ambassadors from all the different countries; it was such an audience as you rarely get for a scientific lecture. They were all there for this big meeting and Professor D gave the first of his series of his Bible and Babel lectures.

And in this lecture he said—first he said—the historical statements of the Bible are wonderfully proven by archaeology. Grand to know about these later in the writings, how accurate they are. Then, he said, in the one part of the Bible you have stories of creation, the flood, and so on; he said we have these things in Babylon too. But the difference is that the Babylonian records were written hundreds of years before the Biblical. Consequently, he said, these stories are not historical; they're simply myths and legends. The Biblical stories are simply imitative from the Babylonian myths and legends. And there's no truth in them at all, they're just stories. The only thing is, he says, the moral tone of the Babylonian is much higher than the Biblical. For instance, he says, in the Babylonian story you find that the Babylonian Noah says, he looked out of the Ark and he saw people floating about like logs of wood and he wept to think of all the people that died in the flood. He says there's no indication of compassion whatever in the Biblical story.

Of course, that's purely imaginary on his part; it shows the hatred which this man Friedrich Delitsch had toward the Bible, which his Godly father Franz Delitsch had done so much to expound. Friedrich Delitsch, who was an utter unbeliever, wrote a book later which he called *The Great Fraud*, in which he attacked the Old Testament. A great unbeliever and denier of Christianity, he gave this great lecture here with all these people around; what he said got into the telegrams all over the world; was featured in the big newspapers; for the next two weeks, they say anywhere you went, everybody was talking about it, at the barber shop, cabmen waiting for people for their cabs, they were all arguing, was D right? A post card they put out showed a dog baying at the moon, had letters below, "Is D right?"

And it was the big topic of discussion and continued to be for the next three or four years. And some unbelieving professors said, "Isn't this wonderful? Babylon has destroyed Babylon." What was meant by that? Here was evidence from Babylon that proved the Bible true; but now here is evidence from Babylon to prove that the stories of creation, flood and all this, are just old Babylonian myths and don't prove anything about the reality at all. So that which was a great instrument toward the increase of faith and substantiating of belief in Christianity, has now become, in their minds, an instrument for the tearing down of faith in Christianity and for the destruction of the Bible.

But from our viewpoint, of going through the Bible in Biblical order, the first place we come in contact with archaeology is where we have the story of Genesis 1; and we have the statement made by so many writers, that the Biblical story here is simply taken over from the Babylonian story.

Here is a book written by Professor Byron M. Price from the University of Chicago, a professor a good many years ago; and Professor Price, I believe, was an earnest Christian. Professor Price said, in comparing the Babylonian story with the Biblical story, he said, note the resemblances and differences; and he gives six resemblances and only three differences. He says, how can you account for those few unlikenesses? Did the writer of the Genesis record borrow his account from the Babylonian tablets, or did the Babylonian writing have its origin in the Genesis account, or did both derive their story from a common original source? Professor Price tried to prove the third—that they both derived from an original source. But is that the fact? What is the fact of their relationship?

My personal belief is, that if the so-called Babylonian story of creation had been first found without any relation to the Bible and studied as such simply as a Babylonian myth, it would have been very, very difficult to convince anybody that it had any relationship to Genesis. But it was George Smith and the other believers in the Bible who grabbed a couple of words and said "Look! Here's proof of the Bible." And they got people into this viewpoint that anything you

find that sounds like something in the Bible, that proves the Bible is true, and laid the groundwork for Professor D and for various others to take this argument and turn it around and use it as it has been, as a potent argument to destroy faith in the Bible, and it is so being used today.

I sat in a class twenty years ago at the University of Pennsylvania with Professor Barton. There was a young Orthodox Jew and myself—the two members of the class—and Professor Barton was reading us the Gilgamesh story. As we read it Professor Barton would make comments; like we would read about Gilgamesh, he was two-thirds god and one-third man. Well, Professor Barton would say, "That's where they get the idea of the god-man, half-god, half-man, Gilgamesh." Then we'd go on and we'd read how one of the goddesses, in response to somebody's prayer, took some earth and kneaded it together and breathed into it and made a man out of it in order to fight another man, to deliver the people from a plot there in ancient Babylon, or a city near Babylon. And he'd say, "That's where the idea of man being made of the dust of the earth with the breath of life came from." And this other student would look there and say, "My, isn't it wonderful to know where it all came from, where it all started." It's not surprising that later on, he left his original intention of devoting his life to Bible study, and he devoted himself now entirely to linguistics, the study of linguistics, English and Japanese and other languages. After a start of many years' study, he's completely left it because it just completely destroyed his faith in it. Well, we have to know something about this because you will find, if you deal with educated people, you'll be surprised how often you'll find this is a vital point in their relationship to Christianity, and so we want to look at this more.

=====

[Review] Now we were speaking yesterday about the Babylonian story of the flood. And we noticed that George Smith found this tablet and that on this tablet it said that he raised the stars to give light and to set time, and he said how similar it is to the fourth day in creation. And then they found other tablets which referred to the making of animals and to the making of fish, and different things similar to creation, so they said here is the Babylonian story of the creation. Of course, at that time nothing was known about these except the little bit he could gather from these tablets and not a great deal was known about the Babylonian language anyway. Something was known; we could read simple things, but when it came to the complexities of the language, there have been many years of study and great progress made. And also we have since that time discovered many new sections of the various epics—Babylonian epics—and we have found that some tablets which he thought were part of the creation story belong to different stories altogether, as a matter of fact.

There are quite a number of different Babylonian stories which refer to the creation of one or another thing in the world. For instance, I will read you one of them, which, if you don't yet have your book, *The Ancient East*, I will read you this one, it's a rather brief one, but it's quite interesting. It's on page one hundred of *Ancient Near East* text, and it's also, I believe, in the portable anthology.

The title which is given is a title which has been given by modern teachers, so I won't read you the title until after I read you the text; but here is the text which is followed and which is not to be considered a part of the main creation story to which we've made reference.

After Annu [that's the god of heaven] (had created heaven),
Heaven had created (the earth)
The earth had created the rivers,
the rivers had created the canals,
The canals had created the marsh,
(And) the marsh had created the worm—
The worm went, weeping, before Shamash,
His tears flowing before Ea:
"What wilt thou give for my food?
What wilt thou give me for my sucking?"
"I shall give thee the ripe fig
(And) the apricot."
"Of what use are they to me, the ripe fig
And the Apricot?
Lift me up among the teeth
And the gums cause me to dwell!
The blood of the tooth I will suck,
And of the gum I will gnaw
Its *roots*!"
Fix the pin and seize its foot.
Because thou hast said this, O worm,
May Ea smite thee with the might
Of his hand!¹⁹

What do you learn about creation from that? Well, the title which was given that by modern interpreters is "A Cosmological Incantation: The Worm and the Toothache." And the words, "Fix the pin and seize its foot" are supposed to be said to the dentist and telling him how to pull out the tooth which is being bothered by this worm. And after this, there follows on the tablet certain details about the treatment, the injunction to repeat this incantation three times and the remark that this text has been copied from an ancient tablet, and the name of the scribe.

¹⁹ Pritchard, *Op. Cit.* p. 75.

Here you have, then, an incantation about toothache, with directions about how to get rid of the tooth that is aching; and in telling it, this incantation gives this story, of the coming into existence of one thing after another, leading up to the worm, the climax of creation. There's no mention of man in the scale of those things that are created. It is not a complete creation account, of course, by any means.

Now, there are a number of different records like this—of ancient Babylonian myth—the Babylonians were a people filled with curiosity. They were thinking about various things and there were a number of stories among them to account for the existence of what we find. They start different ways. This one about the tooth, you notice, is quite brief. There is one about a younger daughter who created a pig.

But of course you'd be silly to take all the various records you find having anything to do with creation and then say that Genesis 1 must be derived from them. There are people who do that though. They would take something in the Bible and make search all through mythology of all the nations to find something similar; then they say they got this idea from this and this, and this and this from this. If you use that method you can derive anything from anything.

But the question we're interested in is not as expansive as that; it is a specific question. Does the Babylonian story of creation, so-called—this one long story, which was a very important thing to the Babylonians when it was recited at the New Year Festival, the fourth day in the New Year Festival every year, recited, down in Babylon, showing their reestablishment of light after the chaos of the winter—does this story give the groundwork from which we can see how somebody could have taken and revised it and derived from it Genesis 1?

Well, that is assumed today by most critical scholars: that Genesis came from this particular Babylonian creation story. I don't like the title, the Babylonian story of Creation, which is generally given to it. In fact, it's a question among scholars of Babylonian study. It's usually given the title the Babylonians gave it themselves. They entitled it from the first two words, *Enuma Elish*. And if you're going to discuss this matter in any scholarly way, that is the proper title to use.

Enuma Elish. That is the title of the story. The Babylonians recorded it in their various writings, *Enuma Elish*, which are the first two words, they mean "when from above" because that's the way it starts. Just like in the Hebrew Bible—many of the books of the Old Testament—the book is named after the first couple of words of the book. That is a common custom in many lands. Well, the assumption is taken today very widely that *Enuma Elish* is the source of Genesis 1. I believe if you would take critical commentaries today you would probably

find that most of them give it as the source of the Genesis story. I read to you from Price's book, *The Monuments of the Old Testament*, in which they said that.

Even Alexander Heidel, whose book on the Babylon story of creation published by the University of Chicago Press about ten years ago. Heidel was a member of the Missouri Lutheran Synod, a very, very conservative group; he was very conservative in theology; but Heidel in his books says that he feels that the two are definitely related. And I was in a group last week where the Professor was speaking to a group of students and said to them, he said, "When even an ultra-fundamentalist like Heidel felt that the Babylonian stories were the source from which Genesis 1 comes, we need have no hesitancy about it." That was his statement, I don't follow it. But that shows the general attitude toward it.

Now one can say, "Well, now I haven't got time to spend much study on this matter, to make it completely for myself; let's just assume it, and then go on and see what the result is." But if you do that, assume it with a question mark, because scholars' opinions may change. But that is the general attitude of scholars today. And this group with which I was last week, the Professor said, "Since the Babylonian story is the origin of Genesis 1 and since the Babylonian story in Genesis, *When from Above*," and so on, then these things began to happen, he said we can naturally assume that Genesis 1 starts the thing, instead of according to the general statement, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," it's "When God began to create heaven and earth, the earth was developed."

I don't want to make much at this point. Now any book on the subject practically, will tell you, *Enuma Elish* is much older than Genesis 1 and therefore, of course, Genesis 1 must be taken from *Enuma Elish*.²⁰ Now here they assume that Genesis 1—being part of the Bible—was written at about maybe 500 BC But most conservatives believe that Genesis 1 was written by Moses. We don't know the date of course, but it certainly would not be later than 1200 BC The *Enuma Elish*, all the copies we have, comes from not earlier than 700 BC But from the concepts of this it is believed by all scholars that they represent copies of something that was written about 2000 BC So it is pretty well agreed that the time of the *Enuma Elish* is earlier than the time of Moses. I don't think there's any reason to question that.

Another thing, though, might be said. To my mind, it's personally extremely questionable that Genesis 1 came from *Enuma Elish*, but the idea that *Enuma Elish* came from Genesis 1 to my mind is impossible. That is, I just don't see how it can possibly have developed from Genesis 1.

²⁰ [dcb] Walter Maunder, *Op. Cit.* argues from analysis of the writings that in fact the Genesis account is older.

But right now I would like to look a little bit, not into the question of what does it mean *if* the two are related, but the question, are they related? I'd like to look into that a bit first. Abraham came out of Babylon; he could have brought something with him from Babylon. Moses was from Egypt; he could have brought something with him from Egypt. That's true. That's contact. But is there anything that we know of which would seem to be the source? I know of nothing from Egypt that is similar to Genesis 1—that would suggest the thought.

I will say this, supposing that you had two men at the battle of Bunker Hill here in the United States. These two men were there, and they didn't even know each other. Let's say that they were in Boston visiting friends. One came from France and one came from Germany. They were visiting friends in Boston. And there they got upon the housetop with the other people there to watch the battle. They didn't even meet each other, knew nothing of the other's existence. They went home to their own country; they each proceeded to write a novel based upon it. You would compare the novels and you would find much of similarity because they both were familiar with the same event.

Now supposing that a Babylonian and an Israelite had both stood on the top of Mount Ararat and watched God creating the world; and then after it was all finished, each of them wrote a story even though they didn't know each other at all, the stories could be rather similar. But since I don't believe either one of them saw the creation of the world, I don't see how that could form a source; for I don't see how anybody could have learned anything true about the creation of the world unless God told it to them. I don't see how they could learn from the facts because nobody was there.

If the Lord gave it to Adam, Adam could've written it down if the Lord taught him how to write; and then the story that he wrote could've been passed on till it came to Moses; and somebody else could've read that story from Adam, and from it imagine a different story, develop one from it; that could've happened, but you see that would be simply another story. It couldn't come from the facts of creation because there would be nobody there to know any facts. Now of course we don't know; if you want to speculate, you could say God could've told people the general outline of it; thus the other story developed. But we have no evidence God did this. So it's just as easy to assume that God dictated this to Moses as it is to assume he dictated it to Adam. Whoever got it, it came from God, not from human knowledge, because no human being was there.

Well, let's not beg the question. Let's not consider the question of what their relation *means* till we consider whether they are related. And then the consideration of how they are related would be the next problem, to consider what their relationship means. But first, what is the relationship?

Now the *Enuma Elish* consists of seven tablets and the Biblical story has seven days in it, and some of the earlier books have pointed that out as a similarity. Later books today will say the importance of the number seven is one of the relationships, because the seven tablets actually do not correspond to the seven divisions. Sometimes the tablet breaks come right in the middle of a paragraph; they're simply as if you wrote in seven pages—big pages, of course, a tablet is, a tablet has maybe a hundred and twenty lines. But the tablet is just the amount of space to fill up, so the fact of seven tablets proves nothing.

Well, now the Babylonian story begins this way, just listen and see if you can notice either how it is echoing the language of Genesis or how Genesis takes this language and reduces it, leaves out some things, and gives it to us in Genesis 1. I don't say it'll do that, I say listen and see, if you feel that's what is done. This is from *The Ancient Near Eastern Texts*.²¹ Tablet I then begins:

When on high the heaven had not been named,
Firm ground below had not been called by name,
Naught but primordial Apsu, their begetter,

(Write down Apsu and Tiamat.) Tiamat then is the name of the mother and Apsu the name of the father, and nothing existed but Apsu and Tiamat. Now this word Tiamat is the name of a being. It is usually interpreted that Apsu is the fresh waters and Tiamat is the salt sea; but they are pictured here as individuals; but they existed, it said, before any heaven or any ground. Now Tiamat is etymologically similar to a word in the second verse of Genesis. "And the Spirit of God ... darkness was upon the face of *tehom*" and *tehom* is somewhat like *tiamat*. We translate *tehom* "the deep"; they considered Tiamat as representing the great salt sea, so here we have a similarity already. The title points out, however, that the Babylonian word *Tiamat* which means the deep, the great deep, and the Hebrew word *tehom* are sufficiently different that neither of them could have been borrowed from the other, though both might have been derived from the same original source. But neither could've been taken from the other, as they would come from the original Semitic language groups. But the two words are related. Does that mean because the two words are related, the concepts are taken over by one or the other? Heidel says in that case we expect the same form to be taken over instead of having the "h" put in *tehom*. See, the Babylonian has no h and the original h of the early Semitic must have disappeared long before Babylon came into existence.

Well, that is the first point of similarity and we know that's a questionable one.

And Mummu-Tiamat, she who bore them all,
Their waters commingling as a single body;
No reed hut had been matted, no marsh land had appeared,

²¹ Pritchard uses the [Translation by E. A. Speiser](#).

When no gods whatever had been brought into being,

(Evidently they don't think of Apsu and Tiamat as gods, but they are personified; they're thought of as individuals.)

Uncalled by name, their destinies undetermined
Then it was that the gods were formed within them.

(that is within Apsu and Tiamat)

Lahmu and Lahamu were brought forth, by name they were called.
Before they had grown in age and stature.
Anshar and Kishar were formed, surpassing the others.

(You might take down the name of one of these, Anshar. This represents one of the earliest gods to come into existence, the third of the great four.

They prolonged the days, added on the years.
Anu was their heir, of his fathers the rival;

(That is, Anshar had a son named Anu. This is the Babylonian word for heaven. Just write the word Anu because we'll refer to it later.)

Anu was their heir, of his fathers the rival;
Yea, Anshar's first-born, Anu, was his equal.
Anu beget in his image Nudimmud.

(Now here is a particular name for a god who is later called by his common name, so I'll just give the common name instead of the particular name, Ea.)

This Nudimmud was of his fathers the master;
Of broad wisdom, understanding, mighty in strength,
Mightier by far than his grandfather, Anshar.

(So you see you have a god Anshar coming into existence, out of the midst of the waters. And then he has a son named Anu and he has a son named. Ea.

This Nudimmud was of his fathers the master;
Of broad wisdom, understanding, mighty in strength,
Mightier by far than his grandfather, Anshar.
He had no rival among the gods, his brothers.

Well, here is the beginning. You don't see much similarity here at the beginning to Genesis thus far, do you? Genesis tells nothing of the coming of God into existence. It assumes the existence of God from the very beginning. This

account has matter before heaven and earth came into existence; it has matter in existence; and it has Apsu and Tiamat, the great bodies of water, which are thought of as individuals; and from them the gods came into existence and therefore they are thought of as the father and mother—ancestors—of the gods.

Now we have an incident described here—very interesting incident. It says,

The divine brothers banded together,

(i.e., the gods now that have come into existence)

They disturbed Tiamat as they surged back and forth,
Yea, they troubled the mood of Tiamat
By their hilarity in the Abode of Heaven.
Apsu could not lessen their clamor
And Tiamat was speechless at their ways.
Their doings were loathsome unto.
Unsavory were their ways; they were overbearing.
Then Apsu, the begetter of the great gods,

(You got the name Apsu, the begetter of the great gods)

Cried out, addressing Mummu, his vizier:

(Now you might write down the name Mummu, though it's much less important than the others. It's important right in this little section of the narrative...his vizier. Now I don't know what the English would be for vizier. It's sort of like a secretary, the general idea of one who does things for one, carries messages, and the German word has taken it over, vizier.)

"O Mummu, my vizier, who rejoicest my spirit,
Come hither and let us go to Tiamat!"
They went and sat down before Tiamat,
Exchanging counsel about the gods, their first-born.
Apsu, opening his mouth,
Said unto resplendent Tiamat:
"Their ways are verily loathsome unto me.
By day I find no relief, nor repose by night.
I will destroy, I will wreck their ways,
That quiet may be restored.
Let us have rest!" As soon as Tiamat heard this,
She was wroth and called out to her husband.
She cried out aggrieved, as she raged all alone,
Injecting woe into her mood:

"What? Should we destroy that which we have built?
Their ways indeed are most troublesome, but let us attend kindly."

(You notice the attitude that she has taken on it, just the opposite, toward the gods who are disturbing their rest.)

Then answered Mummu, giving counsel to Apsu:
Ill-wishing and ungracious was Mummu's advice:
"Do destroy, my father, the mutinous ways.
Then shalt thou have relief by day and rest by night!"
When Apsu heard this, his face grew radiant
Because of the evil he planned against the gods, his sons.
As for Mummu, by the neck he embraced him
As that one sat down on his knees to kiss him.

Now that is, then, the plot of Apsu to destroy the gods, but you notice Tiamat was unfavorable to the plot. She said they should not destroy the gods. Now we have what happened after that. The gods heard of it. What did they do?

Now whatever they had plotted between them,
Was repeated unto the gods, their first-born.
When the gods heard this, they were astir,
Then lapsed into silence and remained speechless.
Surpassing in wisdom, accomplished, resourceful,
Ea, the all-wise, saw through their scheme.
A master design against it he devised and set up,
Made artful his spell against it, surpassing and holy.
He recited it and made it subsist in the deep,
As he poured sleep upon him, Sound asleep he lay.
When Apsu he had made prone, drenched with sleep,
Mummu, the adviser, was powerless to stir
He loosened his band, tore off his tiara,
Removed his halo and put it on himself.
Having fettered Apsu, he slew him.
Mummu he bound and left behind lock.

Now you see what has happened to Apsu: he's been killed and Mummu is captured, and made powerless, and Ea has done this. And Tiamat didn't want the gods killed, did she?

So how much similarity do we have to Genesis 1 thus far? Now it continues then:

Having thus upon Apsu established his dwelling,
He laid hold on Mummu, holding him by the nose-rope.

After Ea had vanquished and trodden down his foes,
Had secured his triumph over his enemies,
In his sacred chamber in profound peace had rested,
He named it "Apsu," for shrines he assigned it.
In that same place his cult hut he founded.
Ea and Damkina, his wife, dwelled there in splendor.
In the chamber of fates, the abode of destinies,
A god was engendered, most able and wisest of gods.
In the heart of Apsu was Marduk created,
In the heart of holy Apsu was Marduk created.

That's the shrine that was made, in which this god lived now, after the killing of the original Apsu, was Marduk created. Now get this name, Marduk. Marduk, you see, is the son of Ea, who does not come into existence until after the destruction of Apsu, and Marduk is the god of Babylon, and the purpose, actually, of *Enuma Elish* is to glorify Marduk, the god of Babylon. Marduk was never heard of until about two thousand BC. Earlier records have no reference to him. These other gods are mentioned in records going back hundreds of years before them; Marduk is not. He is the god of the little town of Babylon, which became a great city, conquered most of the world; and then this epic was written, to glorify Marduk. But you notice the great destruction of Apsu has taken place before Marduk ever came into existence.

In the heart of holy Apsu was Marduk created.
He who begot him was Ea, his father;
She who bore him was Damkina, his mother.
The breast of goddesses he did suck.
The nurse that nursed him filled him with awesomeness.
Alluring was his figure, sparkling the lift of his eyes.
Lordly was his gait, commanding from of old.

And so it goes telling you what a wonderful one this Marduk was, until the account of this new god ends up with the way he was addressed:

"My little son, my little son!
My son, the Sun: Sun of the heavens!"

And so they wrote to say that Marduk was a sun-god, although actually the sun-god in Babylonia is Shamash; but Marduk is here addressed as the sun of the heavens. Does that make Marduk the sun-god, or could they just call any god the sun?

But anyway you have Marduk described as this wonderful new god that has come into existence. And then after Marduk has thus come into existence you find that new troubles begin. You find that:

Clothed with the halo of ten gods, he was strong to the utmost,
As their awesome flashes were heaped upon him.

That's the god, of heaven, his grandfather,

Anu brought forth and begot the fourfold wind
Consigning to its power the leader of the host.
He fashioned . . ., stationed the whirlwind,
He produced streams to disturb Tiamat.
The gods, given no rest, suffer in the storm.
Their hearts having plotted evil,
To Tiamat, their mother, said:
"When they slew Apsu, thy consort,
Thou didst not aid him but remainedst still.
When the dread fourfold wind he created,
Thy vitals were diluted and so we can have no rest.
Let Apsu, thy consort, be in thy mind
And Mummu, who has been vanquished! Thou art left alone!

Thus we have Tiamat now threatened with danger by the gods because they have killed Apsu, and she gives favor to her consort but had not helped him. Now they're against her, and most of the rest is the conflict between the gods and Tiamat. You see it's utterly different from the contents of Genesis 1.

And, the assumption that is taken by most everybody is that the two accounts are related. Personally, it seems to me that if George Smith hadn't happened to find first a couple of lines that spoke about the making of the stars, and if he hadn't happened to find other tablets—unrelated to this—that spoke of the creation of animals and of fish, I would question whether anybody ever would have thought that they were related; but it is so dogmatically stated that they are, and it is taken for granted by so many, that therefore we must face a little of the implications if they are related; but personally I think it's a rather foolish thing to take for granted because, you see, up to this point how many lines here are similar to any lines in Genesis 1? Up to this point, not a single line, except some very short snips.

But we'll look at it. I think it's worth taking time to look at it because it's much discussed. Discussed a great deal by people who've never read it; and people will read, "Somebody says these are related in such a way" and then they'll discuss the relationship. They will say, for instance, "Look at the great similarity: the Biblical story has light created on the first day, and the sun not till the fourth day. This one, toward the end of it, has the moon and stars

created, and light must have been created before—great similarity. But up to this point, have you seen anything about the creation of light?

Some will say there was light before because Marduk was the sun-god; he brought light. Do you think in the first of the story everything was in darkness before Marduk came, with all this as described before then?

Others say the great similarity between Genesis and this is that Genesis begins with darkness on the face of the deep. This begins with a great darkness. Did you notice any reference to darkness here? I saw no reference whatever to darkness here. There is no mention here of creation of light; that is, light is taken for granted, just like sound is taken for granted. There's no mention in Genesis 1 of the creation of sound, none at all. It's just taken for granted. Well, in this account light is taken for granted, as is sound. There's no mention of its creation. It's just not entered into the picture; it's assumed by the writers. But that is one that Heidel says is one of the great similarities. You have light created in Genesis before the sun; in this account you have light created before you have the moon and stars. Actually there's no creation of the sun.

Well, we have Marduk who has come into existence after the defeat of Apsu and his death, Tiamat, who had not wanted to injure the gods, she's left alone, now they're afraid of what she might do; so they start sending winds to make it worse for her, and so in that situation we find that Tiamat decides she's got to do something about it. And so we find, that Tiamat is gathering her friends, and she says, "Let's make monsters; let us do battle against the gods."

They thronged and marched at the side of Tiamat.
Enraged, they plot without cease night and day,
They are set for combat, growling, raging,
They form a council to prepare for the fight.
Mother Hubur, she who fashions all things,
Added matchless weapons, bore monster-serpents,
Sharp of tooth, unsparing of fang.
With venom for blood she has filled their bodies.
Roaring dragons she has clothed with terror,
Has crowned them with haloes, making them like gods,
So that he who beholds them shall perish abjectly,
And that, with their bodies reared up, none might turn them back.
She set up the Viper, the Dragon, and the Sphinx,
The Great-Lion, the Mad-Dog, and the Scorpion-Man,
Mighty lion-demons, the Dragon-Fly, the Centaur,
Bearing weapons that spare not, fearless in battle.
Firm were her decrees, past withstanding were they.
Withal eleven of this kind she brought forth.
From among the gods, her first-born, who formed her Assembly,

She elevated Kingu...

Now here is Kingu; one of the gods who were with Tiamat is called Kingu, and Tiamat makes Kingu the leader of her forces, she elevated him,

...made him chief among them.

The leading of the ranks, command of the Assembly,

The raising of weapons for the encounter, advancing to combat,

And then there are several lines of how she gave great power to Kingu,

She gave him the Tablet of Destinies, fastened on his breast:

"As for thee, thy command shall be unchangeable, Thy word shall endure!"

As soon as Kingu was elevated, possessed of the rank of Anu,

For the gods, his sons, they decreed the fate:

"Your word shall make the first subside,

Shall humble the 'Power-Weapon,' so potent in its sweep!

So now Tiamat determined to resist these gods who have killed her consort Apsu, and she has formed these alarming monsters; and she has other gods with her, and she has appointed one of them, Kingu, to be her commander-in-chief. And in that situation the gods consider what they're going to do; and you have an account of how the gods try to find one who can deliver them from the danger they fear from Tiamat. Actually, as you read it, they are the aggressors right straight through; but here they have raised their propaganda so you think it's she who is the great threat, the great danger, and they are planning what they can do against Tiamat... till they go to one god, and they tell the whole story, like having half of the first tablet repeated over again.

Here is Tiamat, she is raging against us—it goes on for several lines—she is raging against us, she has created monsters; and then you have about fifteen lines naming all the monsters all over again, and then she has taken Kingu and she has made him commander-in-chief; and you have about ten lines with all the power she has given to Kingu, given him the Tablets of Fate, and told him he's to have complete power over his forces; now they say to this god, what will you do about it? Can you deliver us? And this god says "I'm afraid of Tiamat; there's nothing I can do about it!" So then they go to another god and repeat the whole story—about sixty lines—and this god says, "I'm afraid of Tiamat; I can't do anything about it." So they have the thing repeated about three times—it takes a couple of tablets—and finally they come to Marduk, the new god come into existence, born from Ea and Damkina, after the defeat of Apsu, a comparative newcomer to the kingdom. They come to Marduk and say, "Will you deliver us from Tiamat?" and Marduk says, "Yes I will deliver you from Tiamat." But he says, "I won't deliver you unless you give me absolute power." He says, "You must take all the power that you various gods have of controlling

the world and give it all to me." And so before Marduk will do anything against Tiamat, it is necessary that the gods give him absolute power, and so they agree to do it.

Now this describes the first three tablets. The summary, which has so much material of great value in it, doesn't start until tablet 4 of what is *Enuma Elish*. All of the first three tablets are omitted. But if you're going to compare it with Genesis, you need to know something about it; so I read you a fair amount and gave you a summary here, and you notice how little similarity there is to Genesis 1.

Well, the gods came together because they had to something against Tiamat; and Marduk wouldn't lead them unless they gave Marduk all their power, all their authority. And so we read they came together and we read:

All the great gods who decree the fates.
They entered before Anshar, filling (Ubshukinna).
They kissed one another in the Assembly.
They held converse as they (sat down) to the banquet.
They ate festive bread, poured (the wine),
They wetted their drinking-tubes with sweet intoxicant.
As they drank the strong drink (their) bodies swelled.
They became very languid as their spirits rose.
For Marduk, their avenger, they fixed the decrees.

So now they're giving Marduk the powers he says he must have if he is to deliver them. They have this great council at which they all get drunk before they give him the power. Quite a picture of the gods.

They erected for him a princely throne.
Facing his fathers, he sat down, presiding.
"Thou art the most honored of the great gods,
Thy decree is unrivaled, thy command is Anu.
Thou, Marduk, art the most honored of the great gods,
Thy decree is unrivaled, thy word is Anu.
From this day unchangeable shall be thy pronouncement.
To raise or bring low—these shall be in thy hand.
Thy utterance shall be true, thy command shall be unimpeachable.

And so it goes on, with the great power that they've given Marduk because of their fear of Tiamat. Marduk is a comparatively new god here—came into existence long after the rest—it's a reflection of the coming into power of Babylon, a comparatively late city to become important. But Babylon, about 2,000 BC, became the strongest city through the very clever planning of Hammurabi, who conquered most of the regions around him. Those the

Babylonians couldn't conquer, they made friends with; talked very nice to and worked with a while; and then suddenly turned against and conquered them too; till eventually they had all the Near East in their hands; and then somebody wrote this epic to show the god of Babylon—whom nobody ever heard of before—is the greatest of all gods.

So you have all this we've been looking at, written for that purpose very clearly, and here are all these lines telling of how all the gods gave all their power to Marduk. And then here are some very interesting lines. They told him of his great power, granting him kingship over the universe entirely:

We have granted thee kingship over the universe entire.
When in Assembly thou sittest, thy word shall be supreme.
Thy weapons shall not fail; they shall smash thy foes:
O lord, spare the life of him who trusts thee,
But pour out the life of the god who seized evil.
Having placed in their midst the Images,
They addressed themselves to Marduk, their first-born:
"Lord, truly thy decree is first among gods.
Only say to wreck or create; it shall be.
Open thy mouth: the Images will vanish!
Speak again, and the Images shall be whole!
At the word of his mouth the Images vanished.
He spoke again, and the Images were restored.
When the gods, his fathers, saw the fruit of his word,
Joyfully they did homage: "Marduk is king!"

Now, one of the great similarities between this and Genesis 1 is that Genesis 1 has creation by word: God said, "Let there be light and there was light." Here you have the same thing: Marduk said, "Let the cloth vanish and it vanished." Marduk said, "Let the cloth be whole and it was whole." And that's the only place in these whole seven big tablets that you have anything similar; and yet that is pointed out as one of the great similarities. Creation by word. Because they gave Marduk this power which he displayed by making this cloth whole or making it disappear.

Well, then they declare that Marduk is changed; they give him all this power; now that he's got all this power that he wants, he gathers them together, and he leads them against Tiamat; and then we have a vivid account of how he comes—it takes about a hundred lines—how Tiamat comes leading the gods and they rush toward the racing Tiamat, and they attack her and the monsters and the various ones—of course you always call the people on the other side monsters—but they go against them and attack them; and there's a very vivid account of the attack, how he takes a net and tries to catch Tiamat in the net,

and attacks her with spells and incantations, the various methods he used, and ultimately he gets control of all of the forces against him,

When Tiamat opened her mouth to consume him,
He drove in the Evil Wind that she close not her lips.
As the fierce winds charged her belly,
Her body was distended and her mouth was wide open.
He released the arrow, it tore her belly,
It cut through her insides, splitting the heart.
Having thus subdued her, he extinguished her life.

She must have learned here what it means to appease your foes, because when Apsu wanted to destroy these gods she held him back from it, so finally they destroyed him; and now you see they are destroying her.

He cast down her carcass to stand upon it.
After he had slain Tiamat, the leader,
Her band was shattered, her troupe broken up;
And the gods, her helpers who marched at her side,
Trembling with terror, turned their backs about,
In order to save and preserve their lives.
Tightly encircled, they could not escape.
He made them captives and he smashed their weapons.

Thrown into the net, they found themselves ensnared;
Placed in cells, they were filled with wailing;
Bearing his wrath, they were held imprisoned.
And the eleven creatures which she had charged with awe,
The whole band of demons that marched on her right,
He cast into fetters, their hands he bound.
For all their resistance, he trampled them underfoot.
And Kingu who had been made chief among them,
He bound and accounted him to Uggae.
He took from him the Tablet of Destinies, not rightfully his,
Sealed them with a seal and fastened them on his breast.

Then you have a little more about his conquest; and then he seized Kingu, her commander-in-chief, and bound him, and then he turned back to Tiamat whom he had bound.

The lord trod on the legs of Tiamat,
With his unsparing mace he crushed her skull.
When the arteries of her blood he had severed,
The North Wind bore it to places undisclosed.
On seeing this, his fathers were joyful and jubilant,

The other gods were all earlier than he was—they're all called his fathers. He was a young upstart, but he became the head because they were all afraid to attack Tiamat.

They brought gifts of homage, they to him.
Then the lord paused to view her dead body,

(that's the lord Marduk)

That he might divide the monster and do artful works.
He split her like a shellfish into two parts:
Half of her he set up and ceiled it as sky,
Pulled down the bar and posted guards.
He bade them to allow not her waters to escape.

You see, here—after all he's gone through and the end of Tiamat's force—here we find what is said to be the source of Genesis 1, where he divided the waters above the firmament from the waters underneath the firmament. Here he took the Tiamat, which is the great deep, and split it in two; and put half up there and half down here.²² There is a similar picture to this picture in Genesis. Did the author of Genesis read the Babylonian story and get this picture from it and therefore put that into Genesis 1? Or the Babylonian read Genesis 1 and get the idea from him and put it here? Or did two men see both of these happen, one of them write one and one the other? Actually I don't think anybody saw it happen, so it must have been taken from one or the other, if they are related.

This is the account then of how he made the firmament. But before he got winds, he got storms, he got clouds, he got all these; but now he takes Tiamat and divides her in two; he takes her body. Then it goes on, Tablet V:

He constructed stations for the great gods,
Fixing their astral likenesses as the Images.
He determined the year by designating the zones:
He set up three constellations for each of the twelve months.
After defining the days of the year by means of heavenly figures,

Now this doesn't say he created stars, it says constellations; that could be done by creating stars or by arranging stars. It doesn't say. All it says is, he made constellations in order to divide the year into months.

Alongside it he set up the stations of Enlil and Ea.
Having opened up the gates on both sides,

²² [dcb] Ancient Egyptian art and writings have similar creation myths dating to the Old Kingdom (2780–2250 BC), much earlier than the Babylonian myths. See [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creation_myth_in_Ancient_Egypt).

He strengthened the locks to the left and the right.

Now some say that the gates on both sides must mean where the sun comes up and where the sun goes down, and therefore this applies to the sun, creating it, but there's nothing said here about the sun, just that he opens up gates on both sides. Then he did this in Tiamat, whom he has put up there over the sky.

In her belly he established the zenith.

The Moon he caused to shine, the night to him entrusting.

He appointed him a creature of the night to signify the days:

"Monthly, without cease, form designs with a crown.

At the month's very start, rising over the land,

Thou shalt have luminous horns to signify six days,

On the seventh day reaching a half-crown.

At full moon stand in opposition in mid-month.

When the sun overtakes thee at the base of heaven,

Diminish thy crown and retrogress in light.

At the time of disappearance approach thou the course of the sun

You see, this is astronomical, and this takes us to line 22 of Tablet V; and the rest of Tablet V has not been found. There are a few little fragments nobody can read.

So now with our various discoveries we have most of the *Enuma Elish* except Tablet V. In Tablet V we have only these first twenty verses, the rest of it is quite unknown. Now some people say one similarity between *Enuma Elish*—even in this book Price here points out—one of the similarities between *Enuma Elish* and the Genesis is, he says, in Genesis God created the animals and creeping things, in the Babylonian, the assembly of the gods created the animals and little creatures.

Where in the assembly of the gods, where are we told that they created animals and living creatures? Why in Tablet V, in the part that's never been found! See? In the Babylonian creation story, as we have it, there is no mention whatever of creation of animals and creeping things, except for the account of Tiamat making the monsters to fight with; well that wouldn't be the creation of the animals certainly. But that's ridiculous to call it that, but if you leave that out, there is no creation of animals or of creeping things, anything like that, in *Enuma Elish*. Absolutely nothing.

Well, the creation of man is further on but we don't have time to look at that now. This afternoon we'll look at it, the creation of man.

=====

(Review) Many people discuss the relation of the *Enuma Elish* story to the Genesis story of creation without having read the *Enuma Elish* story. They read what some people say about the similarities or what people state as to evidence that one is derived from the other but they don't actually read through the *Enuma Elish* story. As the story stands it is not easy to read through because there are no paragraph divisions. In his book, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, Dr. Speiser says—he is the translator of this—that he was greatly tempted to put in paragraph divisions, but he decided that doing so would be making arbitrary judgments and therefore it was better to just give what you have there. There's much to be said for that position. It's leaving it to you to make your own division. But for the person who's not going to study it a great deal, if you don't have any divisions it's much harder to find out what they're driving at, particularly in poetic language like this. If it was presented with little running summaries it would be much easier for the average person to get into it.

I don't think there's any question as to what it contains, but it takes just a little while to get sufficiently into it to benefit from a reading. If you will read it through two or three times, I'm sure you will understand it very well. But I have tried to give you a running summary to make it easier for you to follow. And one thing I'm trying to bring out is how little there is in it that has anything to do directly with creation. It is the story of a battle, it is the story of early Babylonian gods and their fights and, as a result of it—sort of a by-product of it—we notice that he took Tiamat and divided her in the middle and put half up above and half below. He doesn't say he put half below but I guess that's understood; says divided to make her in the middle and then stretched her up above to make the firmament.

Now, we ran through it; I did not read you one or two of the tablets, but gave you a summary of them; and I pointed out that they contained a tremendous amount of repetition, because the whole story is given at full length to each of two or three different deities, of how Tiamat had created the monsters and they've got to do away with Tiamat and she'd made Kingu supreme, and it quotes several lines of how she'd given him his position of authority. And then unfortunately, for that fifth tablet, we only have 24 lines. It doubtless is about the same length as the other tablets, around 160 lines originally, but we have never found anything other than just the first twenty-four lines. And some assume that the rest of it would tell about the creation of vegetation, the creation of animal life, birds and fishes, and so on. But that's pure assumption. Heidel in his discussion thinks that extremely unlikely. He says the astronomical presentation of the arrangement of the moon, when it's full, when it's a quarter, and so on at the beginning, suggests very strongly that it goes on with the description of astronomical arrangement. And that's the reason we take up a whole tablet. In addition to that he points out that tablet 6 begins,

When Marduk hears the words of the gods,

His heart prompts him to fashion artful works.
Opening his mouth, he addresses Ea

Well, now, what words does he hear? Tablet 5 began with his establishing stations for the gods among the stars. Heidel says that the beginning of tablet 6 suggests very strongly that a large part of tablet 5 deals with the words of the gods that lead on to what Marduk does; and therefore he thinks that by the time you get to the astronomical part it could easily take a whole tablet; and this is the background of the beginning of 6, and there's no space left for any creation of plants or animals or anything like that.

Be that as it may, as it stands there is no creation of animals in it anywhere except the creation of monsters by Tiamat, which is a different thing altogether.

Now tablet 6 is a very special interest to us, very special, and so let me read to you the first part of tablet 6. The first 34 lines of tablet 6 are of very, very special interest. A good part of this was only discovered within the last few years. And here's what it says:

When Marduk hears the words of the gods,
His heart prompts him to fashion artful works.
Opening his mouth, he addresses Ea

Remember Ea is his father; Ea is the god of wisdom; Ea is not the leading god of Babylon at all, but he is quite an important deity; and we will speak of him often later, in various connections, so it is important that you be familiar with Ea.

To impart the plan he had conceived in his heart:
"Blood I will mass and cause bones to be.
I will establish a savage, 'man' shall be his name.
Verily, savage-man I will create.
He shall be charged with the service of the gods
That they might be at ease!"

Now this suggests that perhaps the last half of the fifth tablet was the gods telling what they want to happen to be at ease: the sacrifices they'd like, the food they'd like, and so on; we don't know, but at any rate, he's dealing with the need whatever it is, and he says, "I've got an idea, I'll make savages to do this for them." The Bible doesn't tell us that man was made in order to perform service but that was interesting to hear.

The ways of the gods I will artfully alter.
Though alike revered, into two groups they shall be divided. "
Ea answered him, speaking a word to him,
Giving him another plan for the relief of the gods:

"Let but one of their brothers be handed over;
He alone shall perish that mankind may be fashioned
Let the great gods be here in Assembly,
Let the guilty be handed over that they may endure."
Marduk summoned the great gods to Assembly;
Presiding graciously, he issues instructions.
To his utterance the gods pay heed.
The king addresses a word to the Anunnaki:
"If your former statement was true,
Do now the truth on oath by me declare!
Who was it that contrived the uprising,
And made Tiamat rebel, and joined battle?
Let him be handed over who contrived the uprising.
His guilt I will make him bear. You shall dwell in peace"
The Igigi, the great gods, replied to him,
To Lugaldinrmerankia, counselor of the gods, their lord:
"It was Kingu who contrived the uprising,
And made Tiamat rebel, and joined battle."

Who was this Kingu? Have you ever heard of him before? How many have heard of Kingu. before? He is the one whom Tiamat said was to be the commander. He seems simply to have been selected by her to be the leader. But here these enemies blame it all on Kingu; say that Kingu made Tiamat rebel. She's dead now; Tiamat is dead, and what they say about Kingu: it was Kingu who contrived the uprising and made Tiamat rebel, and joined battle.

They bound him, holding him before Ea.
They imposed on him his guilt and severed his blood vessels.
Out of his blood they fashioned mankind.
He imposed the service and let free the gods.
After Ea, the wise, had created mankind,
Had imposed upon it the service of the gods

And then it goes on to tell how they arranged the Anunnaki, the very spirit of the heavens and earth, but this is all it says about the creation of man. You notice he created man by killing a god, taking his blood, and it says that out of his blood they fashioned mankind. There's nothing like that in Genesis. But that is what it says; that is the method given here of the creation of man.

The next part of the sixth tablet—lines 35 to 90—deals with the making of the city of Babylon. This makes it out that the city of Babylon was formed by Marduk at a very early time when man first came into existence. Now, of course, we know that isn't true; it's imaginary because we have much history before Babylon ever was mentioned. Babylon was a comparatively late city; but in this account of the making of great Babylon, we will not take time to read that; that

will be in the book which many of you are buying, and you can read it if you want, but it's not very important for our present purpose.

Then, after that is mentioned, then it's mentioned how he went—line 91 and following—he went on to establish the home for the gods and they give honor to Marduk who has done this, and they say continuing about line 107:

Most exalted be the Son, our avenger;
Let his sovereignty be surpassing, having no rival.
May he shepherd the black-headed ones, his creatures.

That's mankind, black-headed,

To the end of days, without forgetting, let them acclaim his ways.

And so it tells how mankind honor Marduk; and then it says, in line 120,

Let the black-headed wait on their gods.
As for us, by however many names we pronounce, he is our god!
Let us then proclaim his fifty names:

The rest of tablet 6 and all of tablet 7 are declaring the fifty names of Marduk; and these fifty names of Marduk, each of them honors some special thing about Marduk—like, well I'll read one or two of them—number 1

(1) MARDUK, as Anu, his father, called him from his birth;
Who provides grazing and drinking places, enriches their stalls,
Who with the flood-storm, his weapon, vanquished the detractors,
And who the gods, his fathers, rescued from distress.
Truly, the Son of the Sun, most radiant of gods is he.
In his brilliant light may they walk forever!
On the people he brought forth, endowed with life,
The service of the gods he imposed that these may have ease.
Creation, destruction, deliverance, grace—
Shall be by his command. They shall look up to him!

That's name one, Marduk. And there are fifty names. Here's the 24th:

(24) ENBILULU, the lord who makes them flourish, is he;
The mighty one who named them, who instituted roast-offerings ;
Whoever regulates for the land the grazing and watering places;
Who opened the wells, apportioning waters of abundance.
Enbilulu, secondly, they shall glorify as

and then it gives the 25th name, Epadun,

(25) EPADUN, The lord who sprinkles the field,
Irrigator of heaven and earth, who establishes seed-rows,
Who forms fine plow land in the steppe,
Dam and ditch regulates, who delimits the furrow;

And then it goes on and gives the 26th and so on. There are fifty of these names. They are simply glorifying Marduk in quite general terms. There's only one of them that has any particular interest for us in relation to Genesis 1, and that's number ten.

(10) ASARU, bestower of cultivation, who established water levels;
Creator of grain and herbs, who causes vegetation to sprout.

Is that a statement of the creation of vegetation? It says Marduk is the creator of vegetation, of grain and herbs, who causes vegetation to sprout. Does this represent his continual care over the farmers or does it refer back to a creation of vegetation? The only reference in the whole epic to the creation of vegetation.

Now this is a rapid run-through of *Enuma Elish* to show the nature of most of the contents; and, as you see, there are references to certain matters which are similar to matters touched in Genesis 1. But I think we can say this: take chapter 1 of Genesis, and you won't find more than three or four verses in *Enuma Elish* that has anything very similar in the whole of Genesis. That is as far as identical verses or near anything like it. And if you take the epic here, out of seven tablets, rather six pretty full and the fifth you have the first part of it. Out of say a thousand lines you can find no more than twenty or thirty that really deal at all with anything that is dealt with in Genesis 1. So actually the material—the two groups of material there—is comparatively little when it comes to comparison.

My personal belief is that if George Smith had not had this attitude which was common in his day—anything we find similar to the Bible, this is the Babylonian story of the same thing, isn't that wonderful—why I question whether people would have very seriously thought of comparing this story of battle and fighting and destruction of these gods and all that with Genesis 1, much less to say that either one of them was taken from the other.

Now out of these verses in Genesis 1, the mention of the days, there's nothing like it here, the fact that it should be on seven tablets is not relevant. There's no mention of the days of Genesis 1; there's no statement that God looked upon what he saw and that it was good, which is repeated after practically every day in Genesis 1. The whole framework of Genesis 1 is different. The fullest account of creation in Genesis 1 is the creation of vegetation: trees after their kind,

grass and earth and so on, is rather fully given; fishes and birds, animals, all that rather fully given; nothing there in any part of *Enuma Elish* that we have; there's nothing in *Enuma Elish* about the creation of light, which is the first day in Genesis 1.

Actually the similarity is so very slight that my own personal opinion is that it is an idea which developed in a natural way as we pointed out, which conservatives took first through a misguided and erroneous idea that anything they could grab from Babylon which sounded like something in the Bible was proof of the Bible. And then when the Babel Bible movement came, they twisted it around and put the argument against them; and they were to some extent already converted; and the enemies of the Bible took over from them that which they had given as fact; and they are all convinced of it now quite strongly that this is the source from which the Biblical story came.

Now, most interpreters of the conservative point say, "Well, suppose it is; we can explain it," or they suppose that maybe they both came from a parent source, or some other explanation. I do not think that it is impossible that God could have caused that a Babylonian tablet should be a source from which ideas were taken and eventually developed into something that He caused a writer to correct; and, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to write something that was definitely true. But I think it extremely unlikely because to me the similarities are far too small to require any such approach at all.

Now, if you take up almost any critical book on the subject they will give you evidences why the two are similar and even most conservative books will take that position. I read to you the other day a little bit from this book by Price. Ira Price is quite a conservative man; on the whole he has a very sound attitude toward the Bible. His book, *The Monuments of the Old Testament*, went through many editions. In 1924 it had a thoroughly revised edition which was excellent for 1924. It had the archaeology right up to date; and it was amazing how up-to-date it was in 1924. Now there's never been an edition since, so of course that's very much out of date now, but even so, most of the material in it is very good. It is an excellent job.²³

But in his book Price compares these two and he says, before passing on to other features of Babylonian tradition,

²³ Ira Maurice Price, Professor in Oriental Languages at the University of Chicago retired in 1925 and died in 1939. Judson Press published a thorough revision of the book in 1958 with co-authors the archaeologists Dr. Ovid R. Sellers and E. Leslie Carlson. A letter written in ancient Sumerian is pictured in the book, and dated to 4,000 BC. If that date stands, it is over 1000 years earlier than Dr. MacRae [remark](#) that "writing was invented in Mesopotamia at about 3000 BC"

[L]et us look at some of the resemblances and differences between Genesis and these records.

(1) Genesis knows of a time when the earth was waste and void. The Babylonian accounts mention a time when all was chaos and nothingness.

(2) In Genesis light dispels darkness and order follows chaos. In the Babylonian accounts the god Marduk routs and overthrows Tiamat, the demon of chaos.

Well, I don't see that the second is a similarity. Light follows darkness in Genesis, and order follows chaos; in the Babylonian records the god Marduk moves and overthrows Tiamat. You might as well say in the account of the Second World War, Winston Churchill routed and overthrew Hitler. How is this really a similarity to Genesis 1? I would question very much whether it is similar at all.

(3) In Genesis, after a time, the dry land appears. In the Babylonian account Marduk creates the dust and pours it out by the water.

(4) In Genesis, the sun, moon and stars are set in the heavens. In the Babylonian account, Marduk puts them in their places as the mansions of the gods.

(5) In Genesis, God created the animals and creeping things. In the Babylonian, the assembly of the gods created the animals and living creature of the field and plain.

If they did, it's in the broken part of tablet 5. We have no evidence.

(6) In Genesis God created mankind. In the Babylonian account, Marduk is the creator of mankind.²⁴

Well, they both tell of mankind. Now, he says,

But the differences, although not so numerous as the similarities, are extremely significant:

(1) Genesis declares God to be the creator of all things. The Babylonian record mentions no one as the creator of *all* things; instead, various gods come in for their share in the beginnings.

(2) Genesis describes a waste and an abyss. The Babylonian account personifies these words (*Tohu* and *Tiamat*) as warriors who

²⁴ Ira Maurice Price, *et. al. The Monuments and the Old Testament*, 1958 p.104. Minor wording changes from earlier edition read in class.

met in combat Marduk, the most prominent god in the Babylonian pantheon.

(3) Genesis is pervaded with monotheism while the Babylonian account is permeated with polytheism.

How can we account for these resemblances? Did the writer of the Genesis record borrow his account from the Babylonian tablets? Or did the Babylonian record have its origin in the Genesis account? Or did both derive their story from a common original source? These questions will receive attention at the close of the chapter.²⁵

How can you account for these resemblances? Well, how many resemblances are there? You've got a thousand lines here and you've got about thirty verses here, and maybe five percent of the material has a similarity, and the rest of it is entirely different. It seems to me that the likenesses are very, very few. The unlikenesses are very, very many. In various senses the two documents are utterly different.

Look at the similarities Price points out. Among them he says they created the animals and creeping things; created the sun, moon and stars and put them in the heavens; created mankind. Well, if you have a creation story—*any* creation story—what kind of a creation story would you have if these things weren't created? Suppose anybody were to sit down and say let's make up a story of the origin of the universe. Would not his story include the making of mankind, the making of animals and plants, and the making of the sky? The fact that you have these simply shows that it's a creation story, and any true creation stories are pretty sure to have those things in common. It doesn't seem to me that it necessarily shows any similarity between the two other than that they both have creation stories.

So that, to my mind, it is a type of thinking that's very easy to get into: that every time you find any similarity in two things, one of them is simply taken from the other. You could easily read an account in the newspaper, if you want to, or a magazine, about how in 1914, shortly after the beginning of World War I, a German Admiral named Graf Spee was directing his ship near the islands off the coast of South America and there he was met by a British fleet and the British fleet was larger, had more powerful weapons, and the German ships were sunk and Graf Spee went to the bottom of the ocean with his ship. You could pick up a history of World War II and you would read how, in 1940 or 41, a German pocket battleship named *Graf Spee* (after the man who went down off the coast of South America in World War I), a German pocket battleship with that name, met three or four British ships and they had a battle and the Germans sank the boat *Graf Spee* rather than allow it to fall into the hands of the British.

²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 109.

You could read these two accounts and look at the similarities. They both happened in the same place. Graf Spee in one case is the Admiral and the other the name of the boat. Of course that could be a point of misunderstanding there. But in both cases it's the British and the Germans; in both cases there is the beginning of a world war. You could easily say that the second account has just been copied from the first, a few slight changes made as it was copied. Actually, they represent two different events which were twenty years apart. Some of you here read of both of them; probably most of you read of one of them at the time.

The fact of a similarity does not prove one is derived from the other. There must be something more than that. If you have any two creation stories, they are going to have some things in common; how many do you have to have in common to show that one is related to the other?

It is very interesting to take this little booklet of Alexander Heidel's, I have here the first edition of it, which was offset from type; the second is printed—much easier to use but the two are almost identical in this section—and I'm used to this one so I'm reading from this one. But in it he discusses Old Testament parallels between these Babylonian creation stories; he discusses various Babylonian creation stories; and after he discusses these, he takes up similarities. He says Babylonia has Tiamat, the Bible has *Tehom*, a Hebrew word translated "deep" in verse 2. But he shows the difference in the form of the two words. It's very important to show that this similarity does not show relationship between the two. In fact, Heidel argues that the Hebrew word *Tehom* is "older and more original" than the Babylonian word *tiamat*.²⁶

Then, he says, another correspondence is the idea of a primeval darkness.

In *Enuma Elish* this idea is not expressly stated...

Well, then what right have we to assume it? He says,

but we can deduce it from the fact that Tiamat according to Berossus was shrouded in darkness.

Berossus was a Babylonian priest, in the very latest days of Babylon, who gave us an account of creation which has some features in common with *Enuma Elish*, and many that are different; and it seems to me that Berossus is actually less like Genesis 1 in some ways than *Enuma Elish*, in other ways more.

²⁶ Heidel, *op. cit.*, p.100 "To derive *tehom* from *tiamat* is grammatically impossible. ... As far as the system of Semitic grammar is concerned, *tehom* represents an older and more original formation than does *tiamat* since the feminine is formed from the masculine by the addition of the feminine ending, which in Babylonian and Assyrian appears, in its full form, as *-at*."

Berosus doesn't enter this discussion; Berosus was certainly not likely to know Genesis 1. If they knew *Enuma Elish*, the question is, does it say anything about primeval darkness?

I found no word that says anything about it here. Genesis says, "darkness upon the face of the deep." If darkness was on Tiamat's face, how did she do all the things that she did? I don't see any.

Then Heidel says under the head, "Light before the Luminaries" that this is a very, very marked similarity.

Both accounts refer to the existence of light, and the alternation of day and night before the creation of heavenly bodies. In the *Enuma Elish* day and night are spoken of as being already in existence at the time of Apsu's revolt against the ways of the gods his children.²⁷

Yes, they're just taken for granted. Light is taken for granted. But nothing is said about its being created. The Bible says God said "Let there be light." It doesn't seem to me that's a similarity. One has it, the other doesn't.

Furthermore, tablet 1 expressly speaks of the rage of Mummu, though Mummu is just a vizier. Finally, Marduk, the conqueror of Tiamat, was the solar deity. In Genesis day and night are likewise mentioned as in existence before the celestial bodies but here light is a creation and not a divine attribute. It seems to me that is a difference rather than a similarity, but Heidel gives it as a very marked similarity between the two accounts.

Then he speaks of the Marduk–Tiamat conflict which many writers claim is the background of various statements in other parts of the Bible; and Heidel gives a very good argument to prove this is not true. But, of course, that not dealing with our present consideration of Genesis 1—though it is in a general way of relation to the Bible. Then he mentions the creation of the firmament and that is a similarity. The Bible says "God said, let there be a firmament in the midst of the heavens and let the waters be divided, the waters above the firmament from the waters under the firmament." The other says he took Tiamat, cut her in half, and put half up in the air. It is a similarity but doesn't seem to me extremely close. But there is a fair amount of similarity. The Bible doesn't say anything about cutting her in half and putting half up there. But it does divide the waters, it does that.

Then he speaks of the creation of the earth; and it's rather vague here, as much of the *Enuma Elish* concerns creation of the earth. He doesn't say a great deal about it. Then the creation of the luminaries; there is a similarity. The Bible says that God put the moon and stars in the heavens, and the sun to divide days and

²⁷ Ibid. p.101.

night, months and years, and so on. This account says that he established stations for the gods in the heavens and caused that the moon should mark off the months. But after all, all nations have divided time according to the sun, moon and stars. It doesn't necessarily show a similarity between two accounts for this to happen.

Then Heidel speaks of creation of plant and animal life; he says to date no portion of *Enuma Elish* has been recovered which contains an account of vegetation, of animals, birds, reptiles or fish. The opinion is frequently expressed that this actually has been recorded in the missing portion of tablet V, but then he goes on to show why he thinks that is extremely unlikely.

Then he speaks of the creation of man in which he thinks there is a similarity and he says *Enuma Elish* devotes to it almost two full tablets; but I don't see that in *Enuma Elish*. *Enuma Elish* ends with praise to Marduk, a great banquet celebrating in praise to Marduk; it doesn't seem to me there's much similarity between that and God resting on the seventh day. And in almost any account of any great victory you'll have a celebration. The Biblical account isn't a celebration and it's a different sort of thing.

Then he speaks of the seven tablets and the seven days and shows that this is not a relationship; but then he compares the order and he thinks the order is remarkably similar, particularly that you have light before the sun, though the Babylonian doesn't actually mention the creation of the sun at all. It refers to Marduk as a sun, as a sun-god, but there are other sun-gods mentioned in it too. He says that the order is remarkably similar.

In summary, Heidel says,

Our examination of the various points of comparison between *Enuma Elish* and Gen. 1:1–2:3 shows quite plainly that the similarities are really not so striking as we might expect, considering how closely the Hebrews and the Babylonians were related. In fact, the divergences are much more far-reaching and significant than are the resemblances, most of which are not closer than what we should expect to find in any two more or less complete creation versions (since both would have to account for the same phenomena and since human minds think along much the same lines) which might come from entirely different parts of the world and which might be utterly unrelated to each other. But the identical sequence of events as far as the points of contact are concerned is indeed remarkable. This can hardly be accidental, since the order could have been different; thus the luminary bodies could have been created immediately after the formation of the sky. There no doubt is a genetic relation between the two stories.²⁸

²⁸ *Ibid.* p. 130.

This conclusion seems to me unwarranted—and I mentioned to you how last week I heard it said, since even an ultra-fundamentalist like Heidel thinks they're related, we can take it for granted that the two are related and therefore since *Enuma Elish* starts with an adverbial clause, "When from above, there was no heaven, and so on", therefore we can be justified in saying doubtless Genesis 1 would start the same way, and it isn't "In the beginning God created the heaven and earth" but it is "When God began to create heaven and earth, then the earth was without form and void," so matter existed before the earth was created. To me it's not an argument for how Genesis 1 ought to begin, and I think it's unfortunate after all the good evidence Heidel gave to show they should not be considered as related that he ends up by saying "yes but they are related." On what seems to me to be very, very slight evidence.

Well, I have here a very interesting book, *The Book of Genesis*, in the Westminster Commentary series, by S. R. Driver. Driver was the great leader of the English liberal interpreters of the Old Testament; he died about thirty years ago but his books were—most of them—excellently written. He's careful, he's methodical; you can depend on the factual content of most of his statements. And he did as much as any other individual to make the higher criticism receive acceptance in the English speaking world. With his basic views I very heartily disagree, but his material is usually worthy of consideration and he's careful and methodical and he always deserves consideration.

Well, it is very interesting to read what he says about this relation. On page 30 in this commentary on the book of Genesis, after discussing the *Enuma Elish* and quoting the parts which are most similar to Genesis 1, but not quoting the other part, then he says,

The differences between the Babylonian epic and the first chapter of Genesis are sufficiently wide: in the one, particularly in the parts not here repeated, we have an exuberant and grotesque polytheism; in the other, a severe and dignified monotheism: in the one, chaos is anterior to Deity, the gods emerge, or are evolved, out of it, and Marduk gains his supremacy only after a long contest; in the other, the Creator is supreme and absolute from the beginning.²⁹

Now those few words give an excellent statement of this vital difference. But now Driver continues,

But, in spite of these profound theological differences, there are material resemblances between the two representations, which are too marked and too numerous to be explained as chance coincidences. The outline,

²⁹ S.R.Driver, *The Book of Genesis*, (1904) p.30.

or general course of events, is the same in the two narratives. There are in both the same abyss of waters at the beginning, denoted by almost the same word, the separation of this abyss afterwards into an upper and a lower ocean, the formation of heavenly bodies and their appointment as measures of time, and the creation of man. In estimating these similarities, it must further be remembered that they do not stand alone: in the narrative of the Deluge we find traits borrowed unmistakably from a Babylonian source."

Now we'll take that up when we get to the flood; it shouldn't enter our consideration at this time.

So that the antecedent difficulty which might otherwise have been felt in supposing elements in the Creation-narrative to be traceable ultimately to the same quarter is considerably lessened. In fact, no archaeologist questions that the Biblical cosmogony, however altered in form and stripped of its original polytheism, is, in its main outlines, derived from Babylonia. Nor ought such a conclusion to surprise us. The Biblical historians make no claim to have derived their information from a supernatural source."

Well, the Bible as a whole is derived from a supernatural source; and the fact that it doesn't specifically state it in Genesis doesn't prove that it isn't. But it is true that we do not know how Moses got the information. I don't think I need to read the rest of this paragraph, but the next one, the beginning, is very interesting. Driver says,

We have said 'derived ultimately'; for naturally a direct borrowing from the Babylonian narrative is not to be thought of: it is incredible that the monotheistic author of Gen. i., at whatever date he lived, could have borrowed any detail, however slight, from the polytheistic epic of the conflict of Marduk and Tiamat.

Now if that's the case, then as he holds, it went through a long period of gradual change until finally it reached this form. Well, if that's the case, if Driver's view is correct, that the relationship is so slight actually to go through a long period of gradual change, then it doesn't seem to me to be a factor to bother with. But most of the books treat it as if it is a very, very vital factor.

However, there is one book I came across which I'd like to read you a few words from because I found it extremely interesting. This is a little book called *They Wrote on Clay*, by Edward Chiera, edited after Chiera's death in 1933 by George G. Cameron, instructor in Oriental language at the University of Chicago when this book came out, in 1938. Mr. Cameron is now the Professor of Babylonian at the University of Michigan. Published in 1938 by the University of Chicago

Press, *They Wrote on Clay, the Babylonian Tablets Speak Today*. This is Chiera's material, and Chiera was professor of Assyriology at the University of Chicago, edited by Cameron, who is now Professor of Assyriology at the University of Michigan.

Now this book is an entirely different sort of a book from those at which we've been looking. Price here was at the University of Chicago until his death. He was a very conservative man. Chiera is not a conservative. You will be interested to see the background of his attitude here. He tells here about the various tablets in the museums there and the interest of it, it's a very interesting, book, but here he says:

Let us leave for the time being late historical accounts and pass to something more interesting such as myths and cosmogonies.

To start from the beginning, let us take the creation story in the first chapter of the Bible. Here it says in almost every book dealing with the subject, this story is immediately compared with the Assyrian creation narrative and deductions are made. A considerable amount of erudition and ingenuity is generally expended on the work and finally the responses will come in more or less these words: "The similarities found are not sufficient to suggest either direct borrowing or direct relationship." And this settles the problem to the satisfaction of many inquirers. But the procedure, simple and effective though it may be, takes too much for granted.³⁰

And then he goes on to say The Bible contains not one but many creation stories. And of course that's the liberal view and we will examine that as we go on. But he says,

The Bible does not give us one creation but several of them; the one which happens to be featured in chapter 1 of Genesis appears to be the one which had the least vogue among the common people. It stands alone at the very beginning of the Holy Book and represents the highest development of Hebrew theological thought. Its conceptions are so beautiful and so lofty as to give it a place by itself, although creation stories in other books of the Bible are completely at variance with it. The "Assyrian story" which is generally compared with it,

(the "Assyrian story" is what I've been calling the Babylonian story because Assyria and Babylonia are often used more or less synonymously although actually there is a difference.)

³⁰ Edward Chiera, *They Wrote on Clay, the Babylonian Tablets Speak Today*, p. 119.

is not Assyrian at all but goes back thousands of years to the earliest era of time. It happens to have become the "Assyrian" story because it is the first creation account discovered and because it was written in Assyrian, a language easily understood, instead of in Sumerian, which still presents many difficulties of interpretation.... We can say in its favor that it must have been a very popular story to have survived thousands of years, to have traveled from ancient Sumer to the city of Nineveh and even to have been translated into a different language. That it deserves the popularity it enjoys, [this is the Babylonian story, in the main—*aam*] there can be no doubt. It is dramatic, it has plenty of action, and fully explains what it intends to explain.

He doesn't mention it here, but what it intends to explain is how Marduk became the leading god, the particular god of the Babylonians, and it does explain that very nicely. But then Chiera continues,

The opposite is true of Genesis, chapter 1. That certainly contains a more beautiful context and it does reflect a very high state of theological development. Nevertheless, it is merely an enumeration of facts and the style is stilted and monotonous. It was evidently produced in scholarly circles and of necessity condemned to remain there, or the general public would have known it. If we wish to compare that kind of scholarly presentation with a cuneiform narrative, we must compare it with another type of story than the "Assyrian" story. It is useless to hope to get results by comparing a page from a book of philosophy with a drama born out of the passions and emotions of daily life.

Now very interesting—but that was Chiera's reaction to the two stories—and, while I would differ on most points of theology with Chiera, it seems to me that in his judgment of the relations of the stories, he is certainly right. The Babylonian story is a dramatic story of battle, and of how Marduk, according to the Babylonians, became the leading god in the pantheon. The Assyrians took the same story and put the name of their god in place of the name Marduk, and made it try to represent how their god became the leading god.. But, the Biblical story is an entirely different sort of a story, in an entirely different sort of a style, and the two of them deal with creation quite differently.

So I, personally, feel, now here there are two things I'd like to distinguish. One is, what is fact? The second is, what is our attitude to be as Christians, apologists and Christian workers?

Now, as a matter of fact, I personally believe that the evidence for relationship between *Enuma Elish* and Genesis 1 is too slight to consider that there actually is any real relationship between them. I think the average idea presented should be sufficient to fairly well establish that as a fact. But now secondly, as to our

attitude as Christian apologists; today most interpreters take the view that the two are related; but if you have time to deal with someone at length on the matter, give him the evidence, read him the Babylonian story; I don't think it should be difficult to convince him of the facts that the two are not sufficiently related that we have to say that they came from a parent source or either one from the other.

But if you are dealing with someone on the matter of the truth of Christianity, and this is only one of various points that come in, it seems to me that then it is better to say, well, now, actually the material that has relationship, if it does, is comparatively little, and suppose this in Genesis as taken from the Babylonian, which I personally don't think it was at all, but supposing it was, it's completely cleansed of its polytheism; it's completely changed in, its approach; it's completely changed in its presentation. Why would not God have taken material from a Babylonian source and allowed the writers over a period of time to cleanse it of its polytheism, and to make it something which became the vehicle for the presentation of His truth? I don't think He did. But suppose He did. What we have is what God has inspired and it's free from error and is entirely different in ninety percent of the content.

In view of what I just said, I hesitated about taking quite as much time making you familiar with the Babylonian material as I did; but I think it is wiser—for the material which we'll look at—to get an idea of the type of material; and you can't tell how opinion may shift. Five years from now, more and more people may move away from the idea of a relationship. The time may come when it would be very fine to be familiar with this evidence and help give the deathblow to this, which I think is a theory founded on very little of fact. Just at present I don't think it's vital enough to make it a major issue, but I do think it's important to be familiar with the facts about it. I don't think we need to spend a lot of time trying to explain the resemblances because I don't think the resemblances are enough to need much explanation. But if it be assumed that the two are related, well, as Driver said, it's so completely changed that if this came from the other it would have to be over a long period of gradually spreading through Israel and gradually being cleansed of its polytheism; and if that's the case, then surely the final result would've gone through such a long process that the fact that one starts with an adverbial clause would have nothing to do with how the other ought to start.

Well, now, we'll go on to the next point in our outline. This was the claim of Babylonian origin for this chapter, number 10, and I think that we might be justified in closing our discussion of chapter 1 at this point and going on to chapter 2, unless there's some vital question about chapter 1. And since the relationship of the two was important, even if you have a question, it might come in later on.

B. Genesis 2.

1. Is this another account of creation?

This is a very important question. Is this another account of creation? It is common today for somebody to ask, "Do you believe the story of creation in the Bible?" And you say "Yes," and they say, "Which story? You've got two contradicting each other, Genesis 1 and 2. Which story do you believe?" That is a very common attitude today.

In this group last week I mentioned the statement was made, we have two contradictory stories of creation in the beginning of Genesis. One of them starts with water, one of them starts with earth, but they both start with adverbial clauses. And that's similar to *Enuma Elish*; all three start with adverbial clauses. But is it another contradictory account of creation?

Now do we have here another account of creation? My answer is, yes, we have another account of creation, if you ask the question that way. Suppose you have an account of the building of this building here. And you have another account of the building of the Post Office in Podunk City. Do you have two building accounts? Certainly you have. But they're accounts of the building of different things. Now in this case, you have two accounts of creation, but they're not the same creation. Do we have two accounts of the creation of man? Yes. Genesis 1 has two or three verses on how man was created; Genesis 2 has three or four verses on how man was created. Do we have two accounts of the creation of the universe? No. Genesis 1 is the account of the creation of the universe. Genesis 2 is a more detailed account of the creation of man. When people say two creation accounts, you might think they meant two accounts of the creation of the universe. Well, Genesis 1 tells of the creation of light. It's not mentioned in 2. Genesis 1 tells of the creation of the firmament; it's not mentioned in 2. 1 tells of the creation of the sun, moon and stars; it's not mentioned in 2. 1 tells of the creation of vegetation; it's not given in 2. 1 tells of the creation of animals; this is only referred to in 2.

Now, what kind of a story of the creation of the universe do you have without any sky, any heaven, without any light, without any sun, moon and stars? And without vegetation? And with creation being presented. Somebody has given a figure of this, which I think is not quite accurate but pretty good; they said, like two maps in the beginning of an atlas: the first is a map of the world and the second is a map of North America. I don't think that's very good, but I think it has the basic idea. I would like to say it this way, it's like two maps in an atlas: the first of which is a map of the world and the second is a map of the United States. You see the difference? You look at the map of the world and the United States is on it. You look at the map of the United States and you see something of the parts of the world that touch the United States. You look at the map of

the world, and the United States is a little tiny thing in it—just a very small part on the map of the world. You look at the map of the United States, and this little tiny bit is given in much more detail. On the map of the world, it might show three or four cities of the United States. On the map of the United States it might show several hundred. Genesis gives us an account of the creation of the universe, including God's resting on the seventh day, with the creation of man briefly stated in its proper place. Then it takes up the story again, to deal with that which more particularly concerns us, telling about the creation of man. Genesis 1 begins with watery chaos. Genesis 2 begins with dry ground. Is that a contradiction? Yes, it is, if they are two accounts of the creation of the universe. But if one is a larger area than the other...

I might give you an account of my trip to South America last summer, and I might say that we started out here in Elkins Park riding in a car. Then I might be telling somebody about our airplane trip to Brazil, last summer; and I might say that we started out taxiing down the runway in the airport, and then rose into the air. "Oh," somebody would say, "one story starts with riding in an auto and the other riding in an airplane. They contradict each other." No, they don't. One starts in a different place than the other. If the earth was a watery chaos at one time, then after God separated the dry land from the water, there would be times when the trees lacked the water that they need. If the second one says nothing about the creation of the firmament, of light, of sun, moon and stars, what reason is there to say it starts at the same place as the first? The two contradict each other in that they have opposite starts. They do not actually contradict each other because they're dealing with different things; they're dealing with a different point in the story. Now we'll want to look at that in a little more detail tomorrow morning. I think it's a very vital thing because this is one of the most widely spread ideas today against the Bible, that it starts with two contradictory stories of creation. And it's very important that we have a clear understanding about them.

[Review] We began yesterday our discussion of Genesis 2, and under that we looked at number 1, is this another creation account? It is not a different creation account, it is an account of a different portion of creation. The first was like a map of the world; this second like a map of the United States. It takes a very small portion of the whole creation and covers it in more detail. There is no creation in it of the firmament; there's no creation of light; there is no creation of sun, moon, and stars. That goes quite a ways to cut down the label "the creation of the universe" for this second account. However, you will find some critical commentaries that will say, this account contradicts the first account because it has a different account of creation, that in this account you have man created, and then you have vegetation, and then animals, and then woman. Whereas, in the first account you have the order, vegetation, then animals and then man and woman. Is that a true statement? In the first chapter of Genesis we have vegetation created—ignoring other things—these things are

created in this order: vegetation, animals, man and woman, in the first chapter, male and female created he them. That is the order of the first chapter. Everybody should know that. So everybody should say, "Yes that is true as far as the first chapter is concerned."

Well, now, Chapter 2, verse 5 refers to the time when the plants were not growing. Verse 5 would seem to imply they had already been created, but were not yet growing, because it says the reason they were not growing was that it wasn't raining and there was no man tilling the ground, but it implies they were created and growing some time. Verse 8 and 9 say, "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil."

Well, we do not have mention here of grass and of earth, but we certainly have trees mentioned. Is there here the creation of vegetation mentioned *subsequent* to the creation of man? Verse 8 and 9 is not the account of the creation of vegetation. It is the account of the preparation of the Garden of Eden. It is not the account of the creation of vegetation. About half of the critical books recognize that fact. That is to say, about half the critical books say chapter 2 contradicts chapter 1 because it has a different order of creation; it has man, vegetation, animal, woman. While the other half say chapter 2 contradicts 1 because it has a different order of creation, it has man, animal (and they don't mention vegetation because they recognize that this verse is the verse describing the planting of a garden, not the creation of vegetation). So half recognize this and half don't. But if you meet somebody who, in a superficial way, just passes on what they heard, that the two chapters contradict each other and they do so in this way, that the order of creation is different, it's probably because they think that it has man, vegetation, animals, woman, instead of vegetation, animals, man and woman. And that's the first step: to show them that this is not so, to show that this second account does not include vegetation at all.

So our present point is, is this another creation account? Our present point is not, does it contradict, but is it another creation account? And under that present point, whether it is another creation account, we notice it does not refer to creation of the firmament or of the sun, moon and stars, or original matter, it leaves out a very great part of creation, and to that we now add, it is only an account of a portion, only a very small portion. Yes, it is an exposition of the last little section of chapter 1. Chapter 1 is like a picture of this room; chapter 2 a picture of this blackboard—it is a very small portion of the whole room.

Well, verses 5 and 6 are a little hard to interpret. My guess would be that 5 and 6 applied to a portion of the world, but not to creation as a whole. Because

back in the third day it says, let the earth bring forth, the earth brought forth. That would seem to mean that they were already growing in a substantial portion of the earth; but 5 and 6 imply that they already were in existence, but that in a portion of the earth they had not yet grown; and then the mist began to come up, and they began to grow in that portion. I don't think 5 and 6 are an account of creation, but they perhaps imply a previous creation. But the critical claims that the two are contradictory accounts of creation is not true because this second account covers a very small part. The first is like a big panorama and this is a little section of it. The first is like a map of the world, this like a map of the United States, as far as the overlapping is concerned.

But now then for our first point, I think we have answered in saying the only creation explicitly mentioned in this chapter is the creation of man, woman and animals. There is no other creation explicitly mentioned in this chapter. Therefore this chapter covers a very, very small portion of the whole account of creation. Yes, it is a creation account, but only of a portion of creation, an exposition of the finer points of the big account.

Well, that's our first question. Then

2. Does Genesis 2 contradict Genesis 1?

It is alleged that it contradicts it. It is alleged first that it contradicts it because Genesis 1 starts with a watery chaos, and Genesis 2 starts with an arid waste. One starts it with it too wet, the other with it too dry.

a. The difference in the situation at the beginning. But notice that our answer given to the previous matter is that they start at different places. There's no contradiction when they start at different times in the history of creation. I gave you an illustration the other day of one account of my trip to South America last summer which was started from here, riding in a car; another which was started as we were leaving Miami riding in an airplane. They were contradictory because they started differently; but there was no actual contradiction because they started at different times in the journey; and the world would have started as a watery chaos, but eventually the dry land was separated; then the dry land becomes too dry, and it is necessary to provide a means of taking the water and using it to irrigate the earth. So they start at different times. So that's why a contradiction is not there.

Now, the second alleged contradiction I've already called your attention to: the allegation that the order of creation is different. And, in answer to that we notice in the first place that the creation of vegetation is not here described at all. It is merely the planting of a garden, and you could say that you went out in the springtime and planted a garden and caused corn and oats and lettuce to grow up out of the garden. You would not be creating vegetation, you would be

preparing a place for it to grow and putting the seeds in that particular place, and consequently this is the planting of a garden, not the creation of vegetation.

(student: Doesn't it say in verse 6, "the whole face of the ground?") Yes, well, the "whole face of the earth", does that mean the whole world, or does it mean a portion of the world? If it says the "face of the whole earth", that would seem to be the whole world, wouldn't it? But the "whole face of the earth" might be a portion of it. It is difficult to know exactly what the passage means. It would seem to me probably to be that this refers only to a portion of the world, specifically the location of the future Garden of Eden.

Many commentaries recognize the fact that it is not the creation of vegetation, but the planting of a garden. Even though this is not a statement of the creation of vegetation, I would like to examine the order of events. What happened?

In verse 7, the Lord formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. And then God said, "Let there be a garden come into existence, all of a sudden, with great trees growing, a lovely place for a man to live, and we'll take man and put him in it." Is that what it says? It is not. It says, "God planted a garden. How could He have planted a garden? He could have put the seeds into the ground; and he could have said, "Let these seeds sprout up so fast that the tree will grow to be a hundred years old inside of half a day." He could have said that. But I don't think we're justified in assuming that.

What is then the correct assumption about it? The correct assumption about it is that he planted the garden before he created man. The Lord God made man and the Lord planted the garden where he made everything to grow. When did he plant the garden? He planted it in sufficient time that when man was created the garden would be ready for his occupancy.

What kind of a picture of God as a workman would this be, if it shows that God takes the dust of the ground, breathes into it the breath of life, here he now has man living, so where's this man going to live? Well, we've got to make a place for him to live, all right, put him up on the shelf to dry for a hundred years while the trees are growing and until the garden gets ready to put him into it. Certainly there is no implication that God was that sort of a workman. The implication is that God, when he made man, had the garden all prepared, so he started the preparation of the garden first.

I know of a college in California which purchased a place in Pasadena and advertised through the country that it would be a very, very fine place for a college; they had a lovely property; and they were previously in a little place down in Los Angeles where they were crowded. They were going to move to this

lovely place here. They sold their place in Los Angeles; they had everything all advertised; it came to two weeks before school started and they learned that according to zoning regulations they could not have a school in that part of Pasadena. So they immediately looked around. and they found in Santa Barbara, a hundred miles away, an old estate which was in good shape and was for sale and they purchased it like that and moved, up there and started in. They had to get something that was all ready because they wanted to start their school. Since then they have developed that place and made a nice place for a college. But they suddenly found they had to get a place that was all ready.

Well, such things happen in human life occasionally, but not ordinarily. Ordinarily, when you move, you get the place ready first before you make the move. You start your preparation before you actually need it. And here it could say, "And God put Adam in an excellent garden." It could say that. But it doesn't; it says he planted a garden. The inference is that he had planted the garden before he created man, so the garden was ready when man was there.

Now the Hebrew has no specific pluperfect form. In English we say *he did it* or *he had done it*. In Hebrew there is no specific pluperfect form. The perfect can be translated as a pluperfect; and it is a proper translation in a sense in this chapter, in English, after you say that the Lord formed the man, to say the Lord God *had planted* a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he *had formed*.

You see, this "whom he had formed" in verse 8? There's no "had formed" in Hebrew. Hebrew does not have a pluperfect. Whom he had formed was a correct translation and was equally correct as given in the first part of the verse. The Lord God "had planted" a garden, and there out of the ground he had made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and there he put the man.

To plant means God caused these things to grow. It does not suddenly come into being, you would use other terms for that. So that we are justified and in fact required to say that the Lord God planted means he had planted. Now you don't have to say "had planted." It is possible in most languages, and I believe in English—except in most extremely precise English—to say "planted" and mean that this event took place before the other event.

(student: Is Gen. 12:1 a similar case: "The LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out...") Yes, that is a similar case in translation. "The LORD had said to Abraham", they could just translate it "The LORD said," but the "had said" would be entirely justified. And so you don't have to say "had planted" but you have to understand that this event took place before the other. The verses 5 and 6 would be after the original creation, but it would be a situation a little before man was created.

This word "mist", it's not a very good translation. It's a rather uncommon word, some think it's derivative, but it means—it's hard to establish exactly what the word means—it means that God provided a way to get water to the land. You can find plenty of places in the western United States where there's practically nothing growing. It's absolutely desolate; and yet in the spring it rains; and after the rain you go over that place and you can't step without stepping on a flower. It's so covered with the most beautiful wild flowers, every square inch is covered with flowers, and then within a couple of weeks they're all gone and again it is absolutely rank desert. You wouldn't think anything had ever grown there in years.

Now in Mesopotamia, there's very little growth in Mesopotamia now. Most of it is just wild and inaccessible but the two great rivers come down from the mountains and the people take the water from the rivers and they irrigate the land and have most wonderful growth.

Well, I want to stick to this main point. Does Genesis 2 contradict Genesis 1? It does not as far as the beginning of it is concerned. Because, though it begins in an opposite way, it's at a different time. Chapter 2 says that it started with dryness, chapter 1 with wetness, but they're different parts of the same story. Aren't you glad there's no contradiction there?

The order of the planting of the garden is not tremendously important to our present observation, but it lays the ground for something that is important. Let us look at the creation of animals now.

Now as to the order of creation. The creation of vegetation is not described in a different order because the creation of vegetation isn't described in Genesis 2, but the planting of a garden is; and even that is before the creation of man. Well now, how about the animals? The critical books, those which recognize that chapter 2 does not describe the creation of vegetation, but that this is just the planting of a garden, will say the order of chapter 1 is animals, man and woman, male and female created he them. The order in chapter 2 is man, animals, woman. That's what they will say.

Well, the creation of animals is very definitely mentioned in chapter 2. Verse 18, "The Lord God said it is not good that man should be alone. I will make him an help suitable for him, and out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof."

Verse 26 in chapter 1 says man and woman were created. In chapter 2 it says man was created in verse 8 and it says woman was created in verse 22, and in between them it mentions the creation of animals. In chapter 1 it mentions

animals in an earlier section and man and woman both in verse 28. Everybody recognizes that verse 26 in chapter 1 includes both man and woman because it says male and female created he them. Chapter 2 is an elaboration on that verse.

If you were to say that a certain man at a certain time built a house, and then a little later you were to say that this man dug a foundation into which he put a cellar; he built two stories on the house; he put a chimney on it, and he painted it red, you would be telling the same thing twice: first telling it in brief form, secondly in longer form. You have told the same thing twice, and that's what is done here. It says the creation of man, male and female created he them; and in the second chapter it says he created man, and then it refers to animals, and then it says he created woman. So the critics say there is a contradiction because the order in chapter 1 is animals, man and woman, and in chapter 2 the order is man, animals, woman, and that we want to look at.

Now, does he create animals between the creation of man and woman in chapter 2, while in chapter 1 he puts the two in one verse, man and woman? That what we want to look at, and the place to look at it is verse 19 which says he formed every beast of the field out of the ground, and every fowl of the air and brought them to Adam. That is the allegation of the critic, and just as the plain man would read it, as it stands here in the English, there is a contradiction.

But I hold that in interpreting the Bible—as interpreting everything else—you have to do more than just read; you have to interpret to see what it means. The plain man would simply say God made man and God planted a garden. He might say that means he took the man and put him up on the shelf for a hundred years to dry while the garden grew big enough to put man in. But the intelligent man looks at it and says, "No, it means that God had planted the garden before man was created in order that it would be ready."

I had a friend who was a student once at the University of Chicago Divinity School for a year; and he got thoroughly disgusted there, so he left and went to Moody Bible Institute for a year; and he got just as disgusted there. He couldn't be happy anywhere; I saw him when he was at Moody Bible Institute, and oh, he was disgusted. He says, "You know, these fellows here, they'll pray for money when they need money; they'll pray for money, and then they'll go right to the post box and pull out a letter and there's the money right there; and they'd just prayed for it a few minutes before." That is, it seemed to him absurd that a person should pray and should get the money immediately in answer to his prayer. It seems to me that anyone who believes in God would recognize that God could answer last week the prayer I make today. God knows perfectly last week about the prayer I make today, and can answer it in advance so the answer reaches me at the time after I pray; and. it would be a pretty poor

concept of God to say that God had to make man and then he had to wait awhile before he could plant the garden.

(Student question.) I don't think there need be a contradiction to the intelligent man, even in English, because in English if you say that so-and-so got married and he rented an apartment and took his bride there—if you say that in English—I don't think it necessarily means that after they got married, they then went to a real estate company and asked where they could rent an apartment. I think the implication would be that the renting of the apartment took place before they got married and he had it ready so that when he was married it was right ready. But in precise English we would use the pluperfect form, we would say he got married and he had rented an apartment and he moved into it. Now in Hebrew there is not a pluperfect.

The question we're interested in now is the order of creation: man, animal, woman, here. That's the question we're looking at now, is the order man, animal, woman, and if so, it contradicts chapter 1. I think the answer to that is that the order here is not necessarily man, animal, woman, because just as in verse 8 the Lord God planted a garden describes something which happened previously to something in verse 7. The first half of the verse is leading up to it. It is telling of the preparation previously made before 7, and that here I believe we can take the exact meaning intended, that in verse 18 God said, it is not good that man be alone, I'll make a help meet for him, and out of the ground, the Lord had formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air, and he brought them to Adam, the Lord brought to Adam what he had previously made—and so the implication is that the order of chronology is different from the order of the statement here, just as back in verse 8 and in English we can make that evident by using a pluperfect, but we don't have to; it would be understood if it was without a pluperfect.

One says "earth" and one says "ground," terms quite identical. Verse 19 says the Lord brought the animals to Adam; verse 20, but for Adam there was not found a help meet for him. What this means is that the Lord demonstrated to Adam his need of a help meet by showing him that none of the animals was satisfactory; but that doesn't mean that he had just now made the animals; it means that the animals had been made, but now he demonstrated this. It doesn't mean that God said, "Now man needs a help meet; let's make him a help meet," so he proceeded and made a lion and brought him to Adam and Adam said that wouldn't do for a help meet; so then he made a crocodile, and then he made a hippopotamus, and then he brought all these things and they didn't do; so then he created woman; and all the animals had just been made for this purpose, but they wouldn't do, so he just let them keep on living. That is not what it means at all. It means God had created the animals, but now he's demonstrating to Adam the need of a help meet by showing that none of the animals fills this need; and so there is no contradiction, if it is intelligently

understood; but if you take the words, one, two, three, exactly as they stand, and insist on taking them in the simplest possible way instead of interpreting them in a reasonable way, you do have a contradiction as the critics say you do, because you cannot take anything that anybody ever wrote that way. You have to interpret its meaning, rather than simply to take the words exactly as they stand. You get contradictions out of anything that anybody ever said.

Now there are small points on which we could spend months studying, it would be interesting for you to do, but the thing is to get the big points: that the order here does not contradict the order in chapter 1; that it does not say here that animals were created between man and woman; but that the animals which God had created were brought to man to demonstrate his need for a help meet. We will continue with this next time.

====

(Review) We gave number 1, Is this another creation account? And we examined that and saw the difference and the similarities between chapter 1 and chapter 2. It is another creation account, but it is not another account of the whole creation, only an expanded account of a very small portion of the creation; so the two do overlap but the overlapping is such as you might expect anywhere that you discuss a big subject, and then you discuss a smaller subject more fully. Now, number 2 Does Genesis 2 contradict Genesis 1? This is point 2 under B, and under I want to give a sub-point.

The first point was a. what is the difference in the situation at the beginning of chapter 1 and the beginning of the section that runs from chapter 2:5 on? What is the difference there? One is wet and one is dry. Now if you were to have an account of Mr. Rice on a vacation trip last year, and he said it was a little wet, why you might think he had just come out of a swimming pool, whereas you might read another account of his experience as he started for the pool and say that he was very dry, and you would figure that he had not yet gotten into the pool. The two accounts do overlap, but the beginning may not be the same unless the accounts are accounts of the same thing exactly. Overlapping accounts don't have to start at the same place. That's quite obvious, I should say. This question then is decided by the first question, do we have two accounts of a complete creation? The answer is no. We have an account of complete creation and an account of a portion of creation. Consequently this is not a contradiction. Frequently it is said that it is, but it is not. Now we won't go into such a matter as to whether there is a difference in manner of creation of mankind. Everybody recognizes, I think, that it's given a very general form in Genesis 1, a detailed form in 2. That is not, by anyone I've ever heard of, the mark of a contradiction. But now

b. The order of the events of creation. And the order is alleged to be a contradiction. As you already know, that some say the order here is man, vegetable, animal, woman. Others say the order is man, animal, woman. So for sub point under b, we will put

(1) There is actually no mention here of the creation of vegetation. He planted a garden; and every time every one of you plants a garden and somebody takes it as a creation story, we'd have all sorts of contradictory creation stories. It just says he planted a garden, that's all it said.

(2) The planting of the garden precedes the creation of man. Now, that, of course, is an inference. I was just reading a critical commentary in which he said that it's perfectly clear that the author thought of the garden as planted after man was created. Now how did he know it's perfectly certain? To my mind, that is a ridiculous, absurd statement to make. It is perfectly certain that the author expected that, unless you are convinced that the author was a lunatic. And if you are convinced he was a lunatic, even then you can't predict what he will do, so you can't be sure then that he will do the preposterous, absurd sort of thing. God created man, and then he planted a garden, and in this garden he put the man. Well, if he created the man, then planted the garden that day, and the next day he put him there, it would have been a long time before there were any trees to give them shade or fruit or anything else.

"Garden" isn't a particularly good word. It's not a garden used in the sense of a vegetable garden; it's more like a park, but we think of a park as a place simply for recreation and music. This is more than that. This is a place—a sort of combination of garden and park—the place which is ideally suited for people to live, because it has got what they need: the trees providing all the fruit they need for food; and providing the shade and the shelter and all the other things. And to create man and then put him aside to dry for several decades until the garden had grown is an absurd thought. If the original had intended to say that God made the garden after he made man, it stands to reason it would have said, "And God caused a garden to suddenly come into existence." But that's not what the account says. It says, he planted a garden. And thus the planting was done before the creation of man—assuming that the author of the account was talking sense instead of nonsense. And there is not a pluperfect in Hebrew, but you don't even have to have a pluperfect. In English we can make it specific and clear by making a pluperfect but we don't have to do so.

You might say President Eisenhower appointed so-and-so as secretary of this and then go on and tell whom he appointed later; and then you might say whom he appointed to a different office, in which you're taking the officers in order of importance instead of giving them in chronological order. It is dogmatically stated by certain critical commentaries that the planting must

have come after, but there's absolutely no ground on which to base it. The planting of the garden actually precedes the creation of man.

(3) It does not state that the animals were created after man. You see, the reason why the critical commentaries are so anxious to insist the planting is after the creation of man is because they insist that the making of the animals was after the creation of man in order to get a contradiction; but read the passage and see what it's talking about; and you find that what it's talking about is bringing the animals to Adam in order to demonstrate that no one can be satisfied without a help meet; and the critical commentaries are assuming, not merely that this is an uninspired story, not a story of truth, they are assuming that the author of the story was a man of sub-moronic intelligence; to assume that he pictures God here as making man and then saying, "Now we've got to have a help meet for man. What'll we do? All right, I'll make a giraffe, bring him to man; well this is not a help meet, All right, we'll make a crocodile; see if this works." God makes all these complicated animals—a tremendous variety among them, and very, very complex, and very wonderful kinds of species that these animals are—and God makes them one after the other and brings them to see if they fit and they don't; but they're already made, so they're still in existence but that's what they were made for.

It's perfectly obvious that the author of it—even if he made up the story out of his head, and it was a purely human story—would have had more intelligence than to imagine such a thing. He is saying that God brought before man these animals, that God made them, but it doesn't mean to say that God made them right at this moment. In English we could put in the pluperfect to convey the idea. Hebrew does not have that particular device. You don't have to have such device, even in English. It would not be necessary to make it a pluperfect in order to indicate that.

Now, then, the three facts noted as to the order of the events, we can draw our conclusion fairly from them, that the order is not contradictory. It is stated in Genesis 1, God created man, male and female created he them. It is stated in Genesis 2 that God created man, and then a little later that he made the woman. There is no contradiction between the two accounts. Genesis 1 does not say they are created the same instant necessarily. Genesis 2 does not say that others are created between the two.

So much then for this subject, does Genesis 2 contradict Genesis 1? I think these two together—is it a different account of creation, does it contradict—are extremely important, because if you ever are going to have to do with college students who take any courses in Bible whatever—in almost any school—you're going to find that this is stated in an off-hand manner as that of which there is no question at all: that the Bible begins with two contradictory accounts of creation; and if you don't have a reasonable understanding of the situation, you

either make extremely unwarranted statements, which doesn't work out, and naturally destroys their confidence in everything else that you say; or else you concede too much beyond what the background requires. But you see what the situation is, that you find that this widespread statement completely false and an attack of the enemy.

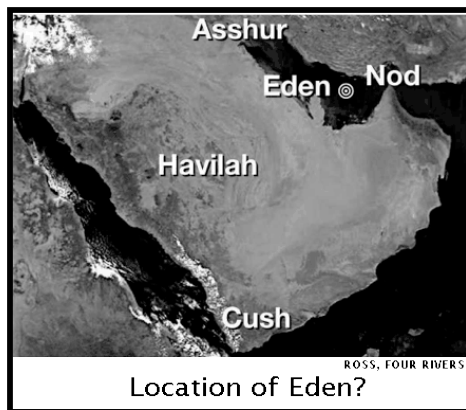
Well, now we go on to matters of interpretation,

3. The Garden of Eden. In Genesis 2 here we have the Garden of Eden established. God plants the garden and He puts man in it, and under that

a. The Geographic Location. Where was the Garden of Eden? Well, we read here about a river which went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. If you take that as going downstream, it certainly is a very unusual arrangement, a river which divides into four parts. The Pison is one that had become four. It's quite the usual thing with rivers today that if you go up them you will find a big river; you will find a Mississippi River, falling into the Gulf of Mexico, a tremendously big river; and as you go north you will reach a point where it divides into two parts. And I forget which is further south, the division of the Ohio or the Missouri. It divides into two and where you divide with the Ohio, the Ohio is a tremendous big river but not nearly as big as the Mississippi. Where you divide with the Missouri, the two are so close together in size it's pretty hard to say which is the real river, and the Missouri you have from there on, is a much longer river; it should be called the Missouri-Mississippi, and the Northern part of Mississippi given another name. Well, that's just a matter of names. But here you have three heads. You come north up the Mississippi and it becomes three heads. There's the Ohio; there is what we call the Mississippi; there is that long, big river which we call the Missouri which reaches clear out into Montana.

That's not our usual terminology today. Usually when you say the rivers became, we would think of it going down rather than going up. But now if this means going downstream it's different from any river anywhere in the world that I ever heard of. If it is going upstream then you have a river here which is formed by four rivers coming together. Now, we have a river today in Mesopotamia formed by two rivers coming together, formed by a river called Hiddekel and the river called Perat. Hiddekel was the Hebrew for Tigris, Perat was Hebrew for Euphrates. It's rather strange in the King James Version here, it does not translate Hiddekel. It leaves it Hiddekel, the Hebrew word for Tigris; but it doesn't say Perat; it translates it to our English form Euphrates. That's rather inconsistent, but then no translation ever made is entirely consistent. It's impossible to be so. Could they have been a little more so here, it's hard to say. But at any rate these two today come together into one river, the Euphrates and the Tigris, come down through Mesopotamia. But what about these other two rivers? The river Pison is the river that compasses the land of Havilah where

there is gold. We know nothing about it. And the river Gihon compasses the whole land of Ethiopia. What we call the land of Ethiopia today is in Africa. How would a river go down to Africa, and then join with the Tigris and Euphrates?



Now there are two possibilities to my mind: one possibility is that the world was entirely different at the time of the Garden of Eden than it is now. That's entirely possible. And that at that time the Nile River coming from Ethiopia, a river going to a place where there is much gold called Havilah—don't know where it is—and the Tigris and the Euphrates, the four of them would have come together somewhere in the region where—south of Asia, and northeast of Africa—what is now the Persian Gulf and Indian

Ocean, somewhere in that area these four rivers would have come together. And that would be the place where the Garden of Eden was, at that time; but it is entirely different now than what it was. Now that is a possibility.³¹

Another possibility would seem to me perhaps, to be more likely—and yet I'm not at all sure about it—is that these names were remembered and later were applied to other rivers; and that the actual Garden of Eden might have been up in Alaska, or down in Patagonia, or over in the heart of China, or most anywhere. We don't know. Now as between the two, it doesn't make a great deal of difference, much, because we know that at the end of chapter 3 the people were driven out of the garden, and they remained out of the Garden of Eden until the time of the flood; and where they went, where they wandered, how far from the Garden of Eden they got before the flood, we don't know; but then they were in the Ark for about a year, drifting around the world; and when that Ark landed they might even have been halfway around the world before the world could be got into; and so it's pretty hard to say much about conditions today in relation to the actual Garden of Eden.

³¹ [dcb] Figure is a NASA satellite image reproduced in Hugh Ross, *Navigating Genesis: A Scientist's Journey through Genesis 1–11*. It shows the courses of two ancient river systems in the Arabian Peninsula. There is a question in interpreting Genesis 2 about what is meant by the "head" of a river. Ross takes the view that the "head" is what we call the "mouth" of a river, not the source of the river. MacRae here takes the conventional view that it is the source. Ross argues that the Garden of Eden is in the vicinity of the mouths of the Tigris and Euphrates—now under the Persian Gulf—and argue that this is what is referred to by the "head". The satellite figure shows two other ancient riverbeds that converge at that same place under what is now the Persian Gulf. See Hugh Ross, [Four Rivers and the Location of Eden](#) (April 10, 2014). "Satellite imagery reveals the dry beds of two large rivers that once flowed from central and southern Arabia into the southwest region of the present Persian Gulf." See also Jeanna Bryner, [Lost Civilization May have Existed Beneath the Persian Gulf](#) (Dec. 9, 2010). The second article includes satellite imagery showing the location of two ancient riverbeds.

I would incline to think we knew nothing about where it was—nothing about the meaning of these rivers—except that there is so much detail given about the rivers, it just makes you wonder whether it might be that we do have here a trace of knowledge of something which today is very different but yet somewhere related to where those places are today. We just don't know. There is a great rift which runs down through Palestine, to make the Dead Sea, which the Jordan River follows; it can be traced down into Africa, so that it is true that there have been great cataclysms and changes in that area, and it is highly possible that the Garden of Eden might have been there and then, with a great cataclysm, have been covered up with water...

These are the names which the Hebrews gave to their rivers—that is, to two of them, Tigris and Euphrates—in the region where Abraham came from. Well, I would think these names came from Abraham. Did Abraham have the four names passed down; had the two from the Garden of Eden been remembered and given to these two later? We don't know. That would be a possibility. Another would be that these are the actual rivers but the place where the garden was is under the water. We just don't know. But what we do know more about—yet even here we have much ignorance—is the trees, so we want to go into that.

b. The trees of the garden. Now we are told here that the trees of the garden would give them food that was to eat, from all of the trees of the garden. One commentary I was looking at today said one reason for the stress on the trees is because in Eden they were allowed to eat the fruit of trees, but after they fell they had to eat herbs. It says in verse 18 of chapter 3, thou shalt eat the herb of the land. I don't think that's quite a true statement. My guess is that they ate herbs also in the garden as well as from the trees. But it is very probable that the major part of their food came from the trees, because that's what is stressed. It said that they are to eat of every tree of the garden, the Lord said thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of life and of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of either of these two trees. Is that what it says? I thought that most everybody would immediately be up in arms at that quotation because it is not what it says at all, but it calls attention to a very interesting problem about these trees. What does he say about the trees here? Verse 17, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." There's no mention here of the tree of life. But up in verse 9 it says, out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Now why does it mention the tree of life up here, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Mentions two of them, doesn't it? Down below he said, "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it."

Then we get over to chapter 3 and the serpent says, is it true you mustn't eat of the fruit of any of the trees, and she says no, we can from all of the trees except the tree that's in the midst of the garden. What does she mean, the tree of life or the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Well, the serpent says "in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, you will be as gods, knowing good and evil," and they ate of it and we read in verse 22, the Lord said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil, and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever: Therefore the Lord sent them forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken."

But, first, the trees of the garden; we have two mentioned specifically. The two mentioned specifically are the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And he commanded not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but in the end he is driven out of the garden so he won't eat of the tree of life too. Well, why didn't he eat of the tree of life before? The critics have a very simple solution: they say that these are two different stories which have been combined. They say in one recension of the story, it was the tree of life they were forbidden to eat of; and another recension said it was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and whoever combined the two didn't iron out the fact that he had two different stories to combine. So we're told that it was through eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil that they fell, but then they're driven out because they won't eat of the tree of life, and so they say, actually, the story originally had only one tree in it. That's what they say. Well, the only reason for saying it is that they don't get sense out of it this way. There certainly is no reason why God shouldn't have two trees.

That word "critics" is an unfortunate word because a critic properly is one who studies it in order to understand it correctly. There's nothing wrong with the word "critic". But those who have studied it with a viewpoint, examining it and come out with conclusions against it and dividing it up into all kinds of sections, they have given so much attention to it and they say this is the result of criticism, that just in a loose way we often refer to them as the critics. But it's a common term and I don't think there's any harm in it, but it's not strictly accurate. We think of the critical scholars as though we mean the destructive scholars; and the believing commentaries will not say these particular things that I've mentioned. It is a term which I think it is good for you to have in mind what we mean when we say it, I don't see any harm in using it, but to speak more correctly we should say the destructive critics. But properly anyone who studies this carefully is a critic—the word critic, one who studies carefully.

Well, now we can simply say we believe this is God's Word; what it says is true; it says there were two trees, and we accept it. We don't know much about them but there were two trees and that's that. Well, that's perfectly all right. We take what God gives us and we believe it. But it is helpful, I think, to have some idea

about the problems the critics raise; and to note where they are not based upon specific evidence; where they're based purely on theory, as this one is; and it is also worthwhile to have something of an idea of, at least a tentative suggestion for, the explanation of matters which some destructive critics may bring up, who think it just doesn't make sense and therefore you have to change the text or throw it away. If we have an idea or a sensible suggestion—I think it is helpful that we should label it as such—make a careful distinction between that which the Scripture specifically teaches and stand upon it, and that which is our suggested interpretation.

Now what about the tree of life? Well, I would say that the tree of life is given a name which would indicate that it is of very considerable importance. That would surely be a reasonable conclusion from the name.

But that doesn't say a great deal. You could call any tree the tree of life but you wouldn't pick up some little tiny shrub which was not at all important and call it the tree of life. You wouldn't be apt to do that; you'd be apt to have some reason of importance. What was the reason for calling it the tree of life? We are not told in chapter 2 anything about it except that there was a tree of life. That's all chapter 2 says, and so for our present purpose we might just say there was a tree there called the tree of life. But the Lord considered this of tremendous importance to mention it specifically here in chapter 2, the tree of life, that there was one. That's all in Genesis 2.

Now it's anticipating to look ahead to chapter 3, but I don't think there's any harm in doing that now, just from this particular point. We don't want to get into the interpretation of 3 till we get there, but the interpretation of this one point; now, why is it called the tree of life? Well, chapter 3 starts in talking about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it doesn't have anything about the tree of life, as you will all agree, till you get near the end of the chapter. But near the end of the chapter we read that "the Lord said, behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. He's eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore, the Lord sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken." And this has caused great difficulty to interpreters. And they say, "If man could take the tree of life and eat, so that he would then get immortality—well why was God so concerned about his not eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Why didn't he tell him he mustn't eat of the tree of life? Is the man so stupid that he didn't have the sense to eat of this tree? Here was this tree that would give him immortality and man didn't have sense enough to eat of it. It was just there. God didn't even have to mention it."

But, suppose man had happened to stumble on it and eaten it; it would have upset God's whole plan, wouldn't it? Man had already eaten of the tree of life;

he was immortal; now if he eats of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, there's nothing God can do about it, is there, because he has already eaten of the tree of life? Well, of course, we think that's ridiculous; we think that even if man had eaten of the tree of life, God caused him to die. But then why is God so concerned to drive him out of the garden lest he eat of it now? If he didn't think to eat of it before, God could've done away with it. Well, if he ate it now, God could do away with it. God could take the tree out of the garden as far as that's concerned. Why is it necessary to drive man out of the garden lest he eats of the tree of life? What is the point of the tree of life?

Well, every commentary that I have looked at has considered it from a magical view that the tree of life is a tree that you eat once and you have immortality; it just makes you so that you never die, and that's that; and it seems to me that it is quite unnecessary to interpret it that way.

Now I'm not dogmatically stating that another interpretation is correct—I'm not saying that—but I do say dogmatically that that interpretation is not required by the context. There is nothing in the second chapter to say that it'll make him immortal to eat of the tree of life. In addition, I would say there is nothing in the second chapter to suggest there is anything wrong with their eating of the tree of life, at this time. There is nothing to suggest that God ordered them not to, or that he didn't want them to. If he didn't, why would he say you may eat of all of the trees, if he meant all except the tree of life, in addition to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? So, you cannot say dogmatically that this tree of life is a tree which eating from it once confers immortality. That we cannot say.

Now I don't say it's wrong to say it, if somebody wants to say it; it's within the bounds of proper interpretation, but it's not within the bounds of required interpretation. What other proper interpretation is there than that? Take verse 22, the Lord said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil, and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever." It is certainly a possibility that verse 22, when it says take from the tree of life, and does not mean take once and eat once, but it means *keep on taking* and keep on eating, and keep on living forever. It certainly is a perfectly possible interpretation of it. A man could say "Here is a pond and everybody that comes by is apt to go swimming in it. I am going to put a big fence around it so that no one will swim in this pond." And then one day he's talking to some people; he says, "Come on in here and take a swim in the pond." He has put up the fence about it so that nobody will swim in the pond, but he doesn't mean necessarily that he's against anybody ever swimming in it. It means he doesn't want people to be able to make a practice of coming in any time they feel like it and swimming in his pond. Only when he permits them to do so; so he put the fence there.

Now God says, "Let man take of the tree of life and eat and live forever," and there is a possibility that that means keep on taking, keep on eating, and keep living forever. It is a possibility. And in support of that possibility, I would call attention to the last chapter of the Bible; because in the last chapter of the Bible, you find the Lord describes what is perhaps the re-created Garden of Eden. Chapter 22, verse 1, "and he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life." Well, how could it be on either side of the river? Does he mean he doesn't know which side it's on? Or does he mean you have to look here at this side, and you have to look here at this side? How can a tree be on either side of the river? I might say to you, you go and plant a tree beside the river and you say do you want it on the east or on the west, and I say I don't care, plant it on either side. But I wouldn't say that after you will find the tree is on either side; I wouldn't say that, it would be one side or the other, if there was one tree. This on either side of the river certainly means on both sides. It is certainly a description here of a river which has a tree of life on both sides of the river.

Now how can one tree be on both sides? Certainly it means that the word tree is here collective. It means the trees: some are on one side and some are on the other; the trees of life are there. We're not told trees of life in Genesis 1, we're just told one tree, but here we are told of various trees; but what do these trees do? "The tree of life bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Now, if the leaves were for the healing of the nations, what was the fruit for? The fruit as to eat and live, but there's no suggestion here that one eating makes a person live forever.

The suggestion is that they eat and eat and eat, and there are twelve different kinds of fruit. My own personal feeling as to the meaning of the tree of life—a theory on which it would be very foolish to be dogmatic. I'm merely dogmatic on this, that there is no statement that this theory is invalid; that there is no statement that the tree is a tree which is once for all: eat of it and you're immortal; there's no such statement. So I say the other interpretation is just as probable—and a great deal more probable in my opinion. You take a person today, and why do we die today? We die because our system does not build up everything that is worn down. A little child plays three, eight, ten, twelve, fifteen, sometimes more hours a day; and it builds up all its tissues that have been torn down and builds up additional tissues and it grows; and as we get older we are growing; we are rebuilding the tissues that we use up; but after a certain age, we only re-build part of the tissue that we use up in the course of a day. They say that in seven years our whole body is made of different matter than it was seven years ago. As we're constantly taking in, we're constantly sloughing off; we are getting new matter into us all the time, but the tissues are not wholly rebuilt for what we lose and what we wear out.

Well, they are now telling us that if we take certain vitamins and certain preparations, that our tissues will last longer—that it will rebuild a larger amount of what is torn down—but nobody says that we will live forever because we cannot stop the process. But it seems to me that it is entirely reasonable as a conjecture that the tree was a tree, or perhaps a group of trees, which had fruit which produced those vitamins, those minerals—which contained those minerals, produced those vitamins, produced those chemical substances—which the body could use to entirely replace what was used up, in such a way that one who had them would not need to become old, would not need to wear out, to decay, and eventually die. Thus it was not that the matter of immortality was simply you take a man: here he is immortal, or here he is going to die; because we are continually renewing, but if you provide the material which makes the process go on forever, the life continues for ever; or if you withhold that and it does not continue forever, it wears out. Well, if that is the case, then, in chapter 2 the tree of life was in the midst of the garden, these trees which had these particularly valuable vitamins and other substances for continuing life; and they were available to man and man used them; but after God said, "That man is going to die," it was no longer his desire that he have access to this particular material. Now that he had eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and had an understanding far beyond what he had before, if man remained in that area it would have been only natural that he would have taken advantage of that which he had not understood before. And so one reason—certainly not the only reason—why God drove man out of the garden of Eden, was to break his connection with the tree of life, because it was God's will now that man should die, that his body should gradually wear out; Adam lived hundreds of years but he finally died, and all men since that time have died.

And then we have another tree that is specifically named: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and here again, or even far more than it was previously, there are certain things that are definite; we can stand upon those things. There are other matters on which we can only conjecture. What is definitely taught in this Scripture? We are definitely taught that it is a tree to which the Lord gave the name—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He calls it that, verse 9, the Lord made the tree to grow which is the tree of knowledge of good and evil. That is an appropriate way to describe this tree, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. We find in verse 17 that the Lord forbade Adam to eat of this tree. And he told Adam that the day that he ate thereof he would surely die. How long was this particular day, the day in which he ate of the tree he surely would die? Well, this is, we are told in advance, it is very, very long. We are not told that it is a poisonous tree which will kill, we are not told that. That could be an interpretation, couldn't it? Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, might mean this is a poisonous tree; don't eat of it because if you eat of it, it will kill you, but we know from what follows that it

did not have that effect. The death that came was God's punishment—not caused by the eating of the tree—it is caused by God's judgment upon them. So the eating of the tree did, not, in itself, bring death, though this verse might be interpreted to mean that. But the eating of the tree brought God's condemnation and God gave them death as a result of the condemnation.

So this is a tree, then, which is of tremendous importance. Now what happened about this tree? This is the only tree man is forbidden to eat. The serpent said to Eve, in chapter 3, is it true you mustn't eat of any tree in the garden? Eve, says, no we may eat of all of them, except one, the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden; there's one particular one you may not eat. The serpent says, you won't die, because God knows that in the day you eat thereof your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil. Now we cannot take this verse as the truth, because we don't know whether the serpent is lying or not. It is a suggestion the serpent made; he says to them, no, he says, you won't die if you use this; this isn't a poisonous tree; and I think he was right there: no evidence that it was poisonous. But he says, God knows the day you eat thereof your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.

Was the serpent speaking truth or telling a lie when he said this to them? Which was it? It was truth. We know that because when they ate, their eyes were opened. That proves the first part of what he said was true. We know that further because it says that God said, now man has eaten of the tree and has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; so we know that what the serpent says here is true: that man would be like gods; not that man would be identical with God; not that man would have all the power of God; not that man would be immortal; but that in some way man would be made more like God than he was already, in some way, because of eating of this tree. We know that was a fact, because God said that it had happened. So in some ways man became more like God when he ate of this tree; and then we find that after he ate of it, his eyes were opened; and certain things happened and God gave him a punishment and God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil, and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life and live forever, therefore the Lord sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken."

Well, those are the facts, what we've looked at now; and those facts are clearly taught here and we should know them, and we should stand upon them; they are what it teaches. But as to the interpretation of those facts, at certain points there is great difference of opinion; and most particularly on what the name indicates. One very common theory among good conservative people, one very common theory is this; God calls this the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because it is through this tree—by means of this tree—that God would know whether Adam would choose good and obey God, or choose evil and turn

away from him. Therefore, it is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because it is the tree by which God would know whether man chose good or evil. That is a theory which gives a very reasonable interpretation to the meaning of the name. And it could just as well, according to that theory, have been instead of being this tree, have been any tree. God could have picked any tree at all and said, "Now here's a test whether man will obey God. If you will obey God, you won't touch that tree; you won't eat anything from that tree. If you eat from that tree, it is proof that you are turning to wickedness, you are disobeying God; that tree is the test by which God knows whether you choose good or evil." Therefore, the title, according to this theory, proves nothing whatever about the intrinsic nature of the tree. That is a theory which some hold. And it is a theory which gives a very reasonable explanation.

C. S. Lewis has written a book called *Perelandra*, which is an account of a re-enactment of the fall; and in this re-enactment man stands the test, but it is similar to this; and I think has a very great value in putting the thing in other terms to show its reasonableness. But according to that story that Lewis writes, man as he describes him lives on an island; they have floating islands, and then there is a fixed land; and man can go on the fixed land all he wants, but he's never to stay on it overnight. That's a command, and if man stays on it overnight he has broken God's command. And then there comes a being from this earth, possessed of the devil; he comes there and talks to Eve and tries to persuade her that she should go and spend a night on the fixed land. After all, why shouldn't she, it would be very nice, much more comfortable there than on this land that's jumping around all the time, a floating island; but God had told her not to, and she stands the test, according to that story. Well, you see there's nothing moral, right or wrong, about sleeping on the fixed land instead of on the floating island. It is purely just something arbitrarily selected to see whether man will obey God or not. That is a theory which some take as the meaning.

[Review] Here's a tree that's any tree. God makes this a test. Will man obey God, will he carry out a simple test, or will he choose to turn away from God? So this simple test, just take any tree and you say here's this tree, it has fruit and looks very nice, but don't eat of it. And we call it the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because it's the tree by which God will know whether man will choose good or choose evil. That would be very satisfactory as the name of it, and it would be an explanation of the name of it and, after all, that is what is important from our viewpoint; because the important thing is that man disobeyed God. The important thing is not what the tree did to him, but that he disobeyed God; that's what matters. And when he disobeyed God, he put his own desire ahead of God's desire; his own will ahead of God's will; followed Satan instead of following God; and consequently he fell; and what the tree amounted to is not, as far as we can see, of any great importance if the major central theme is that he chose to disobey God. So this is what is most vital and

on this we can be dogmatic: that the tree did fulfill the function of a tree which would give God knowledge of whether man would choose good or evil.

Well, if you don't like the term "give God," because God knew everything from the beginning, then say "would give the universe," which would demonstrate to us; which would be the means by which a result would be secured; which would cause that man to proceed as God's child, following him, developing a faith and trust; or that man would fall so it would be necessary to redeem any who might be saved.

Since that is the primary thing; the thing that's significant for us; that's important to us; the thing on which we can be dogmatic; that this tree has this function; and therefore it would be altogether proper to follow this knowledge of good and evil from this viewpoint and be satisfied with it; and my guess is that as far as 99% of your dealing with Christian people is concerned, this is all you need to know about it. As far as 98% of your talking—with your presenting this, your dealing with the matter, you don't need anything more. But if you're going to get into the passage, and see its problems as well as its great central teaching, you immediately do find that there is a very definite problem which comes up in the third verse: that Satan said God knows in the day you eat thereof your eyes will be opened and you will be as gods, knowing good and evil; and we find that when they ate of it, it immediately said that the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And then we find that God said, "behold the man is become as one of us to know good and evil, and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life." And why does man's knowing good and evil make him more apt to put forth his hand and take of the tree of life?

And how did man become more like God? My guess would be that he means that man is becoming more like the superman. That would be my guess. That is to become more like supernatural; but he wouldn't become more like a heavenly being to know evil. So we do have this problem, which should not blind us to the major thing which is that it was a simple test by which man showed whether he would obey God, or disobey God and fall in sin. But this problem is there: that the eating the fruit seems to have made an actual change in man. Not merely because Satan says so, but as soon as it happened the text says his eyes were opened. Well, were his eyes opened simply because he had sinned, or were they opened some way as a result of the eating of the tree? I think we could say, perhaps, just because he sinned, regardless of what it was he did.

I would feel very strongly that man's becoming a sinner was not a result of something in the fruit; that man became a sinner when he disobeyed God. That's vital. But this is a matter of the interpretation of these two or three verses. And it would seem to me that one thing we could note about is that

these two Hebrew words *tov* and *rah*, good and evil, do not necessarily mean *moral* good and evil. That we can say dogmatically. The words do not necessarily mean moral good and evil. Has everybody got that noted down? That is a something we can say dogmatically. So everybody have it in mind.

Aside: "Good" and "Evil". (Student) All right. Very good. That gives a point to examine. Mr. Welch says he does not conceive of any good or evil except moral. Now that's very good; but unfortunately the question that's before us is not what does Mr. Welch conceive of, but what does the Bible teach? And I'm only giving him as one example. It isn't what I think of it; it isn't what you think of it; it isn't what any man thinks; it is what does the Bible teach? And when you speak of what the Bible teaches, again you we must distinguish between two things. Not what are the concepts that gather out of those things, but what do these words mean in the Bible? I would thoroughly agree with what I think Mr. Welch is meaning to say, that the difference between moral good and moral evil is so important that it overshadows every other consideration. I would thoroughly agree with that. But the question of whether the Hebrew word *rah* which is translated "evil" always means moral evil is a different question, and that's the question I'm dealing with now.

What I'm saying is that this particular word *tov* and this particular Hebrew word *rah* do not necessarily mean moral good or evil; that these particular words can have another significance. And I'd just like to—if somebody will just dogmatically say the words can never mean anything but moral good or moral evil—then it would be very interesting to look at one or two passages and see what light the passages would throw on the question. Now you notice I'm not saying these words do not mean moral good and evil, I'm saying they don't *necessarily* mean that. We will readily agree that they must *often* mean moral good and evil, but I'm saying that these two Hebrew words do not necessarily mean moral good and evil.

Now we look at Jeremiah 24. Now Jeremiah takes this word *rah* and in one case, instead of translating it evil, he translates it "naughty." Well, that's a moral word, isn't it, to say a little child is naughty, that's moral evil, isn't it? I don't mean Jeremiah translates it naughty; I mean the King James translator translates it "naughty" in Jeremiah; but in Jeremiah 24 we read "the Lord showed me and behold two basket of figs were set before the temple of the Lord," verse 2, "one basket had very good figs," that's *tov*. You see, these were highly moral figs—very good figs—"one basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe." The other basket had very naughty figs, morally bad, very naughty figs, *rah*. They could not be eaten they were so bad. You wouldn't want to eat figs that were morally evil, would you? The English translates it "naughty" which, in my opinion, is about as bad a translation as anybody could possibly give for that word in its context. Now, that doesn't mean that a bad translation was made. Probably not; three hundred years ago it did not mean moral evil,

but today it does; and so we say it's a very, very poor translation. "Then said the Lord unto me, what seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs, the very good; and the evil (here it doesn't say naughty, it says evil) are very evil (I mean the English translation doesn't say naughty), that cannot be eaten, they are so evil." Well, there he could have on the branch which he held up were figs which were good and figs which were bad, or as the English here translates it, evil. But there was nothing moral about the figs. This was physical evil, not moral evil, which was involved here in the figs.

Now another example of that is found in Genesis 41. There are many which might be given. But another is in Genesis 41. In Genesis 41 we find that Pharaoh had a dream, and Joseph interpreted the dream to Pharaoh: and there were two kinds of corn that grew, and two kinds of cows that were in it. They are described as the good cows and the evil cows, and the good ears and the evil ears, and in that case they represent years of famine and years of prosperity. And the cows are not good morally, and the corn is not good morally, but they are good physically. Now I took this good and evil and went all through the Bible this morning, and I looked at all the usages; and I found that in perhaps four-fifths of the cases, good and evil are used physically rather than morally, in the use of the word. But it would be interesting to look through and see whether there are cases of a moral being in a physical sense. My guess would be you would find the word, but I just didn't happen to think of it, it did not occur to me.

Now there are other words used for moral wickedness which have never any physical connotation. There's a word righteous which has no physical connotation. There are these other words, but the words used here are the words good and bad which are used generally in a physical sense. Now anything that is good in the great bulk of cases is that which is productive of upbuilding, prosperity, or to expand, that which is physically good; and that which is evil is that which is destructive, that which tears down, that which is not effective for a certain purpose. Now if you apply these terms to the plan of God then naturally these physical terms take on a moral connotation. That which is good in relation to Hitler, is morally bad. Hitler has a good bomber which can drop bombs and kill thousands of innocent people, that was good physically, because it can carry out his will and accomplish his purpose and enable him to make progress in his war; it is good from Hitler's viewpoint, but it is morally bad.

That which is evil physically is the bomb which destroys. That which it accomplishes is good, that which it destroys or tears down is bad.

Now we find an interesting verse with this very word which is used in Isaiah 45:7. There in Isaiah 45:7 we find that the Lord said, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil"—this word, this very same word

that's translated evil in Genesis. I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things. Now in our Westminster confession it says that God is not the author of evil. But in Isaiah that God says "I create evil." Does that say my confession is wrong, that God does do the evil? No, it proves that this word evil here is not a word that represents moral evil but physical evil, God says he creates prosperity and he creates destruction. He says when the Israelites obey him and do his will, he gives them much blessing; that when the Israelites turn away from him, he sends them into exile, he brings evil upon them. It is physical evil not moral. It is done from a view, for moral purposes, but the word in itself means that which is physical.

Now that being the case, I have not said that these words *always* mean physical good and evil, not at all. But I have said that they do not *necessarily* mean moral good and evil. They're very frequently used of physical good and evil. I think myself that a case can be made out that the word in itself means physical good and evil and that when they use these particular words to mean moral good and evil, it's only because they are then applied to God and his mercy. And that which is physically good as far as God's purposes are concerned would necessarily be producing moral good. It would depend on who, in relation to whom, this was physically good or evil.

But it raises the question, is it possible that in this particular case, the tree was called the tree of knowledge of good and evil, because it was a tree which has a quality in it, eating of which could give a man a great step forward in his knowledge or ability in relation to physical good and evil? That is to say, which would make him able to build up and tear down, able to accomplish things in a way which he could not have done previously? If that is the case, then we could say that it was God's purpose man should have this knowledge eventually, but that it was not yet his purpose he should have it; and therefore that he used this tree for the test which would give him the knowledge whether man would follow him or would become independent; but that the reason for the name would be this other reason, rather than the reason of the result of the test.

Now I certainly don't want to be dogmatic about it; I only give it as a possibility. But to me it is a possibility which makes sense. The Lord said man has taken a step forward in his ability to see possibility of his advancement or the disadvantage of others, possibilities of building up or tearing down. He now would see the advantages of taking from the tree of life in a way he would not have, and we must remove from him the possibility of doing harm with this knowledge he has.

In a way, it's similar to what many people think of as the primary problem of our present day, since man's technical ability has gone, they say, ahead of his moral ability; that man has acquired tremendous power of construction and destruction, without having developed morally to the point where he is able to

use it in a proper way. Like giving a child a sharp razor which is a very fine thing for one to use when he's developed enough to know how to use it rightly and not to use it wrongly; but that many think that our present civilization is going to destroy itself; and these who do not have a Christian background on it simply say it is because they have not yet developed morally as far as they should have.

Now of course, God intended—as long as man was true to the Lord, was not a sinner and was following the Lord and was developing as the Lord wanted him to—the Lord would give him increased knowledge to use well.

But if the eating of this fruit gave him a step forward, gave him a knowledge of good and evil in a physical sense, then it would be true that it would open his eyes, it would make him like one of us—in the sense that he had greater physical understanding and power—like one of them. But therefore he should be kept from having that advantage over created life, which God would only give to those who are righteous, and not to those who are sinners. Now, you see, this is simply a matter of the interpretation of these couple of verses. It does not affect the major problem here—which is that man became a sinner by doing that which was contrary to God's will; and that the great bulk of the results comes from the fact of his being a sinner rather than from anything in the fruit; and that that was the thing that has brought the evil upon us. Then, using it in the physical sense, it brought evil upon us; and ever since has made us suffer—endure misery—because we became sinners, not because of whatever advantage might come from the eating of the fruit.

We often hear it said nowadays—by people who perhaps know nothing about Christianity—that the great trouble with our civilization is that our technical knowledge, our ability to do things in the physical sphere, has gone ahead of our control in the moral sphere, our knowledge of relationships between people and how they work together, and that therefore that we are getting into the position of a little child with a sharp razor blade in his hand, or with some strong machine which is a fine thing for one who is developed enough to know how to use it right; but the danger is that our civilization will cut us up to pieces because its moral fiber is not up to the intellectual and material things which it has in its hands. Now if this be the correct interpretation of this, it would mean that God placed this tree here and placed it for a good purpose; and that after man stood the test, and after man proved that he desired to trust God and to do what God's will was; whether it appeared reasonable to him or not—that he wouldn't say, "This is the one thing God doesn't want me to have. God must be mean to me and is withholding it. I'll reach out and take it"—but that he would rejoice in the good things God had given him. But then after a man had stood the test, God would have said, "Now you're ready for it; now eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil; now take this step forward in your material effectiveness now that you're ready for it."

But man then—according to this interpretation—when he takes of this tree, he steps forward in a material way, and at the same time he steps backward in a moral way by virtue of breaking God's command; and he falls because he has disobeyed what God has said; he has refused to trust God; he has put Satan's word ahead of God's word, and his own desire ahead of God's desires; and the result is that then, after he has done that, he is now in this morally bad condition; and he has a power the possession of which is dangerous, particularly for one in that condition; and therefore the Lord says in v.22, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." That is, man has taken a step forward in efficiency, in effectiveness, in ability to accomplish things. He has become more godlike in this purely physical aspect; and therefore, being more effective, more powerful, more wise, it is quite natural then that he will think to put forth his hand and to do the thing that will help to retain him in his power; and to make him able to go forward in a life in defiance of God; and therefore God says he must go out of the garden of Eden and not have access to that which he could use with his newfound power in the attitude which he has assumed in defiance of God.

(Student: Why did they think they were naked after that?) Yes, the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. They now had secured a wisdom which was not in itself morally good or bad, but an understanding which enabled them to accomplish things in various directions and to see various possibilities and potentialities; and probably this would leave them to see that which would never would have occurred to them in their innocent state, to realize the need of something to hide their wicked thoughts from one another and from God. There is certainly nothing to suggest—I heard one speaker tell once how doubtless man and woman had a natural covering and that they sinned and lost this covering, and then they were naked. There is nothing in the Scripture to suggest that, that I know of. Now I don't say that this is impossible; but it doesn't impress me that we have any reason to make such an assumption there. I would think they were just as naked before as they were after, but there was nothing wrong with their nakedness before. Afterward there were two things: the moral change which came simply through disobeying God, and there was also the physical change which would give them the possibility of recognizing potentialities that perhaps they didn't know.

I don't think that man was so much righteous before as he was innocent. He was in a state where he naturally trusted God; and God gave him the opportunity to trust him fully and completely; but then he followed Satan instead of God. Now we often hear it said, "Man died. God says in the day you eat thereof you shall die." Now does that mean that there was a spiritual death immediately? Entirely possible. But I would not want to be dogmatic on it; the Bible does not so state. But this certainly is true, that in the day when they ate it, sin entered into the world and they began the long process of decay, which only nine hundred years later or so resulted in complete physical dissolution.

Now, I don't want to take long on this; as I say, it's quite a minor thing. It's only a matter of understanding these two or three verses. But, to me, those verses used to be a puzzle; and, to me, when I saw that this was a possibility—in fact the most common meaning of these particular words—to me it gave a satisfactory understanding of these verses. But it should never distract our attention from the primary problem: that man became a sinner because he didn't obey God.

Man, having acquired this knowledge of good and evil, would see potentialities, not only of that which was right but of that which was just as wrong; and therefore, he would acquire an embarrassment which under innocent conditions would be entirely unnecessary. God said "Who told you that thou wast naked, hast thou eaten of the tree?" Well, it wouldn't seem to me that the tree gave him the knowledge; it would seem to me that the tree gave him the knowledge of the potentiality involved. It would be awareness of the potentialities of good and evil—potentialities of that which would be advantageous and of that which would not. To me, it fits with the verses more perhaps than the other, although even there the moral might fit all right. A man would then see moral potentialities.

Well, I think we'd better go on to the next point. This was the meaning of the trees. The major point is, that this is the fruit by which God learned whether man would continue to follow him or turn against him; but these verses seem to me to suggest that as far as the names are concerned, the actual effect would be that the words would be taken in their most usual sense.

Well, now

4. The Creation of Woman.

a. The Needs Demonstrated. The chapter devotes a number of verses to tell us of God's bringing all the animals before Adam, but there was no help meet for the man. It is demonstrating the need. God had said, "It is not good for man to be alone, I will make a help meet for him." It is not just an arbitrary action of God, but it is an act to fulfill a need in man as man is created. So a number of verses are given here to demonstrate this need. It is the normal condition in which God has created man, the condition in which he is incomplete by himself.

The word for "good" in that verse is the same word *tov*, and it raises a very interesting question. Is the word here used physically, or morally? Is God saying it is immoral for man to be alone? It is not morally good for him to be alone? Or is it saying it is not physically good? And I'm not using physically just in the sense of that which is material, but in the sense of that which makes for well—

being, that which causes prosperity, or happiness, aside from moral connotation.

I think in this particular verse, there is no question that the word "good" is used consistently. It is not good for man to be alone; man is better off with proper companionship. That, I think, is his meaning here; and he says "I will make him a help suitable for him." So, God proceeds to demonstrate that the attempt of various people today to take animals and make for themselves a satisfactory companion is wrong. Animals are a good companion up to a certain point, but that for help that is suitable for man, an animal will not do for that purpose.

Before I was married, I used to say that a man ought to have either a stick, a pipe, a dog, or a wife; and I—not having a pipe or a wife, nor a dog—I always carried a walking stick. But, of course, when I first went to Germany to study, a man wasn't considered a gentleman unless he carried a walking stick. They all carried walking sticks. Now they don't. But then everybody did.

And when I came back here, I had got the habit and I enjoyed it; and when I got back here, nobody else was carrying them here—outside of someone who was lame—so I had to think of a rationalization to explain it and that was the one I gave. Since I got married, it's not necessary. But God brought the animals to man to see, and there was found no help meet for man. So the need is here demonstrated. It is the normal way in which God made man.

I remember one time, speaking of the courage of the Pilgrim settlers, how they came to Plymouth; and how they succeeded in establishing a colony which was successful; and that, of course, was of great importance what was done—not that a hundred people came to Plymouth and, made a little colony which eventually was absorbed by other towns—but that they proved that it could be done. They came from England—poor people, without much training, without any resources—but they came over and they settled there; and half of them died, the first year; but in the next six or seven years, only two or three of them died. They succeeded in carrying on and establishing a home way across the ocean in the wilderness; and the result was that well-to-do people, with the same ideals they had, followed them afterward. And starting about eight years after the Pilgrims came, you had in the next few years tens of thousands of people—whole towns—coming over, with capital and resources. They brought everything with them; they established New England in a comparatively brief time; but the Plymouth colony proved it could be done. They were poor people but they came with their families.

I mentioned this to my friend—that they ventured this with their families. There were some other settlements that had been made where they were just strong men; they had come over, and they got to fighting and confusion and difficulty and they hadn't amounted to much; and this man pointed out to me that this

was the normal way that God made to be with man. And even though the men alone might seem to have more strength and more stamina for a brief undertaking, that over the long period, this was what was more apt to be—the carrying out along the line in which God had created man as described here in this verse.

Now the Roman Catholic Church, of course, takes a position contrary to this. It teaches that the state of being unmarried is a more holy state, a better state than the state which is carrying out the teaching of the second chapter of Genesis, the state of man with a help meet. And I personally think that it was this attitude that Paul had in mind when he said in 1 Timothy 4, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils: speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats." And when you find the Roman Catholic Church with their emphasis on their ministers not being married; and they are commanded not to eat meat on Friday; well, you hate to think of applying the first two verses to them, they are so strong, yet certainly this verse points to a tendency which is certainly not the teaching of the Scripture involved.

Naturally, there are particular circumstances under which this would not be carried out, as when our Lord said in Matthew 19:12 that, "There are some eunuchs which were so born from their mother's wombs; there are some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of man; and there are eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." There are particular circumstances under which it is the Lord's will that people should abstain from marriage for the sake of dealing with a particular emergency, a particular situation; and such a thing may be the matter of one getting an education, under the particular artificial conditions of our present civilization. I've known many people to hamper themselves by getting married before they were able financially to carry on properly. They've been in such a condition that they could carry it out very nicely if nothing went wrong; and then maybe they've had children sooner than they expected; maybe health problems have come up and they've spent the rest of their lives as street car conductors or something like that, doing a good service to the world, perhaps, but not getting the education that the Lord desires them to, because they did not postpone this for a time in order to carry out this particular need. In such a case, of course, the person was doing wrong; but certainly as a general rule, it is the Lord's will that the individual should live in the way which God planned that a human being should live.

In Germany, previous to World War I, they had a custom which has much to be said for it, the custom of the dowry. For everyone there of any means or education, it was the custom to save money for a dowry for his daughter. So a

man there—who was training for a profession, whether for ministry, for law, for medicine—was married at the normal age, and it was expected that his wife's parents would give a dowry which would be sufficient to carry them through the additional expenses during this time of education. World War I swept away the resources of the German professional class and made it impossible for this to continue, but with that custom it was possible to have marriage and a more normal life, at a more normal age, than under our usual American system. But the teaching that there is anything holy about married state rather than an unmarried state is certainly definitely contrary to the teaching of Paul and to the teaching of Genesis. And so in Genesis 2 here we have quite a bit of space devoted to the demonstration of the need of the woman, so that would be point a. And then

b. The supernatural creation. When I was to enter seminary, I went to Princeton Seminary, which at that time was a very orthodox seminary. The faculty was divided into two groups: those who wanted to take a strong stand for the truth; and those who were ready to ride along with conditions as they were developing in the denomination. But for practically all of them, the teaching was quite thoroughly sound. But there were tendencies beginning to come in. And I remember in my class in Old Testament History, within the very first month I was there, hearing Professor Davis say that Adam went to sleep and he had a vision. God gave him a dream and in this dream he saw God taking a part out of him and using it and making it into a woman. He woke up and he saw the woman there, and God had made Eve.

Now it may be true that there are more important lessons for us than the information that is given about the method of the creation of the woman. Yet, I felt when he said that, that he was getting onto very, very dangerous ground; and I feel so today, very, very strongly. If you can say, "Well, it doesn't sound reasonable to me; I think it's a dream." If you can do that with Genesis....

There are cases where God gave people dreams, and they do not represent reality; they represent dreams. Peter was on the housetop, and he saw a big sheet come down from heaven, and it was full of all kinds of animals; and God said, "Kill and eat." Did Peter see a sheet, or did Peter have a vision in his dream? I think most likely he had a dream. I think he dreamt he saw a sheet; and he dreamt he heard God say that. I think that was a vision rather than an actuality. But here we are given nothing in the context to say it was a vision. It doesn't say that Adam dreamt that he saw God do this; it doesn't say that God taught him lessons through a vision; nothing of the kind; it says that when he went to sleep, woman was not there; and when he woke up she was there; and it says that God caused a sleep to fall on Adam, and God took a portion of his side and closed up the flesh; and said a part of man made into a woman; and it seems to me important that when there is a specific definite statement like that

in Scripture, that we take it as a statement of fact, rather than a dream that somebody had.

Adam certainly didn't see it happen. Maybe God gave him a dream to show him how it happened. Maybe God told him afterward what had happened. We don't know how Adam knew, but he certainly doesn't say that this was a dream. Adam said this was bone of his bone. And certainly God made the woman by a very definite specific act; God took this portion of his side, and God made woman; and she is a definite, specific, separate creation.

It's one of the great problems—it seems to me—in a simple evolutionary theory, is the matter of separate identity. The present evolutionists have largely given up the idea that there was a little gradual change, gradually, gradually, gradually, so imperceptibly you couldn't see it any year—but perhaps in a thousand years you could see it—and eventually it changed so that the monkey changed into a man or something which the gradual chain of changes had evoked, changed into a man by little, little gradual changes. They've largely given up that; and today the tendency is to say that once in a million years—certainly not oftener than one hundred years—a strange freak of nature happens, and a certain egg maybe produces something totally new. This strange thing happens which some of the great scientists today say nobody could see it because it happens so infrequently. Once in a million years, something like this happens, a sudden great change which is the next step in evolution.

Well, that takes more faith to believe than Genesis. But if you do believe, well, let us say that from the viewpoint of a pure mechanistic process, let us say that the chances of one in ten billion that this would happen, that suddenly out of a certain reptile egg would come a bird—or like that—there would be this sudden change which would be able to carry on and live in an entirely different type of creature than that which it was before. But that it could happen not merely once, but happen twice—male and female—increases the miracle a thousand fold. And that it should not merely happen twice, so that you have a male bird comes into existence in this instant and then a million years later a female bird comes into existence, but they both happened the same year, at least within ten years of each other. Why it just increases the improbability of it to the point of utter absurdity. The idea, for instance, that a fish was swimming in the dark and the light came and there was a need, so it gradually developed eyes to see with and he responded in reaction to the light.

Well, to think that that could happen up to a certain extent—but to think that the very differences between the sexes, the tremendous number of differences perfectly adapted to each other, would by accidental development or purely mechanistic development, come into being, requires far more faith than simply to take the Bible account as it is. And this is one of the things which is in the

Bible, which is difficult for us to understand—that out of the humanity that God created, that God created man; and that a certain portion he molded and formed, and God made the two sexes. We can't understand it, but we can't understand creation. And I think that we must recognize that it is very specifically and definitely taught here that it is a supernatural act; the creation of woman is an act of divine power and intervention which is very difficult for a natural human mind to understand; but certainly no more difficult, and perhaps not as difficult, as any other way that we could hatch in which it would have come into existence.

And so that is a deed of supernatural creation; and to see the meaning of it, Matthew Henry's *Commentary* has a very beautiful statement here about this verse that God took a portion of his side and closed up the flesh thereof; he says, "not from his head to lord it over, and not from his feet, for him to lord it over, but from his side, to be an equal and a companion and a helpmeet." It's a very beautiful statement which he has made and I think that we can thus take lessons from these things; we can take the lessons God wanted to give us and that is what is most vital; but we must never make the specific statements of the Scripture as to what happened into mere allegory, into mere pictures. There are pictures in Scripture—there are allegories, very few of them—there are many pictures; there are figurative statements; but we must try the literal interpretation first, and recognizing figurative statements here and there, we must recognize that it must be mainly literal, or you can just make anything out of it. I think that is extremely important as a rule of interpretation. It must be mainly taken literally except when there's clear evidence to be taken.

I like the example of figures of speech—that figures of speech are like salt. We sprinkle a little salt and it improves food tremendously. And the same is true of figures of speech. The Bible, as everything else that was ever written, has figures of speech. That is, nobody could possibly take the whole Bible literally. It contains figures of speech. They are like the little salt sprinkled over food. But if you take the whole thing figuratively, it's like pouring a bucket of salt over your food and it just actually wrecks it; it reduces it to nothing. When you take it all figuratively, it means nothing. And some people call this spiritualization, or allegorization; some people by those terms mean they can get all things when you do that; but you just don't have anything left. Well, we'll continue there tomorrow morning.

5. Spiritual Teachings in Genesis 1–2.

I asked you some little time ago to note what we learn about God in these chapters. And you noticed that in the chapters that God is spoken of as definitely uncreated. In the beginning there is God already. Before the universe there is God. There is none before Him. You have the self-existence of God here clearly given. You have the omnipotence of God clearly taught in these

chapters. You have the fact that God is separate from the universe, He is not the *spirit* of the universe; He is not a *part* of the universe; He is not dependent on the universe in any way. God was before there was a universe, and God created the universe. There is many a modern theory which makes God in some way connected with the universe and inseparable from it. The teaching of Genesis 1 and 2 is that the Lord is definitely separate from that which He has created, and exists altogether apart from it.

You have God pictured here as one who has done things in an orderly fashion; not as one who is simply arbitrary, but one who is orderly in His methods; one has a purpose and a method; and there is a progress and there is a goal in what He does. You have God shown here as doing that which is good; He has a good purpose, and we have it stressed. "God saw that it was good." And you have God shown as one who has love toward His creatures, and who does everything for their welfare.

Now you have a picture of man in these chapters which is very different from the picture that many people have of man today. I received through the mail just yesterday from one of our great publishers a copy of a book which they thought we might adopt as a text-book in the seminary, but I don't think we will. They claim it is the best book that ever has been written to prove that this life is the only life we have, and that there is nothing after death. There are those who have ideas of man which are very, very different from the ideas in these two chapters of Genesis, and these ideas are very wide-spread today.

There are those who think of man as simply part of the animal creation, so low down that he's just like a worm of the dust and it hardly matters what happens to him; and there are many people today who go to the opposite extreme and think of man as the very lord of all the universe and able to accomplish just about anything he wants. And these chapters very definitely oppose both extremes.

These chapters teach that man is something entirely different; they teach that he is the creation of God; that he has no life or power in himself except that which God gives to him. They teach that he is just as much made by God as the creation is. They teach our utter inferiority to God. But at the same time these chapters teach that man was made by God as something utterly apart from the rest of creation. His creation is separate and distinct, and not confused with the creation of the universe or of any part. He was created from the divine spirit. He has the divine breath breathed into his nostrils. He is given specific moral responsibility. He is created as a being with reason, with intellectual powers, with conscience, with responsibilities toward God, with the right of dominion over the creation under God, with the right given him of having dominion over all that God has created, and with the command to subdue the animals and the

plants and all the factors of the earth; to subdue them in order that he may use them for the purposes which God has given.

God was able to control and determine creation simply by his command—by his desire. We have the omnipotence of God then, clearly taught in this chapter. We have clearly taught here in this chapter the fact that God, who is eternal, created matter at a definite time and created man at a definite time, that he acted in orderly fashion. That he moved forward in progressive, definite order and we see in Chapter 2 the divine purpose of love throughout in his relation to his creature.

Then we notice the teaching about mankind in these 2 chapters. Man is definitely distinct from the lower creation, also distinct from God, that he is distinct from both. Mankind is separate—separate from God, definitely inferior to God, definitely created by God, given dominion over creation and given an immortal soul by the divine spirit. When we follow the teaching about the universe, the material universe, it was made by the Lord but it is His creation, distinct from Him, not a part of him, not in any sense controlling him, but controlled by him. Given in the beginning at his will. That it came into existence in orderly stages, that it is distinct from man, that man is given control over it.

Thus we have the fundamentals of the understanding of these three great vital matters that affect every one of us given here in this chapter. I ran into a man not so long ago, a physician who was a very active Christian, and very much interested in spreading the knowledge of Christ; in fact he was giving his whole time to Christian service when I met him, but he was having very serious trouble. He was finding his mind filled with doubts and uncertainties and he told me that the problem that was bothering him was this: that in medicine he learned that if you treat a man in a certain way, a certain result comes; if he is sick and you give him the right medicine he may get well; if you give him the wrong medicine, he may die; and that the number of cases that the physician treats right, and the wellbeing of the patient, is dependent to quite an extent on the physician's care and activity; on his knowledge; on his efforts to understand how to deal with the material creation and bring results from what he does.

Now he says this is a very materialistic sort of thing; and as over against it you have the Christian attitude that it is our relationship to God that is important; and he said, "I can't seem to fit the thing together and my whole medical training seems to drive me away from Christianity." And he was a very active Christian; but now the thing in my mind is this tremendous experience that I've had of conversion. He said, "That's the thing that holds me. Now if someone can convince me that that is simply a psychological phenomenon as the result of certain factors," he said, "I simply don't know what I'd do."

Well, I think the answer to his problem is stated right here in the first two chapters of Genesis. We have it taught there that, on the one hand God controls all things; that he has given his orders that the relation to God is the most important factor in the cosmos; that in addition to that we have it clearly taught in each chapter that he created in definite orderly fashion. He created so that definite laws would work according to a definite system. He created the various plants to bring forth seed after their kind. He ordered the sun and the moon and the stars to move in regular fashion in order to be divided into time. He ordered that the earth should bring forth grass; that the waters should bring forth the various sea creatures; he ordered definite relationship between these things.

He said to man that in the day that thou eatest of this, thou shalt surely die. There is a recognition there of a power of choice on man's part, and a recognition that results follow in accordance with what he does and so we have two factors definitely taught here in the first two chapters of Genesis. You have no determinism in those two chapters, which makes man not responsible for anything—everything simply absolutely going according to law, and there is nothing you can do about it. You have definite choice and you have definite opportunities; but it is opportunities in a certain scribed sphere, a sphere that God has created.

You have the two factors taught here in this chapter; and if people carried the one vital all-important factor to the extreme by neglecting the act and by making it look as if this was an awful arbitrary world in which God reaches out and does this and does that and everything is purely arbitrary as his activity, and there is no such thing as our skill in determining results, he is not following the teaching of this chapter. He is taking a portion of the teaching and he is carrying it to an extreme; and he is neglecting another portion of the clear teaching of the chapter.

We have the two factors in line. We have the factor of God acting in accordance with his determined purpose; and then we have the factor that God has created things to move in accordance with laws and in accordance with causation, in which one affects another and causes something, etc.; and God has given man the power to be himself a cause in the midst of creation; and the two are stated and taught here in the Scripture.

It is easy to put your stress on one and forget the other; and it is easy to put the stress on the other and forget the one; even to make an argument that if you have one, you can't have the other; and yet the facts of life include both of them, and you can't explain life apart from both factors; and both are clearly taught here in the beginning of the Scriptures.

Here we have the foundation of our viewpoint of life very clearly given here in these two chapters before the fall occurs. We find that there is no suggestion in these chapters of the idea that the material universe is bad. The idea—as the Buddhists hold—that what man needs is to get away from material things; to break his contact with the material universe; to get away from all need of and use of material things—that is not the teaching of the Bible. God created things good. He created a good universe; certain factors, certain situations all are good, for God created them, and what is needed is not getting away from material things, but it is the freeing of material things from the effects of sin or from the wrong use of them, or the misuse of them which is a result of sin.

So these are the spiritual truths about God, about mankind, and about the universe in these two chapters; I don't know that *spiritual* is the complete term for them; they are very important spiritual truths, but they are very important general truths for our understanding of the universe. They are very clearly taught here, and we are here in a sphere which is infinitely superior to that of most ancient methodology or most modern philosophy. We have a sane and reasonable viewpoint on life here which fits with the circumstances as we discover.

There are two other matters that we could notice in these two chapters of positive teaching which are vital for us today: what is the matter of the Sabbath that is stressed in these chapters? God created in such a way that a recurring period of rest is desirable and necessary. A recurring period of complete change from the previous activities. Attention to matters different from those which occupied one's attention during the main parts of the week. And so He created the universe with this Sabbath principle; and he demonstrated or illustrated it by ceasing on the seventh day from his creative labor as an illustration of his purpose for us.

I was reading just recently that some big company, determined that they will not—as they did in the last war—go onto a seven day basis. They said that they found that in the last war, going onto a basis of seven days of work brought an immediate increase in production—an immediate spurt—but that after they had been at it a little time, the activity per day, the product per day, flattened out so that they were producing no more in 7 days of work than they had previously produced in 6 days of work.

When you go against God's law, you find that though you may seem temporarily to have an advantage, that in the end you are the loser rather than the gainer by what you do. God created man to work for 6 days, and to have a 7th day of rest. And of course we noticed that the Sabbath principle involves not merely the matter of rest, but the matter of the impression upon our minds of the fact that life is not just something that is haphazard: that there is a purpose, a reasonable purpose and progress that is moved toward a goal; that creation

moves toward its end; and God's purpose in this universe moves on towards its destination. There is purpose, there is progress, there is a goal, and He intends that that shall be stressed by taking one day of seven apart, for contemplation on His word and of His purposes for us.

Now the other matter which is vital, of course—is looked at in this chapter—is the matter of the creation of woman and of her relationship to man as here depicted. Quite in contrast to the attitude of those, like the Buddhist, who put woman in an utterly inferior position, or to others who treat woman as though she were hardly human. The Bible has a very different attitude toward woman; and here she is created as the equal of man, she is created as his helpmeet, she is created as his associate.

We find on the other hand that there is a difference of position. The man is created first; the woman is created as a helpmeet for the man. There is a different position. There is nothing in common with the attempts to try to blot out the difference between man and woman. Each is created with his or her own function, his or her own place, his or her own purpose and God has created the woman so that there is a certain subordination, but there is not an inferiority, and that there is a place for both; and if we go against this, we find consequences which are not for the best.

God created the universe in certain ways and we always make the best of it by learning how He created it and bringing ourselves in conformity with his purposes for us. We find that, just as in the French Revolution, they tried to change the week to have it be ten days, and they found that it just didn't work; and the attempt recently, of course, the attempt of trying to do it so that there was no week—it was just a continuous succession—but of course there was double pay on Sunday, but no other difference. That also does not work. The way that God created the universe is the way it works.

Excursus: What about Evolution?

A young budding scientist said to me one day, "It's perfectly silly to deny evolution. Why, anybody can see the evolution of a child into a man." Well, that is an entirely proper way to use the word "evolution"; in fact it is proper to use any word in any way you want; you can use the word white to mean black if you want—provided you make clear what you're doing—so people know that that is what you're doing. In the King James Bible, when it says "science," it means what we today call philosophy, when it says "philosophy" it means what we today call science. The two words have exactly reversed their meaning since the time the King James Bible was written. They've changed sides.

You write a book a hundred years ago on Physics or Chemistry or anything like that and the publisher would entitle it, "Natural Philosophy," and yet it would be

exactly what we'd call Physics or Chemistry today; and if you buy a book on The Understanding of the Theory of Knowledge a hundred years ago, it probably would be called "the science of knowledge," because the two words have just exactly reversed. So any word can mean just about anything! And a great cause of misunderstanding is in language; so often people are arguing, using the same word in different senses. The Russians have called their various governments "the people's democracy"; for the Eastern part of Germany, its official title is The German Democratic Republic. There's nothing in the world that is democratic about it in our sense. It is an absolute dictatorship; but they use the word "democratic" meaning exactly opposite to the way we mean. Well, anybody has a right to use any word any way you want, but you should indicate how you're using it to avoid confusion in discussion. Otherwise there's hopeless confusion.

Well, now this is one word about which there is tremendous hopeless confusion, this word "evolution." It is used by so many people and used in many, many different senses. And it is a good word for the idea for the development of a boy into a man, because it is not merely a development in which everything gets larger, but things change. Evolution fundamentally means a development in the course of which some change occurs; and it's a very good word for that idea.

But unfortunately the word has come in the last hundred years to be used for a very particular kind of development. It has been used for a very wide-ranging development. It has been used for the theory that all life developed by natural progress from the simple to the complex. That is fundamentally what Darwin presented. Darwin was faced with a lot of people who held the view that every single individual thing on this world was a separate creation of God—that everything was absolutely different and distinct from every other thing—and that God had made everything exactly this way, and that is exactly the way it is now. And Darwin said, "No, we find certain forces, certain laws in all of nature," and that was a very good correction to an extreme attitude, a correction which is contained in the Scripture. God did not say, "Let the earth be covered with trees," God said, "Let the trees grow up, let things come into being." There is great amount of development in the Scripture, unquestionably.

But the theory—as Darwin and his associates presented it—was that all things are produced by natural processes; and the result of this on the average person was simply to push God out of his universe altogether, and to leave it like a watch which has been made and wound up, but which would continue to grow indefinitely because it has a spring that will last forever. It is a theory which resulted in a tremendous lot of atheism and of complete materialism. I don't say the theory in itself necessarily so influenced, but it resulted in that; and the reaction to it one hundred years ago on the part of many godly people—and some others perhaps who weren't quite so godly, but who had good positions

in the established churches that were threatened by the spread of unbelief—was to attack the whole thing, head on; it's utterly wrong; everything is just made this way; and God made it, and that's that. And it is foolish to think of changes or development occurring.

Thus you had two extreme positions at extreme opposites. As if someone were to say, "Is it light in this room, or is it dark?" And one person would say, who wanted to sleep here, "I can't sleep, these lights bother me." And another who wanted to write would say, "With that light not on, I can't see clearly enough to write plainly as I would like to." One would say it was dark, the other would say it was light. There are some things in life that are absolute. You are either a man or a dog; you are one or the other; there is a sharp difference between them. There are other things that are relative. Absolute darkness is rare. Absolute light is rare. Nearly everything is somewhere in between, and whether you call it lightness or darkness depends on where you're standing in between.

So many, many things are relative, and some things are absolute. There are many, many things that are absolute. But on a theory like this, you have people say, "No that is absolutely wrong; there's nothing true about it whatever. Here is a simple explanation of the universe: God created all things, and that means that every little detail of everything he made was exactly the way it is now; and that's the way it is, and there's no development." And over here you have some people who said, "This idea of God creating the universe is done for, because everything has developed according to a natural process from a little simple beginning; complexity has naturally come." And so you have two extreme opposites facing each other. And Bishop Wilberforce, a great bishop, excellent debater, able in handling theological problems, faced the great scientist Huxley; and Wilberforce said, "I'd like Mr. Huxley to tell us whether he was descended from a monkey through his mother or through his father. Which was it that you came from a monkey?" Personally, I am not descended from any monkey, but what's that got to do with it? It is casting ridicule upon a thing, which is not the way to define truth. And Huxley, very cleverly, took advantage of the situation. He said, "I would much rather be descended from a simple monkey that walks along, laughing and gibbering and using what he has from God, which isn't much, than to be descended from a learned gentleman who refuses to examine new knowledge but has everything absolutely fixed and set and who refuses to face any facts, but just casts ridicule instead of examining things fairly."

And the students just clapped for him, and he turned many of them to his views, when actually neither of them was dealing with the point at issue. But there was a great deal of argument that way; and you had two extreme attitudes which developed; when as a matter of fact, the question isn't which is right—this theory that we built up here, or this theory we built up here—but what are the facts as to what the Scripture teaches, and what are the facts as to what we find in nature?

Do we find in nature that everything in the universe is exactly as God made it, he produced it just this way and did not cause any development to occur in it, but made them just this way and that's the way it is? And on the other hand, the amount of scientific fact that would be necessary to establish a theory that everything developed by purely natural processes from a simple beginning—simple to the complex—it would require about a thousand times as much good evidence as it ever did gather, to prove so far-reaching a theory. And so you have some people taking the Scriptures way beyond this; and you have some people taking a few facts of science—or perhaps quite a lot of them—to build a theory that went way beyond them.

When I was a student at Princeton Seminary, there was a series of lectures on the dogma of evolution at Princeton University, by Professor Moore, a noted physicist from Ohio; and Professor Moore said in these lectures, that the physicists had worked out definite laws of what we observe to occur. And they have worked out these laws in systematic order and physics—by virtue of the fact that it involves so much experimentation and that it deals with general principles of the trend of events rather than of a continuing series of things like history—that physics had much that is very solid and definite; and then he said the biologists take the viewpoint of the physicists, and they carry it over, and build a complete system of evolution in biology, based on the assumption that the precise system of physics is applicable to biology. Then he said the sociologists and the philosophers take the view of the biologist and carry them over into those areas; and so he said the philosopher and the sociologist sit on the head of the biologist, and the biologist on the head of the physicist. And the biologist would like to shake off the philosopher and the sociologist; and the physicist would like to shake off both of them. And there's a lot truth in what he said, that actually the real conflict is between a philosophy based on certain scientific facts and a philosophy based on a metaphysical statement; and when we get the actual facts of science and the actual statements of the Bible, you do not have this conflict.

But the situation has naturally developed from it, in which in many Christian circles the very word "evolution" signifies something that is terribly wicked and blasphemous; and these circles are much smaller now than they used to be, but it used to be quite widespread.

One Baptist I heard say, "When I was a boy, the circles I was brought up with, evolution was just a dirty word," and there is that tendency. And if evolution is interpreted in its strict sense, it seems to me that it is a proper attitude to take toward it—an all-embracing theory that everything has developed from simple beginnings by natural processes—there is no evidence to warrant such a conclusion in science. And it is fundamentally atheistic and destructive of Christian faith—such an extensive theory—but most first-class scientists

recognize that the evidence is far short of being sufficient to prove any such extensive theory, and many of them will attach all sorts of caveats and qualifiers.

On the other hand, there are many of them—much lesser scientists—to whom evolution is almost a god. I had a friend who told me of being in a class in which they had had some discussion; and he had presented some Scripture which the members of the class were quite interested in and quite impressed by—some material against certain aspects of the evolution theory—and he said that the next day when the class came together, the professor had put up pictures of Charles Darwin; accounts of the man's brilliance and of various events in his life; and he put it on a sentimental basis of glorifying this great man who had brought this in; and there are many today, mostly not the great scientists, who take that view.

[This section breaks off at this point. For a more complete discussion of evolution from a scientific and biblical perspective, see IBRI Syllabus #1, [*Evolution and Special Creation*](#), by Robert J. Dunzweiler.]

C. Genesis 3.

1. Its Place in History.

No true history can ignore Genesis 3. Genesis 3 is the turning point of history. Next to the account of the crucifixion of Christ it is the most important event in all history, and arguments could be made that it was even more important than that. It's not; but an argument could be made that it is, because apart from that the crucifixion of Christ would have no meaning and no purpose, in fact would never have been necessary. The crucifixion of Christ is much more important than the fall, but the crucifixion of Christ is remedying that which was done by the fall; and the fall is the basis, it is the foundation of history. Without it history cannot be understood.

We find a good world—a world which God created according to a good and orderly plan and pattern, created to be a good place for those creatures whom He loved to live in—and then we find this world full of evil and wickedness, of cruelty, of bestiality; and we have no way of understanding it apart from the fall, so that it is the very turning point of history. All history before that leads up to the fall, all history after that is related to it, and not understandable apart from it. Of course, the next turning point of history is the crucifixion of Christ; but the effects of the crucifixion of Christ are not yet evident except to a very small degree; and they will not be evident until Christ comes back to take in His possession, that which He won through His death on Calvary's cross, and establishes that perfection which He won by His death on the tree.

And so the fall had results which were more immediately apparent, and results which affected all of life and all of history.

2. The Details of the Fall.

a. The Nature of the Test. We have already discussed this at some length in discussing the trees of the Garden. Whatever the situation is regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—whether eating of the tree did something for them or not—the nature of the test is a test of man's trust in God, of man's obedience to God. Whether he will have confidence in God's character—to know that when God says something it is done with a spirit of love toward His children, and done in line with the best interest of everything in the universe—or whether he will decide that he knows better than God what is best for him, and best for the world. And so the nature of the test is a test of man's trust in God; of man's obedience to God; of man's willingness to consider that God is right and loving in all things, regardless of whether there is any actual effect from eating of the tree or not. Now,

b. The Serpent. When we look at the passage, we immediately—naturally—ask the question, "What kind of a story is this that we have here? Is this like Aesop's Fables? We find the serpent: here he comes and he begins to talk to the woman. And the woman has quite a discussion with the serpent. Is the Bible a book in which you are going to have animals talking all the time, in which you are going to have a lot of bizarre, of unusual things that are altogether different from our present life, simply in order to present a lesson or to carry an idea, and we know that such things never actually happened?" Well, that may be someone's reaction with this if that's all that he ever reads of the Bible.

But as you read the Bible as a whole, how many times do you find in it that animals talk? What is the number? How many of you can think of ten instances even in the Bible where animals have talked? How many can think of more than two? How many cannot think of as many as two? We seem to have unanimity on it. Or have the questions been asked too negatively? How many can think of exactly two? We seem to have pretty good uniformity on it.

Now in the other case of an animal speaking, you all know that the animal which spoke in the other case was not a serpent nor an asp. (laughter) You know that in the other case it was Balaam's donkey. And in that case we have an explanation of how the donkey was able to talk. And what is the other explanation? The other explanation is that God opened the mouth of the donkey; that God made something happen which is unusual and contrary to the ordinary course of nature in order to drive home a special lesson to Balaam. He caused that this animal should be the instrument of revelation; that through the animal something should be said to Balaam, and a lesson should be brought to him.

Well that immediately raises the question in our minds where we have only two instances. This does not prove that this instance is like the other instance, but it at least shows the possibility that it is like the other instance. You might say that it raises a certain presumption that this instance will be like the other instance, and put the burden of proof on the man who says it isn't, to indicate some reason for saying the two are very different. In that case the donkey talked because a power greater than the donkey—a superhuman power—enabled the donkey to talk in order to give a lesson to the man. It was to cause Balaam to see his sin and his error in going against that which was God's real will, even though God had given in to his urgings, and permitted him to do that which he knew to be contrary to the real will of God. It was God using the donkey to convey God's message to the man.

Now in this case in Genesis, then, there is a presumption that some superhuman power is using the serpent to convey a message to the man. It is not a fable, like Aesop's Fables, in the sense that you have pictured to you an attitude which is characteristic of a human being in a certain situation, but is which is given under the figure of an animal. The serpent is here in no way characteristic of a human being, nor representing human attitudes. It doesn't play out something of human life in the form of animals, as in a fable in which animals talk. The serpent is here an instrument of revelation.

Someone may think that is blasphemous to think of the serpent as an instrument of revelation; and the reason you think so—if you do—is because you are taking the word "revelation" in a narrower sense than the true sense of the word. "Revelation", the word itself, does not say whom the revelation comes from. It does not pass on that information to you. If I were to say about this necktie, "Where do you think I purchased this necktie?" Unless someone heard the revelation that I gave to someone in the office yesterday, there is no one here who would know where I purchased this necktie. I don't know whether by looking on the back of it you could gather some information, but I am quite certain of it that from the front there is nothing which would give any inkling of it. The only way you could find out would be to get a revelation. That is, it would be necessary for me to communicate information to you. That would not be a *divine* revelation. That would be a revelation from a human being, but it would be a revelation in the true sense of the word, because it would be a communication from one mind to other minds.

Well now, in this case, we find the serpent is an instrument of revelation. We find that a superhuman being is doubtless—although not here expressed in the chapter—using the serpent as its instrument in conveying the ideas which this superhuman being wishes conveyed.

The New Testament has a number of references which seem to refer to this passage, even though they don't explicitly say so. They seem to refer to the passage; and they use the term "the serpent" in connection with the devil, in such a way as not directly to say that the serpent is here the instrument of revelation of Satan, but certainly to suggest it very, very strongly. I think to make inescapable the conclusion that the writers of these New Testament passages concerning the serpent here, considered one of two things were true: either this was not a serpent here at all, but the devil masquerading; or else that this was a serpent, but that the serpent was being used as an instrument of revelation by Satan, by the devil. And I don't think that there is anything in the passage which gives us the right to conclude that it was not a real serpent; that this was just a figure, a form, a pretense of a serpent; that Satan had assumed the form of a serpent; and that all serpents ever since get the blame for something that they had actually nothing to do with. I don't think we are entitled to reach a conclusion like that; I think the conclusion we have to reach is that this is a real serpent, but that this serpent is permitting itself to be used as an instrument of revelation by Satan, and that Satan is thus making use of the serpent's body as his instrument.

(Student) The word here used, *nahash* in the Hebrew, is the same word which you find elsewhere in the Hebrew for the snakes which were in existence later, and the serpent does crawl today, and I don't think we have any reason to think that this was a different sort of an animal from the serpents which we have now. (Student) Oh, you're asking not whether this is what we have today, but whether it looked different before than it looks now. That is, you're not questioning the identity of it, but questioning whether the form is the same or different. Well we know nothing about that; there's nothing said. (Laughter). (Student) I think you're right; that there were definitely creeping things, and that therefore it probably did crawl before. (Student) Milton had a great many ideas, some of which were very excellent, and some weren't. But I don't think there is anything in the Scripture to warrant that. (Student) The presumption that it is the same creature which is called the serpent later—I said that—but as to whether it looks the same or not, we just don't know anything about that.

Now it would seem hardly likely that all the animals talked before the fall, or that even one animal talked before the fall, without some suggestion of it. It's possible, but it would hardly seem likely. It would be something so different from what we see now that it would seem likely that some reference would have been made to it, that in the creation they were made so that they could speak. (Student) There was a little snake one time up in Grand Canyon about this long and only about half as big around as my little finger, with bright red colors around him. He stood out on a rock as I passed by, right straight up (I don't know how he ever stood that way), absolutely motionless, and I went up to him and I took my stick ... But it is true that ordinarily the serpent crawls on its stomach today, and the statement, "On thy belly thou shalt go" suggests that he

may have been different; I don't know. (Student) Man was not given exclusive dominion before. God told man to exercise dominion over the animals, to control them, He put them under his hand, but Satan came in and interfered with the normal course.

It's pretty hard in dealing with horses and dogs and other animals to keep from feeling a certain difference in personality among them. There is a certain difference; that is not on the level of human beings—nothing like that—but there is a difference in animals, very definitely; and it is pretty hard in dealing with them to get away from the feeling that you are punishing them for certain things and you're rewarding for certain things, and you get results accordingly. And so it does not seem to me impossible that the serpent might have had that much volition to permit Satan to use it, and that it is punished for that. On the other hand, I don't think it is necessary to believe that, though I do incline to feel that is correct. It is possible that the curse upon the serpent simply means that the animal is put in a situation which perhaps doesn't actually make snakes an awful lot worse off in our world today than wolves and bears are, but in a situation which makes it obvious to mankind that it's in a class apart by itself; puts it separate in such a way as to drive home to us the lesson of that which happened; and to remind us of the situation. It's possible that the curse upon the serpent might simply mean that.

(Question "More subtle?") Yes, the word *arum* is not a very common word in Hebrew; and what it seems to mean in the context here is that in some way this serpent seemed to the woman to be a proper one for a fellowship with. It was more subtle, it insinuated itself into her fellowship somehow. Of course, as far as the unnaturalness of the serpent speaking was concerned, it is true that it is very easy in a certain situation for something not to appear unnatural that wouldn't ordinarily. We don't always realize how out of harmony something is with the usual type of thing; and so it might not seem unnatural to her, particularly after the conversation began. She might be so interested in the thing under discussion that she wouldn't stop to think how strange it was that this one was talking.

(Question: "Is this a slur from the proximity to the ground?") I think so (or is it merely to say he is going to partake of a little dust now?) That is getting on to the curse, which is a later subject.

I think we find these New Testament references: Romans 16:20; I John 3:8; John 8:49; Revelation 12:9, 22; these are five New Testament verses, which make reference to the serpent in such a way as to suggest a very close relationship between Satan actually and the serpent.

I think we are justified in concluding that it is quite certain that we actually have three individuals aside from God in the first verse of the third chapter. We have

the serpent and the woman; but that the serpent is a means of revelation for Satan; that Satan is the active personality there in the temptation, even though it is done through the serpent. We not only have the serpent then asking this question, and this leads us to

c. The Process of the Surrender. And here we have the first thing. The serpent asked the woman the question, "Is it true that God said you must not eat of any tree of the garden?" Our English here is a little ambiguous, in fact that word "any" in English is ambiguous a little bit. It may mean "all"; it may mean "none"; it may mean "not any one"; it may be "not all"; it may be "not every". But the Hebrew is just as bad; the word "any" there is often translated "any" in English; it is not more ambiguous than our English, but just as much so. He says, "Is it true that God has said you're not to eat of any of these trees in the garden?" And the woman is astounded at the idea. What a terrible reflection on God, that God would make all these beautiful trees here in the garden, all this loveliness before them with this splendid fruit, and then say, "You mustn't eat any of it." Why the woman indignantly denies it. She says, "We *may* eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden."

You notice how Satan approached the question. He didn't say to her, "You know I think it would be a good thing if you would go over and eat of that tree there." He didn't come directly to the point. He came to her with something which distracted her attention to another fact. And it is a very important thing in pedagogy—and it is a very important thing in propaganda—that the indirect presentation is often far more effective than the direct presentation. If you can get people to come to the idea themselves, instead of your bringing it up, you will often find them much more responsive and much more interested. And that can be used for good as well as for bad; that if you get them to lead up to the question, instead of your leading up to it, it is usually much more effective.

And so that is what Satan did here. He raised the question about all of the trees, "Is it true you mustn't eat any of these trees?" And the woman indignantly replies, "Why, of course not;" she says, "we can eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden. But," she said, "there is one tree in the midst of the garden, and God said, 'You mustn't eat it, and you mustn't even touch it, or you will die.'" Now where did she get that idea, "neither shall ye touch it lest ye die?" Well, we don't know. There are two possibilities. There is one which I think is a rather unlikely possibility, and that is that in the additional statement which God made to them (for doubtless God talked to them a great deal—more than is actually given in chapter 2), that in these further discussions which God had with them He had said, "You had better not even touch this tree at all." But of course, she goes beyond that. She says, "Neither shall ye touch it lest ye die," as if death were in some way associated simply with the touching of the tree. I am inclined to think it very unlikely that God had said, "If you touch this tree you are going to die." That is what she seems to say here. It seems to me that it is most

probable that actually the command regarding this tree is exactly as given in the previous chapter, that He said, "You shall not eat of this tree; you shall eat of all the other trees, but of this tree you shall not eat, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and that He had said nothing about touching it. And in that case, if that is true—as I think likely it is—though I say we cannot be dogmatic about it, if that is the case, then Eve is here adding to the commands of God.

Now Eve might have said, "It's a terrible thing to eat of that tree. That tree is a very, very dangerous thing. There are terrible results if we eat of it, and therefore my husband and I have decided we are just not even going to touch it. We are not going to go where temptation can come to us easily; we are going to keep away from it. There is plenty of other ground for us in this park to be happy in; we just won't go up to that tree at all; we won't even touch the tree. This is our decision in order to help protect ourselves from the danger that is there." That might have been a very wise and sensible decision for her to make.

But when she makes it out to be a command of God, and says, "God says you mustn't touch it lest you die," she is adding to God's command in such a way that it can boomerang; and instead of making it easier for her to obey His command, make it harder to obey His command. And therefore, it is my opinion (I wouldn't say that it is certain at all) that Eve already made a serious mistake when she spoke in haste and gave the command of God inaccurately and carelessly, instead of stopping to go back and see exactly what the facts are. And if she is going to follow the policy of not touching the tree at all, which might be a very excellent policy, to nevertheless very definitely understand that the reason she doesn't follow it is because of expediency and not that it is part of God's command, that it is something that is wise and helpful to do, but that God's command is, "Don't eat of it."

I feel that there are two possibilities. You might say there are three possibilities. One possibility is that God said, "You mustn't eat of this, and therefore I think it is wise for you not to touch it." That is a possibility. Now if that is a possibility, I don't think that is what she said, "You shall not eat of it; neither shall you touch it lest you die." That is not that He said, "It is a good thing for you not to touch it."

There is a second possibility that He said, "You mustn't eat it, nor must you touch it lest you die." Well now, if that was the case it seems to me rather strange that the way the command is recorded leaves it out, such an important part of His command.

And the third possibility is that the command is exactly as recorded, and she added to it. Now we cannot be dogmatic as between the three possibilities, but that they were actually told that they would die if they touched it seems to me

extremely unlikely, and if either of the other two was the case, she then was adding to God's command, either a little in the one case or a lot in the other; and in either case I think she would have been on much safer ground to have noted what God's command is, and to say, "We think it's wise to take this policy for it, but here is what God's command is."

(Student. Provided that God didn't say not to touch it, what would you classify this statement as, a mistake? Could it be a lie and a sin in the fact that the fall had already come?) No, it is a mistake. It was a careless mistake. It is not a sin, but it is the sort of thing which can lead to it. I would say that we, in our Christian lives, can carry on our Christian life and our Christian conduct, in our relationship to God's Word, in our relationship to many aspects of the church; I think that we should carefully distinguish between that which God commands, and that which we decide is a good thing to do as buttressing and carrying out the will of God. It would be very foolish for us to say we can only do what God commands and we will not absolutely take any attitude on things except the specific demand of God.

The commands of God are inferences. There are various ways that they reach out into our lives. There are various things we think are proper in order to carry out the import of each command; but I think it is wise that we make a distinction. I think it is one thing that has often led to legalism in Christianity. People have taken inferences and implications and ideas as to the best way of living lives that would be acceptable in God's sight; and then elevated these things into commands; and then people are persuaded that this is what Christianity is. I think it is important that we make a distinction.

Well, the woman here may have given exactly the command of God. I think that is very unlikely. She may have slightly changed the command of God. That is possible. If she did that I think she made a mistake. She may have very considerably changed the command of God if He hadn't said anything about touching. That I think is probably the case though I wouldn't certainly be dogmatic on that. But if she did that, she by leaning over backwards, put herself into a rather dangerous situation. You know sometimes, it is desirable that we lean over backwards on things, but if we get into the habit of it; if we constantly lean over backwards, I think we upset equilibrium to where we are apt to go over forwards sometimes. There is the tendency to go from one extreme to another.

There is often a move from one extreme to the opposite extreme which can be far worse than the original; but I don't think it is God's will to go to extremes in either direction, though there are many cases where it is wise for us to say we will not touch them. It is too serious a matter; we will keep absolutely away from that particular thing. Well now, I think that it is quite likely, at least, that she was careless in her recollection of exactly what God's command had been

and that she leaned over backward in such a way as not to do a sin, but to bring a certain danger which could have been avoided if she had said exactly the words that God said.

I gave this in a sermon one time and a man afterwards said that he thought I should be a little bit careful in my wording in this particular passage because someone might get the idea that I thought Eve had a little copy of the word of God in her pocket that she could have taken out and looked at. I don't think of course that she had a little Bible which had only two chapters of Genesis in it. (laughter) Inspiration means that we have a correct presentation of what she said. It doesn't mean that what she said is true, but it means that it is true that she said it. That is a very important point. Somebody said that the Bible says there is no God. That is true. Bible says that "The fool hath said in his heart that there is no God." Now, that is a correct inspired statement, that there is no God, but it is a true presentation of what the person actually said in his heart that there is no God. And very often, we can make mistakes if we simply grasp a statement from the Scripture at random and say that this is inspired and God's word and it may be an inspired picture of somebody's attitude. It may be it is an inspired quotation of what somebody has said.

"All that a man has will he give for his life." That is a cynical statement, but it is contained in the Bible. It is what Satan says in the book of Job. There are people who know that it is a Biblical statement, but they're not quoting the whole statement. It is a Biblical presentation of Satan's claim. It is not the claim of the Christian. It may be of most people, but of not all.

(student: "How do you distinguish between a sin and a mistake?") Yes, I do not think that the innocence of Adam and Eve before the Fall meant absolute perfection, to the extent that they could not make a mistake. I think that sin would involve a deliberate going against God's will. Now in this case there was a mistake, an error, evoked by her emotions in answering the serpent's question. The serpent raises a doubt as to God's goodness. God doesn't let you eat of anything. She is repulsed and retorts, "Any except this one." And then in her zeal in protecting the one, she goes beyond. It was not a sin, but it was a carelessness, an error. I don't think they had perfect wisdom.

If you see a man coming down the street here in a ten thousand dollar Rolls Royce and you see him with a lot of things that you will never have in your whole life, you may say, "Wouldn't it be nice to have them?" That is not sin. You might say, "My, isn't that nice, isn't he fortunate? I would like to have that myself." That is not sin. But when it takes possession of your heart and it becomes an obsession, it becomes sin. That is, it is a continual attitude. It is not in the fact of observing something which is nice.

Now of course there is a point where she stops merely noticing facts and where she assumes an attitude toward it; but I don't think that there would be the opportunity for Eve to covet, because it was too easy to get it. If Eve had set back and moped and said, "My, isn't that mean not to let us eat of that wonderful fruit. How I wish I could eat it." And if she had just sat back and moped and longed for it, that would definitely have been sin, but I don't think that in here it is a coveting in the true sense or the word.

(question) She saw that the tree was one to be desired, but one what? She saw that the tree was something that looked good, but it doesn't mean that it actually was. It means that this is the impression that was created by her mind.

Once when I was in high school in the library and supposed to be studying, and I got it pretty well figured out and needed a little relaxation; and so I went into the genealogy section and I started in looking up something of my ancestors (laughter) and I managed to trace them back to Charlemagne, the great emperor who ruled most of Europe. I was quite interested in having done that, so we had another debate the next year so I went in and traced up another ancestor; and I got to Charlemagne through a different ancestor. I got to Charlemagne on three or four different lines and I thought that was very interesting; so what I thought for a while, I wondered, isn't that remarkable to be descended from Charlemagne. My, I wonder how many people today are descended from Charlemagne? So I did a little figuring. I said, 20 years ago, there were two people living who were ancestors of mine, my father and my mother. We will say that just before they were born there were four people living, at least four who were ancestors of mine, my four grandparents; and then a generation back, there were eight ancestors; another generation there were sixteen; and so Charlemagne came to be about the 37th generation back and so if you figure-up and multiply by 2 and by 2 and by 2 for 37 generations, you've got at least a billion and a half; and since there was certainly not but a small portion of that number of people living in Europe in 700 or 800 AD The result must be that everybody living today who has ancestors that came from Europe, probably would go back to Charlemagne on 50 different lines.

Of course, there were doubtless a lot of people living then who have no descendants living today; but just about any people living then who has descendants today, are probably so interrelated down through, that we are all descendants of each other; and thus it's most likely that all the serpents at least all of that particular species, would be descendants of that serpent. (laughter) Well, maybe there was only one serpent there, maybe there were thousands of them. Maybe this curse only relates to the particular serpents that are descendants from that one. Perhaps the curse is not upon 9/10 of the serpents in the world today. It may be only upon these few. Perhaps that is the situation, and if so, I think the other ones are rather unfortunate on account of it, because they certainly get a lot of treatment that is rather mean; (laughter) and yet I

must say once or twice when I have killed a serpent, my conscience has really hurt me afterwards. I felt badly about it. I think that perhaps it is, we shouldn't be too sure that this particular serpent that we see should have any relation to that one. I remembered one time I killed that pretty little green rattlesnake; it was only about this long. (laughter) I felt like a murderer for the next day. Well, so much for the serpent. We were on c. Process of the surrender.

Now the thing that I'm trying to bring out is the gradualness of the surrender, and I think that there is a lesson here that is very vital for every one of us. She did not come up face to face with a definite decision: shall I disobey God or shall I obey God? Shall I be on the Lord's side or shall I be at on Satan's side? She did not at one instance face that decision absolutely clearly and make the decision. She gradually came to the decision which she made, and I think that it is hard to say where the line comes where you pass over from temptation into sin. It is very difficult often to say where it comes, but there is a place where you pass over. We may not be very sure where it is; but most every criminal knows: everyone who is in the deepest of wickedness did not start out to get into a situation like that, but he gradually moved over into that situation.

I remember when we had a fellow expelled from the school where I attended; he was president of our Senior class, and had been very promising for the four years he was there; and yet the week before the commencement, they discovered that he had been taking funds belonging to the class for over a year; he had been taking a little, and a little and a little, and actually had gotten away with several hundred dollars; and finally they found out what the situation was, and he was dropped from school; and one of the other fellows was speaking to me about it and he said, "That fellow was just a little careless with money sometimes. He was handling these funds that belonged to the class and he was just a little bit careless with it; and he needed something of his own; and was a little careless with the money and so he borrowed five dollars from the class fund, and said to himself, 'I will put it back next week,' and he did and everything was perfectly all right. And he got used to the habit of borrowing 5 dollars from it and pretty soon he was borrowing 10 dollars and then 50 dollars; and in the end, he took quite a sum, and then he didn't have the money to pay it back; and there he was and he gradually got into that situation and you can get used to most anything."

It is a good thing that when you start along a certain line to think where that line will land you if you follow it out logically; and he probably should have stopped immediately here, right in the beginning where it was easy; but he went on step by step. And the process of the surrender is a gradual thing here, and we find Eve first questioning just exactly what is God's word on this. I don't think that she was as accurate as she could have been, in trying to determine exactly what is the Lord's will for her anyway. We have no record of any command except not to eat of it, and then she added to it, and said neither

shall you touch it; and she was not sinning then, but starting on a path which could end her up pretty far away. It is vital that we know just exactly what God's will is; and if we take measures that are not part of God's command, that we realize that we are doing it because it makes it easier for us to carry out his command.

And now the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die, because that God knows that in the day you eat thereof, your eyes will be opened and you will be as gods knowing good and evil"—that this means you will be like gods because you will be able to understand good and evil, righteousness and wickedness, and see where the line comes between.

To me, that doesn't make any sense in the context. It seems to me that either it is an absolute lie and means nothing, or else it means that there actually is an increase and effective powers to accomplish what you may be interested in; powers to know how to do the thing that accomplishes and the thing that tears down. She is told that it will enable her to do this. Now maybe it would and maybe it wouldn't—I incline to think it would—but at any rate, she is given to think that here is a lovely thing that she could have; and it is a good thing to have; and yet God has commanded her not to have it; and immediately the minute she accepts that, she is questioning God's goodness; she is questioning what God said. He said you will die, the serpent says you will not surely die—so are you going to believe the serpent or God? Whose word are you going to follow? She shouldn't even question that what God says is true, but she is also questioning the goodness of God. He is keeping something from her that is good. Well, he may be keeping something from her which is good; but he may be keeping a good thing from her for a definite reason because she is not ready yet to have it; because later on would be the right time for her, there may be a definite reason.

My little boy—his mother was very mean to him this afternoon because she kept him from something good. She took Miss Harden to the train; and they got up there on the platform and the trains came in; and several of them went before Miss Harden's train came; and then Miss Harden's train came, and she got in; and little Johnny couldn't understand how there could be a place where you could see trains coming in and out all the time; why would anybody want to leave a place like that? (laughter) His mother was depriving him of something good, keeping him from seeing trains come in and out. She was just mean, and he couldn't understand how she could take such an attitude; she should have liked to have him see trains for the next 20 hours if he felt like it; but she knew that he needed a nap, and that it was better for him to see more trains some other day rather than then. She was depriving him of something good; but she was depriving him of something that was good because she had a good purpose in mind that was better for him than to give him that particular good thing right now. And God may be depriving you of something that is good; and

another person may have that good thing; and it may be God's will that they have that good thing. But how easy it is for us when things don't go right for us, and something doesn't work out; we say, "Well, why does God let the other person have this and not let me? Why does He give this other person this blessing and not give it to me? Why am I treated this way?" If you truly love God; if you truly trust God; if you truly are a child of God; and then carry this out in its implications, you will realize that what God permits to come into your life is what is actually best for you; and He has a plan for you and a purpose in it; and though it doesn't look good to you—it looks very bad—you can't understand why God would permit that to come; yet you must realize there is a good purpose or God would not do it.

Now of course, you have your own responsibilities; that may enter in to it, but God will overturn even what the result of our acts is—even the mistakes we make in the end are for our good—if we truly trust him and love Him; but it is hard for us to realize that. We are the children of God, and have the whole Bible to show us these truths. Well now, here is Eve; and when we take a step like this, we are following in the same direction in which she went at this point. She—whom God had put in this wonderful garden—began to question God's goodness: "He's kept me away from something that is good."

Now let's look into this and find out if God really is treating her right. "And so she saw the tree was good for food." Well, God had never said it wasn't good for food. God had simply said they weren't to eat of it. "And she saw that it was pleasant to the eyes." And of course it was pleasant to the eyes; everything that God had made was pleasant to the eyes in those days. It was attractive, but God had said not to eat of it; and God must have had a good purpose, if he's a loving God, in having given this command.

But she said, "It's good for food, it's pleasant to the eyes, and it's something that a person might very well desire if they want to get wise; they'll get wisdom from this. Doesn't God want me to be wise?" Surely God wants her to be wise. Of course he does. But maybe He doesn't want her to get wise right away, or maybe He doesn't want her to get this particular kind of wisdom right now.

I know so many people who say, "I want to serve the Lord. I want to do the Lord's will. I know the Gospel. I've got John 3:16. I want to go out and preach it. But," they say, "I want to learn what the other side thinks. I want to get all the opposite viewpoint." And therefore, instead of studying the Bible with those who believe the Bible, they will go and spend a lot of time studying with people who deny the Bible and who tear it to pieces. They want to become wise in that regard. It may be God's will for some people to receive that particular type of wisdom; but I think in most cases, it's His will that they first get a thorough understanding of the Bible from a Bible-believing viewpoint. I have never known of a person who thoroughly disbelieved the Bible to say, "I must learn the

fundamentalist viewpoint. I want to go to Faith Seminary and see what they have to say."

I have never known one to take that attitude. But I have met man after man in a Christian college who wanted to serve the Lord; but he's read John 3:16; he knows what the Bible says; he wants to go and hear what the other side is. Well now, is there a danger that such a one may be getting into the very attitude that Eve got into here? It is something that is desired to make one wise, yes. But is it the particular type of wisdom God wants you to have? Or is it the kind of wisdom He wants you to have right now? Or is there another wisdom that is more important for you to get first, in order that you can properly evaluate that wisdom?

So Eve considers those things, and she weighs the serpent against God. You cannot weigh the serpent against God. Someone has said, "One with God is a majority." And it certainly is true. But none with God is equally a majority. A human being adds nothing to God. God's wisdom is infinite. And God's goodness is infinite, and we don't have to weigh God over against any other force in the universe. We have to weigh God's Word and understand what it means; and determine exactly, and not add to or take away from the Word of God. We have to try to understand what He is saying, and what He means; but we do not have to compare what God says with what others say, and try to see which one is right.

I myself feel that that is a fundamental error in a great deal of philosophy as it is taught today. It starts out with this viewpoint: How are we going to explain the universe? Well let's get the facts and explain it. Well, what is the most important fact in the universe? The most important fact in the universe is God; and the great bulk of the important facts of the universe, we can't reach and touch—they are beyond our contact; the only way we can find out about them is to learn the facts of them from the one who knows. And so if we believe in God, and in the Bible as God's Word, the way to learn about the universe is to study the Bible and see what it teaches. I mean, if you're to get beyond the things we can touch and handle and study here in this world.

And when you start in with the study of philosophy, and you leave this out of account, you are of necessity going off on a line which can't get you anywhere; because you are leaving the most vital facts out of account. You cannot get the true wisdom except through the source from which it comes. And if you leave God's Word out of account, your conclusions mean absolutely nothing. You can study something that you can experiment on; something you can touch; something you can observe; but when you come to study the origin, purpose, and meaning of the universe, you have to get the one source of wisdom, or you can't expect to get anywhere.

Well now, Eve is trying to deal with things here which she has no access to, to determine what is back of them. What the true meaning is—she is weighing God's word against the serpent's word and trying to make a decision as to who is right—and she is in an attitude which is very, very dangerous. She has gradually gone from a start, at which she was simply trying to defend God against the accusation that God might be mean in not letting them eat the fruit of all the trees in the garden. And she starts with that, and she gradually goes along to this point, and now she takes of the fruit, and she eats and she gives it to her husband, and he eats. And so we have the process of the surrender.

d. The Suddenness of the Result. I don't mean that the result necessarily came instantaneously, but I mean that there was suddenly and instantaneously a realization of the point which she had reached. Be sure your sin will find you out; the finding out may be very sudden, it may be very unexpected; but it is it bound to come, and may seem to come very, very suddenly.

Owen Lattimore tells us, in his recent book, *Ordeal by Slander*, how he was over in Tibet, I believe, on a United Nations commission; and he heard a rapping at the door, and he went to the door, and he asked, "What is it?" And he found a telegram from the press in the United States, asking him if it was true that he was the top espionage agent of the Russians in America? And that he's charged of being a convict; and he says in his book that he was utterly astounded. It came as a blow that almost knocked him over that anybody would ever have thought such things as that about him. Well now, the things may have been absolutely false, but it should not have come as a blow to him, and as a sudden effect, because he had allowed himself to be used as a front man for Communist organizations for years; and he had worked with one after another; and worked with men who were giving every bit of their activity, and spending thousands of dollars in order to advance the cause of Communism in America; and he had worked with them and associated with them; put his name with them; and allowed himself to be a leader of in their movement; and perhaps he did it all in the innocence or ignorance of his heart; but he is a pretty bright man, and it is hard to believe that he was quite as stupid as that. The result nevertheless came to him suddenly. He said he just could hardly stand up, he was so shocked at what came.

And that is exactly the situation with Eve here. All of a sudden she realizes what has happened, and yet she has gradually drifted into it. You drift down with the current, and all of a sudden, there is a brink of Niagara, and over you go. And the suddenness of the result is something that is indicated here; and that is true to life and to experience; and something that will come to every one of us if we do not stop the process somewhere along the way.

Now, of course, I do not mean that any one of us could have a temptation that is comparable to that of Adam and Eve; this was the decisive thing in the

universe. This was a turning point in the universe. But on a lesser scale, we all of us have experiences similar to that; and on a lesser scale every person, saved or not, goes through situations of far less import, but very similar in nature—the Christian as well as the non-Christian. I have known many people who have gone forward in a meeting, and made one great wonderful act of consecration of everything to the Lord; and then having done that wonderful thing for God, they feel capable of going ahead and living for selfish purposes all the rest of their lives. Maybe they're looking out for the best church they can get; they're looking for the place where they'll have the best opportunity; or the place where they will have everything that will be most comfortable for them. And at point after point they put their own interests and their own desires first; and you can't do that. Consecration is a moment by moment and a day by day proposition; and you cannot consecrate, you cannot give tomorrow to the Lord today.

Well here was Eve, and the eyes of them both were opened. She had given to her husband, and he ate; and immediately the eyes of them both were opened; and they saw how wise they were, and how wonderful it is to be so wise; they're just like gods now, and they were so happy.

But that's not what happened. The eyes of them both were opened and they were ashamed. The eyes of them both were open, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. Their eyes were opened and they saw that they were in an awful predicament. "Look at the situation we are in. We haven't any clothes to wear." And they hadn't thought of that before. There was no reason why there was anything wrong with that before, but now sin had come into their lives. And they had taken an attitude, they had changed their approach toward God; and immediately fear and uncertainty had come into their lives; and immediately they are strangers to lives which are holy and right before God; immediately they assume unholy and wrong potentialities; and there comes a cause for fear, for mistrust, for embarrassment which would not be present in a state of holiness, and entire devotion to the Lord.

The thing for us to do is to examine the passage carefully and try to find out whether we have a universal picture of every man, or whether we have an individual. And we have so many details which are individual, that we cannot escape the conclusion that though he represents every man, and every man is involved in what happened—he is the federal head of the race—and what he did we are responsible for as his heirs and his descendants. Nevertheless he is an individual—Adam begat Cain; Adam begat Abel; the race doesn't beget individuals. There is much here—to Adam and his wife did the Lord make coats of skin and cloth them. There is much here which I think indicates that there was an individual employed in the matter. I would not cast aside any question like that as to the possibilities of interpretation. There may be at any part of the

Bible something that we may have overlooked. We must go to it fairly and see what it is. It is true that Adam did represent the race.

Now someone says, "This is just a legend, just a story in pictorial form; It shows something that is an experience which we all have." Well, is that the teaching of the Bible? You find the New Testament references to it take a different attitude; and you find the narrative here presents a different thing. And therefore no one can say he is fairly and truly interpreting it in taking it in such a way. The only way he can take it such a way is to say, "Those people who wrote this story thought it was a true one, but it isn't; they were mistaken." And once you do that, you are not taking the Bible as it is; you are twisting it around.

The New Testament makes the proposition clear by its interpretation. The New Testament, when it says, "Adam was not in the transgression, the woman...." Now what does that have to do with the race as a whole? Is not that referring to an individual? I don't see how else you can take it. It is referring to an individual situation. "As of one man's sin...." The terminology is quite clear in the New Testament, I think. But I do think we should beware that we do not adopt an obvious, immediate interpretation, and insist that that is true without careful investigation.

When someone comes along with any interpretation, no matter how crazy it sounds at first sight, I think it may be worth investigating to see if there might be something of an idea in it which corresponds to the facts. But the question is, "What does the Bible teach? What is the New Testament attitude? What is implied and suggested by the actual terminology used?" And what is, I think, quite clearly intended here, is the account of a real individual who was actually the ancestor of the race, and not merely something figurative.

A man said to me once, "Why, just look at the Book of Job! You have this man, and you have these sons, and you have these daughters; so many sons, so many daughters, just the same number of them And then you find that one day he lost this, one day that, and one day the other. That can't be true. Things don't happen that way. That is clearly just an imaginary picture."

Well now, whether the Book of Job is an imaginary picture or not is something to be decided by a study of the book. But to throw it aside on such arguments as that is utterly preposterous. Because you can find in life after life that things work out in just such a way as that. In case after case there are these similarities, and you might say coincidences, if you want to call them that. It's no reason for saying that a thing is impossible, or that it couldn't happen.

I have come upon some of the queerest ones comparatively recently. They just are there. Life is full of them. And there are all sorts of arguments used and raised to interpret the Bible which are utterly invalid. I remember at a meeting

of the American Oriental Society that one of the men got up and said, "What are we going to do with the Book of Ruth? That is surely not a story of something that actually happened. That is surely an allegory. You find here that it begins with a man here, with two sons, Mahlon and Chilion; and one of them means "sickness", and one of them means "weakness". And they both died. Now who would give names like that? Those are just pictures. They are pictures of a situation. And Naomi means "pleasantness". They are all just pictures. That is not a true incident."

And Professor Albright of John Hopkins University got up when the man finished, and he said, "Well, I don't know that there is much validity in that sort of an argument. There was the Oxford Movement—I don't mean this recent thing, but a century ago—the movement in the Anglican Church toward Roman Catholicism. There was the Oxford Movement a hundred years ago; and the leaders of it were Newman, and Manning, and Wiseman. Aren't they pictorial names? They were the leaders."

And I notice that Byblos, the ancient name of one of the important cities in Syria, the city from which the name of our Bible comes. And the word means "little mountain." And in modern times when the French, who control Syria, decided to excavate it, they sent a noted excavator, Pierre Montaigne, whose name means "little mountain", to excavate Biblos. Well I don't think that is the reason they selected him for it. (laughter)

But you find that sort of argument everywhere in relation to the Bible; if you're going to extend it, you'd say, "Why certainly we wouldn't have a president of the United States called True Man." (laughter) You see all sorts of arguments on interpretation, and there may be something to any of them; but do not let the authority or the number of degrees of the man who gives them influence you in your determination of whether they are right or not. The more degrees a man has; and the more studying he has done; the more he is elevated above the people to whom he speaks; the more apt he is to get a little bit careless and fling off arguments without thinking them through sometimes; and people just sit and take notes, and think it all must be wonderful, because this great fellow says it. That is one reason why I always try to encourage people—any time anything I say sounds untrue to them, to speak up and say so—because I don't want ever to get into that attitude. It is a very, very easy attitude to get into. I'm not the least bit interested in what anybody thinks about a thing—I mean—the fact this man thinks it doesn't prove it in the least; I don't care how great a man he is; but I am tremendously interested in what the reasons are why a man reaches a certain conclusion. And of course, the more degrees he has; the more study he has done; the more possibility there is that he has good reasoning; but I want to know what those reasons are, and to make my judgment on the basis of the reasons. You don't learn truth by counting noses, and you don't learn truth by seeing how prominent a man is.

We had one of the greatest physicists in the world come to Occidental College when I was there, and tell us the truth about religion. And when he got through, you could have seen that any child should have been able to speak more truly in the sphere of religion than that man did. I don't think he had even studied the matter he talked about. But because half the world bowed down and said, "It's wonderful!" when he gave some truth in physics, which he had very thoroughly worked out, and really probably knew more about than anyone else in the world, he felt that therefore he could speak on all kinds of other things he knew nothing about at all; and the sad thing is that people just sat and thoroughly worshipped as they listened, and accepted what he said. The question isn't "Who says it?" but "What are his reasons?" But let's examine anything, no matter who suggests it, and really see what the evidence is for it. Well now we have this immediate result. And then we have

e. God's Questions. What do you think of God asking questions, when God knows the answer perfectly well? Wouldn't that be silly? The Lord called and said, "Adam, where art thou?" Didn't God know where he was? Why did He ask the question, "Adam, where art thou?" Doesn't that prove that we have a finite God here who didn't know where Adam was? And He couldn't find Him; He had to call and ask, in order to find out where he was. What a primitive story we have here, of a God who had to come down and look for Adam, and He couldn't find him, He had to call and say, "Adam, where art thou?"

Well, it's easy enough—if you're going to take that sort of argument—to try to make out that we have just a primitive story here, and that it is actually a very primitive mentality that made it; but you can do the same thing with anything that was ever written, if you're going to take the words and insist that they mean exactly what they say.

This word doesn't mean God doesn't know where Adam is—I mean, that He wants to find out. This word means that God wants to call to Adam's attention the impossibility of hiding from God; and therefore He does it in such a way as to drive home a truth to Adam's heart—that Adam cannot escape God; that God is interested in Adam, and though Adam is trying to flee from God, God is going to search him out, and to investigate the situation; and He says, "Adam, where art thou?" And it is a very good method of pedagogy to ask people questions that you know the answer to perfectly well; and it is a very good method of leading them along into truth; but you want to be rather careful whom you use it with, because I find that sometimes when you do it, people will interpret you exactly this way that I suggested of interpreting God here. In fact, I've had it done. Usually I don't try to prove they're wrong. I simply avoid using that particular method again with that individual. (laughter) Well, here we have God using that method with Adam, and asking, "Where art thou?"

f. The Effort to Evade. And God is searching Adam out. And Adam gives an excuse. God doesn't simply say, "Oh, there is nothing to that excuse," He but simply follows it down, asks a further question. Now he says, "I was naked and hid myself." God says, "Who told you, you were naked?" He doesn't explain the thing; He doesn't discuss it; He asks a further question, and He knows the answer perfectly well. But He asks it in order to show the absurdity of the attitude Adam has taken. He is pushing him down, little by little, with His questions; and He follows it right down until He gets to the serpent; and Adam and Eve relax and say, "Isn't that wonderful? He has accepted our excuses; He has gone right to the serpent now." He didn't even question what we said. We didn't do it; the serpent did it; and He has gone right straight to the serpent."

But then after He deals with the serpent, He comes back to them; you can't evade God that way. You make your excuses—and we all do—perhaps efforts to evade; we make our excuses; we try to evade; but God sees right through them. But the trouble is that we don't ourselves, half the time, when we try to deceive God; but we deceive other people; we succeed very well; but what we succeed in, is deceiving ourselves, not in deceiving Him. And we kid ourselves to the point where we believe what we say.

There is nobody in the penitentiary that was put there for something he did. Everyone there was framed. For everyone there, there is a reason why he is there; but he doesn't deserve to be there. He was wrongly treated somewhere along the line. Everybody makes an excuse; we all do ourselves. And I think it is a good illustration here of the need of avoiding that; of taking the blame yourself; regardless of what blame someone else takes.

People live as if there was no God; and yet very few will admit that they don't believe there is a God. Most people will say, "Well of course I believe." Very few people are willing to call themselves atheists. Perhaps they will say that they don't know. Most people will admit that there is a God; and if there is or if there isn't, they don't face the question. They hide from it. They hide from all sorts of things which they are no more able to hide them from God than the trees in the garden are to hide Adam from God.

And you know that—right here perhaps—we notice the value of reasoning; the value of argument; the value of historical, or scientific, or philosophical arguments for religion. You don't win somebody by argument. It is the Holy Spirit that wins one to the Lord. A person faces his sin, and his need of a Savior, and sees Christ as the only possible answer, and is saved. Your arguments do not save a person. They cannot possibly. I think that perhaps your arguments might be compared to someone who is cutting down the trees that people are hiding behind. They are refusing to come face to face with the facts. They know He is there; they know it perfectly well, and yet they refuse to admit it; or they push it so far into the back of their minds that they kid themselves into

thinking they don't believe. They convince themselves, perhaps, that there is nothing to it; and your arguments will not save the person, but will remove some of the obstacles that they themselves have built up to make it seem unnecessary for them to face the fact of their responsibility before God and to face the requirements of Christianity.

You do not win a person by argument, but you remove obstacles—not obstacles in God's way, but obstacles in the person's way. Obstacles which, usually, that person has built up, but which, sometimes, others have built up. There is always a turning away of the will from doing what we don't want to do, but that we know is right; and yet it is far easier to turn away the will when we have a tree, a convenient tree, behind which we think we can hide.

I do not think that anyone ever lost his faith on account of unbelieving arguments which were put before him. I think he lost his faith because the heart is desperately wicked; and since the heart did not want to face his responsibility to God, and desired instead to go out after his simple lusts; but I think that the argument, the presentation of unbelief which was put before someone, furnished him a convenient tree to hide behind and to do the things that he wanted to do; and therefore it is a cause, but does not absolve the man from responsibility.

It is exactly the situation here where the Lord said to the man, "What have you done?" and the man said, "The woman that thou gavest me; she gave me of the tree and I ate." You see it is her fault; and it's God's fault. If God hadn't created the woman, man would have never sinned. "The woman you gave me," see? He put it right there. He directly tied up the responsibility to God, so it is God's fault, you see.

God didn't bother to argue with him. He simply acted as if he were taking his words at face value and turned to the woman and He said, "What is this you have done?" and the woman said, "Oh, it is that serpent. The serpent led me astray." Then the Lord turned right directly to the serpent. And Adam and Eve, both of them heaved a great sigh of relief. They had escaped from any punishment because God had taken the excuse that they had presented; and sometimes people take our excuses, and at other times they don't; but we can be sure of this—that our excuses don't make the least bit of difference to the Lord.

I know one time, I was on the train in the middle of the war, heading westward; and I got to talking to a lieutenant who happened to sit across from me at the table at breakfast; and he mentioned how he had a ten-day furlough—in Texas, I think it was—somewhere down that way; and he was due out in San Francisco at a certain time; and he said, "Now this train is late, and I am going to be six

hours late in getting there. I can't possibly get there before, and there will definitely be punishment for being late."

"Well", I said, "It is not your fault that the train is late; won't you tell them that the train is late?" "No, what is the use of making excuses; I could have allowed for the train and taken an earlier train. They know that just as well as I do. What is the use of making excuses?" I think, as a rule, it is a fact that we all have good reasons for failing sometimes; but no one of us has a reason for failing all the time; and everyone will make allowances for occasional reasons. It is not necessary to give them, and if a person is making excuses all the time, why, they are apt to be judged at face value. God simply acted as if he assumed that they were excuses, and he just went right on and it didn't make the slightest difference in the world. His verdict was strictly in accordance with what they had done; but He traced the thing down. He took the story, and as soon as it was right, He traced it right back to its beginning; and then He came back and dealt with the matters along the way.

And so He turned to the serpent, and he didn't give the serpent any chance for an excuse. He simply turned to the serpent, and He gave the curse upon the serpent immediately. The man and the woman are what matter in this account; the serpent is an incidental element which has been used of the devil to lead them astray; and the serpent is not given an opportunity to say, "After all it was the devil who used me, I couldn't help myself." And so we come to

3. The Curses which God Placed as a Result of the Fall.

I separate these two because the details of the fall are interesting to us in understanding how things come to be as they are. They are interesting as an example of how men fall all the time. They give us many interesting psychological insights into ourselves; but at the same time, what is actually given is simply something that has happened. Now the curse is something that established a permanent effect; and consequently I think it is a separate head: the curse which God placed as the result of the fall; and now the curse as naturally given here, divides into three parts. There is first the curse on the serpent; second, the curse on the woman; third, the curse on the man; and then there is a fourth part of it which enters into all of them.

a. The Curse Upon the Serpent. What are we told about the serpent? He says to the serpent, "Thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field." He says that whatever misery and suffering that comes to other animals, upon you there comes a greater curse. This suggests already that all of nature, in some ways, participates in the curse. "Thou art cursed above all cattle, above every beast of the field."

It suggests that God is placing a curse upon this good world which He has created: upon this good animal world; upon this good earth; upon all this at every stage. He looked upon it, and it was good; and when he came to the end of the sixth day, we read that he looked upon it and it was very good; and now the serpent is more cursed than the rest; and so there is an implication that there is a curse that rests upon all, but here he is stressing the serpent. The serpent is the most cursed, not that it is exclusively cursed.

And, of course, that raises a question, as I mentioned last time: is the serpent actually receiving a punishment? If it is, then we must recognize that the serpent had a responsibility—had permitted Satan to use it—it had a responsibility and consequently we see this punishment. Whether that is true or not, I find very difficult to say, but there is the suggestion in this verse that that is not necessarily the case, because "thou art cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field." which implies that there is a curse upon nature, all nature, not just upon this earth; and not just upon the serpent; and the curse upon nature is not a punishment; but the curse upon nature is the punishment of man.

Man is punished by that which is done to nature. Man is punished by the effect which came upon the animal creation; and upon the vegetable creation as we find in later parts of the curse; and so it is altogether possible that the curse upon the serpent is merely a part of that which is to have its effect upon the man; that is the serpent, as an animal, is simply an object under the lesson for man and something to affect man in his life curse.

Now, between the two views, I don't see how you could be dogmatic. I incline to think that there is a little element of punishment, but I certainly am far from certain, but the serpent is cursed above all the other creatures, "Upon thy belly shalt thou go"—whether this means that previously the serpent walked upright, or whether it is simply that the continuing condition of the serpent is going to be the object lesson to man, is something that is hard to say. "Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." That does not mean that the serpent actually eats dust, it means that his head is down in the dust, that he is in a condition—an inescapable condition in that regard—and, of course, upon an earth under the curse, "to crawl upon your belly and have the dust in your nostrils" would naturally be altogether different than it would be to be upon the ground in a world in which nature was perfect, and in which there was no curse.

I have never thought of picking things up from the floor and eating them anywhere I have been, as far back as I can remember; but when you have a little child in the house, you find that it is impossible to prevent him occasionally from picking up things from the floor and eating them. You drop things on the floor, he picks them up; and you don't have quite that same feeling about something being on the floor as being immediately taboo as far as going into

your mouth is concerned; and that brings to your realization, a difference between your house where you try to keep things clean and you know what comes in and you know who is there; and the situation in the world which in general is under the curse. When I go out to the mountains for a few days and am entirely away from human beings, even though I get dirty, I feel cleaner, much cleaner, than I do riding in a street car or riding a train, where you don't know what kind of people are around you or what kind of germs and what kind of effects there may be there.

We have all sorts of attitudes toward this world, because of the world being under the curse, which we would not have in a perfect world, as God made the world. Everything in it would be good and we would not have to take these particular precautions that we have to take in the world under the curse, and the serpent crawling upon his belly and eating dust is a part of the situation of the curse, whether it is a particular change in the serpent's condition or not.

b. The Curse Upon the Woman. Then the 15th verse—continuing part of the object lesson, perhaps, also part of the punishment—perhaps not. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." The serpent and the woman had been bosom pals. They stood together against God. The serpent had told the woman how mean God was and how fine it would be for her to eat of this; and she believes the serpent instead of believing God. Well, there is a friendship between the serpent and the woman; and now there is a change, now there is an enmity between the serpent and the woman. Now there is an attitude of distrust, an attitude of fear, instead of the attitude which was in the garden. And this is an attitude which is to continue. It is not merely between this woman and this serpent, but it continues between the serpent's descendants, and her seed. The descendant of the woman is trying to hit at the head of the serpent, and trying to destroy the serpent; and the serpent is trying to injure the heel of the woman.

Now as far as a conditioned reflex is concerned, I take it the difference between a conditioned reflex and an unconditioned reflex is that one is a natural instinct and the other is something that you acquire as a habit as a result of circumstances. Well, here is a prediction that it is going to be this way, and it doesn't tell us whether it is going to be naturally made or rather it is going to be conditioned.

I conditioned my wife once in this regard; it was just before we were married, and I was very anxious that we were going right out to the Grand Canyon right after; and I was going to take her into a section that I don't believe any woman had ever been in before (laughter). There was little danger of rattlesnakes there, but there are some; and so I always keep my eyes open very carefully lest I step on one. Once I looked down all of a sudden and there was one all coiled up, and one foot was ahead of it and one behind it and I didn't know which way to step.

(laughter) I almost stepped on it, and because if you step on it, they are apt to spring up at you rather suddenly; and I hadn't had that particular experience, so I wanted her to realize the danger, and watch out for them. So I told her a bit about them before we went; and we went out there and we walked for two days and went way off into a distant section of the canyon and that night I was fast asleep, and all of a sudden she began to shake me, "Look, look, there is a rattlesnake, right over there." It was just as near as Mr. Dorsey, and I looked and I got out my flashlight and there was a great big crooked stick there. (laughter)

You see, she had a conditioned reflex there. (laughter) I had given her an idea of watching out for the serpents, and I had given perhaps too much—well, that was better than having it be too little to the point where she might be careless.

Is this relationship here, the result of situation in life, or is it that God makes it that way from then on? I don't see that we know. I don't see how to tell. I know people who have no fear whatever of serpents; and I know others who seem to have something in their background, or things that have happened, to give them a terrific fear of them. I know that is true of horses and true of monkeys. I heard, not so long ago, of a big gorilla, a very big powerful brute that could lift up three men and throw them through the door if he desired; and they didn't know what to do; they didn't want to kill it; they didn't want to shoot it; and they couldn't get it back in the cage. I think it was just last week, sometime. It wasn't hurting anybody; but they didn't know what it might do; and they wanted to get it back in the cage; and they tried all sorts of things for a couple of hours. He was wandering around and everybody was running from it; and finally they got a hold of the keeper who had been away, I guess; and he came in, and he got a little bit of a garter snake about this long; and he put it down in front of it and the thing began to scream in terror and rushed back into his cage. (laughter) Well, that is not a conditioned reflex, in that case; I would think there was some innate feeling for it.

I think the fact of the matter is that in this fear—there had to be fear in order to avoid definite danger—and there is fear that will go beyond actual danger. There is unreasoning fear that grips us all at times; and it does far more harm than the actual things often that we face. It is one of the great difficulties in our modern life—all sorts of unreasonable fears that we have. It is all part of the curse. It is the human mind and human personality that is under the effect of sin; and under the effect of the result of the curse which God has laid upon this earth because of sin.

Well, now, that affects a good many parts of this curse. Here we have the continuing enmity between the serpent and the woman—and the woman's seed in this case. Now there is no explicit mention here of Satan. There is a

suggestion perhaps of hope for the man here, but it is the curse upon the serpent which stands out.

There is now enmity between the woman and the serpent. She loses a good friend. She no longer has that friendly attitude toward the serpent, nor that feeling that she can trust the serpent; and she knows that she can't trust him; there is this enmity, this fear, this suspicion inserted into nature. Nature is out of joint as a result of sin coming into the world.

Verse 16, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." The woman has ruled over the husband here; she has brought him the apple; she has told him what to do. She has led him into this situation, and he feels that he can blame her for it. Well, that situation is reversed now, under the curse.

And you find that, in a very large portion of the world, the woman is almost a shadow of her husband; there is an absolutely wicked extent to which men have control—and an arbitrary control—over women in the world as a whole. You find that except for a few sections here and there, to a very limited extent, that woman has suffered in this situation; and you find that in the U.S. about 50 years ago, the woman was saying that women had been in bondage all these centuries; the woman has a right to equality and has a right to be free from all this and we had this great feminist movement; and then you find that when you get an attitude established of absolute equality, you find that doesn't work; that that is not the system as God has made it. It is not the world as it is now. There is an inequality, there is an unfairness, in many places in which women are treated in the world today; utter unfairness, an unfairness which I do not think that a Christian should in any way participate in; and yet an unfairness that is so under the curse that it cannot be removed from this earth.

I remember how disgusted I was once at a fellow. He was a young fellow, a minister, out of seminary a couple of years. I was visiting him and he was speaking about a girl in the town. He said, "You know, my brother was here visiting and you know what he said about that girl? He said, 'the trouble with her is that she wants a man.' She is just looking for a husband. That's the way she is." Well, this fellow himself, was just crazy to be married, and was looking over every girl he could meet, considering, and trying to decide who would make ... (laughter)

And the thing that impressed me was this: that we consider perfectly normal and right for a man; the very fact that he suspected a woman of having such an attitude, just seemed to be a terrible thing; and that is ingrained in the constitution of our civilization. You will find the attitude taken by most people to a very large extent. There is an entirely different attitude about appropriate

behavior of men and of women. We have to recognize it and I don't think that we should say that that which is unfair, that which is wrong, is part of God's holy will. I don't think that we should say that; but we should recognize this: that there is a curse upon the earth; and that we have to recognize the curse; and that we have to deal with things as they are—alleviate them as much as we can—but we also must recognize that there are definite differences between man and woman; and God has given man—not this arbitrary control over woman which in so many countries is exercised; nothing of the kind—but he has given man a first place, a leadership; and that is God's will in the creation of man and woman. Man should have the leadership and when that is changed, you find that it doesn't work out. But people take it and go way beyond; and God predicted that in the Scripture.

Now the earlier part of the verse, "I shall greatly multiply thy pain, thy conception. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children." In many parts of creation, birth seems to be almost entirely free of pain and difficulty; in the human world, there is a tremendous amount of pain and misery connected with it and it is the result of things not being in the good condition in which God created it. Nature is out of joint as the result of the curse and the sin which produced the curse.

Now I was reading a book not so long ago, by an English doctor, who was very much disgusted with the attitude that a great many people had in relation to this point. He was an English doctor who I think—as far as I could get it—had worked out some very good sensible ideas in relation to childbirth; and he said that he found it very difficult when the fact that everywhere he went people said, "Oh, but woman is under the curse, woman is supposed to have this pain and this misery and it is perfectly silly to try to do anything about it. That is God's will." Well, I think that is a misunderstanding of the verse. It is a result of sin; it is a result of the curse, which has brought pain and suffering in the world; that may strike any of us, and will strike us no matter how fine Christians we might be, and no matter how well He directs our lives. We may very likely have a great deal of pain and misery in life; but a large portion of it comes from the nervous condition, the fear complex, the wrong approach to things which is all a part of this sin within our hearts, all from the curse upon nature.

And after we believe on the Lord, as we are truly his followers, it is His will that we should have calmness and a freedom from worry, and a complete trust in him which greatly decreases the effects of these things in every aspect of our lives; and anything that we can do to help that relaxation and that freedom from worry is, I think, definitely in accordance with His will. The fact that there is suffering and misery as the result of the curse, doesn't mean that we shouldn't do everything we can to try to make it easier; and it doesn't come because it is God's will that we should suffer; it comes because the result of sin is inevitably suffering; and God has placed a curse upon nature for our good;

and it should drive us not to a situation of rebellion against God—which increases the suffering—but a condition of trusting in Him, which inevitably lessens the suffering.

Now you will find people, who have no Christian profession at all, who put many of us to shame in their attitude and serenity and calmness in their minds. You will often find it, but in a great many of the cases where you find it—not all, by any means but in a great many of the cases—it is the result of a Christian background.

There is the Christian effect that has come, even with the doctrine having been forgotten. It is most interesting to read in early Church History how the people in the Roman Empire had their great rites just before combat when they would massacre thousands of people in the arena for the pleasure of the people to see the blood flow. And there is practically never once in paganism a word said against this terrible cruelty until you find Christianity overcoming in the Empire, and then the thing is done away with almost immediately.³²

And you will find that when you have people who are very humanitarian; and devote their lives to good works; and do a tremendous amount of good in the world; I think I could say that in ninety-five percent of cases you will find that there is a Christian background; that it is the effect of the gospel; and you will find that abuses, which just go right along and people ignore in a nation without Christianity; after the gospel comes, people begin to notice and observe and take an interest in trying to do away with them.

It is very foolish for the Christian to set himself up against the social gospel, as if the social gospel were a harmful thing. One man said to me, "If people are going to hell anyway, what do I care whether they go drunk or sober?" Well, it is far, far more important for the person to be saved from sin than it is to be saved from drunkenness; yes, far more important. But you will find a tremendous value in this Christian effect, and it is very wrong to oppose it.

c. The Curse upon Man. Then we go on to the curse upon the man. The man tries to shift it to the woman; and the man tries to say that the woman has given it to him, and he even blamed it on the Lord. He said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me," as if to say, if only God hadn't given him this woman he wouldn't be in that situation; and I think there is a mighty good lesson here for every man to think of. If you want to ruin your opportunity of serving the Lord effectively, you marry a woman who is not interested in serving

³² [dcb] Constantine issued a decree against these blood sports in connection with the Council of Nicea in 325 AD But his decree did not stop the sport of gladiatorial combat, particularly with the use of captured barbarian warriors. In 404 AD Honorius abolished gladiatorial shows, but combat with beasts continues even today in combat with wild beasts and bullfighting. See Schaff, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Christianity* Vol. III. §21 "Abolition of Gladiatorial Shows." p.122.

the Lord; and there are too many men who go into the Lord's service who think that in the selection of a wife, they do not need to take any consideration of anything other than that which the man of the world would take into consideration; and such an attitude can ruin your ministry more than anything else you can do. If you are called to go into the Lord's service, you not only have no right to consider marrying a woman who is not a Christian; you have no right to consider marrying a woman who is not a consecrated Christian, who will not be a real helpmeet to you in your service to the Lord. But if you do, if you allow yourself to be "carried away by your feelings," or by your instincts, or by some fascination, and to marry some woman who—you have not carefully thought out the question of whether she is a real helpmeet to you in the things of the Lord—and you find your life is ruined, you cannot turn to the Lord and say, "the woman thou gavest me, she gave me of the fruit and I did eat." Adam couldn't help himself. God gave him Eve.

But any man today can help himself and has a very definite responsibility toward it, and cannot evade it by saying, "the woman thou gavest me." He can say, "The woman that I was foolish enough to marry because I put my own desires first instead of putting the Lord's will first." But Adam said, "the woman thou gavest me gave me of the tree, and I did eat." And God said to Adam, "because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife." She might speak, but Adam didn't have to obey her. "Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife and hast eaten of the tree which I commanded thee saying, 'thou shalt not eat of it'; because of this, God placed very serious difficulty in the path of the man. He said, "cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Here is a curse placed upon the vegetable and animal creation; a curse placed upon the creation for the sake of man; a curse placed upon the creation in order that man may suffer as a result of man's sin; and man is not allowed to make any excuses on the ground that the woman had led him into it. The woman is put in the position where she is not supposed to lead the man astray; but the man has the misery in life from the situation of the vegetable creation and from the situation of his body. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground" His body is now made corruptible; it is made subject to decay. It is made subject to disease; it is made subject to decay.

Man also has a curse upon his body, but he is less aware of it; it is less inconvenient to him because he finds his principal misery from the curse upon nature, which God has placed there on account of his sin. And so this curse on nature is the fact of experience; a fact that no one can deny who observes the life of the animal or vegetable creation, or the life of the races of mankind; and it is a fact which Romans 8:22 tells us exists, that all nature groans together

with our bodies waiting for the redemption of our bodies, the time when God will remove this curse from nature and from the body of man.

Yes? (Student) Well, the ground would to some extent include the animal but very definitely the vegetable, because it goes on—"thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee"; and then the animal creation is more brought in by the idea of the "dust thou art", that unto dust he is to go, and of course, man's relation to nature has here principally mentioned the aspect of the ground and of the vegetable. The animal is not especially brought in the curse here, but is doubtless included; it is stressed in other places in the Scripture, and of course over in Isaiah 11 and in Isaiah 65 and in Romans 8 you have the promises of the removal of this curse so that the lion and the ox will lie down together, and the enmity will be removed from the animal creation.

Yes? (Student) This book *Perelandra*, I referred to last time, describes the condition in which the animal creation does not have the enmity or hatred. It is a purely imaginary picture but of course the picture as we have it in the world today is a situation in which there is misery and killing and destruction in a way that forms our balance; and these people, these naturalists, often speak of it in a very beautiful term, this wonderful balance of nature, but when you get down underneath and see what the balance is, it is a balance of killing and of destruction and misery, and a balance which is a result of the curse and it certainly was not the situation as God made the earth or intended it to be.

(Student) There is, of course, the breaking of the fellowship with God when man went and hid himself and God called for him; and then, of course, there is this prediction that man is to go into death. (Student) Yes, physical death, but our concept which we learn from the New Testament that the man living in sin is dead while he lives, the concept of spiritual death as the breaking of fellowship with God is something that is not exclusively mentioned here but which would seem to be very reasonably derived from it, but not certainly specifically stated.

"For thy sake" means it is done in order to affect Adam and it affects him in two ways. It affects him because it is a punishment; it is misery; it is suffering; and also affects him because fallen man is far better off having to work. One good minister that I know up in Philadelphia, who has built up a large church, told me that this statement "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" was a statement of the constitution of the natural person and that it is necessary for his health, and is vital. It is a fact the man who has normal exercise is far healthier than one who doesn't; and that the one who is idle is far more prone to illness than the one who is active.

d. The Curse upon the Animals. As Tennyson said—he spoke of nature red in tooth and claw. I don't know whether I have mentioned to you the experience I had when I was at Princeton Seminary. We went out for a walk in the park one

time; and we had some friends down from New York who had been in the same college I had attended in the west; and I remember one of them was a girl studying at some school of social work in New York; and we went out there to the estate; and there we saw a little pond with beautiful swans on it that looked so pretty, and peaceful; and then as we watched, way over at the other side of it—a pond, two or three times as far across as this room—a big goose jumped into the pond; and immediately one of these big beautiful swans swam across just as fast as it could, and began biting the neck of that other less attractive animal, and threw it out of the pond; and here was this big pond, big enough to get a hundred swans in; and there were about ten of them in it, but they wouldn't allow the goose in the pond. I remember how, when the girl saw it—she was studying social work in a New York school of social work, and she said, "Why, that's unsocial," and she was quite shocked to think that a swan should be unsocial and would want to keep this whole pond to themselves and not allow the geese to share it.

Now that is a fact of nature—that the curse is upon the animal creation and nature is red in tooth and claw—and so is humanity unregenerate. The curse is here. We have to face it. And where did it come from? This is not a perfect world. It is a world of sin and misery; a world that is out of joint. If this world is the way the Creator made it, He did a pretty poor job of it; but it is not the way the Creator made it. It is the way the Creator made it, but altered to the way the Creator cursed it for the sin of man; and so the world is today, under the curse; and it will remain under the curse until the Lord removes the curse from it as we are promised in Romans 8. And so here is the curse laid on nature for man's sake; and man is the one who suffers for the curse upon nature. Woman suffers for the curse upon social relations and the curse upon the body of the woman.

Somebody asked the noted skeptic [Robert] Ingersoll, "If you were making the world, how would you do a better job of it than God did?" And Ingersoll said, "I would make health contagious instead of making disease contagious," which is a very good answer. If anybody wants to say that there is a proof that this is God's world because everything in it is perfect, he is just shutting his eyes to facts. Things are not perfect in this world. This is a world of misery and a world of suffering; there is something wrong in this world. There is something out of mesh in this world, in the character of man, and also in the animal creation and in the vegetable creation; and it is a fact that it is disease that is contagious. Health is too, so some extent, but it is primarily disease that is contagious; and it is a fact that you have to work to make good plants grow but that the weeds will just sprout up the minute you turn your back to them. It is a fact of observation, and you cannot make an argument for theism from the perfection of the universe. There is a perfection of the universe, but there is also an imperfection; and the imperfection is in many ways much more obvious than the perfection; and you cannot explain it apart from the fall and the curse which God has placed upon the universe.

I've been much impressed several times at the Grand Canyon, hearing the naturalists give their talks about the nature of the canyon, to hear a note which one of them brings in every now and then, and that is the balance of nature. He says, "Here in the canyon"—I've heard them tell this story several times—he says, "Here in the canyon there are a great many mountain lions and the government decided a few years ago we want to get rid of these mountain lions; there are too many of them, and so they called in a good hunter who hunted down the mountain lions and killed quite a lot of them." And he said, "What was the result?" He said the result was that the deer began to multiply so fast that we had sickly deer falling dead all over the roads to the park; and that things got out of balance. He said that under normal conditions, the mountain lions killed off all the sickly deer and the backward deer; and they keep the number of deer down, and now the number of deer multiplied, so much that they became a menace to the rest of nature, and a menace to humanity there; and there was even talk of importing a few mountain lions to make up for the ones that had been killed.

He said one time somebody pointed to a little animal there that seemed to be an utterly destructive animal; they could find no good in this animal, and they said, "Let's root it out of the park. Let's kill it. Let's hunt it down." And he said, knowing of the balance of nature as he did, and how it is only injured rather than helped by any way man interferes with it, he said, "Now before you do that, go slow," he said. "Investigate carefully and see what the result is if you kill this animal, which seems to have no good about it." And he said that upon investigation they came to the conclusion that if they killed this animal, there would no longer be any century plants in the park. Well, you know those beautiful century plants that stand there with sharp prongs on the side. They are not particularly conspicuous there—just these sharp points about so high above the ground there and they stand there for a number of years and then out of the middle there shoots up a little soft spot that comes up quite high and then the beautiful flowers, and he said, "If you kill this animal there will be no century plants; and the reason is there is another animal which has an instinct that, when this century plant has shot up a little distance and it has the little soft buds on it and no seeds as yet produced, this little animal jumps up over the short stocks on the side, and gets a hold of this bud and eats it and the result is that it would never seed, and in a short time there would no longer be any century plants there; but the other animal they wanted to kill, kills off this animal, and keeps this down to the proper balance of nature and thus you could have some of both animals and also some of the century plants."

4. Looking Ahead: Protevangelium.

Protevangelium is a term which means the earliest form of the Gospel. The earliest, the beginning, the roots—maybe roots is not quite the word; the

beginning of the Gospel. You could say root in the sense that it is that from which all else eventually comes; but it is not so clear how it comes from this until you have studied into it a good bit, so it is better to go into it, perhaps, just in the first form.

The very first Gospel that we have in the Bible is naturally not contained in Chapter 1 and 2 where we are told of the perfect creation which God made; and it is not contained in Chapter 3 in the earlier part, where it tells how man fell; and it could not come before the fall, for there was no need of it then.

But now, man has fallen and there is need of a gospel. Does chapter 3 contain a gospel, or does chapter 3 entirely contain a message of doom? It has been felt by the church and by the Jews before the coming of Christ—in many instances—that in this chapter you have not only the punishment of sin; not only the explanation of how sin came into the world; but a word of hope, that sin is going to be brought to an end; that there is going to come a time when there will be victory over sin; and every place in the chapter where you find a suggestion of that, is right in connection with the curse. It is not in connection with the curse upon man, or upon woman—each of them is explicitly given the declaration of God's punishment and/or the misery into which they are coming now as the result of the sin they had taken upon themselves.

But before this was given to them, it has been felt by a great many interpreters that there is here—in the curse to the serpent—a strong suggestion of the fact that God is going to give eventual victory over sin, and over that which is connected with sin.

Here we are just briefly looking ahead into succeeding chapters to see what if anything this *protevangelium* may have reference to—to this wonderful promise about the seed of the woman—and immediately we think of the first verse of the next chapter; Genesis 4:1, a verse which I asked you to look up in the commentaries to see what it means; what opinions they had on its interpretation. Last week you turned in to me a discussion of it. And of course I asked those who had already had Hebrew, to look it up, and see exactly what it says.

And in Gen. 4:1, there is a very strange phrase: that last phrase of the verse, which in the Hebrew has the verb *kaniti*, translated in the King James English, "I have gotten," not a word that we use a great deal nowadays—at least not in the form "gotten." The Hebrew word *kana* means "to acquire, to purchase," and so it is very close to the meaning which we will take from this word gotten. Acquired or secured, purchased, perhaps, and then *ish*, a man; she has secured a man, she says when she bears Cain.

This word *kaniti* sounds a little bit like his name, *Kaiyin*; and it is probably connected with the name—not that the name *Kaiyin* means *kaniti*—it is a different form altogether. The word *Kaiyin* however sounds somewhat like the root of *kaniti*, and it might be that she selected this name, and selected it on the ground of its similarity in sound to this word; that she gave this meaning, *kaniti*, "I have acquired, I have secured."

What has she secured? What has she acquired? She has secured a man; and of course immediately you think of the promise, the seed of the woman, and you wonder if this means that she has hope that now there is to come an end to the terrible curse; that the promised seed that shall bruise this serpent's head is now here; and of course that is not stated here, but you just wonder whether that might be the thought that she has secured a man, and then she says—the English says, "from the Lord"—but the Hebrew word for "from," the common regular Hebrew word, is *min*; and the word *min* does not occur in this word at all, and so that is a rather free rendering. I do not recall any other place in the Bible in which the word *eth* is translated "from". I do not recall any case.

How does the Revised Version do it? I didn't look in the RSV in connection with today's lesson. I didn't recall that it said from the Lord—Yes, thank you, "with the help of the LORD." Now this "with the help", the Revised version "with the help of" In italics, meaning it is not in the Hebrew. "I have gotten a man with the Lord." Well, why do they put in "the help of"? Evidently they didn't think "I had gotten a man with the Lord" would be very clear what it means. It is an interpretation, and it is very nice that they put it in italics.

Now very often in the Scripture, you will find words in italics, which while they are not in the Hebrew or Greek, are definitely required by the forms of the Hebrew or Greek, that they are absolutely certain. There is no question about them, very often; but in other cases, the words in italics are simply words which the translator puts in as his guess as to what would be a good thing to put in there in order to make it intelligible to an English reader; and in this case, it is a guess. What does the word "with" mean? "I have gotten a man with the Lord."

Well, the hardest thing in any language is prepositions. Prepositions vary from language to language; and within any one language, the preposition often has a great many different meanings; and it is very hard to tell why we use one preposition in all this various group of meanings in one language; and then take four or five in another language to represent the different ideas; and then one of those in the other language will take four or five in the first language to represent it.

I saw a good illustration of this once. There was a man in Australia, I forget his name now, call him Smith for the illustration. He wrote a book which he called, I

believe, *Literature by Languages*.³³ Then he thought he would make a joke of the way this word 'by' had so many meanings. What does the word mean? "Literature by Languages?" What does the word "by" mean? What is the difference between "Literature by Languages", and "walk by the road"? Or he "went by train"? or he "didn't by Christmas"? I remember he said in the front of it, he hoped people would say, "by literature, by languages, by Christmas, by all means, by Job, buy Smith." (laughter)

But you see how many different meanings this word "by" has. Now our English word "with" doesn't mean "from". And the Hebrew word *eth*, as far as I recall, can never mean "from". The AV says "I have gotten a man from the Lord". Our English word "with" may mean "with the help of", but I think "the help of" is quite a subordinate idea and I am not at all sure that the Hebrew word *eth* ever means "with the help of"; it is more apt to mean, "in association with".

Now of course, if you say, "Two of us carried the piano into the house" and you say, "whom did you do it with?" you would say, "I did it with Harry." You would mean that you did it with the help of Harry. But the idea of the "with" is "in association with", rather than "with the help of" and the help is a secondary idea, in connection with the association.

I think that "with" in the Hebrew, *eth*, ordinarily means "association with" rather than "with the help of," so this is a very, very queer statement, "I have purchased a man, I have secured a man, with the Lord." Well, "If you want to put in the *min* because you can't understand something; so it must be wrong, let's change it." But what we try to do is interpret it as it stands, admitting the fact that there are cases where the meaning is uncertain; but insisting that these cases are far less frequent than critics of the type of Driver will assume.

If I give you a hundred cases and I say, "Here are the translations; and out of these I think that there are probably three of the hundred words that there has been an error in translation; and I would suggest that this is perhaps the original, you have a right to say, "Well, now perhaps that is a good guess." But if out of the hundred, instead of guessing it in three cases, I guess it in thirty cases, you have pretty good reason to say, "that is pretty wide interpretation." The evidence to the accuracy of the transmission is too great to assume error of transmission in any large number of cases. There are undoubtedly some; but in this case, it says "with" the Lord, if you translate the *eth* as "with." These thoughts suggest that you put in the *min* with the Lord; you might as well just drop the *eth*, and put in the *min* "from the Lord" which is exactly what the AV has. Even there it is a little uncertain what it means by "I have gotten him from the Lord." Does the "from" mean "with the help of" in that case? But the important thing to know in connection with the Hebrew word *eth* is that the

³³ [dcb] This appears to be William A. Amiet, *Literature By Languages: A Roll Call* (1932). Published in Australia.

Hebrew word means "with" in only a comparatively small percentage in the cases where it is asserted.

The word "lay" when you read it—the word l-a-y in English—what does that word "lay" mean? Well, the troubadours sang a "lay" is one meaning. The hen "lay" an egg; that is another meaning. He "lay" on his side; that is a third meaning. While the word "lay" in English then has different possible meanings, these are not meanings of the same word; these are distinct words which have that same form, and you will find the proof of it by the fact that in other forms of these words they will be different one from another. And similarly in this case, there are two *eth* Hebrew words: one of which, before a suffix, has the letter *t* doubled. "He went with him," *etto*. The other word *eth* is in Hebrew the sign of the accusative, used frequently before an accusative that represents a definite specific idea; that is not a general idea like "I have gotten a man", but "I have gotten the man"; "I have seen my friend"; "I have seen Henry", something like that, that is definite. That could use an *eth*; it doesn't have to. It is a sign of the accusative in such a case. We cannot translate it "with". There was a translation of the Hebrew Old Testament made into Greek at one time—many centuries ago—in which they felt that every Hebrew word should be represented by a Greek word, so they always translated it *sun* which means "with." And so "in the beginning God created with the Heaven and with the Earth"; and of course that doesn't make sense; but he is simply taking this *eth* in translating and putting the word "with"; not that he thought it meant with, but he put a Greek word with every Hebrew word to show you what the Hebrew actually said.

Now if the word *eth* is before a suffix, it does not become *etto*, but it either stays *eth* or becomes *oth*. So you see, you have two different Hebrew words, which in the undeclined form are exactly the same, *eth*. And so you have this sentence, "I have gotten a man *eth* the Lord". You immediately ask, which of the two is it? And it naturally seems more natural to say a man "with" the Lord, and yet you wonder just what she means, "with the Lord", and it is a very unusual use of the preposition in any case.

On the other hand, if it is the sign of the accusative, "I have gotten a man, even the Lord." Now that is very strange. Now would she think that Cain was actually Jehovah, the redemptive name of God? Could she think such a thing? It would hardly seem possible, and yet the difficulty between the two, the difficulty of knowing exactly what is meant by it, makes us wonder whether we have in the phrase a reflection of the idea that she thought here is the promised seed; and either she thought that here is the wonderful gift of God, that He has given me the promised seed who will bruise the serpent's head and bring an end to all of our misery; or she might have thought that here is the one God—God incarnate—the one who is to be the seed of the woman, the one who is to bruise the serpent's head. Now whether she knew enough theology to establish that, we don't know; and we don't know whether God elaborated on what had

previously been given. We know that God must have revealed some things to these people that are not told us in the Scripture. There are plentiful reasons to think that some things are revealed beyond what is actually given here; but what that actually might have been, we do not know. At any rate, this verse here—I would not say that we can dogmatically say—but I think that it can very clearly be said that it suggests the promised seed; and that she may have thought that this was perhaps the actual one promised; this was the seed which was hoped for.

Well, you say "Why on earth would she do that? Didn't she know that it was at least 4,000 years before the time of Christ?" Well, God said, "The seed of the woman will bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." He didn't say when; and so you go back to that verse and you say, what is the chronology? How long will it be before the seed comes? And the answer is, "God does not say." She has no way to know. She has every reason to think that it may be soon, but no reason in the world to think that it must be soon. It is exactly the situation that the Christian church has been in relative to the return of Christ. Right from the time of Christ's ascension into Heaven, we have had every reason to think that it may be soon; but never any reason to say that it must be soon; and today we have more reason to say it may be soon, but absolutely no rightful evidence to say it *must* be soon. It is not revealed and we do not know.

And so, what may be perhaps here, is a suggestion of Eve's attitude toward the promised seed; but when we look at verse 25, we find a further suggestion "And Adam knew his wife again and she bear him a son and called his name Seth, for she said, God has appointed (the root *sheeth* is similar to "Seth") me another seed instead of Abel" because Cain slew Abel.

In other words, here was the first one—Cain came; she hoped this was the promised seed. Then Abel came. Cain proves to be a murderer; he cannot be the seed. Abel can't be the promised seed, because Cain has killed him; and so God has appointed her another seed. Now let us see if Seth is going to be the promised one. I do not think again that we can be dogmatic upon it, but when you put the two verses together, it seems to me that there is the most extreme probability that that was what was in Eve's mind.

And then we turn over to Chapter 5:29 and we find that one of Seth's descendants was named Lamech—a man of very different character from the Lamech who was descended from Cain. Lamech "had a son, and he called his name Noah—comfort—and he said 'This one will comfort us in our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.'" What did he mean by that? What did he mean by saying, "Here is a seed that is going to comfort us because of the ground the Lord has cursed?" It could just mean that here is a boy—we feel happy to have a child—and so we are comforted in our work. Is that all he meant? Perhaps, but it would seem to me much more likely

that he is harking back to the one that was promised; and he is pointing specifically to the curse which God has laid upon the ground as the result of man's sin; and he says God has promised a seed. Here is a seed, and let us hope and pray that this is the one we are looking forward to, the one who will bring us comfort and consolation which God has promised, the one who will bruise the serpent's head.

And it would not be then any proof whatever of what kind of a man Noah was going to be, but it would show the godly attitude of his father Lamech. Just as when you meet a person today, and you find a man with a good Biblical name; and he may be a bank robber; he may be a bandit; he may be an atheist; and the name proves nothing about him, but it is rather apt to suggest that his father was one who loved the Scripture. And when you find someone like the Governor of Texas who two years ago, I understand, had two daughters—one of whom he named Ima, the other he named Ura—and his own name was Governor Hogg. The names of the two children don't show anything about character of the two girls; but they do show something about the rather light type of mind that their father possessed before he became Governor, when the two daughters were born. (laughter) I have been told—I never have checked into it, it may be wrong—but a man told me that he had received an invitation to a party given by Miss Ima Hogg in honor of Miss Ura Hogg. (laughter) And as I say, you cannot hold it against the girls. It shows their father's attitude when they were born.

Well, now in this case then, it so worked out that Noah was the one whom God made a creature of righteousness and whom God used as an instrument in saving humanity through the flood; but I don't think the name Noah, has anything to do with that; the name shows what his father felt, and showed the godly character of the father, which was partly responsible for the Lord's use of his son.

5. The Seed of the Woman . And who is the "you" that he is talking to? The serpent. "I will put enmity between you and between the woman." Between you and the woman, your seed and her seed, A and B, C and D; and then we have "he". Now just a minute. What is the Hebrew word for he here? *Who*. They say a good thing to learn in Hebrew: *who* is "he", and *he* is "she". *Who* in Hebrew is "he" in English, and *He* in Hebrew is "she" in English. So it is *who*, he. Do you ordinarily express seed that way? You don't, do you? Ordinarily your word simply uses the pronoun "it"; but here it is expressed as "he." As to who that one is, "he" is either the seed of the serpent or the seed of the woman; and of that one, what is "he" going to do? Bruise. After all, why couldn't he be the serpent here? We know he is not the woman, why couldn't he be the serpent here?

Well whom is God talking to? And ordinarily when you are talking to someone you don't speak of him as "he". Ordinarily that when you are speaking to them and using "he", "he" is a third party; but the fact that he is speaking to the serpent would seem to make the "he" refer to her seed, rather than the serpent. Add the fact that the "he" is masculine is indicated in two ways: first by the pronoun which is masculine; second, by the verb that is masculine. This would seem to indicate that "he" is not the woman but is one of the two seeds.

Well, now, why does it say "he" though? Why doesn't it say "they"? What is the word "seed"? Singular or plural? How many of you think it is singular? How many think that it is plural? Well, we read that God says to Abraham "Thy seed shall be as the sand of the sea. If thou art able to count the sand of the sea, thou shalt be able to count thy seed." Is that singular or plural? That is plural isn't it? But Paul says "The promise was given to his seed, as of one, not as to many." That is singular then, isn't it? In other words, the word seed in Hebrew is exactly like it is in English. Here is a seed. That is one. But farmers scattered seed. That is many. The word is the same for singular or plural. It covers both. It can be used either way, and you have to determine by context which it is—whether it is singular or plural.

So that when there is enmity between the woman's seed and the serpent's seed, that doesn't mean that there is going to be one serpent and one descendent of her own that in one future time will meet each other. It means a great many descendants of the serpent and a great many descendants of the woman. It is plural, isn't it? The enmity between thy seed and her seed; as far as the word is concerned, it could be singular, it could mean there would be but two individuals. But it seems reasonable in the context to consider that it there is plural. That it means many descendants of the woman and many descendants of the serpent will have enmity one against the other. But then, it continues, "he." It doesn't say "they," it says "he," and therefore it suggests that, as this continues, it is not all of the seed but one particular seed, doesn't it? It suggests that one particular seed is now in mind which is referred to as that one, "he," a specific one, with a definite pronoun used to point to it and with a singular verb used. That one then, we say is, "he." It is either a seed of the woman or one of the descendants of the serpent.

Now what are we told about that one? He will bruise you as to the head. And as for "you," you have the pronoun there which you don't ordinarily have. You don't need the "you". The verb carries a you, so this pronoun puts an emphasis upon it. And as for him, he will bruise you as to the head, and as for you, you will bruise him as to the heel; he will bruise you as to the head.

Well, now here we have: first then the two—the serpent and the woman. Enmity between the serpent and the woman. Then we have enmity between the serpent's descendants and the woman's descendants. Now we have a third

clause: and we read that "as for him"—and that can't be the woman, and it can't be the serpent for he is talking to the serpent—so it must be "as to the seed of the woman," this one who is to bruise the head of the seed of the serpent; or "as to the seed of the serpent who is to bruise the head of the seed of the woman." Is that what we have now? That would be symmetrical, wouldn't it? So then what would we have? We have him, who would seem to be either one of the seed of the woman or one of the seed of the serpent. One descendent of the woman or one descendent of the serpent. And which of the two is it?

But we are told that it is going to bruise the serpent. Well, now, you might say to the serpent. One of your descendants is going to kill you. That could conceivably be said. But it doesn't seem to be what the context calls for. The context seems rather to call for continuation of the oppositions that have been discussed between the two sides—the serpent's side and the woman's side. And so, since you are on one side of this, it suggests that he is from the other side, and is a seed of the woman rather than that of the serpent. So when it says "he", it would seem to be one of the seed of the woman. That is the seed of the woman in some very special sense—he, that one which can be called in a fuller sense the seed of the Woman. Now here we have it. Here is the serpent and here is the woman.

Generations go by. Thousands of years pass. Many, many descendants of the woman lived and died and were buried. Now there is enmity between the line of the woman and the line of the serpent, and then thousands or years later, this prophecy is fulfilled and one of the descendants of the woman kills the serpent.

Well, how did the serpent live so long? How is the serpent there all the time? It doesn't say that he shall kill one of the descendants of the serpent. It doesn't say "kill all of the descendants of the serpent," but kill you. What kind of a serpent is this anyway? That is going to live that long—generations and generations of descendants have disappeared. It raises the question. Up to this point he has been talking to an animal—to a serpent.

But is he now talking still to the serpent, or is he talking to one that will be there after a thousand years? He has been talking over here to the serpent; and then he turns his direction and looks over here and says something in this direction—to one who is connected with the serpent—having been the one who is using the serpent and speaking through the serpent, and who is the real cause of the difficulty. Who is the real center of all of this? He turns to that one, and he says: "he will bruise your head and as for you, you will bruise his heel." And so it would seem, in the context.

You might say that there will be enmity between the serpent and the woman and the descendants of the serpent and the descendants of the woman, each one of these is going to try to hurt the head of each one of those and each one

of those is going to try to hurt the heel or each one of these. You might say that. But it would just be a continuing on—the way many naturalistic interpreters try to take it—but that is not what is said here. It doesn't say the descendants of the woman and the descendants of the serpent. It says, You, so either he is talking to a literal serpent and saying that one of the sons of the woman is going to kill this serpent here, or else he is no longer talking to the serpent, but he has at this point, turned his attention to the one who was using the serpent—the one who is back of the serpent, the one who had spoken through the serpent—and to that one, he says, you will be injured by the one who is promised seed of the woman.

And the serpent is the visible Satan. God is not in one particular spot; God is infinite. And Satan is finite; Satan does not have the omnipresence qualities of God, but Satan is a spirit, and I simply used the figure of speaking to the serpent and then turning your attention over to him—not meaning that God turns his attention in a special way.

I was reading where someone said he met a man who was color blind; and he talked to him and he said, "That is very interesting to me, being color blind. I wonder just what that is like?" He says, "How do you see things? Do they look to you all black and white, or do they look like a pale blue?" The man asked what he meant by black and white or pale blue. How could he tell? What do you mean by red and white? If a person has never seen colors, he has never seen any. There is no possible way that you can explain to him what they mean. You have that sense of recognizing colors, and the man that doesn't have it just doesn't have it.

But this does seem to be clear: God speaks to the serpent in vs. 14 and in the first half of 15; and then after he speaks to the serpent, that there is to be a continual enmity between the serpent and the woman and the descendants of the serpent and the descendants of the woman; then he turns his attention away from both the woman and the serpent, but to something related to both of them. He is now not talking to the serpent but to the one who was controlling the serpent, the one who used the serpent, the spiritual being behind the serpent, because a mere serpent would not be living this long afterward. It is some other that he is talking of, because it is a continuing one. It is not the descendants of the woman, but that one whom you can call the seed of the woman; and between Satan and that one who you can call the seed of the woman, there is not only going to be an enmity between the woman and the serpent, and between the descendants, but now between Satan and that one who is the seed of the woman. This suggests here that there is to be not merely a continuing enmity, but there is to be an actual combat between the one who can be spoken of as the seed of the woman, and the one who is actually addressed here, which is of course, Satan, not the serpent; for that serpent would be dead and gone long before this could be fulfilled. And so up to this

point he has been talking to the serpent and now he turns his attention to Satan.

Now, the Roman Catholic Church considers that the seed referred to here, is the Virgin Mary, but you notice that it isn't "she," it is "he." He does it—the seed of the woman .

Nevertheless the reference to the Virgin Mary is not quite as far-fetched as it appears at first sight, because I do feel that there is a suggestion here of an important truth. That word "seed" you don't use in connection with woman ordinarily. The seed of a man. It is not the seed of a woman. It is an unusual expression. It is a very strange expression. It is not a normal expression at all. In the middle ages there were those who thought of child birth as a man planting a seed, and the woman is simply the ground in which it is planted, in which it sprouts and the child comes forth. Now, of course, we know that that is an entirely erroneous picture. We know that the woman is truly a mother of the child. Nevertheless, it always has been the usage in all languages to speak of seed of the father. In fact our very term "sperm," our medical term is the Greek word for "seed". The very word used in the Greek that is in the New Testament; and so "the seed of the woman" is a very, very strange phrase; why is this strange phrase used here in connection with the first promise of redemption?

I do not think that seed is explained here clearly so that someone could know that great mystery of the Virgin birth; but I do think that he is giving an intimation of it in the term that he uses here. I think that he is presenting the suggestion that this is one who will bruise the serpent's head, one who is very unusual. A suggestion that makes you realize there is something unusual; something strange; something that you need a little more knowledge; a little more data in order to fully understand what it means; and then you find that it fits in perfectly when you see what actually happens.

Why does he say of the seed, he will bruise your head? He is the one who is the seed of the woman. He is the only one who has ever been born in this world to whom that term would possibly apply, because there was no man's seed in connection with his birth. And so the seed of the woman is an expression which very excellently fits with the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who did indeed bruise the head of the serpent at Calvary; even as the serpent at Calvary bruised his heel, in the terrible suffering and injury which he went through at Calvary, in which He destroyed the power of the serpent and redeemed us. And we find in Romans 16, it says that God will bruise Satan under your feet shortly, there promising the eventual fulfillment of all that which is here promised. That is, Christ bruising the head of the serpent in principle at Calvary—one that ransomed, saved us from the power of the devil; but the full outworking of that awaits the second coming. That is when Satan is fully bruised under our feet

through that which Christ has done in bruising the head of the serpent at Calvary.

6. The Aftermath of the Fall, 3:20–24. We just looked ahead here because of the relationship to the Protevangelium. The aftermath of the Fall would be verses 20–24. The man called his wife's name *Chayah*, because she was the mother of all living. And the Lord made for Adam and his wife coats of skins and clothed them. We found back in vs. 7 that they had sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons after the Fall and before the Lord had come to them.

How soon did the Lord come to them after the Fall? We do not know. Not instantly after, because you couldn't sew fig leaves together in an instant. There was a period of time, at least. Was it a half an hour? Was it an hour? Was it a day? Was it a hundred years? We don't know. It can't have been many hundreds because we are given the total length of years of Adam's life; but after the Lord had put the curse upon them and given them the promise, then the Lord made for them coats of skins and clothed them. Up to this point we have had no mention of sacrifice; we have had no suggestion of the possibility of eating of animals; no suggestion of any reason for killing animals, nothing of the kind; and yet we find here, the Lord made them coats of skin, instead of using the means that they had used before of sewing leaves together.

Well now there are those who think—and I think that they have much reason to think—that this indicates that God had revealed something here that is not explained in the Scripture; that he had revealed to them a meaning in this, a reason. That the death of an animal provided a coat of skin for the man and the woman, was a type, a representation, of the work by which God was going to redeem them; and a light was going to be given. Now we have no proof of that; but that is the common idea later in the Scripture; and it is suggested here; and whether God explained it to them, or merely suggested that there is a definite difference between the clothing that they had; they had used something that grew—like cotton—but God used something for which an animal must give his life. I don't think it shows that it is better to dress in furs than to dress in cotton clothes; I do not think that is the reason for this act. I think that there is a meaning contained in it; and we must say that doubtless God revealed something to them beyond what it says, although how much, we do not know.

And then vs. 22 the Lord said—that verse which so many make the Lord seem to be such a hard and selfish and mean individual—"The man is become like one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground." It is quite evident from this verse that man had in some way become more like God. In some way he had taken a step forward; and this step forward was a cause of his being

deprived of the advantages which he had in Paradise. Now the explanation which I offer for that is, that good and evil throughout the Old Testament means good and evil in a physical sense instead of a moral sense; good and evil in the sense of that which is helpful or harmful, that which builds up or tears down; and of course, if applied to God's plans it becomes morally evil; but the meaning is physical evil; if you put that meaning in here, the Lord is saying, "The man has a step forward in knowledge and efficiency, a step forward which he would normally have received when he had passed the test of obedience and had acquired the moral stamina which would enable him to make the proper use of this step forward in efficiency and understanding; and having this it would now be dangerous for him to be in a situation where he might step forward to try to use this newly acquired ability in the further defiance of God, so he is driven out."

I remember when I was a child, I read these verses and I was greatly puzzled; and therefore I think it is vital in dealing with the passage to give people something of an understanding of the verse. You cannot get the full meaning of the verse by itself; you have to interpret it in the light of context, and in the light of the picture of the Lord in the Scripture as a whole—the picture of the Lord as one who is good and kind and loving and one who in all of his dealings with mankind has a purpose; and therefore you know that the Lord is not grieving because man has taken a step forward to become more like God, but the man is facing a danger and he has acquired further ability, you might say.

My little boy reaches his hand onto a shelf and he takes out a knife and begins to play with it; or he takes up some liquid and begins to fool with the bottle; and we take these things and put them on a higher shelf; we put them up where he can't reach them; and then one day we find that he has got to the point where he can reach a higher shelf; and we see that he has taken hold of something very harmful off this shelf; but we say now the boy is getting taller; he is getting stronger; he is now able to reach up to this higher shelf; and lest he take the razor and cut his throat with it, we will put it still higher (laughter) and so the Lord says man has acquired further intelligence, further abilities.

And then in addition to that, you will find that when the humanitarian movement gets away from the gospel—as many of them do—you will find that they get out on the byways, and in the end they often bring with them all sorts of things that are harmful. Social improvement is a thing which is a byproduct of the gospel—an important byproduct—and we should always favor it; yet we should recognize that the only way that you actually can make a better person in the end—something that lasts—is by dealing with the sin question, which is the foundation of all evil. And God, in this curse, has to some extent done this to nature, because of the sin of man; and to some extent he is simply pointing out the facts of the sin upon man's constitution and upon his relationship to nature. We can't expect to separate between those two aspects of it.

And then God turns to man; and to Adam he said "Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, thou hast eaten of the tree of which I have commanded thee saying thou shalt not eat." Here again, Adam got his direction here from his wife. He followed her. The question isn't "Shall you follow her, or shall you follow God?" The question is "How do you follow God?" And if she leads you toward following God, then you should follow her, but the minute she steps away from it, then you should cease to follow her. I think that it is one thing that we ought to watch out for—that we don't follow any human being—that we follow the Lord and follow His Word. I think that it is important, on the other hand, that as we deal with others, to recognize that other people are going to follow us to some extent; and therefore our example is important in dealing with others; and yet let us try to get others not to follow us but to follow the Lord.

When you find people putting up human beings; idolizing a human being, and thinking that that human being is just about perfect; oh, how often things just turn about, and they find that that human being was one that they properly should not follow. My mother, when she was a young girl, told me that there were two ministers who were constantly just out in evangelistic work; and going so much for the salvation of the lost; and she said to someone that as long as these two ministers stand true, how could my faith ever waver? And then she and my father moved away to a different part of the country, and didn't see these men for 30 years; and 30 years later, I remember, in just one year both of them had turned into complete modernists. Both of them had turned absolutely away from the things that they had been teaching. Both of them were utterly removed from that on which they had previously stood.

You cannot put your trust in any human being. It is only in God and His Word in which you can put your trust; and Adam—even the one nearest to him, even his wife—if he hearkened to her instead of God, he would sin. It says "Thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife and now instead of following God's word, eaten of the tree of which I commanded that thou shalt not eat thereof. Cursed is the ground for thy sake." The vegetable creation is under the curse as a result of the sin of man. Not that the vegetable creation had misled Adam. It isn't because of the apples that the ground was to be punished. There is no punishment here in the curse upon the ground, but the ground is cursed for its effect upon Adam.

Nature is cursed. Man is no longer in a world that is free from harm. He is in a world on which there is a curse upon nature, which is the result of sin, and which also is to have the effect of driving man to God. There are the two aspects. There is the effect of sin, and then there is the purpose that it shall drive man to God. And you will find that people turn to God ordinarily only when they have some trouble, some difficulties. You will find that when a nation

has everything going well, the people just won't listen as a rule to the gospel; there is not much interest in it; I mean the nation as a whole is not interested; and then trouble comes, and that is when people are ready to listen to God's Word; and it is necessary on account of sin of the man, that sent trouble into the world.

When I was in my teens, I decided once that it was wrong for me to pray for the Lord to keep me from serious diseases and injuries; that was right as a part of a prayer, but not as a whole prayer. I decided that I should pray that the Lord would make me responsive to His will, and ready to the lessons that he wants to give me, so that it would not be necessary for him to send the pains and miseries into my life in order to force me to take the lessons that He wanted me to have; but that if it be necessary, that if I turn away from listening to the things that he wants me to get, that he should not just leave me, but that he should send the disciplinary things to make me look back to him. And you will find that most people, who haven't much use for the Lord, have had an experience of sorrow or suffering, or trouble; and it shouldn't be necessary; we should be able from God's Word to get what he wants us to have. It is there. We can study it; we can pray; we can get what He wants, but most of us simply will not pay sufficient attention; and it is necessary in the lives of those Christians whom God uses most. It is often necessary that God use what seems to be harshness in order to teach us the lessons He wants to have.

The person who is having everything going along just fine—that is not necessarily the one that God is blessing most. He may be one that it isn't worthwhile to use a hard method to give the lesson; it may not be a sign particularly of blessing at all.

This is one of the problems of the Scripture. Why do the righteous often have a hard time in this life, and the wicked often have everything come out just fine? Why is that? Why does it often seem that way? Well, God does not pour out his blessings strictly in proportion to our deserts in this life. In this life, it is not a matter of, you do this good thing, you get this good; you do this bad, you get this punishment. It is not that at all. It is that in God's economy when eternity is taken into account. But in this life it is a matter of God's giving us that which is necessary to produce the results that he desires. Job says, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust him." And Paul, who was shipwrecked, stoned, had a thorn in the flesh that he prayed repeatedly God would take it away and God did not take it away. Paul nevertheless said that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, because he knew that if a person is clearly following God, all these things are for his good. And the curse upon the ground was for the good of man. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake. In sorrow shall thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee."

Someone asked Robert Ingersoll, when he was going about the country giving his great lectures assailing the mistakes of Moses, "Well, Ingersoll, if you made the world instead of God, how would you make it better than He did?" "Why," Ingersoll said, "that's easy. I'd make health contagious instead of sickness." And, of course, his answer was a good answer for a question like that. The person went to him with utter omission of the recognition of the fall of man or the curse. This world is the good world which God created. We can't say, "We see that everything is perfect, because the perfect God made it." You believe in the Absolute God, and everything is explained. It isn't. You have to have the Absolute God, plus sin in the world, plus the curse upon nature, in order to understand things. And we can't tell often which is related to this factor and which is related to that factor, and which to the other factor.

There would be no disease and misery in the world if it were not for the curse upon mankind. But of course, Ingersoll's idea of simply doing away with disease, simply making health contagious instead of disease, would be simply giving man heaven without salvation. It would be like taking the pig and dressing him up in good clothes, and putting him in the parlor to eat at the table. It wouldn't work out. You have to have the nature changed; you have to have the character changed, before you can give the perfect world to live in. And so the Lord said, "In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." God prescribed that in this world, under the curse, hard work was good for a man; hard work of all kinds; and certainly a certain amount of hard physical work. And the person who does not follow the command and gets this is not so well off in the end. God has established it that way in this age.

Why is it that you have to work so hard to make good plants grow, and yet the weeds just sprout right up? There they are. It's the curse upon nature. It's the way God has made it. And all of nature is integrated with this violence and suffering.

A man told me out at the Grand Canyon--he is a naturalist there, and he is much interested in the balance of nature. He said, "You must never disturb the balance of nature." He said that out there they decided there were too many mountain lions, and so the government hired a good mountain lion hunter, and he went in there, tracked them down, and killed fifty mountain lions. And the result was that the next year they had sickly deer multiplying all over the park and dying on the roads, and it became such a nuisance that they had to go and hunt down the deer to even up the balance again, and they wished they had the mountain lions back again. And he said there is a balance in nature, but it a balance that nature tends with tooth and claw. It is a balance of suffering; it's a balance of mutual enemies. It is a situation that certainly is not characteristic of

the earth as it was made, but it is characteristic of the earth under the curse. And you will find it all through.

D. Chapters 4–5.

1. The seed of the Woman. In this the account of Cain and Abel, there is a question of how much we want to try to explain the different details or the story itself; because after all it is not so specially important to the study of Old Testament History; and it is not one of the matters which is most widely raised as an argument and difficulty in the Bible as were the first 3 chapters of Genesis. About the only thing that you hear about Cain and Abel very much in contact with unbelievers is the question, Where did Cain get his wife?

I remember an article in the *Christian Century* some time ago which took up that question; it took up various explanations of where Cain got his wife, and went through about three pages trying to show how each one of them failed; and then when the author got through showing how each one of them failed, the conclusion was well, what about it? It is just an old myth; you can't expect everything to work out. That is the modernist attitude towards the story; but I happened once to be at a meeting where John Brown of Arkansas was speaking; and he took up Bible difficulties; and one was on this section, where did Cain get his wife? Then he went on to show how it says that Adam and Eve begat Cain and Abel and Seth and begat sons and daughters; and there is every reason to think that there would have been quite a large number of them by the time this event happened in the life of Cain; and then he noticed how long these people lived in those days; and I don't remember just what the evidence was that he had to show how old Cain was at this time—the time he married, when he took his wife and went off into the land of Nod—and he said that the thing that bothered him about it wasn't how Cain got his wife, but why the old fool waited so long. (laughter).

But, I am afraid that a lot of that was without much evidence; but at least, it is just as reasonable as the arguments that supposedly pose a difficulty in the story. *The Christian Century* says, for example, the idea that he married his sister is, of course, preposterous—and they just thrust that aside, just like that—but there is no reason in the world why such an idea is preposterous. There are very good reasons why it is not a good thing to have marriage of brothers and sisters, but it is not preposterous.

One reason or course, is that there is an intimacy in married life which is different than that of brothers and sisters; and it is well to keep the things apart; and you can lead to troubles and difficulties if you don't make a sharp line; so that you have the opportunity for a certain type of intimacy that is perfectly all right between brothers and sisters and cousins, because there is no

thought of marriage; and that is doubtless one reason why the Bible forbids marriage of close relations.

Now of course, the other reason is, that if there is a genetic weakness, it may cause genetic malformation in the offspring. But in the case of Adam and Eve, one would presume that the gene pool was perfect. There was no opportunity, as there is when multiple generations of descendants are involved, to have random genetic defects crop up, and therefore there is no genetic reason in the world why Cain and Seth and Abel could not marry their siblings. So that the question of where did Cain get his wife is after all a rather silly question when there is plenty of evidence in the scripture where Cain could have gotten his wife.

The only reference that we have to it here is of course, is vs. 17 where it says Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bear Enoch; and he built a city, and called the city after his son Enoch. Now in the story, perhaps we might mention though, the Lord's attitude toward Cain where the Lord sent Cain out; it says that he is to be a fugitive and vagabond on the earth. Cain says that my punishment is greater than I can bear, thou hast driven me this day from the face of the earth. I think that "land" would be much better than "earth."

He must have been on the earth, not driven from the face of the earth. The word *eretz* here is the word for land or earth; the face of the land, that is, away from the area where his relatives lived; and "he was to be a fugitive and vagabond on the earth and it shall come to pass that everyone who findeth me shall slay me." I think that that is a rather bad translation. I think the difference between "any" and "every" is rather peculiar; and I think both of the ideas are included in the Hebrew. "And anyone who finds me will slay me; and the Lord said, whoever slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. There are novels and poems written today on the mark of Cain, by which they mean the mark of a murderer. As the word is used today, it is altogether different than the origin of it. The mark of the Lord was a protection upon him. It was a sign that it was not God's will to kill him.

2. Sin brings forth death. Sin leads to death, inevitably. We have that in Chapter 4:8. The first death did not come about as a result simply of the dissolution of the body by any natural means. It came about as a direct result of sin through murder; through Cain's murdering Abel.

a. The First Murder. Adam and Eve sinned; and they saw what appeared like greater sin in their children. And how often that is the case; that one turns aside from God's law and from the teaching of the Bible; nevertheless, outwardly in his life he carries on the fine ethical principles which are due to his background and training; and his life outwardly is very respectable and very

fine. In God's sight it is not, for he has turned away from God's teaching; but in the next generation, the teachings that he is following bear fruit. And in the following generation, you see the results in clear, outspoken sin on their part, which is without the influences which had affected the external characteristics of the previous generation. That is a thing which we see over and over; and so here Adam and Eve, probably all through their lives, were not subject to quite the extent of sin or the depth of sin—that is, so far as its outward manifestation is concerned—into which Cain fell. We find Cain here falling into this sin; we find him jealous of his brother. It seems likely that he disobeyed the command of God in bringing a vegetable offering instead of an offering which would typify God's means of redemption. I think that is a very probable inference from what is stated here, though certainly one ought not to be dogmatic about it.

It is a fact that Cain brought a vegetable offering, and Abel brought an animal offering; and that God had respect to Abel and his offering, and not to Cain and his offering. That much is a fact. Why, we can infer. If you do not want to infer that it is against God's command, then it would be Cain's attitude; and if the command had been given, Cain's attitude would certainly affect his relation to the command. At any rate we find then that death came into the world.

We can't be dogmatic about it. Abel had faith and Cain didn't. Does that mean simply the way they got the offering? Or does it mean that Abel followed out the type of offering the Lord commanded, and Cain did not? I think the latter is true. It is not so clear, and we must not be dogmatic about it. And now Cain has slain his brother; death has come in; and in verse 14, we have the fear of death. The Lord drives Cain away; he is to be a fugitive and vagabond in the earth; and Cain said, "My punishment is greater than I can possibly bear." He said, "I'll be a fugitive and a vagabond and anyone who finds me will slay me." I think our English translation there is not very good. It says that "every one that findeth me shall slay me." Only one could find him, of course. The Hebrew word *kol* is a word which may be translated "any" or "every", depending on the context. Our English word "every" is a word which also is sometimes a very ambiguous word. The Hebrew word *kol* covers both our English words "any" and "every." It would be a better English translation here to say, "Anyone finding me will kill me," and that is the way it is translated in v. 15. The Lord set a mark on Cain lest any finding him should kill him. That is quite different from the idea that a murderer is to be killed by man. In this case, God said, "this murderer is to be punished by God, but is not to be killed by man." The other alternative would mean that murder is a civil offense; it is not something which is punished by the Lord Himself. God will punish Cain, but God puts a mark on Cain that man should not kill him.

(Student: Is there a command given to man here to shed the blood or is it a prediction given, that by and large that will be the fate which will come to those who shed other men's blood: that they themselves shall suffer from the same

type of thing which they bring upon others?) It is to some extent a penalty which God places on the murderous nature of man; that the ones who partake in it are very apt to be killed themselves some time. And that is a thing you will see worked out in life today. When you get gangsters who are brutalizing the population, and who are killing people, you can be pretty sure that some of them themselves are going to be shot by other gangsters, even if the law does nothing to them. Murder begets murder. It is a law of nature as God has established the universe, so I am not at all sure that that particular statement would have to be taken as a command.

God chose Abel instead of Cain. That's the very time when most people get angry, when somebody else is preferred before them; because they always know that they themselves are the ones who deserve the particular place. People are always having excuses. It is the very nature of sin. Someone once told of going to the penitentiary and talking to the people there; and he said after he talked to the inmates, he made the discovery that there wasn't a single person there who deserved to be there. He said every one of them had been framed—every person there! They all had excuses. It's human nature, since the fall, that when anyone else is preferred before us, we all immediately become angry.

I've found this. If a person deserves an 85 and you give him a 95, he never comes around and makes a fuss about it. I've never had one yet. But I've had many a time when I wasn't sure whether someone deserved a 70 or a 65 and I have thought it over and come to the conclusion finally to give him the 70 and then they've come around to see me and insisted they should have had at least an 85 and probably a 90. I've had probably fifteen or twenty cases of that. I remember when I first began teaching Hebrew, and Dr. Robert Dick Wilson was teaching the advanced Hebrew; and he was taken ill, so I taught it the last month; and then I gave the exams and I marked the papers; and there were two fellows I did that with. I gave 70's—and I really thought they should have 65s but I gave in to a momentary weakness and gave them 70s—and in both cases they came around and they said that for all the work they had done they should have had, probably a 90 but at least an 85, and I mentioned it to Dr. Wilson and Dr. Wilson said, "Oh, you are just beginning to teach; you should have brought the papers and let me mark them, and then I would have borne the brunt of it."

Well, I took the papers to him; and he looked them over, and he decided I had been wrong. I should have given them 65 instead of 70. But it is human nature. We all feel that we deserve more than we get in everything. Once in a while we get more than we deserve, and then we keep quiet; but when Abel was respected and Cain wasn't, Cain knew that was pretty mean favoritism. That was pretty low down, and he did the thing that people usually will do. Instead, of blaming the one who was giving Abel the better position here, he blamed

Abel; and he raised his voice against Abel and they had a quarrel, and it is very easy for such a quarrel to reach the point where there are blows.

b. Culture without Godliness. Now when we get over into the laws of Israel, God lays it down as civil law for Israel: the death penalty for murder and for blasphemy and for certain other very serious crimes; but that is the civil law of Israel. Then you have fear of death, which has come in, and toward the end of this chapter we have a very interesting development. We have the development of the family from Cain on; and we find that they are learning to do all sorts of excellent things. They are getting the knowledge of construction and destruction developed very greatly; and we find, that Lamech had two wives, Adah and Zillah; and Adah bore Jabal, the father of such as dwell in tents, and had cattle, and Jubal was the father of all such as handle the harp and the organ.



And Zillah bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron;³⁴ and now here is Lamech; and he says to his wives, Adah and Zillah, "Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech; hearken unto my speech; for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold." And what does that mean? I have entitled this section, "Culture without godliness." God had given the command Cain is not to be touched. God says, "Whoever slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken upon him sevenfold." Now Cain's descendent Lamech says, "If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold." Cain had a big row with his

brother. He got very angry at him and killed him, but Lamech says, "Here is a man who injured me slightly, and I killed him." There was a young man who stepped on my toe and I have slain him. Cain had provocation, or at least thought he had; Lamech had far less provocation. Cain committed one murder. Lamech committed two murders. God said that Cain was not to be killed by man; he said whoever would kill Cain, vengeance would be taken on him sevenfold; Lamech said, "Whoever tries to injure me; I shall be avenged seventy and sevenfold." It is a marvelous picture of the spirit of our day, which is the same as the spirit of the day of Lamech.

³⁴ [dcb] This refers to a time before the Flood. The earliest archaeological evidence for iron tools made from meteorites is from Egypt in the 4th millennium BC, presumably after the Flood. Actual smelted iron from iron ore is from the Hittites around 1500 BC ([Wikipedia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iron_in_ancient_times) says 18th century).

Knowledge had increased. They learned now; they had plenty of food; they had plenty of cattle. They had good shelter, their fine tents. They had music, the harp and the organ. They had copper and iron instruments. They could make fine weapons, far better than anything that anybody had anywhere else in the world; and with all this fine technical advance, Lamech felt secure that he didn't need to look to any kind of an old superstition of divine protection for himself. There was Cain, and it took God to avenge him. Well, Lamech says, "I'm not worried about his God," he says; "If Cain would be avenged sevenfold, with all this fine equipment, all this splendid armor, this fine machinery that I've got, truly Lamech will be avenged seventy and sevenfold." He says, "You just irritate me a little, and I'll run my bayonet through you. And the picture is a picture of culture with godlessness and what it leads to.

Adam defied God by disobeying God's commands. Lamech is defying God by thinking himself to be greater than God. He doesn't need any god. He, with his fine machinery that he has, and this splendid equipment, is able to take care of himself. He takes his own counsel about whatever God commands. That is his attitude, and it is no wonder that very soon after God sent the flood and wiped out the whole race.

And we see here how the development of increased efficiency and increased knowledge, without dependence on God and development of increased moral strength leads to death, to haughtiness, to misery.

(Student: "The *Scofield Reference Bible* note 2 on Genesis 4:17 states: 'The *e*/ termination of the names of Enoch's son and grandson shows that for a time the knowledge of Elohim was preserved, but this soon disappears. Adah means "pleasure" or "adornment"; Zillah, "to hide"; Lamech "conqueror" or "wild man".') I think that that is one particular note on which Dr. Scofield made a rather poor selection of material. If the same words were used by someone of the godly line, such an interpretation might be worthy of consideration; in the context it certainly is not that.

Lamech's boast: "I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt." It is altogether possible that there is simply a parallelism there; that he had only killed one man. You don't have to interpret it as two men. It may be only one, but it seems to me the wounding and the hurt is a minor point. Not that he is claiming to have had extremely serious provocation for the course that he took. He was so strong with all these fine things that his sons had invented, that if anybody interferes with him, he'll show them where to get off. I think the "to" there is undoubtedly the reason why he is hurt. "To my hurt", "to my wounding": A man injured me and I have slain him. This is a modern idiom—"to my hurt"—but I don't think that would be a proper rendering.

Now further details of Lamech we do not know. All we know is what is stated here, and we have to try to interpret what is stated here. It is not a tremendously vital section here at all. It doesn't affect the main teaching. To me, it falls right under this head, "Sin brings forth death" and it was God's decision to protect Cain and say that no one would be allowed to kill Cain, he should be avenged sevenfold. But now things had reached the point where you find Lamech, without ever calling on God to help, declaring his situation. To me it is the result of culture without godliness. It is thinking that we can get along perfectly all right. We may use the Lord. We'll call for a day of prayer if it will help the morale of the forces; and when it comes to forming a United Nations, if there are some who don't believe in God, we'll just have a minute of silence; instead of having any invocation to the Lord at all we'll just go through some sort of a form but actually we're putting God out of His universe. That is what Lamech has done here. This is, of course, this is not Lamech, the father of Noah; this is a different Lamech. It is Lamech, the descendant of Cain.

(Student) We are not given any chronology at this point. We don't know how long it is. We don't know how many years have gone by. We don't know how large their families were. We don't know how widespread people were, but at least there were enough people scattered through the earth by that time that Cain felt that in being driven away from his place where he was known, he would be put in a situation where he would be in grave danger. He thought that, and he said, "I'll be a fugitive and vagabond in the earth;" he said, "this is more punishment than I can bear."

(Student) Well, now it is not a reasonable objection to the Scripture that Cain would have had to marry his sister, because there was no reason under those circumstances why there should have been any harm in that; and Adam did beget sons and daughters. I don't think we have anything in the Bible to tell how long he waited. This statement here that Cain knew his wife and she conceived and bare Enoch; and he builded a city and called the name of the city after his son Enoch; I don't think this necessarily comes after Cain went out from the presence of the Lord. It is entirely possible that it is telling now how Cain went out and built a city and it mentions the fact that Cain had a son after whom he named the city. It is entirely possible that his son had been born before this. I am not certain by any means, but it is entirely possible; we don't know, and it is entirely possible that there were other people in the world by this time or at least there would be rather soon.

(Student) Well, we are told here that the cherubim were placed at the east of the garden and a flaming sword that turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life, and so when Adam left the garden he couldn't get back to it; and he went on; how far he went we don't know, or whether he tried to get back and was driven away by the angel, the flaming sword, we don't know. All we know is that he was shut out and after this, of course, we have many events which

occurred and then we have the flood which changed the whole face of the world; and whether God removed the garden at the time of the flood or at some previous time, we just don't know. I mean, speculations would be interesting on it, but we simply don't know.

The difficult question is v. 22 of chapter 4. What happened to the brass and the iron? Archaeology shows man using copper, which is here called brass—the Hebrew word means copper just as well—using copper for many years before he began using iron and it shows him using stone for many years before he began using copper. We have abundant evidences of the stone age man—who used instruments of stone—and then they began using copper, and then eventually using iron. We have all this comparatively late in our archaeological remains, and it is pretty hard to find the place afterward for the flood. The iron age begins at about a thousand BC The copper age begins at 3000 BC It is pretty hard to get any flood in after that. What became of the copper and the iron described in Genesis 4 is, I think, a more difficult question. Now God may have simply taken the Garden of Eden and carried it away but I hardly think he carried away these iron and copper implements that Tubal-Cain and these others made, but that question we will look at a little later under the flood.

3. The Antediluvian Patriarchs, Genesis 5.

In Chapter 4 there is just a list of individuals; and when you get to Chapter 5, you have not only a list of individuals but some statements about them. We find that Adam lived a hundred and thirty years before Seth was born; and Seth lived a hundred and five years before Enos was born; and Enos lived ninety years before Cainan was born; and then you have how long they lived after these children.

Some have figured up, in chapter 11, if Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years and begat sons and daughters; and then Arphaxad lived thirty-five years and begat Salah; and Salah lived thirty years and begat Eber; and Eber lived thirty-four years and begat Peleg; they figured it up that perhaps Shem was a guest at Abraham's wedding, according to the adding up of the figures of how old a man was when his son was born. You would have Shem still living at the time when Abraham was married. Now that seems extremely unlikely. It seems extremely unlikely that in the time of Abraham, Shem was actually alive. It is hard to think how men could have put God completely out of their consciousness as they did by the time of Abraham; that he was one individual coming out from a wicked city and a wicked civilization; and coming out at a time at which we have archaeological evidence of people who had no knowledge of God whatever for centuries before; and yet it would be such a short time after the flood that the men who had actually been in the ark would still be left.

And so it makes us question very seriously if it is the Lord's intention that these men who are listed here give us a continuous chronology; so that we can tell exactly when the particular events mentioned occurred. It would seem very unlikely that that was the case. The figures are given us to give us certain ideas; they teach us certain truths, but the particular thing of an exact chronology back in those early days, there is no reason to think that God intended to give us. Certainly God did not give us an exact chronology anywhere in the Bible of the later years: of the time from Ezra to Christ. We can only rest on the speculations of Greek historians to make our guess as to how far before the time of Christ Ezra was. They took the number of generations that lived according to certain records and they just multiplied so many years to a generation and made a guess, and there is a big period there between 1200 and 100 BC that are dependent upon extremely slight information for knowing the life of the period and we have no Biblical information whatever.

Nowhere in the Bible does it tell us how long before Christ those things happened. As a matter of fact, the Bible doesn't tell us when Paul was converted. We can't tell from any statement in the book of Acts whether Paul was converted the year after the crucifixion, or five years or ten years after, or twenty years after; and we have to take certain data which we get from pagan sources, and get certain dates toward the end of Paul's life, and then work back and try to figure about when this was that he was converted. God has evidently not desired in the Bible to give us an exact chronology. That is not a part of His purpose. That doesn't mean there is anything wrong in our trying to get as many facts of chronology as we can; but it does mean that we needn't—when God hasn't even given to us in the New Testament these things that are the very center of our religion—we need not expect that God will give them to us regarding the flood or the creation, a means of knowing exactly how many years ago that was. It would have no purpose except to satisfy our curiosity; and it is very good to satisfy it if we can, but we needn't expect that God will do it.

We have no right to go to the Bible and say, "What does the Bible teach on this? Does it teach this date or that date?" Let's go to the Bible and say, "Does the Bible give us an answer to this question? Do we have the data for answer to this particular question or not?" And in this case it seems hardly reasonable to think that we have it. Now that partly rests upon the fact that, if we take all these years exactly, assuming that their purpose is to give us an exact chronology, it does not fit in with our recent discoveries; and also rests upon the fact that later genealogy in the Scripture does not attempt to give us complete statements.

Now you find, for instance, that in I Chronicles 9:12 you have a statement there that you can compare with Nehemiah 11:12; and in 1 Chronicles 9:12 you have certain individuals named; and if you look at Nehemiah 11:12, it is quite

evident that we have the same individuals. Let's look at Nehemiah first, Nehemiah 11:12—of the priests. The brethren that did the work of the house were eight hundred twenty-two and Adaiah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchiah. That is Nehemiah 11:12; and in 1 Chronicles 9:12 we read about Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah, and in each one of those it was Adaiah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashur, and then both of them, the son of Malchiah. So it seems quite definite, then, from the fact that your beginning and end are the same—and one of them has three others in between—it would seem quite definite that you have in one case simply a partial genealogy. When he says "the son of" he means "the descendant of." Of course we have that right in the beginning of Matthew, where we read of Jesus, the son of David, the son of Abraham. He means the descendant. The word "son" is translated that way in Scripture, and in Matthew 1:8 we have the list of the ancestors of Christ; and we have three kings omitted, who are given in 2 Kings 11:15. There is no question in that case; and there is no question in this case, because anyone in the time of Christ that didn't know the names of the kings of Judah—certainly any Jewish child would know that; and supposing that somebody were to tell you that George Washington was the first president of the United States and that John Adams was the second and that Andrew Jackson was the third and Martin Van Buren was the fourth, I think everybody here would immediately recognize that Jefferson and a number of others had been omitted.

It was apparent to everybody; it was no mistake, it was no accident; it was simply not the purpose to give the entire complete list. They knew how it ran; they knew the genealogy down to this point. They were just skipping forward in the genealogy. It says there that he begat—and then lists his great, great grandson as the one—as the one whom he begat, with these three names omitted. Well, now the result is that—it is my opinion and that of most scientific students of the Bible—that there are gaps in the chronology; that in Genesis we are given certain key figures; given an idea of the progress; and given an idea of the comparative length of life, by telling us the ages of these particular individuals who are mentioned when their first child was born; but then it may have the name of one who was a great grandson. There may be a jump of a few years or many years in between certain of these steps in the genealogy; and so, while we know a good deal about the individuals, we do not know anything about the overall picture, the complete list.

Now, Dr. Davis, in his *Bible Dictionary*, suggests the possibility that some of these men were not men at all, but tribes. I don't think that is a reasonable interpretation at all, but Dr. Davis suggests it. He thinks that there may have been tribes which had the leadership for a period of a few hundred years. I feel that the years are to be taken literally as the length of life of that time, but that there may be gaps in between; that when man came out of Paradise, much of

the strength of Paradise remained with him, and death was slow in getting a foothold to work. It already had a hold but it was slow in working itself out; and then as the effect of sin increased, longevity diminished; and the length of time was cut down until in the time of Noah it came to be about one hundred and twenty years and then later on it works down to about seventy years, which it has been for the last couple of thousand years.

So I think there is probably much of real value for us in these lists of the patriarchs—the statements about them—but that we can add these years together and get the total length I do not think likely. Now when we say this, the result of that is that if someone wants to say there is proof man has been on the earth nine hundred thousand years, I'm not going to say, "You are absolutely wrong. The Bible says he was created in 4004 BC" We do not know. Someone asked me this. He said, "I believe we have proof that man has been on the earth for nine hundred thousand years." He said, "Now could it be that there were human beings on the earth for all that time but that four or five thousand years ago one of these became Adam?" I said, "I don't think so at all. I am quite sure that whenever the first man was, that was Adam; but when Adam was, I don't think we know. Adam may have been a long time ago. He may have been less long ago, but any evidence you want to bring to put Adam back quite a ways, I don't think poses any serious difficulty for the believer in the statements of the Scripture."

Now on the other hand, here is an interesting thing. Can we ridicule the date 4004 BC? Is that perfectly absurd? We have Egyptian records going back to 5700 and 6000 BC We have Chinese records of kings back to 5000 and 6000 BC Well, all such statements are absolutely false. There is not a written record of anyone anywhere on this earth before 3000 BC³⁵; and so as far as any written records are concerned, the date 4004 BC could stand. The difficulty is not with written record. We will go into this when we study Joseph and the sojourn in Egypt.

There are probably twenty or thirty different figures that have been given for the creation. That which came to be most generally accepted was that of Archbishop Ussher. The reason that his guesses were accepted at places where other people's guesses were not accepted was doubtless due to two things. One, that he was a man of outstanding prominence in the church and a very fine man in every way, a man of great influence; and secondly, that he managed to figure the dates together in such a way as to have the creation of Adam

³⁵ [dcb] The Sumerians appear to have invented writing about 3,100 BC See the recent [timeline according to ancientscripts.com](https://www.ancientscripts.com/timeline-according-to-ancientscripts.com). However cave painting, which includes a form of record-keeping goes back tens of thousands of years. The Lascaux paintings are dated to 15,300 BC by multiple methods of dating which appear to be at least approximately correct. These paintings depict several recognizable star constellations (Orion's Belt, Taurus, Hyades and Pleiades and perhaps many others). The most astonishing of these cave paintings have only been discovered since about 1940, and some since 1990, and may not have been well-known to Dr. MacRae.

exactly 4,000 years before the birth of Christ; and of course that works out very interestingly in accordance with the statement in the New Testament that a day is as a thousand years to the Lord and a thousand years as a day, so you have exactly 4000 years from the birth of Christ in 4 BC; and then two thousand years after, making 6,000; and then the millennium, the Sabbath, making another 1000; and so Ussher's idea seems to fit in to a very nice scheme and that doubtless helped in this. But of course that is no proof that it is true at all; the general attitude of the scholars of the Bible today is to think that it does not attempt to tell us when man was created; that it is not the Lord's intention in the Bible to give us information on that; and the information we can get elsewhere is certainly worthwhile.

If someone says, "I believe that man was created 900,000 BC" I would say to him, "It seems to me that you are making it rather early," but I would not say, "That it contrary to the Scripture." I do not think that it is necessary to interpret the Scripture as making the creation somewhere between 5000 and 3000 BC as it would be if you figure it up.

It is not intended to give us these dates without any gaps between. There are certain gaps; we can't get away from it. There are places we have to guess; and Ussher guessed, and many others have guessed and their guesses are different. The cornerstone at Dropsie College of Hebrew Learning in Philadelphia has at the bottom of it that this was dedicated in such and such a year—the corner stone laid—and on the one side it gives it according to our numbers, and on the other side it says that it was on the 23d of such-and-such a month in the year—I forget whether it was 7254 or what it is—but it does not figure from Ussher's chronology; it is one of the many other systems.

(Student) If you can have it to two thousand years you can just as well have it two hundred thousand, it seems to me. I would have said six months ago, I would have said my guess is that the flood was about 4000 BC, and the creation of man perhaps 10,000. BC I believe Dr. [R. Laird] Harris, if I recall correctly, would have said at that time that his guess was that the flood was about 10,000 and the creation of man maybe 15,000 or 20,000. I am not sure whether I remember exactly what he would have said at that time. Since that time we have both of us heard material presented by a very fine Christian man, who is a very thorough student of geology, in which he claims that he is absolutely convinced that the evidence shows that man was created 900,000 BC Now I am not at all sure that the evidence he presents is conclusive. He may be entirely wrong. It may be that the creation was only 100,000 BC, or 200,000. It is possible, though the evidence he presents makes any figure later than 200,000 very difficult; but I will say this, that if the 900,000 date should be thoroughly, definitely proven scientifically, I do not believe that it would contradict Scripture. I certainly do not accept it until it is scientifically proven. I mean, here is one very fine geologist and very fine Christian who is quite convinced of it.

Well, that doesn't prove it. He may be wrong. A dozen may be wrong, but I heard him discuss it for five hours and present evidence and pictures and so on and there are a number of points in it which look very, very convincing; and also he was able to pick out a few points on which it is clear that further evidence is needed, and they are now seeking further evidence.

But I don't think it is contradictory to the Bible. I would say just on a superficial reading of the Bible, I would not think it was that; I would think that the creation was somewhere between 5000 and 3000 BC I would think that it was fairly easy in view of these other considerations to say that this may have been as early as 10,000 or 15,000. Just looking at the Bible alone it doesn't strike our minds as quite plausible, but if it can be adjusted a thousand years I do not think we have anything to become terrifically excited about over what is the age of man.

This I would insist upon—that wherever man began, that man was Adam. It shouldn't be difficult for people in the days before they had writing to recall the figures of the years and that might have been passed down by word of mouth.

(Student). In Matthew 1:8 you have the statement that "Solomon begat Rehoboam and Rehoboam begat Abijah, and Abijah begat Asa and Asa begat Jehosaphat and Jehosaphat begat Jehoram and Jehoram begat Uzziah and Uzziah begat Jotham; and everybody who had Old Testament History last semester knows that Jehoram was not the father of Uzziah, but the father of Ahaziah who in turn was the father of Joash, who in turn was the father of Amaziah, the father of Uzziah. So that you have here these three Israelite kings, and Matthew simply says that Jehoram begat, and then gives the name of his great grandson.

Well, now if Matthew could do that here—and it is no mistake because all the Israelites knew the names of these kings even better than those who had Old Testament history last semester know them. They had them clearly in mind; and if Matthew had come out with something like that simply by mistake, people would have said, "Why, what a crazy book. How can we believe anything in the book of Matthew when it gets the kings all mixed up?" So it is very evident that he did it intentionally and that he simply gave the kings along in line and said "begat" and then named one who was three or four individuals down the line. Now if that is all right for Matthew to do it certainly is all right for Moses.

Now I don't say that Moses did do it. I certainly don't say there are gaps as long as this; but I say that there may be; but we don't know, and I think certainly that there are gaps after the flood. I feel quite convinced of that, because we have archaeological evidence going back to perhaps 4,000 BC which leaves no space for a flood; and it is pretty hard to see how you can have the tremendous flood

and no change made in the world rulers. It would seem to me that the flood occurs earlier than any other archaeological event. That is, we have evidence of floods. You take the Johnstown flood—you'll find evidence, of floods. In Mesopotamia you have evidence of floods in different parts of the country; but the floods come from different times—maybe a thousand years apart—but evidence of a flood such as Noah's we do not have.

Well, now these figures are given in Genesis chapter 5; and then chapter 5 ends with Lamech—not the Lamech who said, "If Cain be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold"—but the Lamech who called his son Noah, saying, "This one will comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands because of the ground which the Lord has cursed," the Lamech who was interested in God and in God's curse and in God's prediction, a very different type of man from the ungodly Lamech. But Lamech's son Noah is the one who is there at the time of the flood.

(Student) Matthew gives a device for remembering the genealogical list. There are so many them in the list. He divides them into three groups of fourteen each; but if he meant there are actually fourteen men with no gap, then he told a lie, because there are others—as everybody knows, as the Old Testament clearly proves, as all his readers would know, except the Gentiles, and Matthew is the gospel to the Jews—so that very evidently he meant, "I am arranging these in three approximate groups and I am getting fourteen in each list." I admit it is not what you would gather from it, but that is a superficial interpretation; but as a superficial interpretation of it, Matthew has here said something which is definitely wrong. You have to say either Matthew was wrong or that Matthew didn't intend to name them that way. One or the other. Of course, there is a third possibility that some critic might say that there was a mistake, Matthew wrote it right but he didn't say there were fourteen generations and then somebody copying made a mistake and left out three and then somebody put in that verse. All such ideas would be pure conjecture—and our belief is that it is as Matthew wrote it.

(Student) In the third of Luke? When Peter says these were seven and when Luke gives ten names, it just shows that God didn't intend us to take these figures and construct an absolute complete table of years. There are many purposes of the Bible; there are many other things which it might have done which it didn't do. It might, for instance, have given us the exact figure of five. We find in Kings that, it describes a bath there, and it says that this bath was circular and it says that the bath was ten cubits across and that it was thirty cubits around and people say that that is a mistake in the description of the temple, because they say if you make a circle which is ten across it will not be thirty around. As a matter of fact, they say, it will be thirty-one around, but of course if he had said it was ten and thirty-one they could have said, that is wrong because it is not thirty-one around, it is thirty-one and four-tenths around, while if he said it is

31.4 they could, have said, "That's wrong, because it is 31.416," and then if you had said, "All right, it is 31.416," they could say, "That's wrong, because as every mathematician knows, it would be 31.4157," and you could go on and on and I think it has been figured two hundred places.

Well, the Bible could have given it the whole 200 places to have given us an accurate statement. That was not God's intention. God gives it approximately. He only gives the first figures just the three, instead of giving the whole list. We cannot figure exactly what pi is from the Scripture, because that was not God's intention, to give us pi. He just refers to the approximate figures. He didn't even give us the first five figures of it, and He certainly didn't give the two hundred.

Well, now the same thing applies to these other questions as to the length of time mankind has been here, some of these matters of chronology. The Lord could have given us something five times the size of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and answered a great many questions about ancient history that we are interested in; and after we read that, we could think of still more questions to ask that wouldn't be answered in it. That was not His intention. He gives us the great facts of the universe, He tells us about Himself, and His relation to man, and how man can be saved; and in so doing, He touches on many points; and that which He touches upon is true, as far as the information goes that is given to us; but He does not attempt to give it in full, and whatever can be literally and definitely inferred from the Scripture, we can stand upon without fear that it will ever be proven to be erroneous; but we want to be very careful that we stand upon a statement of Scripture, and not upon a gap in Scripture, not upon something that is simply not whole.

When we read that Sennacherib returned to his own land, and when he was worshiping in the temple of his god, his sons killed him and he died; we can stand on that; that he returned to his land and we stand on that; that as he was worshiping in his temple his sons smote him; but as to the gap between when he got back and when they killed him—was it two minutes, was it two hours, was it two days, was it two years, or was it twenty years? We cannot stand on the gap, because the Bible doesn't say how long it was. We have archaeological evidence which suggests very strongly that it was twenty years; but on a superficial reading of the statement, you think it certain that it was within the same week. It doesn't say it was, but there is a gap there which the Lord simply didn't choose to fill.

Well, I think that is as much time as we'd better take on this matter of chronology. I would not have said that man was created 900,000 BC I certainly don't know anything about it. It is altogether possible that there are some serious errors in these methods of calculation. At the same time, there has been some very convincing evidence. I do not say it was even 100,000, but it

does impress me as extremely unlikely that it was anywhere near as late as 4000 BC I would guess it was at least as early as 8,000 or 10,000. I think these genealogies show us the change in the world at the flood, as we see how before they lived such long periods of time, and after the flood these rapidly decreased; and it shows the effect of a changed condition in the world

Well, in Genesis 5, the line of Seth is described. Some people will say the godly line of Seth. Well, it is true it is a godly line in the sense that through it came the one whom God was going to use in later years. It is a godly line in the sense that there are individuals in the course of it whom we know to have been godly. How many individuals in chapter 5 are there of whom you can say definitely that you know that they were godly? How many are there in the chapter of whom you can say that? How many will say ten? How many will say 8? How many would you say Mr. Mood? You wouldn't say? (laughter) Mr. Bates? Well, at least a couple; who are they?

Well now, Enoch. We read here that Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him; a description of a godly man. There is a man who lived so closely to his God that God took him up into heaven—the ascension of Enoch. (laughter) Whether the Virgin Mary was taken up bodily or not, no one knows. There is nothing in the scripture to say that she was. There is nothing to say that she wasn't. We cannot say that she wasn't, but we have no reason to say she was. Nobody who was there at the time, or who lived for five hundred years after, has ever said that such thing occurred, although people today have said so. (laughter) Maybe there was, but we have no scriptural evidence and therefore the wisest attitude is one of strong skepticism. (laughter) But on the assumption of Enoch there is no doubt. The scripture says that Enoch was taken to God. Enoch walked with God and he lived so closely in fellowship with God, that one day he just walked a little further and remained with God forever; a very brief picture of a very spiritual life. The assumption of Enoch.

Now there is a book of Enoch which was written about the time of Christ—perhaps a little of it before, most of it much after—a book which has all kinds of imaginary stuff in it which is purely what people thought about Enoch later on. Then in the book of Jude we have a quotation of one statement from Enoch, a looking forward to the vengeance which God was going to take upon the wickedness upon the earth. And that is all we know about Enoch, a very godly man. Life sketched very briefly, but that much about it very clear.

So there is one man that we know is godly in this chapter. Now, Mr. Bates do you know that Seth was a godly man? Mr. Bates is ignorant on the question. (laughter) Now whether Seth was godly or not, is there someone here who knows? Nobody knows, oh, here is one who knows. We don't know. I think that we can make a guess, that Seth was a godly man; but it is only a guess. I think that it is a reasonable guess, but should be labeled a guess. It is most likely he

was a godly man, but it is only a guess. There is nothing said here on which to have any certainty that Seth was; but we have certainty that Enoch was; and of the men between Seth and Enoch we have no certainty; there is no statement to give us any proof as to whether they were godly or not, but Enoch was.

Is there anyone else in the chapter who was a godly man? Noah. You cannot tell anything from the chapter 5 about Noah; but in chapter 6, you read that Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. Genesis 6:9 tells us that Noah was a godly man. So here are two in the chapter. Is there any other of whom you can say with more than a guess, that he was a godly man? Lamech. What proof have you that Lamech was a godly man? Now that statement—taken absolutely alone—could be the statement of an ungodly man who looks at the earth with the terrible curse God has brought upon it, and says that we are going to do something about it, and my family is going to improve things; but taken in the light of the previous statements in the Scripture of God's promise of the seed of the woman that is going to bruise the serpent's head; of God's promise that alleviation is going to come through a man from the curse; taken in the light of that, we are justified in reaching the conclusion that Lamech was a man who believed God. He believed the promise of God. He looked forward to its fulfillment; he hoped that his own son might be the one through whom the fulfillment will come; therefore we have proof, not so much about Lamech in general, but a very definite proof that he was a believer in the Scripture and one who would look for the fulfillment of God's promise.

(Student: Could this be the same Lamech that made the boasts?) Well that would be strange indeed, but not at all impossible if that was all that we know about the matter. One thing that is very good to learn. As you go into Christian work, when somebody does a good deed, do not immediately say, "This is a perfect and holy man; that everything he does is fine." And then when you find that he has feet of clay, you immediately are terribly upset because your idol has feet of clay. You should not have an idol in the church; and every man has his weaknesses, and even his wickedness; every one of us has sin in his heart and in his life; and the strange thing is, that you will find that the best of men and the finest of men sometimes fall into the worst of sin; and you will—it is not at all impossible—that the same man might take the wicked ungodly attitude of Lamech in ch. 4 and also the godly attitude, looking forward to the hope of the promise of Lamech in ch.5. It is not at all impossible. We must put our trust in the Lord and not in any man; and know that no man is perfectly sanctified in this life.

But in this particular case, it happens that we have other evidence regarding these two men. We have the very best of evidence here as to whether these men are identical or different; and what is the nature of that evidence that we have, Mr. Dorsey? Lamech is the son of Methuselah, and the grandson of the godly

Enoch in ch. 5; and in ch. 4, Lamech is a son of Methusael; and Methusael is the son of Mehujael; he is the son of Irad; and Irad the son of a man named Enoch, who was the son of Cain. You will find some similar names; but other names that are different, and the order of the names are different. One is descended from the male line of Cain, the other from the male line of Seth; and so it is quite clear that we have two different men here. So this is given not to show two different sides of one man's character, as you will find so often in life, but it is two men that may be taken as representative of the day. One of them is the literal remnant of them who still believe in God and looking for the fulfillment of his promise; the other of those who were going along with the trend of the time and feeling that great progress was being made in human culture; and human technical skill was something that was so important that God was quite utterly shifted into the background. The one is looking to human efforts for the great hope of the future; the other is looking to God and the fulfillment of his promise; and the two different men are representing two different groups.

Well, now then, we have the contrast of the two Lamechs. It is interesting to take this book of *Archaeology and the Bible* by G. A. Barton, in which he has many very, very, excellent things and to notice some of the things that are not so excellent. (laughter) One of them is his discussion of the line of the patriarchs; and if you will look at it, I think that you will find one of the most nonsensical passages that I have ever seen in my life anywhere. He gives you lists from Gen. 4 and 5, and tries to make out that they are just the same; he tries to show that the close parallelism of the lists of names would suggest that they are actually the same lists. Now you would never think, when you heard this, that they were the same as Lamech; Adam, Seth, Enoch, Mahalaleel, Cainan, Jerod, Methuselah, Noah, but Barton tries to suggest that possibly it may be the same list in a different form. It is this derivation idea gone to a crazy extreme when you try to compare ten names of kings before the flood to these. Dr. Barton tries to see if these names can equal the Hebrew names; and some of them he makes little changes in, and some of them he translates and then translates something somewhat similar into Hebrew; and thus with considerable juggling and twisting he manages to get some of them somewhat like the names of the Hebrew patriarchs.

I think that the best answer to that sort of comparison I have ever heard was made by Dr. Albright of John Hopkins University, who said it is very easy to get Sargon out of Moses. All you have to do is drop Moses and add Sargon. He was ridiculing the idea of taking two things which have very slight similarity and trying to equate them. Now I think that is what is done in this case. I see no reason to think the Sumerian list of kings before the flood has any relation whatever to the Biblical list of the patriarchs who lived before the flood. The names are utterly different; but these patriarchs are given, and it gives something of the years of each one; and the real interest to us is perhaps not so much in how many years the total was before the flood, as how many years

the total is in the next list of patriarchs that we get, the list that comes over in chapter 11 where we have the descendants of Shem.

It is unfortunate that there have been—up to the last two or three years—in recent decades hardly any Christian geologists. We have had Christians who have done careful study in most other fields of science, particularly in the fields that don't particularly touch the Bible, like physics and chemistry and astronomy. We have had very, very fine Christian geologists until a century ago. The early geologists were mostly very, fine Christians; but in recent years, while there have been some botanists and biologists who have been convinced Christians, there have been hardly any geologists who have been. There is one man, a Seventh Day Adventist, who has written extensively on geology³⁶, who takes views that differ with the views of other geologists today; and that doesn't mean that at some points he may be proven right and they wrong; but one would be very foolish to stand upon the opinion of a man who is so entirely by himself on as involved and complicated a science as geology; and of course there is a great deal of new material discovered in it and many new thoughts; and this man of whom I speak, before going into geology was a Ph. D. in chemistry, and he is very much interested in physical chemistry methods for dating, which he says have been worked out particularly within the last few years and he claims they are extremely reliable.

Now I am not able to speak with any first-hand knowledge in the field because we've been very short of Christian geologists and the next few years should bring further information; but I just think that it would be foolish for us to put ourselves out on a limb to say the Bible teaches that man was created either in 4000 BC or in 10,000 BC I don't think it was 4000; and if it wasn't, there are gaps; and if there are gaps of a thousand years, there can be gaps of a hundred thousand; but what they were I don't know.

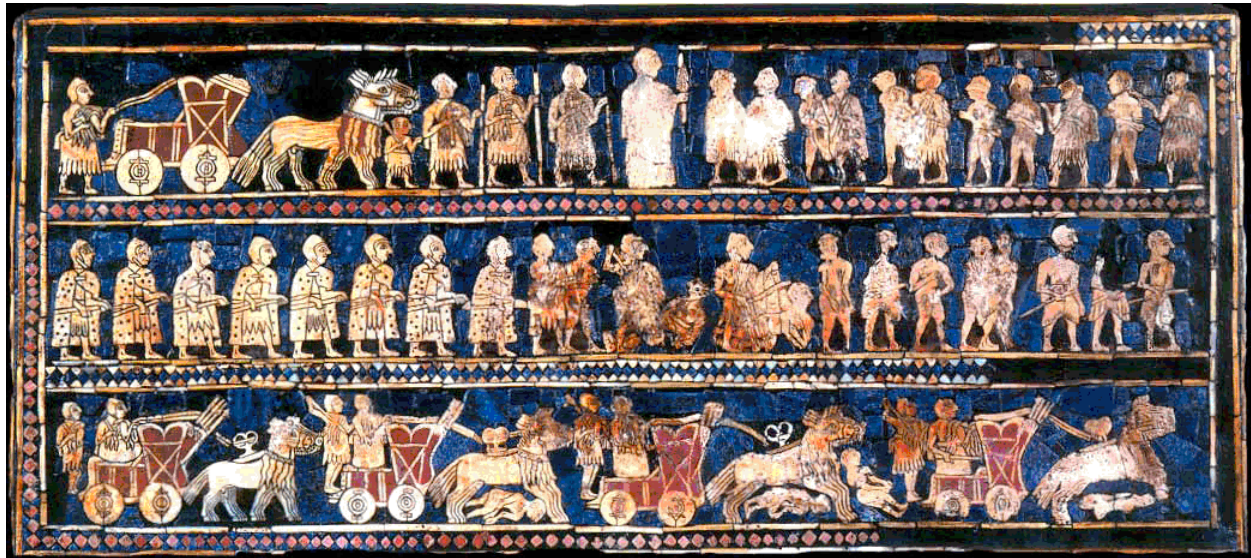
(Student) The view of the higher critics is that this is—that is simply their attitude—that these are ancient myths. They would not even think of there being any truth in anything in the history before the time of—well, they wouldn't have thought of anything before the time of the kings, at all. They thought that it was just folklore before that; and the critical theories were saturated with that viewpoint. They were largely the result of the philosophy which was widely taught in Germany—the philosophy of history of a hundred and fifty years ago—according to which we didn't believe any ancient document unless we had absolute proof from completely other sources; and this did away with all the history of early Rome, up until the late period of the republic. It did away with most ancient history; but that has been given up, and the attitude taken now is, where we have ancient sources, we trust the sources unless we

³⁶ [dcb] Reference is probably to [George McCready Price](#) (1870–1963). In particular he advocated flood geology, which influenced Creation Science from the 1960s to the present. see [icr.org](#).

have evidence that they are erroneous. It has been given up in all other fields except the Bible.

In the Bible the higher criticism developed in the atmosphere which had accepted those theories of the nondependability of ancient documents; and now that we trust ancient documents in general much more than we did then, the higher criticism is already well-established and widely held in relation to the Bible, while the other attitude would not be held of itself.

(Student: "Can population growth be used to estimate age?") The trouble there is that, especially in those days, there was so much upheaval and war that any such figuring would be altered very quickly when the war came. (Student: "Does war affect population growth?") Oh, yes. A great deal. There has been warfare at all periods in history; and another thing about it, also, is that even apart from wars, population has never moved at an exactly stable rate.³⁷



STANDARD OF UR FROM ROYAL TOMBS (2550 BC)

Wikipedia

During the last century we had a time when the population—I think of the whole world—doubled, within a very short period; quite unprecedented from anything before or since; and it was due to improvement in the source of food and improvement in hygiene. That improvement came, and the population all over Europe increased tremendously—the population in every country and every section. Well, now in ancient times we have certain great advances which are similar, which are comparable, and just when they came we don't know exactly so that we have not sufficient evidence to base any estimate of time.

³⁷ The scene is from a box buried in the Royal Tombs of Ur, about 2550 BC. The design is made with tile pieces. See [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Standard_of_Ur). It was discovered by Sir Leonard Woolley in his 1927–28 expedition to Ur. Note the horse- or ass-drawn chariots—unknown in Egypt until the Hyksos invasion (1650 BC -- 900 years later—See the discussion of Hyksos below). Deep soundings by Woolley indicate that the Ur site was first occupied in the 5th millennium BC.

(Student: "Did Ur's population increase over time?") Ur has been fairly well excavated. I imagine it wouldn't be difficult to make a fairly good estimate of the population of Ur at a particular time; but you'll find, that Ur a few years before that was completely destroyed; and you'll find a few years later it was completely destroyed; and I don't think the population movement would be at all stable.

Well, now I think we are ready to go on to the flood.

E. Chapter 6–9: The Flood.

1. Cause of the Flood (Genesis 6).

We have the account of the cause of the Flood: the increasing sin in the earth. We note there that though there were great technical advances, there was moral degeneration. The world under sin naturally goes downward. Development is downward rather than upward. It is only the power of God that lifts it up. There is a fact there, a fact that is in human life in a sinful world. It is a fact in your own lives. You are not going on just naturally, growing and improving. You are going to need to have a series of events of being lifted up by the power of God; and to be improved and take a step forward in one or another regard in your spiritual life and in your general attitude; and you will find that when you turn your attention away from God, you will gradually degenerate from that. You will have to try to get back. It will be as you draw close to the Lord and you study the Word, then you will take a step forward.

You will decline if you just set these aside and forget them. Life does not work that way; and so we have this gradual decline, this gradual degradation that comes in before the flood, except that the grace of God was working in individual hearts and lives. We have Enoch, Lamech, a very godly man; we have Noah, a preacher of righteousness, but Noah is left almost alone.

a. Sons of God took Daughters of Men as Wives. The Cause of the Flood is described in Genesis 6, and the chapter begins with the statement

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

And then there is repetition beginning in verse 4:

There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children

to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

There were giants, Hebrew *nephilim*, in the earth in those days: and also after that, the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men and they bare children of them; the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown." We have that little incident described there in the course of this account of the wickedness of man both before and after. Well, now just what does this fourth verse here mean? What is the real truth in connection with it? The sons of God and the daughters of men?

Now there are three possible ways we know of for taking this statement.

(1) Supernatural beings marrying humans? One possibility is that the sons of God has the same meaning as mentioned over in Job, that they are supernatural beings; that they are beings of supernatural power, beings as described in II Peter who have left their first estate.³⁸ And that the angels of God do not marry or are given in marriage, such as these here, who have fallen from their first estate, seeking to experience that which does not belong to their estate and which should not belong to them; and as they are entering in in some way that we know very little about into this period of earth's history. In favor of that would be the fact that in the New Testament we have such people possessed of demons and we have evidence that there was such a thing as demon possession. They believed that there are supernatural forces which enter into this world in some way at certain periods.

Now, of course, that is a very unpopular idea in these days, because so much that people would have been ready a short time ago to interpret as demon possession is now taken to be simply a derangement of the mind. And doubtless there are many places where people have thought it to be demon possession where it actually was derangement of the mind. It may even be that there are long periods in which there is no such thing as demon possession; in which God does not permit it, or it is not done for some reason or another. But we can't accept the Gospels as true records without believing that at least at some periods there is something as demon possession; or that at least in some cases and perhaps at some times in many cases there is such a thing as demon possession.

It is clearly taught in the Bible that there are supernatural forces which exert an influence in life for good, and supernatural forces which exert an influence for ill. Even though it may also be true that a very great portion of our experience in life is related to natural causes, and we misunderstand it rather than understand it, if we imagine supernatural agencies are involved in it without definite evidence to such a fact.

³⁸ Jude 6.

Now those are the reasons why this is a view which cannot be said, I believe, to be impossible. The view that the sons of God means the same thing here as it means over in Job. It is interesting that, in the mythologies of most ancient peoples, you have instances where this sort of thing is alleged to have occurred. Well, now, that doesn't prove anything whatever, as to its ever having occurred; but it does show that it was a rather common idea in early times. Now the idea might perhaps have come from it having actually happened at certain times. On the other hand, of course, the modern scholars would generally feel that this is simply like those other stories, just ancient mythology that doesn't belong in the Scriptures. That of course, we don't believe.

Now, is this actually supernatural beings? I don't think that we can say.

(2) Descendants of Seth marrying descendants of Cain? It is natural for us to think that there is not something that is marvelous and supernatural here. It is natural for us to think that it is probably some explanation of just some natural situation; and so some say the sons of God are the descendants of Seth, and the daughters of men are the descendants of Cain; and this means a breaking down of the line of demarcation between the holy line of Seth and the unholy line of Cain. Well, that is not what it says here. Maybe that's what it means, but it doesn't say it.

Certainly there is a great element of possibility in it, which would account for the increased wickedness of the world; because it is true that there is nothing that has been more injurious to Christian men than marriage with un-Christian women; but I think you could say vice versa also, so I don't think—I am sure you can say vice versa. But I am not at all sure that you would call the sons of Seth the sons of God in a proper sense; and I don't know how Cain was any more a man than Seth was.

We don't, I think, have anywhere in the Scriptures, as far as I know, a statement that all of Cain's sons are ungodly; I imagine that most of them were. Nor a statement that all of Seth's descendants were godly, though we know that some of them were; and we don't know of anywhere in the Scripture a command that these two lines should remain permanently separate from one another.

Christ Himself had his favorite title for Himself, "The Son of Man". He was the Son of God; He was also the Son of Man. To say that the sons of God are the descendants of Seth and the sons of man the sons of Cain is at least highly conjectural.

And I don't know why the daughters of Cain should be called daughters of men. If you want to say the sons of God came in unto the daughters of the devil, that would be God opposite the Devil; or the sons of righteousness unto the

daughters of wickedness, there would be a pair, but that isn't the parallel. The parallel is not between good and bad. It is between God and man and the difference between God and man is not a difference of goodness and badness. Seth was a man just as much as Cain was a man; and so to say that this means the line of Cain and the line of Seth seems to me extremely unlikely.

And then they bare children to them; the same became mighty men, men of renown. Why would the children of a common nation of Seth and Cain be any more apt to be mighty men than the children of Cain or the children of Seth? I think that there is a great deal against that interpretation, and I don't know of anything in its favor; and so I think that that interpretation must be laid aside as an unsatisfactory one.

Then there is a question about the word "giants," the Hebrew *nephilim*. They were at least different. They were in some way outstanding; and as it says, they were men of renown. Mighty men. They seemed to be men of strength; men who made great reputations.

Now, it may mean that there were great upheavals of some sort; and one of the leaders of them might have happened to have had a father from the descendants of Seth and a mother from Cain; but I think that it would be just as apt to be the other way around, or just as apt to be entirely one line. We don't know much of anything about it, except that it is before the flood, and we have no evidence except this.

And so I am not ready to say that this interpretation is necessarily false. I am just ready to say I don't see any evidence that it is true; that is all, that these are the descendants of Cain and the descendants of Seth. I don't know why they should be called sons of God and daughters of man. It is purely a conjecture; it may be a correct one, but I know of no reason to think that it is. It may mean something entirely different that we are not familiar with.³⁹

Now these are two interpretations. I think either of them is a possible interpretation. I don't think we know for a certainty which of the two it is. My inclination is to guess that there is some supernatural element involved, but I am not at all certain that's correct. The other seems to me less likely, but not impossible. At any rate we have increasing wickedness here; and I wouldn't be

³⁹ [dcb] If humans overlap the neanderthals (which appear to have gone extinct around 25,000 BC) then another possibility is that sexual relations may have occurred between neanderthals (=sons of men) and humans (=sons of God). Whether such unions could result in offspring is still an unresolved question among scientists, based in part on analysis of dna obtained from some neanderthal fossils. One characteristic of neanderthals is their greater strength as compared with humans. Certain a flood might remove such impurity of the human race. It is interesting that the "daughters of men" are "daughters of *adam*", and the "mighty men" are "mighty *ish*", using a different, more general word.

at all surprised if in that increasing wickedness, we have the spiritual influence of the one who had led man into his fall increasing the wickedness.

I do not think we can account for this world apart from the activities of Satan. There are too many things that simply are unaccountable otherwise. The curse accounts for many but there are others which the curse alone does not account for. There is certainly a definite activity of Satan in the world; and that is surely definitely taught by our Lord in his statements; and in one parable he said that the one that has the demon driven out of him and the house is left empty, the demon goes and gets seven others worse than himself and brings them back.

It seems to me that there is a very real truth to that. It's a very good thing to get people cleaned up and to get them away from the evil in which they have been; but if you merely get them away from the evil to which they have been addicted, you prepare them for something which may be more respectable but may be even worse in God's sight. There is a need of something positive. It is not enough to turn away from sin; we must actively turn to God and serve Him.

(student "Does *elohim* necessarily mean God?"). The word *elohim* is translated "judges" in some cases, but whether it is correctly translated "judges" here, I am very skeptical about it. But Mr. Sanderson has put his finger on a good point—that the word *elohim* is used in the Scripture in a sense other than that of "the true God." It is used in various other connections and other senses and there are some very interesting problems connected with it.

In one case, our English version translates it "judges" but it is "gods" in the New Testament. I believe it is that passage where Christ says, "He calls them gods unto whom the Lord came." I think he is quoting that very passage, so that would look as if the translation "judges" was not really a correct translation. "Bring them to the gods" is a phrase used occasionally in Scripture. The word is used—like all words in the Scripture are used—in senses which sometimes have to be gathered from the context. We rarely find a word in the Scripture—any more than we do in modern speech—which always has exactly the same meaning. They vary somewhat in different people's mouths and in different situations.

Human language is a very fallible instrument; and when we say that the Bible is verbally inspired, we do not mean that God created an infallible language for it. We mean that He gave us something in which the fallible words are used—words which express the idea as well as can be done in fallible words—and words which correctly interpreted do not bring in incorrect implication of fact or doctrine or of judgment; but it is very, very vital that we get the correct interpretation of what verbal inspiration is. It is easy to build up an idea of verbal inspiration which is not taught in the Scripture; and does not conform to the nature of language; and then have people knock it to pieces and simply

destroy our whole religion; and that is a very grave danger. I am all the more convinced that it is vital that we study sanely and exactly and accurately, rather than simply take an extreme position and stand on it. The extreme position—a few people can go out and proclaim and win followers—but you will always find there are those who react against the extreme position; and then they usually go to the opposite extreme; and it much wiser to try to find just what the Scripture does teach.

Now in this matter—whether the sons of God are fallen spirit beings or whether they are the sons of Seth—the Bible doesn't say; and as far as I can see we can take either of the two interpretations as far as our present knowledge goes. Of the two I am inclined to think it is the supernatural beings. I am inclined to that, but I don't feel at all dogmatic about it. Now we find that this verse 5, "And God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And God repented that he had made man on the earth and it grieved him at his heart. And He decided to destroy them from the face of the earth. But there was one man who found grace in the eyes of the Lord, Noah."

So very evidently, we do not have here the descendants of Seth, all of whom are good, and the women that descended from Cain, all of whom were bad; and some of the sons of Seth have gone over and joined the bad, but there still are a lot of them left; but we find, that sin has been in both parts of the human race. The line of Cain has gone much worse than the line of Seth, but both of them have fallen into sin; and out of all of both lines we have only Noah left who has found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and then we find that verses 11 and 12 describe the earth as very corrupt.

(Student: What does it mean that God repented?) Repentance means godly sorrow for sin and turning away from it; and, so the Lord saw, He'd made men on the earth, He had a godly sorrow for their sin and He turned away from it. I don't think that is what it means at all; and when you look at the Hebrew word there (verse 6) which is translated "repent," the Hebrew word is the word *nacham*; and this Hebrew word *nacham* is quite generally translated "repent" but it is also sometimes translated "to be comforted" and in *nachamu* it is the causative; and you find in Isaiah 40, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith the Lord," and that is the causative of this same verb. It is not "Cause my people to repent. Cause my people to repent." It is, "Cause my people to be comforted. Cause my people to be comforted." Or "Comfort my people, comfort my people" saith the Lord.

Those two translations occur for the verb, and they are quite different in their ideas to us; but actually the word has one meaning, but it is a quite difficult meaning. I traced it through once—went right through the Old Testament looking at the usage of this word—and I came to this conclusion that this word

nacham has the meaning of a changed emotional feeling from an unhappy state to a less unhappy state which is brought about in view of something which has occurred or which one plans to do.

Now you see we have no exact English word that gives that meaning; but that—I came to the conclusion—is what is meant by this word *nacham*. We read in Genesis 24, for instance, that when Rebekah came to Isaac, we read that Isaac *ynachem* her after the death of his mother. It doesn't mean he repented, turned away from sin; it means that his state of misery on account of the loss of his mother was considerably lessened with the joy that came from the presence of Rebekah.

And we find many other instances. We find it used in Samuel where the Lord said to Samuel, "It has repented me that I have made Saul king. I'm going to anoint another," and Samuel went in the very same chapter and said to Saul, "You have sinned against God and God is going to take the kingship away from you;" and "God is not a man that He should repent." The very same words here; God told Samuel He had repented; Samuel said to Saul, "God is not a man that He should repent." Well, you see it is the meaning of the word. God said to Samuel, "I am in misery because of the wickedness of this man Saul. I comfort myself with the decision to appoint another king. I find relief from the unpleasant emotional state by the decision that another one will be appointed king." Samuel said to Saul, "God is going to take the kingship away from you" and, he said, "Don't think you can make some sacrifices or some kind of a present to God, and that God is a man who will turn away from His sadness, of His determination to remove you from being king and allow Himself to be made happier over it and forget it, because of some present you give Him."

You see how—there's a very definite meaning in it. Well now, of all the passages in the Scripture, this one here is perhaps the hardest to apply the law of first interpretation, the principle of first occurrence, you see. It is the hardest one of all. But I do think that the meaning does fit here very well that God, in view of His determination to destroy man from the face of the earth is comforted over the misery which the creation of man has brought Him. You see it fits in with the others. It certainly is not turning away from sin, a godly sorrow for sin and turning away from it; and in the Old Testament it is mostly used for God—this particular word. It is altogether different from the Greek word we use in the New Testament. I think it is a rather unfortunate translation.

The word is used in the sense "to be comforted" or "to repent"; and then the causative of it, "to cause to repent," "to cause to be comforted." He was grieved on account of the situation of man and His grief was lessened by this decision to do away with him. So, of course, you cannot interpret the word simply in the light of the one verse alone. You take the following verse—And God said "I will destroy man"—and you take its many uses elsewhere. I tried this meaning "He

was grieved", but it doesn't fit, and I know too many cases where isn't "grieved"; it's a lessening of grief, often a lessening of grief through contemplation of a decision which has been made. Very often—it is used a good many times in the Scripture. You will find it interesting to look it through and see how it is used.

(3) Believers marrying unbelievers? Now there is a third possibility that I think we should look at, which is certainly not any more impossible than the first view. Now the third view is that the sons of God here is not used in the sense it is used in Job—not in that sense here—but it is used in the sense in which we find it in the New Testament; that he that believes in Christ becomes a son of God. That the sons of God here means regenerate people; members of the church of God; those who have been saved by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. These are the ones spoken of here as the sons of God. Now that would not be an incorrect use of the term, because it is used frequently that way in the New Testament. It certainly is no more correct use of it than in the book of Job, where it refers to supernatural beings, but it is equally correct. We find in the New Testament repeatedly, "Now are we the sons of God".

Now if this means the sons of God, it doesn't mean the sons of Seth. It doesn't mean those that were in the family of Seth and not in the family of Cain; but it means the regenerate, the elect; those who are saved as Abraham was—through faith in Christ—even though they did not know the details of it; they did not understand what was going to happen exactly; but they knew that God had promised that He would give a particular seed of the woman which would bruise the serpent's head. They knew the true God; that there was salvation coming; that God, as predicted, would in some way bear the penalty of sin. They looked forward to the days of Christ, and they were saved through faith in Christ, just exactly as we are saved now by faith in Christ.

And so if the sons of God were taken in that sense here, then you would mean by the sons of God, people—regardless of whether they were descendants of Seth or Cain, or from some of the other sons of Adam—for as a matter of fact at the time of Noah, not over a fifth of the people were descendants of Seth, and not over a fifth descendants of Cain, because Adam had many other sons, as the Scripture says, and the rest would be descendants from the other sons.

But these would be individuals who were born again, regenerated through Christ; who therefore would be spoken of as the sons of God; and the evil as described here that these were the sons of God, who should have been separated unto God and whose lives should have been devoted to service and whose wives should have been selected from those that were also sons of God, that they saw those, who are spoken of as the daughters of men, not that they themselves were not sons of men, but that they were *only* daughters of men. They were not daughters of God, only of men. They were purely human, not people who were human beings regenerated through the blood of Christ.

And therefore that these men, that should have been carrying on the testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ and raising a standard for Him, were allowing their lives to be wrecked and their testimonies to be ruined in this very vital and important part of their life, the question as to whom they should marry; and taking wives who were only human, who were not regenerated through Christ. Now that is indeed one of the things which has brought as much injury into the Christian church in our age as anything; it has been people that were wishing to serve the Lord, but leaving him out of account in this very important part of their lives.

I was talking to a man not very long ago connected with a church in town—not a separated church—but he was telling me about a man in the church, a young man who was planning to become a minister, and tremendously interested in becoming a minister; and he said that this man was engaged to a girl who had absolutely no interest in religious things whatever; and she was just constantly trying to get him to be not interested in such things at all; and he described to me one time when late on a Sunday afternoon, they were off having some rather worldly enjoyment; and it came time for church, and he said to her "Let's go to church." And she answered, "We are having a good time here, so let's stay here. What do you want to go to church for?" And he said, "But that is my life." And if that was the division between them before they were married, you can think what the situation would be afterwards. If he really wanted to serve the Lord he should have made a clean break immediately. He never should have made the relationship.

Now that is a thing which has ruined the lives of more Christians, more servants of the Lord, than almost anything else; and consequently, since that is the case in our present age, it is entirely possible that that is what is referred to here. That that is what happened, and that would certainly have a great deal to do with the increasing degeneracy and wickedness of the race, until you reach the point where only Noah was left.

And so here we have three possible interpretations. The second of which I see absolutely no warrant for whatever in Scripture. The other two, it seems to me a great deal can be said for either one of them, and I don't know of any way in which we can prove which of the two is correct.

In our age it is remarkable how often you find that people who are people of real prominence and leadership and strength; and when we watch, how very often you find they are people who have a godly background, but very often a divided home. I was just thinking of one instance, of Harry Hopkins, a man who had such tremendous influence in Washington for about ten years; a man who went and talked with Stalin and made arrangements with Stalin, he had as much influence as any American aside from Roosevelt. Roosevelt said, "Treat him exactly as if he were myself." And he made deals and arrangements with Stalin.

And the same thing with Churchill: he exerted a tremendous influence. He was a very powerful character, when he could get time to get away from the racetracks, where he loved to gamble in the two dollar section. He just loved the nightclubs and all that sort of thing, but still he took enough time away from those things to do a tremendous bit. A very able man, and a man who along with his many evil qualities had a lot of good characteristics and a lot of impulses to really help people and to do good. And his father was a very worldly sort of man, who had no interest of anything much that was of a very high character; and his mother was a very devout and earnest Christian, who did the very best she could to give him a very Christian upbringing, but found it difficult on account of the opposite influence of the father. And you could repeat that over hundreds of times when we find outstanding men in modern life.

It is true that in our day—in the last three or four centuries—you find that the mighty men, men of renown, very frequently are men who have a very definite Christian background, and yet a background which is not holy. Now, we can't tell what was before the flood; I merely see possibilities, that between the combination of the demon and the human being, there might be a great element of strength; and there certainly would be between the Christian and the non-Christian—there would be an element of strength combined with the recklessness and the carelessness which allows that strength to exert itself in a direction in which it ordinarily wouldn't. Therefore, perhaps, from a worldly viewpoint, comes a man of renown.

As between these two—the two are possibilities, and I think that some may prefer one, some may prefer the other—but the vital thing is that we be not dogmatic on either one of them; that we recognize—this you can say definitely here: Clearly there was a union of those who should not have been united. Clearly there was a combination which was not in accordance with God's will, and which contributed to the increase of the wickedness in the earth. That you can say. As to what the elements were, there may be different possibilities. It is just like everything in the Scripture; it's not a point but an area. There are possibilities within it. Sometimes you can narrow the area, but sometimes it is broad; but in any event, it describes things in those days before the flood, which contributed to the situation where "God saw the wickedness of man was very great in the earth, and every imagination of his heart evil continually," and the Lord decided to destroy man from upon the earth.

We have a statement where the Lord says, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man—not the angels of heaven—but my Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the

flood came and took them all away, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."

Very evidently here, what he is pointing out is that life was going on in normal course; not as though something new had happened—that they'd begun all of a sudden to marry and give in marriage—but they were simply carrying on in their normal course, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and all of a sudden this comes. The whole tone is that God is displeased with what is happening, and he decides to wipe them out. And then Luke 17:26 also refers to the days of Noah. In Luke you have the same statement told; in both cases it is not describing the wickedness in the time of Noah; it is simply describing the fact that people did not expect some great change; it came suddenly. They thought everything would continue in exactly the same way.

The passage here in Genesis is describing a period, perhaps a hundred years or more before the flood came, a period when God determined to destroy the earth; and He began preparing Noah for the situation; and it describes the things that made it necessary to destroy the earth; and in the list of them, it doesn't say they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, but it says, "the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair, and they took whom they chose of them; and God said, 'every imagination of man's heart is evil continuously.'"

Everything which is not constantly vitalized and strengthened by continuous contact with the Spirit of the living God inevitably degenerates and goes down. You cannot form an organization, a denomination, an institution or a movement that will automatically keep on a high plain. You can do nothing that will insure that any movement will remain Christian. The only thing that will insure that any denomination, movement, institution or anything whatever will remain Christian is constant communion between its leaders and God—constant looking to Him day by day. The wonderful Christian spirit of the founders of no institution is sufficient to keep it Christian ten years later; and so we find that the human race has degenerated until there is only one man left who is righteous; and yet, as Christ tells us, they were marrying and giving in marriage, they were going through the ordinary processes of life, without people realizing that a terrific crisis was upon them. The descent into sin and wickedness is something which was not fully realized. Conditions were moving along smoothly; and they looked on this man Noah, who preached righteousness to them and declared the judgment of God, as some sort of a crazy freak, and then suddenly the crisis came.

And before looking at the nature of the crisis or that which followed it any further we might take up

Excursus: The Babylonian Flood Story (The Gilgamesh Epic).⁴⁰ Now for a very good statement of the similarity between the Babylonian flood story and the Biblical story I have a note in my notes here that you may see Skinner, for an excellent statement of this:

The dependence of the biblical narrative on this ancient Babylonian legend hardly requires detailed proof. It is somewhat more obvious in the Yahwistic recension [J] than in the Priestly [P]; but there is enough in the common substratum of the two accounts to show that the Heb. tradition as a whole was derived from Babylonia. Thus both J and P agree with the Bab. story in the general conception of the Flood as a divine visitation, its universality (so far as the human race is concerned), the warnings conveyed to a favoured individual, and the final pacification of the deity who had caused the Deluge. J agrees with Bab. in the following particulars: the entry of the hero into the ark *after* the premonitory rain; the shutting of the door; the prominence of the number 7; the episode of the birds; the sacrifice; and the effect of its savour on the gods. P has also its peculiar correspondences (though some of these may have been in J originally): e.g., the precise instructions for building the ark; the mention of bitumen (a distinctively Bab. touch); the grounding of the ark on a mountain; the blessing on the survivors. By the side of this close and marked parallelism, the material differences on which Nickel (p. 185) lays stress: viz. as to (a) the chronology, (b) the landing-place of the ark, (c) the *details* of the sending out of the birds, (d) the sign of the rainbow (absent in Bab.), and (e) the name of the hero sink into insignificance. They are, indeed, sufficient to disprove immediate literary contact between the Heb. writers and the Gilgamesh Tablets; but they do not weaken the presumption that the story had taken the shape known to us in Babylonia before it passed into the possession of the Israelites. And since we have seen (p. 177) that the Babylonian legend was already reduced to writing about the time usually assigned to the Abrahamic migration, it is impossible to suppose that the Heb. oral tradition had preserved an independent recollection of the historical occurrence which may be assumed as the basis of fact underlying the Deluge tradition... The *differences* between the two narratives are on this account all the more instructive. The ethical motive, which is but feebly developed in the Babylonian account, obtains clear recognition in the hands of the Heb. writers: the Flood is a divine judgment on human corruption; and the one

⁴⁰ [dcb] The Gilgamesh Epic was first discovered in 1867 by George Smith at the British Museum as he translated cuneiform tablets unearthed in 1851 by pioneering archaeologist Layard when he discovered the library of Ashurbanipal in Ninevah. This library contained copies (in cuneiform) of much of the literature of that day, including this Epic. He discovered further tablets during follow-up expeditions to Ninevah in the 1870s. Among his other discoveries was a record of the total eclipse of 763 BC which is the basis for precise dating of events in the Assyrian empire for several hundred years around this date. See [Appendix A. New Light from Mesopotamia](#) for further information.

family saved is saved on account of the righteousness of its head. More pervasive still is the influence of the monotheistic idea. The gods of the Babylonian version are vindictive, capricious, divided in counsel, false to each other and to men; the writer speaks of them with little reverence, and appears to indulge in flashes of Homeric satire at their expense. Over against this picturesque variety of deities we have in Genesis the one almighty and righteous God, a Being capable of anger and pity, and even change of purpose, but holy and just in His dealings with men. ...the Bab. parallel serves as a 'measure of the unique grandeur of the idea of God in Israel, which was powerful enough to purify and transform in such a manner the most uncongenial and repugnant features' of the pagan myth; and, further, that 'the Flood-story of Genesis retains to this day the power to waken the conscience of the world, and was written by the biblical narrator with this pedagogic and ethical purpose.' "⁴¹

I asked you, as your assignment a couple of days ago to note the similarities between it and the Biblical story. Barton gives a statement of them in his *Archaeology and the Bible*, which I do not think is anywhere near as good a statement, but he mentions certain features. He says, that the account

"so closely resembles that in the Bible (Gen. 6:9-9:19) that nearly all scholars recognize that they are two versions of the same narrative."⁴²

And then he footnotes "Or two accounts of the same event." I don't know whether he put the footnote in, or whether some editor put it in to make it look a little more conservative than it would otherwise look; because two versions of the same narrative, and two accounts of the same event are quite different things; and for one who believes as Barton did that there is no special truth in any of it, it is easy enough to say that there are two different versions of the same narrative, but there would be quite a difference when you say two accounts of the same event.

He continues,

"In each case there is a divine revelation to the hero of the deluge that a catastrophe is coming of which everyone else is ignorant. They both relate the building of the vessel, the 'pitching it within and without with pitch,' the embarkation, the flood in which other men are destroyed, the resting of the ship on a mountain, the sending out of the birds, the disembarkation, the sacrifice, and the intimation that in future a deluge shall not be."

⁴¹ Int'l Critical Commentary: Skinner, *Commentary on Genesis* (1910), p.177-9. Emphases in the original text.

⁴² George A. Barton, [*Archaeology and the Bible*](#), (1916) p.277.

I asked you all to look up the similarities, and to read the account as you would find it given either in Barton, or in Finegan's *Light from the Ancient Past*, or in some other book which would give you a translation of it.

I think it was four years ago in this class that I did not give that assignment, but instead I read the story of the deluge here; and I remember that as I started, it was about like it is now outside; and when I got to the point here that the floods began to come down, it began to pour rain; and when I got to the end where there was a rainbow, the bright sun was shining in the room; so we had affects which were very appropriate in our description.

Now, I have noticed—those of you who have read it, and I hope all of you have read it, for it is within the two hours of the assignment. In fact, you could read it in half an hour easily within the two hours of that assignment; it certainly would not be fulfilling that assignment simply to copy what one of these various writers said, but I meant you specifically to read the account—and if you read it, you noticed the very dramatic manner of presentation. You noticed that a vivid picture was given here of the flood; a vivid picture of the attitude of the god, who was so sure the flood was going to come and who got the word secretly to Gilgamesh without the other gods knowing about it: that a flood, was coming and all that might be saved through the flood; and then we remember the description here, the vivid description of the terror of the flood: the Babylonian gods were frightened at the deluge; they fled; they climbed to the highest heavens; the gods crouched like dogs, they lay down by the walls. A very vivid picture which he gives: a sight of the people who were like logs floating about, and he wept to think that all mankind had died.

Professor Friedrich Delitzsch, the one who gave the lectures on Babylon and the Bible said, "You find no compassion in the Biblical Noah," which, to him, was one of the signs of the great superiority of the Babylonian account. The picture is a very vivid picture here which you have, and there are certainly many points which at first sight look very similar to the Biblical account; but, we ask, are these points similar to those which we have in the story of creation? We notice that there you have the sun, moon and stars created in both accounts. Well, what kind of a creation story would it be if you didn't have that? You notice that there man is created. Well, how would you have a creation story without humanity being created? We noticed that most of the points of alleged similarity between the Babylonian story of the creation and the Biblical story of the creation were simply such as would exist in any two creation stories; and therefore when you say each is a story of creation, you have practically named all the similarities.

The Babylonian creation story does have a certain chaos with dampness and wetness which is somewhat similar to the dampness of the Scriptural account; but that is just about as far as any similarity goes of a type which would not

necessarily inhere in any creation story. There is really no reason to consider the Babylonian creation story related to the Biblical story any more than any other creation story anywhere in the world.

But in this case, I think that we have a difference. We have in both a flood. Well, there have been thousands of floods in the world. A very dramatic story of the Johnstown flood here in Pennsylvania would make a thrilling account, certainly just as thrilling as the Babylonian story here; but it surely would be entirely different. There you have a flood which occurred from the coming down of a big river when the dam was broken and the flood swept down through the river bed—entirely different from the picture of the windows of heaven being opened here. Here you have an account of a divine revelation to Noah that a flood was coming. There is a divine revelation too, that a flood is coming. Now of course that is something which you might have in several flood stories, but you wouldn't have to have. It is, you might say, something which is incidental to the fact that there is a flood. It might or it might not be.

Then you have in both of them the account of the building of a vessel. Out in the Grand Canyon there were two boys who were up the Bright Angel creek, a stream bed which is quite a stream, a little stream maybe as far as from here to there; maybe a little wider, sometimes from one to three feet in depth which flows down—bright, cold water—flows down from the north into the Colorado river; and I remember a few years ago these two boys who were up the stream bed a couple of miles; and just at that time, there was a cloud burst five or six miles away from them up in the mountains there; which hit right in the upper end of one of the little tributaries of the Bright Angel Creek and that water came flooding down there and this stream which was ordinarily two or three feet in depth came up to twenty feet in depth. A trail there which had been built at a cost of many thousands of dollars was completely washed out.

I went up a month later, and I tried to walk up it—you'd have a lovely trail along the side; and as you would be walking along, all of a sudden you would come to a place that was completely washed out and there was a drop of twenty feet, and you would have to retrace your steps and you would go down. And eventually I decided I might as well just walk up through the body of the stream. It would be easier than trying to follow the trail.

The flash flood did terrific havoc to the trail and to the place inland. Well, after it was over, the parents of these boys went up the stream to see if they could find any trace of the bodies of these two boys who had been up there when the flood suddenly came down; and they went up and hunted and hunted, and finally they saw that way up on the side of a steep hill, the boys had heard the waters coming with a terrific roar and they had managed to dash up the side there and to get up high enough that the stream didn't get them; and they had gotten up there and were safe up there on the hillside.

Now in a story of a flood somebody might go up a high mountain and that way he might be saved from the flood and thus not injured. Occasionally you have stories of floods in which someone manages to hang on to a piece of wreckage; and though he may be hurled about by the waters, manages to escape with his life. There are various ways in which an individual might save his life in the course of a flood; but in both these stories a boat is built, and built in advance, in preparation for the coming of this tremendous flood. Then we have the building of a vessel—both of them mention this little incidental fact that it was pitched within and without with pitch. Now that, you might say, would be rather incidental to the description of the building of a boat. It would be watertight to resist a tremendous thing like this; and you notice an interesting little touch that both of them had that. Then in both of them it tells how they went into the boat when there was no sign of rain and they got in there in readiness for the coming of the storm. In both accounts, as it is being swept about—they're in the flood—the master of the vessel sends out a bird.

Now that is not a thing that would necessarily occur to people in a flood like this. Surely there would be many people who would be wondering whether they were anywhere near a time when they could get out of the boat, who wouldn't think of sending out a bird. You wouldn't always have a bird you could send out, but in each case you have three birds sent out. They are different birds. The order of them is different, but you have three birds sent out one after the other to see if from the actions of these birds you can get any idea as to whether the flood is abating enough that you will soon be able to get out on dry land again.

Both of them describe the disembarkation. Well, if you have an account of a boat you would rather expect to have a disembarkation; but then both of them tell how a sacrifice is made; and in the Babylonian account it says that when they disembarked and made a sacrifice, the gods smelled the sweet savor. The gods above the sacrifice had collected like flies. Well now the Bible has nothing exactly parallel to that, but the Bible does tell how Noah made a sacrifice immediately after they came out of the ark.

And then in both of them you have an intimation that there would not be a deluge again; that if God is going to destroy mankind, He will use some other means but that the deluge will not be an instrument again.

Now these are a large number of similarities between the two accounts which are not simply natural and necessary to the fact of having two stories of the flood. You have many stories of floods in other countries, because everywhere you have a big river you have a flood some time or other; floods are rather common, but that doesn't mean you have a flood every year by any means. But if you would take the Mississippi, certainly once in every ten or fifteen years you

have a rather devastating flood; and the same is true of many of the big rivers out in Pennsylvania; and so flood stories are rather common, but very few of them have anything like this number of little incidental details in common, and consequently it seems to me that in the story of the flood you are in quite a different situation than you were in the story of creation.

My own inclination is to think that the Babylonian flood story and the Biblical flood story are indeed two accounts of the same event. In the Babylonian account the flood began with a slight rain but I don't think the main rains had started, if I recall correctly. But I notice Barton quotes,

"Shamash [said] 'When the senders of rain shall rain upon you a mighty rainstorm at evening, Embark upon the ship and close thy door.' The appointed time approached, The senders of rain sent at evening a heavy rainstorm. I observed the appearance of the day, The day was terrible to look upon. I embarked upon the ship, I closed my door.

So there was a little more evidence in this case than in the Biblical case that the rain was coming. Perhaps that wouldn't really be a similarity between the two. They did enter in ample time in both cases. They didn't wait until it was obvious it was difficult, and then rushed to the boat. In both they entered it first, but in this case probably a little more information of it had been given.

(Student) There would be more faith in the case of Noah. That would be definite. Well, there are many similarities then between these which are slight incidental things such as would not necessarily occur in the story of a flood and we have—probably every nation on the face of the earth has—a story of a flood. Probably every great people who ever lived in a river valley has had a flood which has left an impression on the imagination of the people; and so how many of these stories go back in any sense to the Biblical flood would be hard to say; but it certainly would look as if the Babylonian story and the Biblical story went back either to the same event or to a common source.

(Student) Well, now that is a separate question, the nature of the flood, but do you mean the Babylonian or the Biblical? (Student) Yes. Well, that is a separate question, let's take that up later; but as to the stories, I think we must say that there are striking similarities between them. My inclination is to say the Babylonian story of the creation has no similarity whatever to the Biblical story. The Babylonian story of the flood is strikingly similar to the Biblical story. Now is that un-natural or is it natural? The creation had taken place at least 3,000 years before the time of the Babylonian story, the Biblical story perhaps a few hundred thousand years. No one had seen the creation. It was only by revelation of God that it could be known to anybody. Man intentionally put God out of his mind. How, then, could he be expected to have remembered much about the creation of the world? And the same applies to the fall. These would

be only things, at the time of the flood, which were remembered as something from long before; but the extreme flood would be something which had not been so far prior to the story of the Babylonians or to the Biblical story, or to the time of Abraham. It might be a few hundred years; it might be a few thousand years, but at least it was far nearer than the fall was, or than the creation was; and there is nothing *per se* in it that would make sinful man want to blot it out of his mind; all of the theological implications of the flood story are completely lacking in the Babylonian flood story.

The Biblical flood story comes because man had sinned against God. The Babylonian flood story comes because one of the gods has a tantrum, and he decides that he wants to get rid of mankind. In the Biblical story, Noah alone is righteous on the earth, and God preserves Noah. In the Babylonian story one of the gods secretly tells his friend that he can save himself from this, and the other gods are angry with him when they discover that somebody's life has been saved.

There is nothing theological in the sense of Christian teaching in the Babylonian story. It is a polytheistic story of gods who blame each other; who fight and dispute; who crouch with fear like dogs; who come swarming to the sacrifice like hungry flies. It is utterly different from the picture of God in the Bible, and of the purpose of the flood, as well as the purpose of the preservation of Noah. All of this is what we would naturally expect sinful man to put out of his mind, if he turned away from God; but the great tremendous event of this flood, and the outstanding facts about it, are something that would have a tremendous effect on the imagination of mankind; and it would be quite natural that for a long time after, the main features of them would be recalled and passed on from generation to generation; and so to my mind it is absolutely natural that the Babylonians would retain much of the detail of the story of the flood; much more so than it would be if they remembered the creation story or the story of the fall; and it fits quite together with the fact that the Bible should have it—that Abraham, and the Babylonians should have it at this early time; and written down at least as early as 2000 BC and perhaps a good deal earlier; and passed on to subsequent generations; and I think we can agree with the critics that the Babylonian flood story is similar to the Biblical flood story, though you can say that it is altogether natural that there should be a recollection of the event; in fact it becomes a further evidence of the fact that the event occurred, that it should be recalled as long as this after the time.

Now there is no other race in the world anywhere that has literature as ancient as the Babylonian literature; and it is altogether natural that the main details of it should have been forgotten also, but quite natural that they should have been preserved it this long in Mesopotamia. [end of class]

(Review) Now in past years I have taken them in the opposite order, but I thought today it might be more logical to do them in this order for a special reason which I have in mind. The critic's story of the flood, as you know, takes it that there are two documents in the story of the flood which have been interwoven together, and you have—not like Genesis 1 and 2, where you have the whole of story of creation in Genesis 1, and the whole of story of creation in Genesis 2—according to the critics. Here you have a few words from one and a few words from another; a few verses from P and a few verses from J; and so on, and so on; a little of this and a little of that; a little of this and a little of that; intertwined together to make up your whole flood story.

I happened one evening to drop in at a Presbyterian church in Charlottesville, Virginia; and I remember that the pastor there in that Southern Presbyterian Church was preaching a sermon on the flood; and he said in beginning, "I am preaching my sermon tonight on the J story of the flood, and I will read to you the J story of the flood." He said, "I am sure that as you read it in the Bible, many of you have been confused by the repetitions and contradictions between the J and P stories of the flood which are so intertwined in your Bibles just as you have been confused by the mixture together of sources in the gospels of Matthew and Luke." He said, "I am sure you have found in, both in the gospels and in Genesis, this very confusing; so tonight we will simply read the J story." And he simply read those verses which they put into the J story, and then he proceeded to preach quite a good sermon on the J story of the flood.

Now, that is their theory then; that you have these two stories, the J story and the P story of the flood combined together; and while the main treatment of this question is something which will be taken up in our course Introduction to the Pentateuch where the whole matter of the critical theory of the Pentateuch will be considered at one time; still it is worthwhile that we take a few minutes to note this question, "is it something that is necessarily true that the J story and the P story are two distinct stories which have been intertwined together and interwoven together?"⁴³

And as you look at it—I asked you to look up the evidences which are given for it—and one of the evidences which is most stressed is the fact that you have a continuous and complete story of the flood in either the J story or the P story; and that consequently you do not—it is repetition when you put the two together—you have the same thing told twice, and this is quite evident in the early part of the story.

For instance, you find that the P story says, in v. 10, "the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened"; and then v. 12, the J story says, "And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty

⁴³ Dr. MacRae's course, Introduction to the Pentateuch, has been published as the book [*JEDP: Lectures on the Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch*](#).

nights," and thus you have one of them saying that water came on the earth, and then the other says water came upon the earth. You have the thing repeated; and so you give one of them to the J story and you give one of them to the P story. Then you find that in vs. 13–16a you have the P story, telling about all the people and all the animals going into the ark, and then at 16b you have the J story, "The Lord shut them in."

And then, 17a, you have the P story, "And the flood was forty days upon the earth." Then you have the J story, "And the waters increased and bore up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth"; and then the P story again, "And the waters prevailed and were increased greatly upon the earth." And so you notice—just as an example of it—here is v. 17, "The waters increased and bare up the ark and it was lifted up above the earth"—that's the J story, and then the P story says, "And the waters prevailed and were increased, greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters." And you notice how it is repeated. And so it is easy enough to divide up the story and to take half the verses and make a fairly continuous story; and to take the other half and make a fairly continuous story; and it looks like a very strong argument, that you have two different stories which are combined here; but an interesting feature of it is that you can carry that argument still further. You take in v. 17, "The waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth," and then the P story, "And the waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth and the ark went upon the face of the waters, and the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth." You notice how they both say the same thing, but if you take what the P story had in 17 b, "The waters increased, they bare up the ark and it was lifted up above the earth."

Well, there you have twice told that the ark was lifted up—twice right in the one story; and then you go into the P story in v. 18, "The waters prevailed and they were increased greatly upon the earth" and then in v 19, "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth", and then the end of 19 tells you that all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered; the end of 20, which is also P, says the mountains were covered. In other words, if you have repetition which warrants dividing it up into two stories, because the same thing is told you twice, so you can say one of them is J and the other is P; then you will notice that very often the same thing that is told you twice is told you five or six times; so you could in turn divide J into five or six stories, and you could divide P into five or six stories because a great many of the things which are told twice; and thus give a warrant to say you have two or three different stories are told two or three different times within each of the two documents. I think that is a very interesting fact; and that you can easily follow through in the earlier part of the story of the flood: of the coming of the flood, and of the waters upon the earth; you find that a thing is told and told and told and told and told again; and they give two or three of them to J, and two or three to P, but why say you have two documents? Why not say you have six or seven documents?

And then an interesting thing is, that when you get to the end of the story of the flood, you find that practically everything is only told once; and the result is that at the end of the story of the flood, you have one telling a certain thing and the other telling another thing. Only one of the two documents tells how they came out of the ark. Only one of the two documents tells how the sacrifice was made. Only one of the two documents tells about the promise that there will not be another flood; so the details of the end of the flood are only told once; and the critics say, "Well, the other story must have had it also, but the redactor, when he put them together, only took from one account there."

Well, if you are going to have the redactor free to take as much as he chooses, you cut down very greatly the validity of that sort of argument as evidence that there was a redactor at all; but the interesting thing is that in the beginning of the flood story, if you have evidence for two documents, you have evidence for six documents; and in the latter part of it, you do not have evidence for more than one document; and what does that mean? It seems to me it means that a very natural and effective literary device has been used. The waters increased and they multiplied and they prevailed upon the earth and the waters mounted up and they covered the heavens; just one thing after another, after another, to pile up adjectives and statements to impress upon you with the tremendous nature of the flood; and then when the flood is over, they don't have to say, "And the waters went down and they stopped, and they discontinued and they were gone." It is not necessary. The flood's over; the waters are gone. The people come out. God speaks to them. There is no need of repetition. It is a dramatic device in telling the story, and you do not have two accounts straight through. You have five or six accounts of the early phase of the flood, which is simply the piling up of statements in order to effectively make the impression of the tremendous nature of the flood which God brought upon the earth; and then at the end there is no need of that particular rhetorical device, and it just comes to an end and then stops.

You could say "it comes to an end" in the J document, and "it stops" in the P document; but that isn't done. It merely says it comes to an end, so you have to assume that the other also ends, that it stops, but the end has just been left off.

But that is one thing that I think is very noticeable about this argument. It is so easy to divide the flood story up because you have everything told twice; but that is only true of the first half or two-thirds of the story; and afterward there is very little that is told twice. Most of it is told five or six times, and at the end of that story, there is hardly anything that is told more than once. It simply is a literary device or a way of telling it; and I think that that is true of that argument, so that on examination it disappears.

Now, of course, one of the big arguments is the argument that one document always says "God" and one of them says "Lord"; and it is true that in Genesis 1 "God" is always said; but in Genesis 2 we have "the Lord God," and there are a few times where we just have "God." In Genesis 3:1, Satan says "God said"; it does not say, "Hath the Lord said?" So that it is not consistent throughout; and here both names are used, "Lord" and "God"; but you will find that sometimes you have long series of verses where only once is God referred to. And I remember Driver points out in one case: he says, "You compare this from J, where the Lord is always used, and this from P, where God is always used"; and you look at the fifteen verses he is pointing out from P, and you'll find that the word God only occurs once and there is no other reference to God in the portion. The fact of the matter is that the argument for the divine names is greatly overdrawn in this story of the flood; and it doesn't work out consistently there. There are a few cases where the critics say that the redactor has changed the name; and actually that you have "God" or "Lord" used in the wrong sense.

As I say, we are not trying to go into the arguments as a whole; we are simply looking now at one of those cases which is most widely given as a clear proof of the fact that you have two documents brought together of the story of the flood; and the reason that is given as clear proof is because it is so easy to take the first part of the story of the flood and to divide it into two parts without losing any of it; but you can't do that in the last half of the story; and in the first part you could just as well divide it into five or six.

Now the reason today why I gave the Babylonian flood story first, instead of dealing with the critical approach first, is because the Babylonian flood story has a very interesting relationship to the Biblical story; and that is the fact that if you are going to make a comparison between the Biblical story and the Babylonian flood story, you will find that it takes the entire Babylonian story to get the similarity. That is to say, the Babylonian story has some similarity to J and some to P, and some few statements that are both in J and in P; but you do not get a fair parallel to the Babylonian story unless you take the flood story as it stands in the Bible; you find that in the Babylonian story there is a great flood, divinely sent, which destroyed all men and animals except those saved in a single vessel with one man to whom the coming of the catastrophe had been disclosed and who had gathered into this vessel species of tame and wild beasts and members of his own family.

That is in both the J document and the P document and the Babylonian story; but now in the P document, the Bible tells you that the patriarch was divinely directed to build the vessel; and that he was given particularly the dimensions; and told to pitch it within and without with bitumen; and to stock it with provisions; and that he ended it on the day that the flood came, or the day before; that the great deep as well as the heavens supplied the waters of the flood; and that the ark eventually rested on a mountains.

All these things are in the P story—and not in the J story—and all these things are in the Babylonian story. On the other hand the J story has it—but the P story does not—that there was a covering to the ark; and that the door is shut is specifically mentioned in the J story, and it is mentioned in the Babylonian story. Both of them—the J story and the Babylonian story—mention how long this storm was, though they give it different lengths. They each mention that a window was opened, and that birds were sent out. That is mentioned in the J story but not in the P story; and it is mentioned in the Babylonian story. There is mentioned in the J story the erection of an altar—an altar of sacrifice—it is not in the P story—and it is in the Babylonian story; and so we see that we have a number of things which are in the J story and in the Babylonian; and when you divide it up into two stories, as the critics do, you have something which is not nearly as parallel to the Babylonian story as the whole thing put together. Now, I think that is an extremely interesting evidence of the fact that the Biblical story should not be divided up and if you want to take reiteration of the reason for dividing the story up, you could certainly divide the Babylonian story into two documents or into six documents, because that is a very common device there, to be repeating; but to think that you have two different stories, the J and the P story, which became united together by some redactor of about 400 BC; and that in Babylon, you have two different stories, one like the J story and one like the P story, and these stories were united together before 2000 BC in Babylon, it would push accident beyond any reasonable ground whatever. The Babylonian story is there as a unit by 2000 BC, long before the time at which the critics say the J and the P stories were written.

The critical theory that the Biblical story and the J and P documents were bound together about 400 BC to make the whole, which has about ten different elements similar to the Babylonian story, all of which are an integrated whole in the Babylonian story at 2000 BC and therefore the idea that in the Biblical account the whole is produced by combining two distinct stories seems quite unreasonable. If it were so, why would it be so similar to the Babylonian story?

Well, now I think that is as long as we will take at this time on the comparison of the arguments for the critical view. There are other arguments which are raised, and which might be examined to see if they carry through consistently; and it is remarkable how often, according to the critics, you have evidence of the distinction because here is a flat contradiction: you have one account and the other, and they flatly contradict each other right next to each other—they must be different stories! Well, you ask, why on earth didn't the redactor have sense enough to see that, and to straighten it out? And then you will find where the part that the critics say belongs to one document uses phrases that are distinctive of the other; and they say, "Well the redactor modified them"; and the redactor modified so many points to make them count, and at the same time overlooked so many points, that it cuts down tremendously the value of it

as evidence toward such a statement as that it once came from two distinct documents.

The Biblical story has the division between clean and unclean animals which you don't have in the Babylonian story. You have the rainbow in the Biblical account; and though you have an inference in the Babylonian that there would probably not be another flood, the Biblical account makes a declaration of some other disaster rather than a flood in case of another destruction. And of course you have the great difference between the two in the emphasis on the one great and holy purpose of the one in contrast to the number of gods at cross purposes with one another, fighting among themselves; and one god doing the thing that the other doesn't catch on to, and so the other is very angry, but there is nothing he can do about it. The polytheistic attitude is very different from the idea which is in the Bible as to the relation of God to man. The relationships are such as to make it seem extremely likely that that the two go back to one original event; they are two accounts of the same occurrence.

And this is not at all unreasonable to expect, since the flood was the last grave outstanding world event prior to the time of Abram; it would be rather natural that the story of this tremendous thing would have greatly impressed the grandchildren of Shem, Ham and Japheth as they told it to them; and even though their grandchildren tried to put out of their minds the remembrance of God and of God's will for them, yet many of the details of the story of the flood would have remained and been passed on correctly. And so it is possibly an evidence to some extent to the fact that there was such a flood—the fact that you have this Babylonian story. There are so many details that are fairly similar.

Excursus: Textual Criticism and the Flood. I mention one more point in connection with the flood account, that it takes the Biblical story as we have it to make the parallel to the whole Babylonian story. This contrasts with the critical viewpoint, which is taught in most colleges that have courses in the Bible today, and in most almost all theological seminaries that are over thirty years in age today.

This viewpoint holds that there are two distinct stories, what they call the J story and the P story; and that these two stories have been combined together to make our present flood story. I ran into a Southern Presbyterian Church in Virginia about 6 or 7 years ago one Sunday evening; and I heard the pastor preach on the story of the flood. And he said in beginning his sermon, before he read the Scripture lesson, "I guess", he said, "Many of you have been confused in reading the Book of Genesis just as you are confused in the Gospel by the way the different documents are intertwined and interlaced. You are similarly being confused in reading Genesis. The way these two stories, contradictory stories, are combined together. Now, tonight I will just read you the J story of the flood and our sermon will be based on that entirely."

And consequently, he did read three verses here, and then he would read half a verse, and then he would skip two or three verses, and then he would read two or three words and so on. He read the J story; and then he proceeded to give quite an evangelical message on the basis of the J story of the flood. The J story and the P story you have to keep together as they are in the Bible to get the full parallel to the Babylonian story. The Babylonian story has a sacrifice at the end; only one of the Biblical stories has a sacrifice. The Babylonian story has this incident with the birds; only one of the Biblical stories has the account of the birds. The Babylonian story has the measurements of the ark; only one of the Biblical has the measurements of the ark. There are elements in the Babylonian story which are found in both the J and the P story. But there are elements which are found in only one of these two stories—and some in one and some in the other—and so you have to have the two stories together to get the full parallel to the Babylonian. I do not say that this is a complete contradiction to the idea that we have two documents interlaced; but I think that this moves us a certain distance in that direction.

About half of you last year had the course in the Introduction to the Pentateuch; and in that course we went more fully into the matter of the critical view of the story of the flood. There is no need here in repeating what we did then. You have it in mind; and if you haven't, you have it in your notes, and can easily refresh your mind on it; and consequently we can count on you to be fairly familiar with it enough in connection with this course. It is a vital part of this course as background; but for your sake it will not hurt to have a very brief review of some of its features; and for the others I think it is worthwhile to give such an introduction to it, even though we will go into more detail on it next year.

I would like to say that the critical division of the Biblical account of the flood into two stories is one which is worth our mentioning frequently because it is one of the points of the Biblical story which you will find very widely referred to—just like the point of two accounts of creation. You have two different stories of the flood, two different contradictory stories, we are told.

Well, as to this matter: how are these two stories divided? How is it done? Well, you go through the story and you see all the sections that refer to God as God, and you put them together; and then you take all those that refer to God as Jehovah, and you put them together; and then you have large elements that don't have either in them—which don't refer to God specifically—and you see with which verses you will put those; and you see if it is possible in these two groups to get one complete story of the flood which uses the name God, and another complete story of the flood which uses the name Jehovah; and if when you have done it you have two complete stories of the flood, why that would certainly suggest that you have two original stories each complete and then

combined together. Then in addition to that, as you try to tell which verses go with which section, you are not merely interested in knowing what makes up a complete story, you are interested in avoiding unnecessary duplications. There is no use in telling the same thing twice in a story, you say; therefore if a thing is told twice, one part goes in one and the other in the other; you have duplications and you have repetitions; and as you look at them you see evidences of style to show that the style of the J document is similar to the style of J elsewhere—Gen. 2:4 following through the next few chapters and other parts of the Old Testament; and you see that the style of P is similar to the style of P elsewhere—in Gen. 1 and elsewhere in the OT

Thus, for instance, you find that now in Gen. 1 a statement refers to "male and female created he them" and in Gen 2 it says "they were naked, the man and his wife." It doesn't say they were naked male and female, but it says man and his wife. The other doesn't say God created them the man and his wife; it just says God created them male and female. Well, now then, is male and female a characteristic of the P school of writing and man and his wife a phrase characteristic of the J school of writing? Well, you look at the division of the flood story here, and you find both places they are called male and female and the man and his wife. There are several, but they don't occur consecutively. Sometimes you have the phrase that is characteristic of P in the J story, and vice-versa. And therefore we know that at those points, the man that combined the two the mixed them up a little bit; he took a phrase from one and put it in the middle of the other one; similarly we see the evidence of influence of the redactor at work. In many places you find the style of J in P sections and the style of P in J sections.

Well, one way to get around this is to say that it is the style of the redactor; but it is certainly very much against the claim that the two differ stylistically if you find the style of one in the other. If you are going to say this has the P style and that has the J style, that is proof that there are two documents; however if J has the P style, that is proof that the redactor has introduced it, you do away with this as an identifier. Any of you who are interested in going further into this point, I think you would find it very interesting to take William Henry Green's book on the unity of the Pentateuch.⁴⁴ Wm. H. Green was professor in Princeton Theological Seminary until I believe 1901. I think for nearly 50 years he was professor there. He wrote many very fine books on the OT, mostly dealing with the critical problems and answering in opposing the critical attack upon the OT and he has about fifty pages, chap. 3 in this book, on the story of the flood, taking up these phrases which they say are characteristic of P and phrases that are characteristic of J and showing how they fit.

Now as to the idea that the thing that is told twice, and naturally you wouldn't tell a thing twice in one account; therefore one phrase goes in one story and

⁴⁴ Some of this is reprinted as *The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch* (Baker, 1978)].

one phrase goes in another story and that is very interesting. You have repetition. There is no question about it. You have the thing said and said and said and said again. You have a good deal of that; and therefore you might say, "This is proof that there are two different documents"; but here is the interesting thing about it, the beginning of the flood story you divide it into two documents; and then in each of them you find repetitions. You can divide them into three or four documents. How wicked was the earth that God had to destroy the earth on account of a flood? Man had corrupted his way before the Lord. The earth was filled with violence. There were all kinds of wickedness in men's hearts. God looked upon man and He said, "How long could He put up with the wickedness of men?" There are five or six or seven phrases like that—one after the other. Someone tells the story. It is repeated. Well, in this case, you put all of them in the one document; but that surely would be evidence enough to show that there are two different documents. But the evidence shows there are six or seven. You have the floods lifted up the ark, and they spread over the earth, and everything was covered; and then you read that the violence of the water was tremendous; and the tops of the mountains were covered. Well, you can divide that statement in the middle and have one part of it be one document and have one be the other.

But the thing is that after you divide it into the 2 documents, you still find that in the earlier part of the story of the flood, that you could divide it again and perhaps again. You have most of the features in the coming of the flood, I'm told, six or seven times. Now isn't that a queer sort of writing to tell us this thing six or seven times? Actually, it is something that you will find in any literary writing. It is not merely trying in the briefest possible language to give us an idea of what occurred. It is trying to give us a picture of it. It is trying to enable us to realize what a tremendous thing it was; and so it is stressing these matters, and dwelling upon them, and emphasizing them; and if there is evidence for dividing the one document on this basis, there is evidence for dividing it into six or seven documents.

But that is only true of the first half of the flood story. When you come to the end, you don't find that. In the first part, you have two full complete stories but you could take each of them and divide them up into three or four more. In the last part, neither of them is complete because of the artistry of the story. It dwells upon and stresses the wickedness of man upon the earth; and it stresses the tremendous nature of the flood at the time. But when you come to the end, the waters were dried up, and they opened the door, and stepped out of the ark. At the beginning, it is the thing to build it up and up and up just to tell you how tremendous it was; but at the end, the flood is merely coming to an end, and so at the end neither story is complete. Each of them assumes things from the other story; because most of the events at the end are only told once, where at the beginning most statements in one form or another six or seven times; and you will do exactly the same thing, if you try to tell anything that you are

trying to stress and dwell upon and emphasize. As I just said now—"stress, dwell upon and emphasize." You might say that is three documents. I used stress, dwell upon, and emphasize, and that is not the least bit overdrawn. It is exactly the method which is used.

The claim is that the two stories contradict each other and therefore there must have been two different documents. Now if we had somewhere a record that the priests had a story of a flood; and that the prophets had a story of the flood; and if we had a few quotations from them; and these quotations were all found in the story of the flood, then you might say, "Well now, here is evidence there were two different stories; we find evidence; both of them are here; isn't it likely they were combined?" I mean, that it is not at all unnatural to talk of two stories being combined into one; such things do occur. The only thing is, you have no right to assume such a thing occurred without proof of it; and to say that you have proof of such a thing here; and that therefore it is two distinct different stories combined together; and not only that, but two stories that contradict each other.

And I have here [William E.] Addis, *The Documents of the Hexateuch*,⁴⁵ which we have used much in the Pentateuch course—and will next year in the Pentateuch course—and in it the statement is made⁴⁶ that there is a sharp contradiction on the thing that caused the flood; because one story tells how the rains came down and covered the earth; but the other says that the fountains of the deep were opened, and the windows of heaven were opened. Now you see in one place, the fountains of the deep are opened and the water comes up out of the earth and covers the land, and in the other there is tremendous rain.⁴⁷ What a contrast. But the one that says the fountains of the deep were opened also says that the windows of heaven were opened; and so as a matter of fact you have one of them saying that there was rain; and the other one saying there was rain and also tidal waters. And there is no contradiction there at all; and if you have a case where there was rain and tidal waves, to take the statement of rain and put it here, and take the tidal waves and put them there, and say that there is a contrast; it doesn't make a contradiction. Neither of them says the other event did not occur. Both of them occur; and if there was a tremendous flood, it would be quite natural that the great deep would rise up and come over the

⁴⁵ William E. Addis, *The Documents of the Hexateuch* (1892). Several readable scans are available at openlibrary.com.

⁴⁶ [dcb] These appear to be Dr. MacRae's summary of Addis; I cannot find a comparative discussion of these contradictions in the detail alleged here. In the 1892 edition of the book, The "things that caused the flood" are contained in Addis, pp10–13. Note, p.14 on VIII.9 "On the whole, the Babylonian record seems to be here more original and consistent than the Hebrew." However note on vs. 20, "the coarseness of Assyrian polytheism and the relative sobriety of the Hebrew religion is plain."

⁴⁷ p. 13, Gen VIII.12 "And a torrent of rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights." 2b: "And the torrent of rain was restrained from the heaven." footnote: "In vv. 8 and 9 there is a confusion of the Jahvist with the priestly document."

land, as well as the waters coming down from the mountains and submerging them; so that the alleged contradictions between the two very often consist of two different things, that can perfectly well each of them be true, but which there is no reason that they can't both be true. But when you say this says this and that says that; and there is a contradiction, and in this particular case they are not even different. One of them says rain; the other says both tidal waves and rain; and so they are not even different. And of course, the P document is in turn divided up into P1, P2, P3, P4; and J document into J1, J2, J3, and J4. That is true—it has been carried to that extent. The theory is a very complex, involved theory—very complex and involved—and there are very few people today who know a great deal about it. But there are a great many people today who have been taught in school that it is true, established, and definite; and they are absolutely certain.

I spoke last Thursday night. I gave a paper for a Presidential Address, before a group of about 40 professors from different institutions in this area, including the University of Pennsylvania, Bryn Mawr, Alfred, Princeton Theological Seminary, Crozier Seminary—other institutions of that type—and I spoke for about an hour and a quarter on this very subject. (laughter) And I think about half of those present were professors in classical literature or anthropology or something like that and they don't know much about the higher criticism. The other half—a third to a half—were men who were actually professors of Old Testament; they actually working in this field, and they were all of them one hundred percent convinced that it is true that you can divide into these documents this way. The discussion was quite interesting afterwards. (laughter)

But I did not feel that any of them brought out any arguments which impressed me as very strong arguments in relation to it. Most of them, I don't think that they would bother to try to argue on the matter. I don't think that any of them can do as good a job of arguing on it as they are capable of doing, simply because they haven't tried particularly. They were trained in this; they were taught that this was what science has worked out. This is definite. This is proven. They are so convinced that it is true that to them it is just as absurd to try to prove it as it would be to try to prove the earth is round. That is the way they were taught when they were in school; and they are absolutely convinced of it; and they go out and they teach it; they are interested not in the question, is there a J document, or a P document? But the question for them is, is this particular verse part of the J document or is it a part of the P document? (laughter)

They are convinced that the thing must be correct; and consequently they could have done a better job of arguing than they did. But there is one point about it to mention. There was a man there who is an expert in Sumerian antiquities; and he spoke up, and he said that I made the statement that you would not take any rediscovered Babylonian story, like the Gilgamesh story, the flood

story on one tablet, or the *Enuma Elish* story, that is the story of creation. I said no one today would think of taking one of those and dividing it up into three or four sources on the basis of internal evidence alone; and saying this is this source; this is this one and this is this one; and this man who is an expert in Sumerian after I got through, spoke up and very politely and very cautiously made the statement that he thought I was just a little bit inaccurate in my statement about Babylonia because as a matter of fact, for the *Enuma Elish* story, there are other Sumerian sources which have similarities to a part of it; and he himself had written an article showing the relation of this Sumerian story of the source to the *Enuma Elish*, the Babylonian story; and he said he had no doubt there were sources back to the Sumerian that had been combined into it though he was sure nobody would be so brash as to try to show what they are, to try to divide it up. (snickers)

Well, now, if it is brash to try to show what they are when you actually have a Sumerian source, what about these men who, with no such source, divide up Genesis and all of the Pentateuch and every verse and every word of it in fact and say this is from the J and this the P and this the E, this from the D document, add even divide them into P1, P2, P3, P4 and etc.? Well, I thought the best way to answer him was to say that it would be very interesting indeed if someone had taken the *Enuma Elish* story and tried to divide it into sources—which nobody did when we had no external evidence on it—but if somebody had, and divided it into two or three sources; and then the Sumerian story was discovered, then to see whether one of these corresponded very much to the Sumerian story actually discovered or not. There you would have a chance to test whether the method is effective or not; whether it can really be done.

And in this case with the Biblical flood story, we have nothing with which to test it; yet we have almost an air of omniscience in this regard (laughter) by those who wrote on it—mostly 40 or 50 years ago—and the recent writers simply follow them. It is considered absolutely proven since 1853 which verses are P and which are J in the flood story; that's one of the places where very few changes have been made. It is considered as very definite. One difficulty with the whole thing; one reason that we don't get together on it; is that there are a mass of people like the other professors who were present that night; and hundreds of people in the world as a whole, who know nothing about the subject. They know nothing about it; and as far as they are concerned, they take the word of someone in whom they have confidence; that you have on the one hand a great number of people who are teaching in our theological seminaries and in our universities who were trained to believe that this is fixed and definite and certain; and they have no doubt of it; and they think that it is silly and preposterous for anyone to deny it; and then on the other hand, you have a great number of evangelicals who are convinced that the whole thing is a lot of foolishness and can't think how anybody can be quite so stupid as to believe it; and so you have such extreme views on both sides that there is very

seldom very much of a reasonable discussion nowadays about the basis on which it rests.

Now I think that things may change. We may have opportunities for such reasonable discussions. I doubt if that particular club have had a paper such as I gave in the last forty years. I am sure that if anyone had said to almost anyone there that we might have a fundamental paper sometime, he would have been horror stricken at the idea. (laughter) And that of course, is what they had last Thursday night. It not only was in actuality, but I used the Word in the course of it. (laughter) But, I do think, that it is not necessary that we take two or three years studying over these detailed evidences; but the thing that is vital is that we have something of an understanding of the basis on which the theory was given; and something of an understanding of its weaknesses; and that we do in the Pentateuch course. We don't do it in this course, but it is so important in relation to the flood that just at this point I want to bring out these few main points; and of course, the people that I had last year, I would like to review their notes. I would say readily that any story may have sources; and I would say that it is entirely possible that Moses, in fact, I am sure that Moses had sources then; I have no doubt about it; but I think that it is unlikely that he had two different sources, which he interlaced, taking a little from one, and then from the other. I think it is very unlikely; I think that it is altogether possible in connection with some particular incident that he might have had such sources. I think that altogether possible.

Dr. Harris could write a story of his experiences in Europe and Palestine last summer and I could write one of mine, and then someone could take material from each of ours and put them into another and take a few phrases from each one. Such things happen frequently; but what I deny is that it is possible, without external evidences, to take a complete story and divide it up that way; and then say these into which we divided it actually existed, and they contradict each other. That is what I demand. And it is unfortunate, and it is a little hard to make clear exactly what we mean by it; because people get the idea that we think that the church is to believe in sources. Not at all. You find sources all through literature. There is no reason that there shouldn't be sources. The Sumerian story may be, I don't think it is proven that it is, but it may be a source of a portion of the *Enuma Elish* story; but even with the Sumerian story in front of you, I don't think that anybody today would be so brash—to use his word—as to think that he could take the Babylonian story and divide it up, and know which came from each of the different sources. He could only say, very likely these sections came from the Sumerian story.

That is the philosophical approach to it. It is to say yes, repetition is a good method. I mean, we must do that; but what is more to say is you take the Babylonian story and something is repeated and stressed and dwelt upon and given over; and in the J and the P story you find it stressed and given over; and

even no matter how much you divided down, you are still going to find some of it, if you have anything like a continued story; but the interesting thing there in connection with the flood story is, you have so much repetition in the first part and so little in the later part; and consequently you don't have two complete stories as you divide it in the last part; and at the first part you might as well have five or six. Well, now, at this point I wanted you to have an idea of the situation regarding the flood story and since it is such an important part of the whole critical viewpoint, I want those who had the Pentateuch last year to be sure that they have well in mind what we went into last year and we go now to

2. The nature of the flood (Genesis 7–9). I don't think we need to take time to discuss Noah's character, his previous preaching as a preacher of righteousness, his general career. Those are obvious in the reading. But the nature of the flood is described in the 7th, 8th, and 9th chapters. And we have many details there which are very interesting to read, and easy to examine; we don't need to go into them here.

But we ask this one question: was this a universal flood? Well, what does it say? It says in 6:11

"The land was corrupt before God, and the land was filled with violence, and God looked upon the land, and behold it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the land. And God said to Noah, 'The end of all flesh is come before me, because the land is filled with violence, and behold, I will destroy them with the land.'"

Every place where I said "land" here the AV says "earth", but the Hebrew word *eret*, which is also the word used in the first verse of Genesis—and which there means the whole of this globe upon which we are standing—that word is also frequently used in the Scripture for the land of Canaan, the land of Egypt, the land of Assyria; it is the word for a particular land. It is very different from our English word earth. Our English word "earth" means the whole of this habitable ground, or it means that portion of it on which you can grow vegetables. You wouldn't say you had a piece of earth in your hand if you had a piece of gold. You wouldn't say you had a piece of earth in your hand if it were filled with water. There are two very different senses in which we use that word.

But this we can certainly say: "It was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way on the land." And so that certainly would sound as if it is either the whole habitable globe, or it is a definite portion of the globe which forms a unit, one or the other. "God was determined to wipe man out from the face of the earth." That is a clear picture; and so it is undeniable that the picture in the Bible is a picture of an event which eradicated human beings from the face of the earth. We can say this: the Bible clearly teaches that wherever man was, there the flood was. Now, would that mean that man had only spread over a certain

portion of the earth and the flood cover the whole earth? It might be, but when you look at the statements about it, the tremendous nature of it, the fountains of the great deep broken up, and all this, why you soon come to the impression that it is much too great a thing to think of as just the description of a local flood; and so I think we can say this: that there is no specific statement in the Bible which clearly proves that it is the whole world rather than a portion of the world, but that the picture given is one that is pretty hard, to interpret as otherwise than a flood which covered the whole earth.

Now when you get down to verse 17 and you read that He is going to bring a flood of waters on the land to destroy flesh wherein is the breath of life from under heaven, everything that is in the land shall die under heaven, that might mean just that portion of heaven that is above that particular land, but it certainly suggests that it means anything that is under the sky anywhere. It certainly seems to suggest that. I don't know as from chapter 6 that you can prove that it is a universal flood or that it is a flood over a large portion of the earth, but when you go on and you read the description of it: the tremendous size of the flood; and the flood going up and covering all the mountains that were there; and all this long time that everything was covered in this way; the picture which is given is one which is pretty hard to imagine as being confined to one particular area of this earth. The impression, it seems to me of the whole picture, is very strongly a picture of a flood which covered the whole earth rather than one which covered only a particular land. I think this we can say with certainty, wherever human beings were, there were no human beings left.

I got a letter just recently from a professor in a Christian institution who wanted to know is it possible that the flood was just where civilized man was and if there were saved men through the time of the flood that lived elsewhere. Is that possible? I do not think so.

So, was the whole earth covered? Well, I would say at least it would seem that it might have extended over a considerable distance, but I don't think that the whole earth by any means was covered; because, if it was, we would be finding remains of it all the time.

(Student: Could the geological strata be the result of a global flood?) I am not enough of a geologist to know. The group of Professor [George McReady] Price, the 7th Day Adventist from California, is very insistent that all our strata comes from being deposited by the flood; and he has written a great deal on it, and he has quite a number of followers who are very ardently attached to the theory; then I know of others who are very much against that idea; they say it would be impossible to think that a great pouring of waters over the earth would leave evidence of that type. Personally, I don't quite see how strata would be laid in regular form and order by the flood. It seems it would be more of a matter of a tumultuous overturning, with some breaks left more or less in a chaotic

condition but with the earth as a whole not particularly affected; and there is a great deal of that type but it is pretty hard to say.

There are many things on which geology can speak with great positiveness; and there are many other things on which certainly it's highly questionable as in any other science. The difficulty is that until you work a great deal in the science, you are not usually capable of judging what are the definite things and what are the things that are purely conjectures. So many that do work in it become somewhat emotionally attached, and they talk much more strongly in favor of the things that are doubtful than they do that about the things that are quite clear. So geology is a science in which there are a good many points that I don't think anybody can have much certainty on it as yet.

In Mesopotamia there are several flood levels which have been found at different places. These levels in Mesopotamia do not correspond to one another. There will be one in one place and another in another, 3 or 4 hundred years apart. The region of Mesopotamia is an area which is very, very flat, and down which two tremendously large rivers flow; and these rivers have changed their course in recent centuries; and it would seem quite likely that there is a certain area there at Ur of the Chaldees, where there were people and houses and settlements going on for some time; and then there was a flood, and the river came across that area; and it came across with sufficient force, evidently, to bring in quite a lot of soil that came down in the river, and it deposited it there. That might have happened in a couple of days, or it might have lasted for 50 years.

But then you have the river receding from that place and houses put up over it—of the same type of civilization exactly as it was underneath it—which would suggest there wasn't a long interval between. And just four miles away, where the ground is a little higher, you have exactly the same civilization with no interruption; and consequently the flooded Ur—which was much popularized as an evidence of Noah's flood—was probably popularized at the time by an archaeologist who had no thought of it having any relation to Noah's flood, but was simply doing it in order to raise money for the excavation. The evidence is too strong against it in that particular case—against it having any connection with the flood at all. And there are other similar areas elsewhere in Mesopotamia, but they come at different periods, so that I do not think that we have any evidence from Mesopotamia of a flood layer which would correspond to the area of Noah's flood.

My own guess is that civilization before the flood was not in Mesopotamia. That isn't to say that the Garden of Eden might not have possibly have been there. We do not know; but at least that the people at the time of the flood were not there, I believe, because it so happens that we would have found definite evidence of it, which we haven't. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if they were in

Alaska or someplace like that. We just don't know. Well, now then was it universal? We cannot say whether it was universal or not. It may be that Australia had no men living in it at the time; and was way off from the rest of the world; and was elevated up a few thousand feet higher than it is now; and was above the flood, or the flood did not reach to there; or possibly for some reason the water was all held on the other side of the world and didn't get to there; it is possible. But the impression I get from the story is that most of the world was covered with it, if not all—and most likely all. Certainly not a very small section.

Now, I was going to speak about flood strata and I already have. I don't know as to the nature of it that there is much more we need to mention, but what is quite obvious in the account. Perhaps right here it would be good to say a word about whether the ark has been rediscovered. There has been constant publicity from various sources in the last 5 years—the idea that some Russian flyers flew over the ark. And some even say that one or two of them went and saw it on Mt. Ararat, about 1917 or 1918. And then they wrote a full report that the boat should be suppressed, because they did not want it to be published; and therefore nobody has ever seen the report; and the flyers were killed, but they told somebody else, who told somebody else, and then on to another person; and eventually it reached somebody who wrote a tract about it and told how the ark had actually been discovered.

A man came to me about 8 years ago and asked me if I would be willing to go with them to find Noah's ark over in Ararat; and as they described it to me, their theory did not sound to me at all impossible—unlikely, but not impossible. Their theory that the ark might have landed near the top of Mt. Ararat and might within the next few years been covered with snow, which turned to ice; and was embedded in a glacier, and preserved in the glacier for a period of many thousands of years; and then to have travelled that way down the mountain side until it got to a low enough level that it came out of the glacier; and that then in one of those valleys there, the ark in a well preserved condition had come out of the glacier and was there.

Now it sounds to me unlikely but by no means impossible; and I said to them; "It would seem to me that there would be no harm in someone going and looking, and seeing if they can find something of that kind. It would be very foolish to have any publicity about it before it was done, because the chances are one in hundred that such a thing is true. If it was found it would be a very wonderful thing. But to go and look and make a lot of publicity and find nothing, would do a great deal of harm." And therefore I urged them that they get someone that they could trust to go over there and hunt for six months to see if they could find such a thing and examine it carefully; and if they did find definite evidence, then send a large party and examine it very carefully, taking scientists of different types with them, and bring definite evidence regarding it.

And I thought they were somewhat interested to the view I presented; and I said that if you want to do this, I would be willing to be one of the party. They were that anxious to have me because of my knowledge of the Old Testament, of Archaeology and of mountain climbing; and so for these three reasons they were very anxious to have me in the group to go. But I said, "I do not wish my name connected with anything like that in advance. I don't want any publicity given in which my name would occur at all in advance; and so they agreed that it wouldn't be." And so, in order to raise money in order to carry on such an expedition, they made up a mimeograph sheet in which they sent out to people they thought might give for it and they sent me one of the copies and it described the people who had promised to take part in it. One was a leader in the science of boatbuilding, connected with the Navy, and various men like that; and then they mentioned one who does not wish his name to be mentioned. All that we can say about him is that he is president of one of the leading theological seminaries in the state of Delaware. (laughter) But I believe that they proceeded in good faith with me, on my desire that my name not be mentioned in connection with any advance publicity, I didn't pay much attention to it after that; and I believe that their group, after trying in vain to raise sufficient money to put on such a big expedition of this kind, that they finally broke up in some disagreement; and two or three of their party left the rest, and made an expedition on their own with an awful lot of publicity and went over; and exactly the thing happened that you might have expected; they found nothing. Now that doesn't prove the ark isn't there. In a great mountain complex like that, it would be entirely possible for it to be there; and you could hunt six months before you found it. That is entirely possible. The ark may have been broken up for kindling wood; It simply could have stayed there and rotted in the next 3000 years. We simply don't know anything about it.

But that won't always have the harmful effect on people's faith you think it might; because I remember about ten years ago—or a little more than that—there was tremendous publicity through the U.S.; absolute proof of the theory of evolution was going to be found. Out in the Grand Canyon there, is a mountain called the Kaibab plateau, which borders the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. It is a mountain which rises up out of the Canyon to a great height and it is isolated from everything around. And therefore the Smithsonian Institution gave money and organized a great party of scientists which were going to go and climb it. And on this site—which for many, many thousands of years had been separated from the mainland—they were going to examine the animals and see how they had evolved in different directions from that of the animals in the rest of the U.S., and thus to get absolute proof of evolution. About fifteen years ago, maybe a little less than that, there was tremendous publicity on this in the newspapers all over the country. The great expedition was going to find what would be absolute proof of evolution. Then the newspapers had a great deal about the details of the climb; and how they got to the top; and about the

little incidents of it; and then you heard nothing more about it. And tourists who went out there naturally asked, what did they find? What is the wonderful proof of evolution? What has been discovered? And the rangers and the naturalists got tired of having so many people asking the question so they made out a mimeograph statement to give to everybody who asked the questions; and the mimeograph statement explained that the scientists had examined the top of the mountain thoroughly; and that they had collected about two hundred specimens of small insects from it; and they had taken them to the Smithsonian Institution, and they were going to be examined in order to see what evidence would come from them. Someday we would get the answer; and as far as I know, the answer has not yet reached the public of what was found about the insects.

That was just exactly the sort of thing I mentioned about the ark. There was tremendous publicity about how they were going to find absolute proof of evolution. There was nothing found. They might have said in advance, "There won't be anything found, but that doesn't prove one way or the other as far as evolution is concerned. But it just fizzled out; it didn't do any harm. So perhaps this publicity about the ark hasn't done such harm that one might have feared. I think it is still possible that the ark is over there; but I think it is very unlikely, and I hope none of you will use it as a punching proof in an evangelistic campaign (laughter).

Now, of course, I mention there are little contradictions, so the critics say, between the two stories; but most of them dissolve on examination. They say that one represents the waters as prevailing a hundred and twenty days, and the other says forty days; but when you compare them, one seems to be the length of time it rained and the other the length of time the water was there after it rained; and, then they say that one of them has rain and the other has a tidal wave; that v. 11, which is the P document says, "In the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." One of the two accounts says rain and a raising of the level of the earth. The other one only mentions rain; well, that is not a contradiction. If you said it was a tremendous rain, that doesn't prove there wasn't a great increase in the water of the ocean. If it said there was rain but no increase in the ocean; and two verses later said there was a rise in the ocean; that would be a contradiction. If you say one moment there was tremendous rain, and then two minutes later you say there was a great tidal wave, you are not contradicting; you are merely supplementing, and particularly when in mentioning the tidal wave it also mentioned the rain in the same statement.

So these contradictions mostly disappear on careful examination. It was then not necessarily a universal flood, but certainly a flood covering a tremendous area and the picture of it is such as to make the most reasonable interpretation be that it was a universal flood.

Now, how early was this flood? When did it take place? We do not know. You find in your many Bibles the statement made that 2500 BC was the year of the flood. Well, in Mesopotamia we have records, and we have levels of civilization, which seem to go from 3000 BC right up to 2000 BC. It is pretty hard to find any place for a flood in the middle of that; and if you assume that there are gaps in the genealogies of the patriarchs after the flood, then it must have been before 3000 BC.

Personally, I think it is extremely unlikely that it was later than 4000 BC. I would think it nearer 5000 BC, but we don't know. We don't know when it was; but it certainly would be very hard to reconcile with the evidence that we have of ancient civilizations, a date as late as 2500 for the time of the flood.

Now, there is a widespread tradition all over the earth of the great flood. I think the Babylonian story of the flood is to quite an extent a corroboration of the fact of the flood. Whether the other stories elsewhere in the world are to be taken as corroboration; whether the tradition of the great flood was passed on all over the world or not; it is hard to say. It would at first sight certainly be a remarkable corroboration that there are floods occurring just about everywhere in the world; but then, again, as I said, in every place you have a river valley, you have terrific floods once in a while; and so a great many flood stories could very naturally come into existence from the rising of the waters in particular areas; and how many of them are actually recollections of the great flood is hard to say. The Babylonian flood strata we have already mentioned; and we have noticed that it is highly questionable whether we have actual strata in Mesopotamia which indicates the flood.

Personally, it is my opinion that we do not know where man lived before the flood. We have a picture here in the Bible of man before the flood perfecting metal—the use of the copper and the use of iron—carrying civilization way beyond the point at which we find it immediately after the flood. Shem, Ham and Japheth were probably not versed in the making of iron and copper. Let us suppose that a great flood were to occur here; and that everyone was killed here except me. Do you imagine that we would soon have a big power plant built and electric lights all around? I wouldn't have the least idea how to go about it! In something like that, a tremendous amount of the technical knowledge of our age would be lost if the individuals who survived did not have that particular knowledge.

We have the knowledge before the flood which was largely gained by the people of the race of Cain. We have no evidence that Noah's family were especially skilled in the founding of copper and iron and these other things. And then we can trace, in different places in Mesopotamia and elsewhere, people using stone and using it very cleverly. I am sure that the instruments they made out of

stone were far superior to anything I could make or that you could make. They show a very high level of artistic achievement in making these things out of stone; but they did not know how to smelt copper and to make things out of copper—smelting it in the heat and pouring it into molds. That is something which was learned about 3000 BC; and once that was learned, civilization was completely overturned. The people who knew it could make new weapons far quicker than any others; they had a tremendous advantage. And most of the cities of Mesopotamia were burned or destroyed between 3000 BC and the next hundred years after that. The people who had the new weapons used them, but the knowledge of it spread. You have turmoil and confusion and then the world was in pretty much the same state as before; except that everything was on a much lower level of culture, because while they had better technical devices and better weapons, they didn't have the time and leisure to make as fine artistic things as they made before, when they had only the stone articles to make it; and so culturally they all took a step backward, though technically they took a good step forward.

It was one particular scientific idea which became known and made a great step forward at about 3000 BC. This idea would seem to have been known before the flood, but forgotten afterward; and it is my personal opinion that we have no idea where the ark was when Noah went into it—we have no idea where the people lived before the flood. There probably were not a great many people on the earth. They may have been in South America; they may have been in the heart of Africa; they may have been up near the North pole. We don't know; but wherever they were, if we should happen to stumble on that place, and dig deep enough, we would find remains, I think, of the life of the people prior to the flood; and it would show an advancement in scientific devices which was not reached after the flood for at least a thousand years. They had to retrace a good many of their steps. Of course, back in the Middle Ages, we had to retrace many things that had been known in ancient times, and had been completely forgotten with the coming of the middle ages; and so I don't think we know where civilization was before the flood. I don't think we know when the flood was. I think that everything that has been found of ancient times comes from a period after the flood—perhaps long after the flood. I mean everything of which we have any great amount of material. Perhaps we may find a single tooth somewhere, or a single skull, and we don't know whether that was before the flood or after.

3. The Consequences of the Flood. Now, of course, we don't need to mention the outstanding consequence of the flood—that all the wicked were removed. There was a complete end brought, as far as this earth was concerned, to the great body of the wicked. We are interested now in the consequences upon this earth; and so I will put them under two heads.

a. Blessing on the righteous. At the end of the great judgment of the flood, God declared His blessing to the few who had been true to Him. God blessed Noah and his sons. He promised them that there would never again be a similar flood: that the earth would not be wiped out with a flood. In Genesis 8, where we are told about Noah's coming out of the Ark and building an altar, "And the Lord smelled the sweet savour; and the Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

This is a declaration of the continuity of the general condition which we have. A recognition of the weakness and evil of man as a result of sin. The imagination of a man's heart is evil from his youth. Even regenerate man is so affected as the result of sin that it is necessary that there be a long process of sanctification; yet God is not going again to send a universal flood. And then in chapter 9 He goes on with his blessing of Noah and we have the command to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, to fill up the earth.

That English word "replenish": some people draw conclusions from the "re" in it about the previous condition. But the "re" is purely an English "re" in "replenish". It is not a Hebrew "re". The Hebrew word is simply "fill up". And in Old English, the word replenish is the way to say "fill up". Modern English, if we say "replenish", we think it is filling again, but that is not in the word "replenish". It is simply be fruitful and multiply and fill up the earth. The earth was now pretty empty compared to the situation before, with Cain's descendants and Seth's descendants and the descendants of the other sons and daughters of Adam, who were all wiped off by the flood.

And they are to fill again. But that is not in the Hebrew word, which is just to "fill". And of course this filling doubtless went far beyond the population before the flood. Doubtless—well, I don't know—we can't say how many people were on the earth before; maybe there were just as many before as there were in the next few thousand years after the flood; but maybe there were as many before as there were hundred years ago or two hundred years ago; but I suppose there are four or five times as many people on the earth today as there were two hundred years ago. I imagine that 500 years ago, there were perhaps a tenth as many people on the earth as there are today, maybe a twentieth, and I would doubt that there were more than that on the earth before the flood.

Then in verse 2 of chapter 9, He gives a promise. "The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth." A fear of man, an attitude of all creation towards man. "Into your hands are they delivered." A supremacy of man over the animal creation is stated in verse 2 here. And that indeed is a

strange thing: how man, physically weak in comparison with so many portions of the animal creation; very weak compared to the strength of the horse, tiny compared to the strength of the elephant; yet is able to have the horse and the elephant, and many of these animals, to obey his will; and to some extent even to put fear into the many much larger animals, which could destroy him very easily.

After the Fall, there is nothing stated as to whether the dominion has been lost or has been retained over the animals. It might be natural to think that it might be lost. But here after the flood, the dominion is expressed here; but it is expressed in a different way than under the condition of innocence. There man was given dominion over these friendly creatures. Now, he is told that the fear of man and the dread of him has come to all the creatures and into his hand they are delivered. The dominion, I think, then would be just as extensive as it was before. But it is a dominion that is tinged with fear, with the recognition of the results of the Fall. There is no longer the friendly attitude that there was prior to the fall. There is the hatred, the destruction among animals; the destruction of animals by man, and sometimes man by animals; but there is a fear and a dread of humanity based upon the animal creation. They are delivered into the hands of man. It still remains then—a large portion of the dominion which God gave before the Fall. It still remains, but it is very different to the previous situation; and it gives man the authority and dominion to a large extent, built upon fear rather than friendship and recognition of proper relationship.

And then, vs. 3 is something that we haven't had mentioned before. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. The Old English word "meat" is the same as our modern word "food." The Bible [KJV], when it says "meat," means "food". They can speak of an apple as "meat", vegetation as "meat". In this case, of course, since it is speaking of moving things, the word "meat" would be equally correct but not an exact translation of the original, since the original is food in the wider sense. But he says, "Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." What does He mean, "even as the green herb"? Well, previously he said in vs. 29 that every plant to you it shall be for meat, and in verse 30 to the animal creation "I have given every green herb for food."

Now He says that the animals will be for you food, even like the green herb. In other words, the man is now told that he can eat animals. You might say, does that mean that man never ate animals before? We have no record of any giving of human beings before the flood the right to eat meat. We have no record of any such thing. They were to eat the herbs; they were to eat vegetables; but there is no statement before the flood of any right to eat creatures. There is no evidence of such a thing it until this, and here it is explicit. If a person adopts a vegetarian attitude of eating, they may do that on some dietetic theory or some

idea that it is better for themselves; but they cannot do it on a Biblical basis, because it is here explicitly stated to Noah by the Lord that every moving thing that lives shall be food for you.

There are those who refuse to eat meat on two grounds. Some on the grounds that they say that it is not good for them to eat meat, that our bodies are better off eating vegetables. And there are others who say that it is not right to kill an animal in order that we may live. I have a friend, a Canadian student studying medicine in Germany; and he was a very strict vegetarian. He used to walk miles in order to find a vegetarian restaurant; and the last night before I was leaving Berlin, he came over and helped me pack; and my landlady cooked up some scrambled eggs for us; and as a special treat in recognition of this fellow's kindness, she mixed in just a little bit of bacon; and he wouldn't touch them, of course. And she says, "That little bit wouldn't hurt you." "Well," he said, "that is not the question. I am not interested in its hurting me; I don't believe that it will hurt me; I am not worried about that; but it is the principle of things. I don't believe that an animal should die in order that I can live." Well, it sounds like a very pretty sentiment, but it is not a Christian sentiment. It is not a Biblical sentiment, because the Bible teaches that God has given the animals as meat—as food for man—and therefore there is no reason why we should say that we will not eat it. God has given them to us; it is a sentiment that is not based upon fact.

I remember that I mentioned this to another fellow and he said, "Well, how does he wear shoes?"⁴⁸ They come from a dead animal!" He said, "Why don't you ask him how he can be consistent and do that?" Well, I didn't want to ask him that. I was afraid that if I did, he would start wearing wooden shoes. (laughter) He was of this principle; and he probably would have carried it out consistently; and I preferred that he shouldn't be consistent; but this—it is a beautiful sentiment, but it is not a Christian sentiment. It is not a sentiment that is based upon fact. God has given us this food to eat; and then as to whether meat is harmful to us, God told Noah that the animals were food for him as the green herb.

Now, whether it was harmful before the flood, or not, we have no way of knowing. It may have been very harmful; it may have been good, it may have been eaten then, we don't know. But we have the assurance here that meat is given to be eaten.

I believe that there were many physicians 20 years, 30 years ago, that were convinced that there was a great deal of waste matter in meat that was very harmful, and people could often be much healthier with just vegetables. But now with the new discoveries of vitamins and the amino acids, it is definitely established that there are a good many substances in meat that are necessary

⁴⁸ [dcb] Recall that Adam and Eve were clothed in animal skins, so animal sacrifice for clothing was evidently proper even if the diet was only vegetables.

for the proper carrying on of human life. Man can get them, possibly from cheese and milk, but not fully. The easiest source to get them from is meat. The Scripture says that meat is given us, that the animals are to be food for us; as the green herb, we can take it as something that is true.

The Lord, later on, gave an explicit command. In fact he even told Noah before this that there were some animals that he called clean and some he called unclean; and there are two reasons which there might be for the differentiation. That is something that we will come to in Exodus, but there is no harm in just a word on it now. There are two possible reasons. One reason might be this, that under particular climatic conditions, it might be much easier to keep one particular type of food. One might have to be eaten immediately if it were to be good. One might deteriorate much more rapidly. There might be various reasons, but under particular conditions, one particular type of meat was much more suited than another.

And another matter, about the commands to the Israelites, is that very often commands were given more for the purpose of containing a lesson. More for impressing upon their hearts that they were a peculiar people. They were different, so to speak. They had things to do that marked them off from the nations round about them; and these showed that they were set apart from them to God; and they did certain things simply to indicate that fact. And so just how much under one category, and how much under the other, you can't tell. That is the question which will be of great importance a little later when we get to that; but it relates directly to here so I am glad to have it raised at this time.

Then in verse 4, however, it says, "but flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." Now there are people I know of who say the Mosaic Law is done away with, and therefore we do not have to obey any of the commands of the Mosaic hygiene; and there are others who say that we are much better off if we do. I know some Christians who try very definitely to carry out the Mosaic Law in their eating, in their hygienic life. But this matter of the blood in the meat is not something which originates with the Mosaic hygiene. You find it right here in vs. 4 given to Noah. "But the flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat."

And you ask right away, what is the reason for this? You remember in Acts 15, when the Christians were told by the council in Jerusalem they need not obey the Mosaic law, they were told nevertheless they should abstain from things strangled and from blood. They were told to do that. Well, now, in this case here, the question is, why did He command them not to eat flesh with the blood? Was it because the blood represents the life? And was it to bring to their minds the lesson, the important lesson of the fact of life being in the blood?

Blood must be shed for our salvation. Is it a means of giving us a lesson? It may be.

On the other hand, maybe there is something hygienic in it. I heard a paper at a meeting of the Oriental Society one time by a Baltimore physician, in which he presented the results of tests that he claims to have made with animals which were killed and the blood taken out in accordance with the Mosaic law and animals of which the blood was not taken out; and he claimed to find that the meat was much more healthy, much less toxic, of the animal from which the blood had so carefully been removed. The important thing here to note is whether this is something that should be taken into consideration in present life or not. It is something that goes back to Noah. It does not start with the Mosaic covenant, or the Mosaic Law.

Now we have this blessing on the righteous man, but not removal of the curse. The blessing is somewhat different from the blessing before the fall of man. And then, of course, He establishes the covenant with him. He says right after this that He is going to require their blood; "whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man"; and then He tells of making His covenant with man that He will not cut off all flesh by a flood; and putting up the token of the covenant, setting his bow in the clouds, which would be a token of the covenant between God and the earth.

When the Babylonian records were first discovered, they immediately naturally looked for the rainbow and someone found the bow in it. But then on closer study, they found out that it was a misinterpretation of a word in the Babylonian record. There is no mention of any rainbow in the Babylonian record. That is the sort of thing that wicked man would put out of his mind. It is a sign of God's goodness and a blessing upon His own and one of the things that would not be remembered.

Now, the covenant, the blessing of the righteous, has this sign of the bow in the clouds. Now does it say here that there was no bow before that? Does it say that there was no rainbow previous? It doesn't say so. It says here, from here on when you see the rainbow, you'll know that is God's promise. If there was a rainbow before, He did not recognize it and did not say what it means. Perhaps there wasn't any rainbow there. I mean we cannot draw conclusions where it doesn't state any; but in either case, now the rainbow has this meaning.

Now, it would be interesting to go further into the details of these relationships but I think that we will move on to

b. Changed conditions. There is not a specific statement given here that conditions upon the earth have been changed, but it is pretty hard to read the first nine chapters of Genesis without having the feeling as you come into

chapter 9 that you are in a new situation, that you are in quite a different atmosphere from that in which you were in the earlier chapters of the book. Very often as a person travels from one area to another you have a different feeling. You don't just realize what it is or why it is, but there may be something different in the people in the certain place; something in their customs; something in the general surroundings. You don't immediately recognize what it is, but you recognize that there is a different atmosphere. There is a different climate there; and upon examination you can, if you examine far enough, you can always find out what are the factors that enter into it and make it different.

And so in this case we notice certain changed conditions. We have noticed that there is definite provision here that man may eat animals which he has killed, that the moving things are to be food for him. There was no such provision before. It was not stated before not to eat animals, but it was expressly stated that they may eat fruit, that they may eat plants. Now there is an explicit statement that they may eat animals.

Then we notice a very strange thing. Here is Noah, a godly man; a preacher of righteousness for many years; a man who has been blessed of God and selected out of all the earth to be saved from the flood; and Noah has come out of the ark; and we read that he became a husbandman, and planted a vineyard, and drank of the wine, and was drunken, and you wonder—was Noah so excited after all the tense life that he had been through; with all these hundred years of preaching; and all this experience of the flood and all that, that he simply relaxed and fell into this drunkenness? That is a thing which everyone must guard against. The man who has done the greatest service in the Lord's kingdom; the man who has called a great evangelistic meeting; or has performed a great missionary work; and has just pulled himself up, will often reach a point where he just seems to collapse completely; an act which he must watch for carefully, that so he does not fall into the deepest and grossest of sin. It has happened. It has happened that men who have been most used of God have fallen into such a condition that their usefulness has been brought to an end; or they have fallen into such a condition that it has been years before they have come back and been restored to usefulness in God's kingdom.

But is that what we have here? It doesn't sound like it! For one thing, it didn't happen as soon as the flood was over. Noah became a husbandman and planted a vineyard and drank of the wine. Now when you plant a vineyard one day, do you usually drink of the wine the next day? Here is a statement where, if you take the verses in the order in which they occur, and assume there is no gap in between—then a miracle must have occurred. Noah planted the vineyard and he drank of the wine. Well, what a miracle, if he could drink of the wine the next day after he planted the vineyard! It is quite evident here that a space of time has elapsed; that this vineyard which Noah planted has had time to grow

up; and the grapes have had time to come out upon it; and Noah has taken the juice of these grapes; and he drinks of it and he is drunken. It is not then a reaction immediately after the terrific flood, of the situation of the flood. There is quite an interval in between, an interval in which Noah has been working in the garden, and cultivating the crops, and having the sort of a change from his strenuous life which he has had in the past. There is no reason to think of this as a relapse of Noah into known sin. There is nothing actually to suggest that. There is simply a fact given. Noah plants a vineyard—and then we assume there is a gap between that and the next verse. The vineyard must have grown up and reached the point where there were a good many grapes; and he took these grapes, and he pressed them out into a dish; and he drank some, and it tasted good; and it stood there; and maybe two weeks or a month later, he drank some more of it; and this time it had a different effect on him from which it had had the first time; and he took it and he was drunken; and here was Noah who had fallen into this drunken state.

There is not a suggestion in this chapter—or anywhere else—that Noah had fallen into sin in the matter. In fact, we are told that Noah cursed others; and it is told in such a way as to suggest that Noah was right in cursing them. There is no suggestion of any wrong on Noah's part in the transaction; and so it seems very natural to wonder why on earth would this creature of righteousness not know that if you drink wine from the grapes you are apt to get drunk? That he had been preaching over the radio all these years, so that he never saw the people he talked to, and never knew what kind of lives they lived, and never knew the danger into which they were falling? Was he the sort of a preacher who was absolutely apart from the people, and has no knowledge of their situation and the needs of their lives?

When Noah as a preacher of righteousness during those many years before the flood, it would be strange indeed if Noah did not come in contact with it and know about it; and strange indeed that he would fall into drunkenness in this way; and so while we cannot say—it does not say anywhere—there was no drunkenness before the flood; neither does it say that there *was* drunkenness before the flood; and the whole tone of this story is to suggest that this was a surprise to Noah. This was something that he did not expect to occur; and a thing which occurred which he did not expect would then be the fermentation. It would look as if fermentation—which is so common a phenomenon today—was something which did not exist in the same way, or to the same extent, prior to the flood; and so the suggestion has been made by some that you have a marked change of condition after the flood; that you have animals used for food; that you have fermentation occurring in a way in which it did not occur before; and the question is asked, "What would be apt to make such a change after the flood like this from the situation that existed before?"

And someone, observing these facts, has noticed that one of our planets—I believe it is the planet Saturn—has a number of rings around it; which would seem to be great rings of vapor around it; and that would fit in with the statement in Genesis 1 that God made a firmament or an expanse between the waters above the firmament and the waters below; and consequently the theory has been advanced that this earth prior to the flood was like the planet Saturn; that there were those great rings of vapor—the water above the firmament—around the earth, and that the sun's rays came to this earth mediated through those great bodies of water up there; and consequently there was not the sharp heat or the sharp brightness of the sun which we have today; and that the way in which the Lord accomplished the flood was to cause this canopy of waters from above to fall down onto the earth, opening up a more direct way to the earth from the sun, so that the sun would be seen, not so much as it is getting light and getting dark, but a good deal more clearly, as we see it; and that this would have an effect upon the constitution of men and of animals, of an increase of thirstiness; perhaps, would cause a greater amount of killing and of slaughter upon the earth; would make it perhaps more feasible to eat meat than before, and also would more greatly increase fermentation, upon the earth.

Now, whether there is anything to this theory or not, I am not in a position to say; but I do think that there are a number of Scriptural phenomena which seem to fit in with it rather neatly; and consequently it seems to me that it is something with which we should at least be familiar. Well, of course, it is my impression that under natural conditions that grape juice will only ferment up to about 12%, which would be enough, I believe, to produce drunkenness if quite a bit of it were used; but it is this artificial process of distillation, that produces stronger drinks. Now, under other conditions, it might be that fermentation would only go up to two or three or four per cent, something which would not have the effect unless gallons and gallons were taken. I don't know, but at least I wouldn't say that there wouldn't be any fermentation, but it might be tremendously decreased in amount.⁴⁹

As soon as the curse came upon the world, death came, but death was very slow in working itself out, and the early patriarchs lived very long periods. We find that there is comparatively little shortening in the length of human life prior to the flood, while after the flood the span of life rapidly decreases and the very long periods of life which exist before the flood and immediately thereafter have practically disappeared by the time of Abraham. By that time life is longer than it is now, but not a great deal longer.

(Student: Are the years the same then as now?) We have no proof of it. But it seems the most reasonable way to interpret the words that it refers to the same

⁴⁹ [rcn: There are several problems with this treatment of the firmament; I have suggested an alternative in my book: Robert C. Newman, *The Biblical Firmament: Vault or Vapor?* Available on our IBRI website, www.ibri.org and as a Kindle e-book from Amazon.]

type of years, but it would be not impossible that there was a different type of year used before the flood. However, we note the individuals immediately after the flood living length of years that are comparable to those before, and then it decreases rapidly, but it is pretty hard after the flood to see a particular place where the length of years might have become noticeably changed.

In the time of Christ they used grape juice—a great deal of it. In fact, in the Old Testament, they used the words "wine" and "new wine"; and "new wine" is grape juice, and that is referred to a great deal in the Old Testament. Grape juice was very commonly used. There is abundant evidence in the Old Testament of the use of what they call "new wine", abundant use of it. These changes, then, we have noticed, suggest a change in conditions of life after the flood. The canopy theory is one which has been advanced to account for it. It might be true; it may not. It is one of those many matters on which we do not know. All we can do is arrange our data to see how they look. They look—a certain amount in a certain direction—but it is not complete. No one living today was there then. Anyone living today who tells you anything that happened 5000 years ago is using his imagination to quite an extent. He may have a certain number of definite facts. Beyond that, he is using his imagination.

Now it is interesting—I referred you the other day to a book which describes a re-enactment of something similar to the temptation and fall on this earth, with a man from this earth being used instead of the serpent by Satan as his spokesman⁵⁰. Now it is quite interesting that this book is about the planet Venus. The author of this book describes conditions on that planet as if there were a canopy of water over it, and describes differences in conditions very much as it would be if this canopy story were true. He never refers to it, but that would seem to be his theory about the condition of Paradise or Eden there. Now, he never mentions it; if you are familiar with the theory, it is interesting as you read the book to see that he is at least familiar with the same theory.

Well, now, we should go on and look a little more at the account. As I said, it is an account which we don't understand. We don't know just what it was. He drank of the wine "and was drunken; and was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brethren without." Well, now, does that say that Ham had done anything wrong here? After all the verse might be Ham glances in and he sees that his father is in a bad situation and he goes and tells his brothers that they must come and do something about it; it is only later on that we get the idea that there is anything wrong that has happened.

And what is the wrong thing that has happened? Verse 24, "and Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him." Now that

⁵⁰ C.S. Lewis' science fiction novel *Perelandra*]

English word, "younger" simply represents the Hebrew "little," and "son" as we know in Hebrew means posterity. It might mean son, grandson, or great-grandson—anyone who was a descendent of his. He knew what his little son had done unto him. Well, how did he know? And where is the little son? "And He said, Cursed be Ham who has done this wicked thing." That is not what he said. Well, some say Ham was the youngest of the three and therefore since he is the youngest of the three, therefore his youngest son would mean Ham. But they are always listed as Shem, Ham and Japheth; Ham is always listed in the middle. That doesn't prove he is *not* the youngest son; but as far as I know there is no proof that he *is* the youngest son. "And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his little son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan..." and just above, we read, "Ham the father of Canaan"; and so this would suggest that the one who had done whatever the reprehensible thing was not Ham at all but was Canaan—the young one, the grandchild. He is the one; certainly he is the one who is cursed.

There is no mention here of any curse upon Ham. There is no criticism of Ham whatever, except for the fact that he is the father of Canaan. He is not criticized for anything else here at all. You certainly cannot take verse 22 and consider it as a criticism. If you take the verse alone, there is nothing in it alone to suggest that it is a criticism; and in verse 24, if it said, "And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew that his younger had seen his nakedness," that would, of course, correspond verbally with 22, "And the father of Canaan saw the nakedness of his father."

But that is not what it says, "He knew what his little son had done unto him," something that we can't do. And so we must say that there is something—that we don't know what it is. We don't know what was done to Noah; but it certainly is pretty difficult to deny that it would seem to be Canaan rather than Ham who did whatever it was—else why on earth should Canaan be cursed? Why should one of Ham's many sons be cursed, and the whole curse be directed to this one, and no mention of any other son of Ham, and no mention of Ham himself? "And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." There are doubtless elements back of that which, if we knew the customs of the time, would be perfectly clear to us; but there are elements in it which are now forgotten, and we do not really altogether understand what happened there. We do not know just what happened. Something happened that Noah could see when he awoke from his wine; he could see had happened, and he knew what his younger son had done to him; and for some reason it was Canaan particularly who was implicated, rather than simply Ham; and so Canaan is now cursed.

There was a man up in Canada a few years ago who wrote an article on anthropology—a suggestion for the book of the American Scientific Affiliation—and the article he wrote was not printed because he made up his own brand

new anthropology which was different from anybody else's in the world that I know of; and while it was very interesting, it seemed to have no factual basis, and therefore it wasn't used, much to his disgust. But he devoted the greater part of his article to the discussion of the three brothers Shem, Ham and Japheth; and he said that what is needed in life is to have Shem, Ham and Japheth working together and that when the three brothers don't work together, we get into trouble; and he said that Shem is the Semitic peoples—the Hebrews and the others—Japheth—Dr. Spieser of the University of Pennsylvania wrote an article about fifteen years ago in which he suggested that the mountain folk above Mesopotamia, up in the mountains there. There were quite a few mountain people there; for a collective name for them all we might call them Japhethites; and two or three others had taken over the suggestion and had been adopted by many—but he evidently had gotten ahold of that and he said the Japhethites were these mountain people and the Shemites were the Hebrews and the Arabs.

And then this Canadian fellow, he says the Sons of Ham were all the rest of them; and so he said that when it says cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers—he said that a servant of servants means an ideal servant; and therefore this means that Ham is going to be the ideal servant; and he said that all our great inventions come from Ham; and he started in and he listed all the great discoveries which have been made in modern science, very few of which, he says, have been made by the Jews; and none of which have been made by these mountain people in Mesopotamia; and that all of them were the descendants of Ham; and the prophecy was wonderfully fulfilled that Ham was the ideal servant, the servant of servants.

Well, I thought it was a rather fantastic theory; but the thing I mentioned it for here, is that it is exactly opposite to what the verse says. The verse says "Cursed be Canaan." It doesn't say Ham is cursed. There is no curse upon Ham anywhere in the passage. The curse is on Canaan, and "a servant of servants shall he be" is not a blessing but a curse, and therefore it doesn't mean that.

And then the next verses say, "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."

Now you wonder who this Canaan is; and you read down in Ch. 10:6: the sons of Ham are Cush, which is Ethiopia, and Mizraim, which is Egypt, and Phut, and Canaan.

So Canaan is one of the four named sons of Ham and if you want to know more about Canaan, you look on to verse 15 and you read that Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn. Sidon you know is the city there in Syria in Palestine; and Heth, that would be the Hittites; "and the Jebusites, and the Amorite, and the

Girgasite, and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite; and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad. And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza." In other words, Palestine and Syria, as thou goest unto Sodom and Gomorrah, "and Admah, and Zeboim; even unto Lasha."

So it is very clearly stated in chapter 10 here that Canaan means the people who were in Palestine before any Israelites went up. They are the white people who were in Palestine before the Israelites came in; and who were conquered by the Israelites at that time; and made to be doers of work and drawers of water and servants to the Israelites; and the statement is made here that they shall be servants; they shall be in subjection. And that was fulfilled with the Israelites' conquest of Canaan; and with the Israelite treatment of the Canaanites; and it has nothing to do with Ham, except that Ham happened to be the father of Canaan as he was of many others; and it certainly has nothing to do with the Negroes, because there is no suggestion anywhere in the Scripture that Ham had any connection with any Negroes whatever.

But whether Ham ever did or not, certainly Canaan never did; and so it is a very strange instance of how people can take two or three words out of the Scripture, and can build upon them things that have absolutely nothing whatever to do with it. But the sad thing is this that we all will do it if we are not careful, because the air is just filled with misconceptions; and the Lord wants us to get back to the Scripture, and see what is there, and take what it says. And what it says is true; and what we infer from it may be true, and what we infer by misunderstanding a statement, we have no reason in the world to say.

It is altogether possible that the Negroes are descendants of Ham, but it is just as possible that they are from either Shem or Japheth. We have absolutely no evidence on it one way or the other. One of the Sons of Ham is Mizraim, that is Egypt; and we have an Egyptian record, an account of how at about 2000 BC, traveling south down the Nile; while on the Nile, they came in contact with the Negroes. The Negroes were far south in Africa. The Negroes worked North, and the Egyptians worked South; and they met and they gradually worked further North; but the Egyptians came in contact with them after they evidently had been separated from each other for a very long time.

Well, now, this incident in Genesis chapter 10, then, we don't altogether understand. There are doubtless elements in it that are not clear to us. It may be that the fermentation, the drunkenness was entirely new. I like to think so, in view of the wonderful things told about Noah's character elsewhere. The statement, "God shall enlarge Japheth and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem" is usually taken by interpreting the tents of Shem—the revelation of God given through Shem to Abraham, to descendants of Shem—that the blessings of it are to be taken over by the Gentile nations, who are the descendants of Japheth.

That is how it is usually so interpreted. That is the general inference, but it is as likely as any inference I know of. Thou shalt enlarge Japheth is usually taken to mean that Japheth will spread widely over the world; and the sons are the sons of Japheth down below, which seems to have covered a much larger area than either of the others.

Although we are not in a position to know of the great bulk of the people of the earth, whether they are descendants of Shem, Ham or Japheth; for that matter I think that it is vital to realize that we are not told anywhere that there is hard and fast division between them. That the sons of Shem went over there; and that Japheth was here; and Ham here; and they never inter-married. There is no suggestion anywhere of that being the case; and therefore it would seem altogether possible and probable that there was perhaps a line from each of them—a line of leadership, a line of groups which looked for their leadership to each one of the three; but which population was of which we do not know.

The word "Semitic" as we use it today—I think that it is important to recognize—is not a term for race. "Semitic" today does not describe any particular race. It describes a group of languages; and these languages are spoken by people of varied diverse background and varied diverse physical types. Language doesn't tell much about physical type anyway, because languages are often taken over by people of very different nature, either if they are another nation or if people migrate. You will find, for instance—down in South America—you will find a great many Germans who are now Spanish speaking. You would never dream that their background was German. Their racial condition—their physical appearance—is very definitely German; but when you hear them talk, they are just as Spanish as anybody in South America. They have lived there and given up their German language altogether and taken over the Spanish language of the people who got there a little bit ahead of them.

And the Semitic languages are spoken by—as a matter of fact, Cush of Ethiopia is one of the sons of Ham and the language of the Ethiopians is a Semitic language and has been for many thousands of years. Semitic as used today is not a word of descent, it is a word of language.

The name "Jew" comes from Judah who was a son of Jacob; and strictly speaking it only means the tribe of Judah, because the other tribes were taken into captivity first; but it has been extended to some extent to cover all the tribes of Israel. But when the Jews went back to Palestine after the Babylonian captivity, they were mostly from Judah, and so named, the citizens of Israel became known as Jews.

=====

(Review). Now we have been looking at the consequences of the flood. We were noticing the blessing on the righteous and noticing the suggestion of changed condition. I think it is better to say the *suggestion* of changed condition, rather than changed condition. I think they are very definite suggestions, and definite enough and strong enough to lead me to think that it is rather probable that these are actual things; but I do not think that it is at all certain; and no one of them is clearly stated that the condition is different from before; but there is a strong suggestion that it was, and it fits in with the idea that the flood was a great cosmic event which seems to me to be most probable, although this we should not be dogmatic on.

I know that the ordinary ignorant person is much more attracted when you go out to preach to them, and you say, "This is it." And you proceed to tell them the whole history of the universe, and this is how it happened; and he is much more attracted than if you have any uncertainty about anything; and therefore, if your purpose simply is to build up a church and to bring people in—particularly uneducated people—you might say that it makes for greater immediate effectiveness to ignore any uncertainties and be absolutely positive about everything.

But I don't think that your purpose is simply to attract people and to build up a group. I think that is a vital purpose and one which you should remember, and I don't think that you should ever forget that purpose. That is very vital. There is no point in talking to empty rooms; but I do think that you can—there is plenty that is absolutely certain in the Scripture to talk about. You don't have to be speaking about the things which you are uncertain about. There is plenty to speak about that is absolutely certain; but you cannot speak a great deal with a positive definite clear message about the things that are certain in the interpretation of the Scriptures, and stick to them, without having a pretty good idea what the things are on which there are various possibilities of opinion; knowing where the exegesis of that material of which you are quite sure as to exactly what it means; and then I think that when people are a little more trained in the faith, and a little further educated in the word, it is useful for them to learn about those matters on which there are various possibilities of interpretation; and I think that in the end you will find the leadership that will be used of God is a leadership which speaks positively where the Bible speaks positively, and which judges between possibilities where the Bible only gives us possibilities.

If your purpose is only to attract people; and to get them coming and attending your meetings—that that is all your purpose in life—why then why bother to study the Bible at all? Why not just speak to them in an interesting way and in an effective way? And get some good soft stories, and that is all that you need if that is your purpose? Now, I say, that is "a part of your purpose and a vital one, to get people in"; but more important than that, is that what you give is

worthwhile. You must get them, but you must also give them something that is worthwhile; and so our purpose here is to try to train real interpreters of the word. And so in this, I think that this is a point that is sufficiently clear, that it illuminates our understanding, and it is helpful; and I think that you should remember that it is possible that these conditions were more or less the same before the Flood, and that there is not an absolute change in conditions, though these are at least instances of possible change. Now

F. Genesis 10–11. I shall just try to point out a few vital things. Under this

1. The Table of the Nations (Genesis 10). Here is a table of which we must say that there is a great deal in it that we do not fully understand. The table does not try to explain the whole situation in antiquity, but it gives us certain very important facts; and it gives us certain facts concerning which we do not have sufficient background to know fully what they mean; but we may have it sometime, as we discover new things about that ancient world.

There are lists here of people who are not all individual persons. They certainly—many of them—are peoples; and the peoples are described in their relationship to one another; and the relationship—from what we know of ancient history—would seem in some cases to be a descent, of one nation coming out of another; in other cases, possibly a political relation of one group controlling another. There are different types of relationship represented here. It would seem that the descendants of Noah spread over the Near East, and somewhat further, quite quickly. And we are told here simply of this people in that general area. There would doubtless be many others of the descendants of Noah who would have been spread much further in different directions, and separated from this group which is described here. This is a table, then, which is not a genealogical table in the usual sense of the word. It is indeed a table of the nations.

The table, while in general genealogical, does not seem to be strictly genealogical. There are cases in it where the word "son" seems to be used as one who was a subject rather than who was descended. It seems to some extent to give a political relationship rather than simply a genealogical relationship. It seems to show something of the development of different nations of antiquity—at least a portion of the world of antiquity—and of their relations here: political to some extent; linguistic to some extent; racial to some extent. It is not a straight-forward direct genealogical table.

You find, for instance, in verse, 15: "Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth." Sidon was of course, a great city; verse 19, "And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon." Sidon was one of the greatest cities of the Canaanites. Yet Sidon is also the name of a man—the son of Canaan—and that

all the people of this particular city came from him, and the Hittites came from Heth, is not at all a likely interpretation.

And when you read verse 16: "and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite..." that is quite clear. These are names of nations, not of individuals. The Jebusites, the Amorites, The Girgasites, they are names of nations. This is not a table of individuals to any great extent—although there are individuals' names in it. It gives us some of the nations which come from Japheth and from Ham and from Shem. Some of these nations are very well known to us; others we know very little about as yet. There is an interesting statement down in vs. 21 where we have the children of Shem and then of Aram.

We come down to "... unto Eber was born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided". Now what does that mean? Was the earth divided? Someone has made the observation that if you look at South America and you look at Africa, you have the two sort of fit together like a jigsaw puzzle. They are separated now by thousands of miles of water; but at one time it was one land, and it is now separated with all of this water between; and they show various correspondences between certain sections of South America and certain sections of Africa; and they say that where it says here "... for in his days was the earth divided..." that means when the separation occurred, when the two continents began to move apart.⁵¹

Now I do not think that there are many scientists today that think that is true; and yet I don't think that it can be proven that there is absolutely no proof whatever to it; but that *this* is what this means here is rather unlikely in this case. Another possible suggestion would be that it was in the days of Peleg that the event of the tower of Babel occurred; for then the people were scattered, and divided abroad. That strikes me as perhaps a more likely interpretation. This man, Peleg, at any event, has a name which means division and his name was given him because of his days in which the land was divided. Perhaps it means that his name was changed on account of the situation that developed. Perhaps it means that before he was named, the great event occurred; and he was given the name then. We are not told. So it is an interesting verse to conjecture about.

And some of these names we know perfectly well: like Mizraim – Egypt; Cush – Ethiopia; Asshur – Assyria; Aram – Arameans; Nineveh, the great city named

⁵¹ [dcb] Since the mid-1950s scientists have generally accepted that the continents float on the viscous mantle forming large tectonic plates that move over vast periods of time. At one time South America joined Africa and began separating about 200 million years ago. This is proved in part by observing the similarity of fossils at the points of separation of the two continents, as well as the "correspondence" of the continents mentioned here. But this separation occurred millions of years before the creation of humans or modern animals and could not be "when the earth divided". More likely, as Dr. MacRae notes, the "division" related to the confusion of tongues.

earlier in the chapter. To fully understand this table, we need much more evidence than we have yet discovered from those ancient times. Yet we can understand it now much better than we could have a few years ago.

But we will not take time in this course to more than mention these few facts about it and go on to

2. The Tower of Babel. The Tower of Babel is something doubtless which occurred after the time of Noah. It is hardly likely that Noah is involved in it and it quite definitely happened before the time of Abraham. We have no certainty of the name of anyone involved in this event described here. It is in between two periods. Just when it is we don't know, but the event described here—the Tower of Babel—is one which is very easy to get specific ideas on details that are not fully described here.

The tower of Babel is described in the beginning of Chapter 11:

"The whole land was of one language and one speech, and it came to pass as they journeyed from the east"

—as who journeyed from the east? All the Sons of Noah or the sons of Shem? Some interpreters take it that these are the Semites, and some take it that it is all the descendants of Noah in one group. We do not know; and where we do not know, we should not be dogmatic. There is no harm in making guesses if we label them as guesses and say, "This is a guess that I make, but it may not be right." It is good to make guesses, but be sure you always label them. We don't know whether these are all the sons of Noah or whether they are the Semites.

Now one thing that there is much misunderstanding about is, what were these people trying to do? We read in the beginning of the chapter the people were journeying from the east and

"they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, those top may reach unto heaven."

—unto the sky, whose top reaches way up into the clouds. Well, why did they want to do this? Whose top reaches up into Heaven, so we can get up there, and pull God down out of Heaven, and establish ourselves in control? Well, of course, whenever people try to do something against God's will, that is what they are trying to do—to pull God out of his control. But that is not what it says here as being the specific purpose. That is an indirect part of the purpose. But

the purpose was that we will build a tower whose top reaches up into the sky; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

But these here, we read, journeyed together from the east; and they found a plain in the land of Shinar, which would seem to be Mesopotamia; and they said to one another, "Let's make brick and burn them thoroughly"; and here there was brick and slime which describes Mesopotamia—it might fit some other area but it fits perfectly with that area—and in verse 4 they said, "Let's build us a city and a tower whose top will reach way up into the sky; and let's make us a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

They're going to put up a great big, tremendous monument there, so that they can see it from all directions and use it as their center. It's going to be a great center, in which their power will center, and from which their power will go out into all the world. It is a godless, human power, trying to control this world in forgetfulness of God. You might say it is somewhat similar, then, to the United Nations of today; an organization which in forgetfulness of God, and bowing Him out of His universe, seeks to build up a manmade control which is to extend over the whole earth; and so they build up this city and tower whose top would reach way up into the skies.

"And let us make a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." Now, of course, "whose top will reach up unto heaven"—somebody may say it means the top will reach up into heaven where God is; but, of course, that is pure conjecture from the statement, and is not at all borne out by the rest of the statement. It would not fit in the context that there was such an idea in mind. It seems to be simply a great center which they were building; a great center of human government and human organization; to control the world in one great unified organization, in defiance of and forgetfulness of God. And then we read, "The Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded." Anthropomorphic language—"the Lord came down." Of course, the Lord is everywhere. It means, of course, that the Lord manifested Himself there particularly; that the Lord paid special attention to what was happening. It is exactly like the statement that the Holy Ghost descended on the day of Pentecost; or that the Holy Ghost came into believers on the day of Pentecost; the Holy Ghost was on this earth always. Everything here happens through His operation; and the Holy Ghost was in the believers. He is in all people, and He controls all people to a large extent; but He was in the believers from the time that they became disciples, for their regeneration was His work.

The descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, or the coming of the Holy Spirit into a person, is not like putting water into a pitcher. It is not a movement of something physical from one place to another; for the Holy Spirit is God, and

God is everywhere; but it is a special manifestation of the Spirit of God in a particular way; and so, as the Holy Spirit manifests Himself in a particular way at Pentecost; and as He manifests Himself in a particular way in those who are yielded to the Lord and whom the Lord uses particularly for His purposes. Similarly here; God manifested His presence. He took a special interest in what was happening. In anthropomorphic language, He came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men built; and the Lord said, "Behold the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." No harm in the people being one language; no harm in the people being one people, if it is one people devoted to God; one people seeking to follow out the will of God; but when people are acting in defiance of God; when people are opposed to God; when people refuse to even recognize Him in their assemblies; and have at the beginning of their first meeting a minute simply of silence; and don't even try to have a silent prayer, in which they can pray to all the heathen deities they want; they simply call it a minute of silence, because if they said silent prayer, that might offend one of the three greatest powers. When you have any sort of an attempt to unity of that type, you can be sure that the Lord will say, "The people is one and they there have one language; go to, let us go down and there confound their language."

And you see what a primitive, early idea you have, of the Lord coming down; and of course, there are those who take it that way, but the Lord is everywhere. The Holy Spirit is everywhere. Isn't it strange that when somebody says the Lord came down to see it, you say, "What a primitive idea of God!" And yet, when you say the Holy Spirit entered into the man, you don't say what a primitive idea of God. Actually both are figures. The Holy Spirit is everywhere. He is in everything. He is in this table here. He is in this wall; He is in the air, in everything everywhere is the Holy Spirit. And God is everywhere; but the Holy Spirit exerts his activity more in a certain place. He begins to take a greater control of one, as that one is more yielded to Him; and we speak of that as entering in. It is a figure of speech. And it is similarly a figure of speech here, "The Lord came down." It means that the Lord exerted His influence particularly in a certain place.

Well, God came down; and He saw what was happening, and He said, "Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin, to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Come, let us go down, and there confound their language." The Hebrew word *havah*; I don't know why it is translated "Go to" in the Old English here—three or four times in Chapter 11 here. I like "Come" a little better. I think it is a little more literal translation of the original. "Come, let us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

The phrase—this Old English phrase "go to" which is used in v. 3 and v. 7—the Hebrew is simply "Come". "Come! Let us go down and confound their language." It is a very strange Old English translation. And so He said, "Let us confound their language that they may not understand one another's speech"; and so the Lord scatters them abroad upon the face of all the earth, and they left off to build the city.

How did He scatter them? Did He pick them up and put one over here and one over there and one over a little way? It would seem more reasonable to consider that when it says, "The Lord scattered them"; but in this instance, it means that the Lord caused that a process occurred, which resulted in their being scattered. Now what was the process? If you and I were talking together, and all of a sudden we found we were talking different languages... Now I don't think the sensible thing to do would be to turn, and you'd run over this way, and I'd run over that way ten miles; the sensible thing to do would be to point at you and indicate, "I want to know what you call that." And I'd tell you what I call it, and pretty soon we'd get together and learn each other's language; and we'd, get on as well as we got on before. It may be that what the Lord did here was to cause a change in the constitution of the mind of the people; to make a change in the brain so that all of a sudden, they started talking different languages. That is a possible interpretation of the statement, but it does not seem to me to be the most probable interpretation of this statement.

I heard a very interesting story about how the people were building the tower. Suddenly the Lord confused their language and a man from above said "Hand me up that load of bricks"; and the man below said in a different language, "What are you talking about? What are you saying?" And the man above couldn't understand; just all of a sudden like that, they began talking different languages and therefore they were all in terrific confusion.

Well, it is possible that is what it means, but I don't think it is likely. I don't think it is necessary—I mean to say—to take it that way. It is not necessary to consider that this is an event which happened in a single instant. It may be, and I wouldn't say it isn't. I would say, that we cannot dogmatically say it is. Personally, I am inclined to think that it is not.

It seems to me much more probable that what God did was this: He went down and confounded their language so they couldn't understand one speech. He caused that these over here who were standing for dictatorship would start talking about democracy, and calling the others over there who really stood for democracy, calling them dictators; and simply twisting the meaning of words around so that you have people who are supposed to be working together, now were using words in an entirely different way; and they were choosing their usages thereof, because they were coming to oppose one another, each of them trying to advance his own interests.

That is what the Lord does, then. There is a great united movement, trying to accomplish some great thing in their antagonism to God. God simply intensifies a little bit the attitude of hatred and of selfishness and of greed that are in the heart of every natural man. He simply intensifies them a very slight bit, and you have them soon at each other's throats; and you have them very soon talking so each of them doesn't understand what the other was talking about. They are going in different directions and are soon split up into a dozen tongues. It happens all the time.

What is meant here, is that God caused that this great unified effort for an ungodly purpose would be broken up by the members of it ceasing to have a unified understanding; by them beginning not to understand one another, because each of them was looking out for his own selfish purposes and his own interests, instead of merging all those selfish purposes together into one great selfish purpose which would be contrary to God; and the result would be that soon they would not understand one another's speech.

Now, what is He going to do? He is going to go down and confound their language that they may not understand one another's speech and so the Lord scattered them abroad and they left off to build a city. Now, it doesn't say exactly what He did or how He did it. What He did was to scatter them. He said, "Let's confound their language..." And then He went down and He scattered them.

Now what is meant by "scattered"? We don't know. It is possible that God worked a surgical operation somewhere in the brain of each one of these people, so that all of a sudden they lost the language that they had, and they took some new language; and suddenly there were thousands of different languages being talked instead of one language as before. It is possible, but the Scripture doesn't say that is what happened; and I don't think that is necessary to consider that that is what happened.

My own personal guess is this way: that the Lord slightly intensified the natural series of events which take place. That He slightly increased that which takes place whenever you get a group of ungodly people together trying to carry on a project—even when you get Christians together that are not fully sanctified, you find that it happens. Well, in little while, they get to misunderstanding one another; and this one wants to do this, and that one wants to do that; and this one says, "Let's build an abutment over here on the tower"; and this one says, "No, it ought to be over here"; and this one says that we have to put this kind of material in it; and this one says that would be terrible if you put that in, you want to put this kind and pretty soon they got to fighting and they can't understand each other's language.

They don't see any sense in what each other is saying. They think it is all foolishness. They say, "If that is the kind of a tower that you are going to build, then I am not going to have anything to do with it; I am going to go off here and build my own tower." And very soon we find that they are scattered abroad on the face of the earth; and they lose contact with one another, and their language naturally and inevitably, in the process of time, becomes so completely changed that soon they would not be able to understand even the words of one another.

I have known many instances where I have had two people tell me of a talk they have had together; and as they describe it, one of them tells me what he said and what the other fellow said; and "Isn't that terrible what he said?" And then the other one says, "Now I said this and he said that"; and you know, they will tell you word for word just exactly the same thing; but if you hear one of them say it, you think, "What awful things the other fellow said to him"; and then as you hear the other one say it, you think, "What awful things they were this man said"; and it is in the tone of voice; but you can interpret the tone of voice in such a way as to get an entirely different idea. Human words are extremely fallible—a very, very poor method of conveying thought. The tone makes a big difference; and the thought back of the words makes a tremendous difference. "The Lord scattered them abroad," simply means He picked them up and He put this one over this way, this one over this way, and this one this way. He simply scattered them, maybe He just blew on them and caused them to shoot off in all directions; but it seems to me that when it says the Lord scattered them, it means that the Lord did this, not by one miraculous act, but through a process; and it seems to me that also it maybe—I don't wish to be dogmatic about this—it may be that in v. 7 where the Lord said, "Let us confound their language" and v. 9 where He confounded their language, that it is similar to the process like the scattering of the people; that He caused the sinful selfishness that was in their hearts—and it is not only in the hearts of people who live miles apart but it is in the hearts of people who live right in the same family sometimes—that He caused the sinful, selfish greed of their hearts to cause a disagreement and an unwillingness to work together which broke up the whole concern and split them in all directions.

That is one interpretation; another interpretation is that God worked some kind of a miracle in the mind of each of them and took away the language which he had, and put another language in place of it. I do not say that is impossible at all. It may be what the Scripture means. But there are these two interpretations. Personally the other one impresses me as being more likely to be the meaning of the particular passage. I wouldn't be dogmatic about it at all, which of the two it was.

We must note, though, in v. 9, "therefore the name of it is called Babel, because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth; and from thence did

the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of the earth. Now if the Lord confounded the languages there, why did they call it "Babel"?

According to the Scriptural account you have one original language. Now you have one original language, when the people are scattered; the language would differ and they would gradually develop other languages; and when they might be completely cut off and the language destroyed, you might have a brand new language start; we don't know. At any rate we have our situation today, and the Bible makes no attempt to tell us how it happened, so it is pure conjecture on our part.

What the Bible does is tell us how it began to happen; and the beginning of it is here at this place when the Lord scattered the people abroad on the face of the earth, and they left off to build the city, and v. 9 says, "Therefore the name of it is called Babel, because the Lord began there to *balel* the language of all the earth. And from thence the Lord scattered them abroad on the face of the earth." Some of your Bibles have a footnote under the word Babel, which says "confusion," but the word "Babel" does *not* mean "confusion."

Our modern English word "babble" means "confusion" I guess; and what they did was to babble; they couldn't understand each other. But the old word "Babel" here is the name of a place in Mesopotamia; it is a Babylonian word which is in two parts: *bab* and *el*. *Bab* means "gate" and *el* means "god": So "the gate of god." In this particular case here, we are not being told what the word "Babel" means, because it was perfectly well known to everyone at the time of Moses what the word "Babel" means. But Moses is pointing to Babylon as the area in which the town of Babel was originally built; and Moses is saying, "It is very appropriate that the word "Babel" should be used for that place; that word which now means "gate of god." Is not that the place where God *balelled* (or confused) the language?" That is, it is a pun, you might say; it is a play on words.

And there are a great many of these plays on words in Genesis, a great many of them. There are standard names given to children, given to cities, given to situations; and then there is a play on words whereby the appropriateness of this standard name is designated; and it is a misunderstanding to think that it is a translation of it; it is not a translation; it is simply a pointing out how appropriate it is that such a name should be used; a name that sounds like something that expresses a certain idea.

And it is an interesting thing to note, that right in that place today, there is a city which has a name which is quite similar to the Hebrew word which means "to confound." It is simply an interesting notation; that is not the statement of where the name of Babylon comes from, because the city of Babylon is not one of the early cities in Mesopotamia. There are other cities there that existed a

thousand years before Babylon existed. Babylon was comparatively late in becoming an important city; and when it became an important city, it was founded by people who came there from the west; and people have called it the gate of God, so that it is simply an interesting note here; that is, not to say that Babel means "confound," which it does not. Well, that I think, is rather important, not for itself, in v. 9, but for the light it throws on many subsequent cases where we have a meaning of a Hebrew word which is somewhat similar to the name of some place. It is not a Hebrew word. It is a Babylonian word.

(Student: How do you account for the tongues in the world today?) There are many different theories about it. There is one group of tongues that are quite easy to account for. That is the group of tongues that cover about 2/3 of Europe. That group of tongues is very easy to account for because we can see how they came into existence. We have Latin. We have documents in Latin. We know how the people talked in Rome in 100 BC And then, we have today people in France and in Spain, and in Portugal and in Italy, and in Rumania, and in perhaps a dozen different countries speaking a dozen different languages all of which we can trace back step by step to ancient Latin, to ancient Rome; and yet today, some of them cannot understand each other at all.

And we can take the language today of the Swedes and the language of the Germans; and they can't understand each other at all; but we can find where certain regular changes have taken place in the consonants and in the vowels of the languages and we can trace them back to an imaginary original language—which we think may once have existed just as Latin we know existed—on the basis of these other languages. And then people take Latin and Slavic and Germanic and about a dozen different groups like this and they trace them back by a further imaginary process based upon the same principles which we see in the development of Latin and of these Germanic languages; and they take it back to what they think may have been the original Indo-Germanic language from which all of these came.

But when you do that, you have the source from which has come the language of nine-tenths of Europe and a good portion of Western Asia. But after you do that, you have other languages in the world which have no observable relation to those. And where did they come from? How did they start? Nobody knows There are various men, who have various theories.

Personally I like the theory of Otto Jespersen, the Danish linguist best of all⁵². His theory is that there is an ability in man to create language; that there is a natural ability to make language, just as a child will learn to stretch his arms and move his legs and to do certain things; even if nobody ever showed him, he would learn to talk, that there is this natural ability to develop a language. He

⁵² Otto Jespersen, *Language: Its Nature Development & Origin* (1922).

cites the development of "secret languages" in children as a simple example of this.

You take the area of America here—the sections where the winters are comparatively mild, and where there are berries or things—that very small children, if their parents have been killed off by animals; or died in some accident; and the children, were left alone; and they could have grown up; you will find in them, there are many original languages. We have a couple of hundred Indian languages, among a comparatively small group of people here; and his theory is, that given a few children, left to grow up naturally, without instruction from others; they have been able to develop a language, and that all of our original languages began that way; that it is a natural ability in man to make language. Most of us simply learn a language from others; but originally cut off from other language, there would be some process by which we would build a language. The fact is that we have perhaps five or six hundred languages—unrelated, as far as we know—but of these we have one original language, Indo-Germanic, from which we have at least forty languages today that are clearly derived from it, and are related.

Now you might say the name for Babylon and its similarity to the word babble is a coincidence, and it would be; but coincidences like that are extremely common. It is remarkable how very, very frequently we find that coincidence. There is an ancient town in Northern Syria called "Biblos," which means "little mountain" or "Biblos" the word from which our "Bible" comes. It means "Little Mountain". The town has been excavated in modern times. The excavator was a Frenchman named Montaigne, "little mountain" in French. I don't think they selected him to be excavator because of the fact that he had that name.

In the Colorado River, as it goes down through many canyons, about eighty years ago, Colonel Powell, a great geologist and explorer, took a party of surveyors and explorers, and they made the first trip with boats down through the Grand Canyon, along the Colorado River; and as they went day after day down through terrific rapids, and great places with tremendous cliffs on the sides, you'd hear the falling rock around you; and where the boat would occasionally be turned over, and they would have considerable difficulty; and they never knew when, just ahead, there might be a steep waterfall which would kill them all—there proved to be none, but they wouldn't know when there might be, on their first trip down—the men got, some of them, more and more frightened; and finally the time came when one day two of the men said, "We're not going a bit further. What is the use of risking our lives this way? There may be a tremendous waterfall just ahead; the next rapid we may not get through safely. We'll not go any further." So they left the rest.

They had reached a little creek there, and they camped there overnight. These two men left the rest and they said, "We're going to make our way out of here

somehow on foot." So they left; and the others, when they went on—on their map they were mapping all the little creeks—and this one, where the others had left, they marked "separation creek," because it was where the other men had separated from them. Now the other men went up the creek a way; managed to make their way up the side of the mountain. With tremendous effort, they got up to the top, out onto the flat country; and they came to a band of Indians, who took them for a couple of cattle thieves; and they immediately cut their scalps off, and killed them; while the rest that were in the party got in their boats; and the very next day, they came out into calm waters down below; and their dangers were all over. The maps have borne that name "Separation Creek" ever since; but thirty years ago, it was decided to make a dam below that in the Colorado River, the Boulder Dam, or as it is now called, the Hoover Dam; and this dam was made, which in a narrow canyon walled up the waters of that Colorado River and as a result caused it to rise higher and higher and make a big lake where previously there was just a river flowing down; and this lake is now about 190 miles in length and reaches way back up the river; and it is called Lake Mead; and as you fly over it in a plane, you can see the Colorado River coming down utterly brown with the tremendous amount of sediment in it and then you see a spot where the brown ends and it becomes clear crystal blue, because the waters enter Lake Mede; there the water stops going, and it drops its sediment there; and on one side you have absolute brown and on the other side you have beautiful blue; and as you look down, you see at that spot, you see a creek that comes in right at that spot; and it is called "Separation Creek." It is where the blue waters and the brown waters separate; and anybody would say the name was given when the dam was built twenty years ago, and the waters separate right at that point; but you can look at a map fifty years old and you will find it was called "Separation Creek" for the other reason.

Now these are two illustrations of the fact that life is filled with remarkable coincidences; and these coincidences don't prove anything. They just occur. They certainly do not prove a definite plan in it. When you have a coincidence in your life it is—as a rule—apt to be something that is rather interesting, and that is all. Well, now, it is interesting that in the course of history, people have noticed coincidences, and have remarked on them—have been impressed by them. To us it is now just an interesting statement. We may get some further light sometime that will make it again to us of tremendous importance; but unless we do and until we do, it would be very foolish for us to be dogmatic about just what a particular name means.

Of course, you can make a much better impression on people if you can say, "This is what it means." People will say, "Oh that is a learned man. He knows." For someone else, they might say, "What does he know about it? He says, 'Maybe this; maybe that.' What does he know about it? Let's go and listen to this other fellow." You can draw much bigger crowds when you speak positively in your conviction than if you say, "Maybe it is this and maybe it is that." Well,

what is the answer to it? If your sole interest is in drawing crowds, don't come to seminary. Gather about fifteen facts and go out and just yell them out as loud as you can. Wave your arms and stamp your foot and say, "This is it," and you can gather a big crowd. There is no question that anybody that will take any fifteen statements—I don't care what they are, sensible or not—can go out, and he can draw a crowd and can build up a movement with them; and if you take fifteen good statements, which are true, Scriptural teaching and you just go out and declare them, you may build up something that will really be very helpful in the work of the Lord.

Some people say, "What is the use of studying all the Bible? We've got John 3:16. Let's go out and give that." Well, it is a thousand times better to just go out and give John 3:16 than it is not to go out and give the truth of God. There is nothing more important in the Bible than John 3:16; and I praise the Lord for anybody's work who is just going out and giving John 3:16. But let a person who does that recognize his limitation. Let him gather people in and then leave their leadership to somebody who has knowledge—not only of one or two verses of what God has given, but—of the whole counsel of God, and who is ready to interpret the Word. I would say, as you go out and preach, take the things you are absolutely sure of; and don't speak them as if there was doubt of them. Speak them with conviction; speak them positively; speak them in a way to gather people about you; but the things that you are not sure of, do not speak positively on. Keep quiet about those things under the circumstances where it is simply drawing people in; but then, as you come to lead people, give them a sane, sensible approach to the Scripture, of seeing what there is they understand thoroughly; what there is they partly understand; and what there is that we don't know what it means; and you may not produce quite as enthusiastic a group as you would with the other, but you will produce a group which is going in a sane, sensible direction. And in the end it is far better to march forward steadily and persistently in the right direction than it is to run with tremendous force and energy in the wrong direction.

Get a place you can go in the right direction and keep it up, and the Lord will bless you. There are two things that are vital in any of our work. One is deciding what the truth is; the other is making the truth effective; and if you skip the first, you may be very effective but effective in the wrong way; if you skip the second, you will be just somebody that is saying, "Maybe this" and "Maybe that" and people aren't going to be interested. You've got to be both.

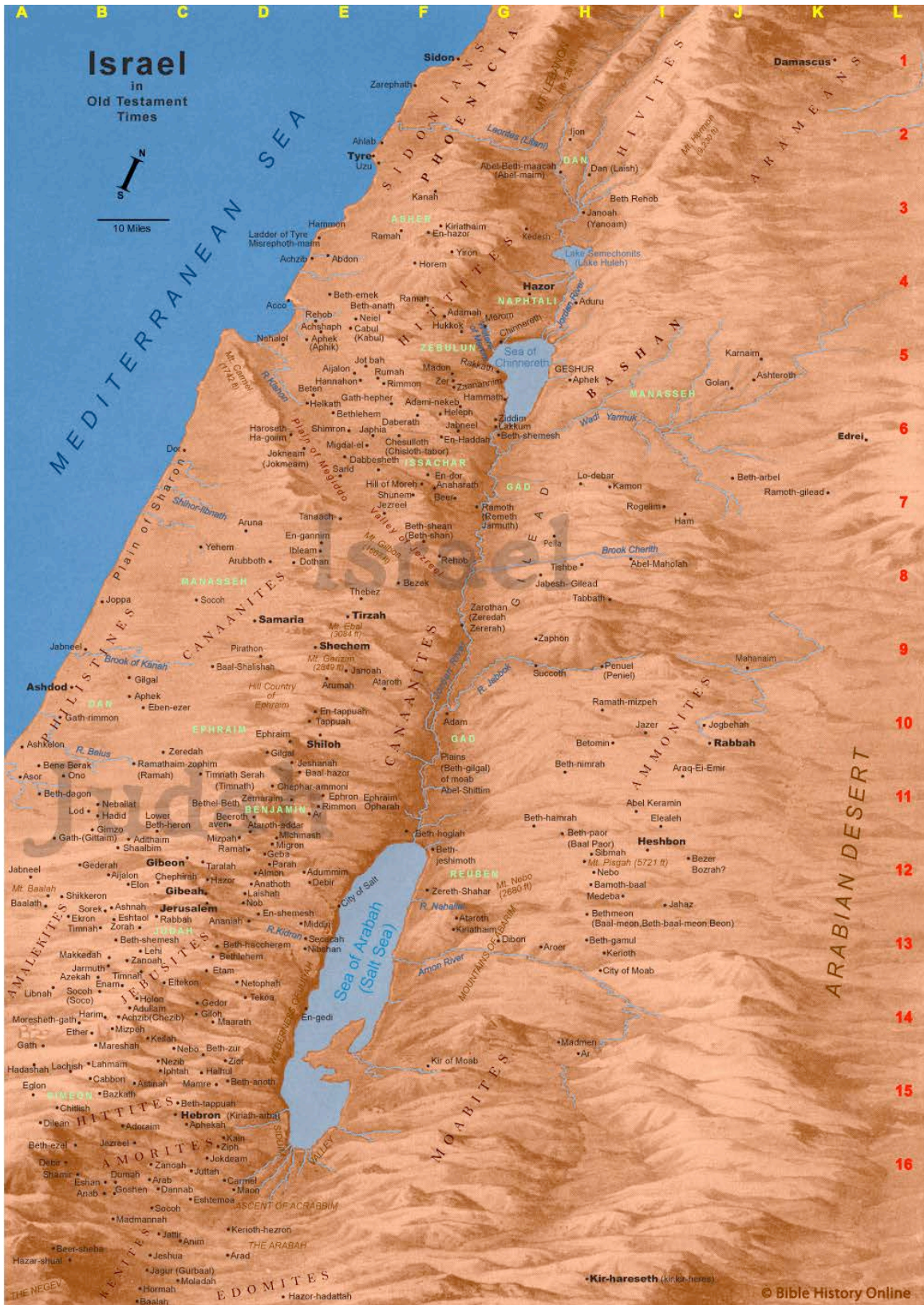
Well, now let's go on.

3. The Generations of Shem. (Genesis 11:10ff). From verse 10 on up to Abraham and Nahor we have the generations of Shem. It is interesting to note that the generations of Shem begin with Arphaxad, the son of Shem, born two years after the flood; and if there are no gaps in this chronology at all, you then

have Abraham born when Terah was seventy years old; in other words, he was born in the three hundred and fifty-second year after the flood; fifty years before the death of Shem; fifty years before the death of Arphaxad; one hundred and eighty years before the death of Salah; one hundred and ninety years before the death of Eber; forty-eight years before the death of Peleg; eighty years before the death of Reu; one hundred years before the death of Serug; and forty-nine years before the death of Nahor, the grandfather of Abraham.

And so if there are no gaps in the chronology, every single one of the ancestors back to Noah were still living at the time of Abraham. That is not the picture that we get at all in the time of Abraham. We have a picture of a great wicked civilization which had turned away from God; and from which God called him to go forth to a land which God would show him; a land in which there also were people; there were great numbers of people scattered here and there who had forgotten all about Noah; and most of them had put God out of their hearts and minds. And so it seems most likely that there are gaps in the chronology, along the principle we pointed out before; and that there actually was a much longer period than the period of three hundred and fifty-two years between the time of the flood and the time of the birth of Abraham.

EXCURSUS Palestine Archaeology



A. The Geography of Palestine.

It is very helpful in understanding the Old Testament, to know something of the places with which it is dealing. Now as you look at the land of Palestine on this map, you get a better idea when you are told that it is about the size of Maryland. I think to most of you that is a fairly definite idea. Well, now you say right away. "About the size of Maryland. Well, we take the train to Virginia and we go right across Maryland in no time, across one corner of it. If we go from the East coast to the West coast we cross Maryland in no time, it seems like. It is only a few hours. What of importance would happen in a little country like that?"

The geography of Palestine is made up of four main regions, each running North to South.

1. The Coastal Plain. The first of them—the one, I say first, simply because it is runs along the Mediterranean Sea—the one which we reach first when we come from the West. It is not the most important. It is, in fact, in some ways it's the least of importance. That is because there are less Biblical events in this region than in any other of the four.

It is perhaps the most important section from an economic viewpoint. It is one of the finest sections of Palestine. Nevertheless, from the viewpoint of Biblical history it is less important than the other three; and why would you think that might be? It was possessed by strong people. It was never, to any great extent, a center of Israelite life in Biblical times. The events of both Old Testament and New Testament largely take place in the other three areas; comparatively few New Testament events, and still fewer Old Testament events, take place in the coastal plain, because it was filled with strong people.

We read in the Pentateuch that the Israelites came up into the land from the East; they did not come up from the West. Now why should they do that? As you come up from Egypt, from Sinai here, you might come straight up the coastal plain. Why should they go way around on the Eastern end? Much further, much less pleasant country? Why should they do it that way? We are told in the Scripture that the Lord said that they would go that way, rather than by the way of the Philistines, lest the people be frightened when they see war on the way.

This territory was possessed by strong peoples. While the Lord could have destroyed them and removed them from before the Israelites, He chose instead to bring them up to this desert area, where there were less people and less difficulty, than to bring them in from over here, so they wouldn't have to see the great difficulties immediately. And so, this region here is occupied by powerful nations whom the Israelites did not conquer for many years—and

never wholly subjugated—and consequently while it is an excellent section of the land of Canaan, it was not the section where the Israelites lived to any great extent; and as a result, the Philistines still were the prominent people there even after they were subjugated; and after Bible times, when people came from Greece and other regions to Canaan—the land of Israel—the first thing they met were the people of the Philistines.

And so they called the whole land after the Philistines; and our word "Palestine" means the land of the Philistines. The word is taken from the word "Philistine." It means the Philistines' country; and here God promised this country to the Israelites; and yet, even today, we call it the land of the Philistines. Palestine means the land of the Philistine. Is it any wonder that the Israelites of today do not call it Palestine, but call it Israel? And so you have this coastal plain, in which these Philistines and other strong people lived; and the Israelites mostly lived up on the Hill country here and over here; and their events are in other sections largely instead of down in that section. Their relation to that section was largely that of antagonism.

Now let us run over a little bit of the various sections of this coastal plain. We notice that up north here in Phoenicia, it is a narrow section. The mountains come right down nearer to the coast; and we notice that up there are sections of good harbors, in which it is easy for ships to be protected, and easy for people to start adventuring out to sea; and so in Phoenicia there is one of the great maritime regions of the world; and even today, the people of Phoenicia are great world travelers. They are not great shippers anymore. They do not have a cultivated life today like it was in ancient times. They are a rather poor people as a whole; but they still are great travelers, and over half the population of that area has probably been for some term of years in North or South America. That is, it was so up until 20 or 30 years ago. I imagine it is still so today.

It is a region which is very important in ancient history for its seafaring people. They were great merchants and great travelers. And in that region there, there are three great cities which you should be familiar with. Up in the North here is the city of *Gebal*, otherwise known as Byblos, the city from which our word "Bible" comes. And south of this is the city of Sidon; and further south, the city of Tyre. Sidon and Tyre are very well known as the two greatest Phoenician cities.

Byblos was just as important and just as great, but less widely known. Although the word that comes from Byblos, the word "Bible", is far better known than either of the names of Tyre or of Sidon; and then you have other cities of less importance down here. This city of Acco was of considerable importance. In the middle ages it became to be known as Acre, and was a great crusade center during the middle ages.

Then further south you have here a large harbor region. It is too large to be a good harbor without a great deal of additional work—breakwaters and so on. When I came to this part here, there is a modern town of Haifa here in the southern part of it. When I came there in 1929, the ship had to anchor three miles out. There was no decent way to bring it in with safety into the shore. You are already in Palestine proper, although you are not far from Phoenicia. This ship had to anchor three miles out; and from there we went in on a little launch; and when I got in there to the customs house, I found that one of my suitcases was not there; and so I decided that perhaps it was left on the boat; and I went out to get it, and I had a vivid impression of the poor nature of this area here for shipping. I had to go out for three miles to the boat in order to see if my suitcase was out there. I found a little motor launch that was going out with six or seven men in it. I got in it, and we went out for three miles. We came up to the edge of the great ship there. There was a ladder hanging down the side—a big wooden ladder—and our little boat came up to the edge; and I stepped up and grabbed the ladder; and the next wave carried the boat thirty or forty feet away before I had hardly (laughter) gotten my hands on the ladder. I climbed up and went inside and I couldn't find the suitcase, but I had a good rest there anyway, but it was a half an hour before they were able to get close enough for the rest of the people to get off and come on to the boat.

It showed something of the rough nature of the sea, there. How unsuited it is to general maritime life. Quite different from Phoenicia further north. And then the modern city of Beirut, in between Sidon and Byblos, which is one of the greatest ports in the world today. Now, you have here—in this big indentation here—a little headland at the north of it, at Acre, and at the south of it here, you have quite a projection out in the sea; there, as you notice, which is Mt. Carmel. Carmel is a mountain ridge maybe eight miles in length. It rises maybe three thousand feet above the surrounding plains, and juts right out to the edge of the sea and so it breaks the coastal plains. There is nothing but a very narrow area of beach between Mt. Carmel and the sea. The plain is broken into two parts there, the Phoenician plain to the north, and then a complete break, with the long ridge of Mt. Carmel there.

You remember in the story of Elijah, that it was on Mt. Carmel that Elijah met with the priests of Baal; and you remember that after the fire had fallen and consumed Elijah's sacrifice, you remember that Elijah told his servant to go up to the top of the mountain; and when he got up there, he could look out to sea. Carmel is right on the edge of the Mediterranean sea; and he went up there and looked out to sea; and on the 7th trip up, he saw a little cloud the size of a man's hand out there at sea.

Just north of Mt. Carmel, along the Kedron brook is the Plain of Esdraelon extending to Megiddo, and south of Mt. Carmel the coastal plain is unbroken all

the way south, but it divides into two main sections. There is the section to the north there, which we call the Plain of Sharon—a name which is much used in the Bible—suggesting a place of great fertility, a place that is a very attractive land, the plain of Sharon. It was occupied by a strong people before the Israelites came; and although the Israelites ruled over it, it never became a center of any great importance in Old Testament times. The very fertile and very attractive Plain of Sharon. And you notice the little streams that go down from the hills to the sea, there; an area in which by even a fairly shallow well, you can find water most anywhere. A very fertile and excellent region, but not an important region in Bible history.

And then south of this plain, you have the Philistine plain. And this Philistine plain is so called because of the people who occupied it in Biblical times. It is not as fine an area as the Plain of Sharon, but it is a very attractive pleasant area. It is an area in which the Philistines were able to maintain quite a fine community life. The Philistines had five important cities down there which we read of in the Bible: the cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath and Ekron. There were these five main ones and some others of less importance; but this region down through here is where the Philistines lived.

Now, if the Philistines lived down there, how is it that they could fight up there in Gilboa? And how does it come about that at Beth Shan, they could fasten Saul's body on the fortress? It indicates the fact that, while the Philistines lived down here for quite a period, they controlled the whole of the land of Canaan; and they held fortresses here and there through it; and they held the Israelites in subjection for most of the time of Samuel, and to a large extent during all of the reign of Saul. And at the end of the reign of Saul, they seemed to be in complete control. They are not a numerous people, but they are a people of considerable technical knowledge and understanding. They understand the use of iron. They know how to make good iron weapons, which were unknown to the people in the rest of Palestine. They probably brought in the knowledge of iron.

The Iron Age probably came with the Philistines when they came into the land; and they kept the knowledge of iron in their own homes—how to work it and how to make tools. They sold the other people iron agricultural implements, but they refused to let them have weapons. Only Saul and Jonathan had actual iron weapons and iron arms. They were the leaders of the Israelite kingdom. Some were able to get some, but the rest of the people did not have the advantage of the equivalent armament. The Philistines did not enter into a program of arming the Israelites and sending them money and help in order to make them strong and self-sufficient. Instead, they kept the iron, and thus a comparatively small number of them were able to maintain their safety for a long period against the far greater number of the Israelites, who were up here mostly in the hill country, where the region is much less fertile; and much more

barren further south here until you come to a river here, which is called the River of Egypt, so-called, not the Nile river. The River of Egypt is the river which is the border between Palestine and Egypt. It is still one hundred miles from the settled districts of Egypt. It is simply a border. The great river of Egypt, of course, is the Nile, the river that makes Egypt prosper. But in the Bible they speak of the River of Egypt as the river which is here on the border.

(Question: What place in the Bible do we find that there were more Philistines?) What verse? You mean the account of the battle there in 1 Samuel 13, where does it say that there were more Philistines than Israelites? Verse 6,

When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.

And there were only 600 who dared to be with Saul. And why was it that there were only 600? Because the Philistines had chariots.

We read down in verse 19,

Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears: But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.

And verse 22 says that

it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found.

There were only 600 people who dared to come out to what would seem to be certain slaughter. They had no decent weapons. The Philistines had 30,000. Well what is 30,000? How many Israelites were there? At least a couple of million. Out of a couple of million men, what is thirty thousand?

The Philistines would have been just swallowed up if the Israelites had decent weapons; but the Philistines kept them from getting weapons until the end of Saul's reign, when David lived among the Philistines for a while and learned the secrets from them of the working of iron. And after that, once David had those secrets, then the Philistines are a comparatively small folk; because they never are more than a fifth as numerous as the Israelites. Their army may be more numerous because they had equipment, but the people as a whole, the potential, was a very small fraction compared to the Israelites.

Jerusalem was a very strong point, very easy to defend. But it had never belonged to them. It had been conquered in the conquest of Canaan, but the conquest then would seem to be merely that the army was defeated and the king taken; but the actual city would seem not to have been taken because it remains a foreign city until the time of David. In Judges 1:21,

And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

That is, the Jebusites still lived there. You see, in the territory of the children of Benjamin, the Jebusites still lived in Jerusalem until this day. In the light of Joshua 12, the fighting against the people of Jerusalem, slaying the king of Jerusalem [12:8], the taking it, and setting the city on fire, suggests possibly that there might have been a temporary holding of it for a brief time, but the army was going through and attacking one place after another, and there were a good many cities that they seemed to have briefly conquered; but when the campaign was over we find they are still in enemies' hands.

Now, this coastal plain, just to give you an idea of distance: Byblos, along the coastal plain, you go about forty miles and you come to Beirut, the great modern harbor and city that was so important in ancient times, although not so important in Biblical history. Thirty miles south of this—that is 70 miles south of Byblos—you come to Sidon; and then 33 miles south of Sidon, you come to Tyre. From Tyre, here, you go 13 miles and you come to the modern border; and then from this modern border, you go 15 miles and you come to this city of Acco; in other words, 28 miles from Tyre to Acco (modern Acre), which is within the border of Israel.

And then from Acco, you go ten miles along this coast here, and you come to Haifa, which is just on the northern end of Mt. Carmel. South of that, we have the Plain of Sharon, which extends about 75 miles. Then we have the Philistine plain, that extends about another 40 miles; and then you come to the city of Gaza at the southern end of the Philistine plain; and south of that is another 50 miles to the river of Egypt, of which you get to see a little bit of it down here. It runs to the Mediterranean Sea.

That is your coastal area—a very important section in Palestine today—and one which is important to the Israelites in its relationship with them, but not for things they did in it. In the Old Testament, there are very few things mentioned that happened in this coastal area. Who can give me one thing that happened in this plain here? One event, not including Mt. Carmel, but in the plain there; who can name one event which happened in Biblical Old Testament history? It was at Gaza from which Samson took the gates. Then there is a book recently

published entitled *Iris in Gaza*,⁵³ which is talking about the idea of Sampson being in Gaza, and forced to work there. So Gaza was where Sampson was taken. Now, how about the northern part? Can somebody think of an event which took place up in this coastal plain far north here, even north of Tyre, in this little city of Zarephath? Elijah and the widow. Elijah fled from Ahab and went clear up there.

Gerar is one of the Philistine cities. Abraham stayed there and Isaac was there. Another event in the Philistine plain in the Old Testament.

One other thing we should mention from the Old Testament. You remember when Jonah fled from the face of the Lord, he came down to Joppa here, and he found a ship to take him off to Spain—a ship of Tarshish—which is an ancient name for Spain.

Well, now in the New Testament, we also have many events in the Philistine plain. I do not recall any record that would prove that our Lord was ever on the coastal plain at all. He may have been. He probably was, but I don't recall any reference to anything he did down in that coastal plain in New Testament times. Peter was in Joppa when he was called to Caesarea to see Cornelius. But there's comparatively little in the Philistine plain in the New Testament.

2. The Shephelah (Low Hill) Country. Now the next region after the coastal plain, a region of low hills. This hill country is the region in which most events take place in either the Old or the New Testament. It is the region in which the Israelites lived and did most of their deeds, where most of the important cities were. The Hill country region which is a long backbone of hills, some places rising into very high mountains, which runs all the way from the extreme north of Syria clear south down to the southern end; and this hill country region, we simply call it, as a rule, the hill country. In modern terminology we would call it foothills, but the Hebrew word for it is *shephelah*—this region, the lower hills between the high hill country and the Philistine plain—the Shephelah.

Now, that word, "Shephelah" is the Hebrew word; and it is good for us to use it to identify this section. It is translated in the Bible variously. If it is used by the Philistines coming up to it, they say they went up into the mountains. If it is used by the people of Israel coming down to it, they say they went down to the plain; and in both cases, it is the word Shephelah. For from the viewpoint of the mountains it is a plain, and from the view point of the plain (coastal) it is the mountains. I think that foothills would be perhaps the best translation, if you want to give it a translation; but Shephelah is good because it is the actual term. It is not another region, it is the area between main regions, between the plain and the hills right in this section around the Philistines and it makes a sort of a no-man's land between the Philistines and the Israelites. Many of the

⁵³ Ed. Note: Spelling may be in error. Not able to find the book.

battles between the Philistines and the Israelites were fought there, in the Shephelah. It was there, for instance, that David met Goliath. It was there that the ox cart came bringing back the ark from the Philistines, came up into the Shephelah; and there at Beth-shemesh in the Shephelah, that the Israelites got the ark back again.

3. The Hill Country and the Jordan Valley. Now, that is not a main region, but a section between the two regions. The second main region, the region of the hill country; a mountain far to the north up here, Mt. Lebanon; and this Mt. Lebanon is a long ridge, but its highest point is ten thousand forty six feet above the sea well. Now, the highest mountain in the U.S. East of the Mississippi river is only about 7000 feet high, a mountain in N. Carolina; and so you see Mt. Lebanon is 50% higher than the highest mountain in the Eastern U.S. And in addition to that it is a nearly two miles rise fairly near the Mediterranean Sea; so that it is a really sizable mountain.

And on all the sides of Mt. Lebanon, there were the great forests in ancient times from which the best wood was secured. The wood from Mt. Lebanon was taken to Egypt; and most of the fine buildings of Egypt were built with wood taken from Mt. Lebanon. That is what gave Byblos its great importance in ancient times. It is to Byblos that the Egyptians went to get wood for their buildings. They had no fine building wood in Egypt. They had little brush-heap trees in Egypt; and they got the good wood from Lebanon; and in exchange for it, they gave them the papyrus that grows in Egypt—the fine writing material—and then this town became a great center of trade.

When they had more papyrus than they wanted to use, they went about the Mediterranean purchasing things; and they would exchange for it papyrus, which they had secured from Egypt for the wood of Lebanon; and so the people came to think of the papyrus as something which came from this town of Byblos; and so they called the papyrus *byblos*; and a group of papyri together they called *byblios*; and therefore books came to be *biblia*; and then the Bible is "the books"; and the name came from the name of this town in which the papyrus didn't even grow—it grew in Egypt, who exchanged it for the cedars of Lebanon, which meant much to the Egyptians. And you know also, of course, that Solomon secured the cedars of Lebanon for the building of the temple; and for the building of his own house.

So Lebanon is not a place where Biblical events happen, but it is a place which is very important, because of the material that comes from there, and for the effect of events connected with Lebanon in Biblical history.

But as you come south from Lebanon, you have this long snow-covered ridge of Lebanon extending far out into Syria there; and as you come south from it, you find a very extensive area, a very extensive hill country, a very rough area. Here

you have fairly large regions, but not so particularly flat, with hills up and down on both sides of them and pretty much in the middle of them too. There are many hills there, and some fairly high mountains, like Tabor, Gilboa; these other mountains up in that northern region there; and in it is this city—this town, not mentioned in the Old Testament—but important in the New Testament, the town of Nazareth; and in this town of Nazareth, you are right on the edge of this northern part of the hill country.

At the southern end of the town of Nazareth, there is a hill; a place you go out from the town maybe a half mile; and then you come to a place where you go straight down into the valley below; and they call that the Hill of Precipitation, because it is the hill where the people took Christ; and threatened to precipitate him down the side of the hill; and so they call it the Hill of Precipitation; but from it you look down to the plain below; and your hill country is broken here by a great plain that cuts across; and it cuts across north of Mt. Carmel here; and you have what is called the Valley of Jezreel; and then the valley cuts across down here into the Jordan Valley. It is a low place in the hill country here, which cuts into it quite a wide valley, the Valley of Jezreel, a very fertile region.

The Jews today changed Jezreel to Israel; they call it the Valley of Israel. It has become one of their great centers of colonization in the last thirty years; and the River Kishon runs through it up to the Mediterranean; and then you have another small stream flowing down here into the Jordan; and right there is the fortress of Beth Shan. It guards the approach from the Jordan valley up into this valley, which cuts into the midst of the hill country and thus Beth Shan guards the way across from the Jordan valley across the hill country, so that Beth Shan was a very important fortress there. It is really getting down into the edge of the Jordan valley, but it is in the south and cuts across here and just at the southern end of that valley is Mt. Gilboa.

Now your hill country comes on over here to Galilee north of this; it comes on through this lower country, and then on into higher hills again; and here you get Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal. Mt. Ebal is over 3000 ft. high; Mt. Gerizim is only 800 ft. high. They are the two mountains where in Deuteronomy the command was given that the Israelites were to give blessings from one side and curses from the other; blessings upon them, if they would follow God's law and curses, if they went away from them.

And right there on the shoulder of Mt. Gerizim is the town of Shechem, an important town in Israelite history; right from the book of Genesis on. We find it even in the time of Jacob; we find Shechem there, an important city from that time on, all through the Israelite history; and that is the modern center of the Samaritans. The Samaritans today have their headquarters at what was the old town of Shechem, but what is now called the new city. You know the Greek for new city is Neapolis; and Neapolis in modern Arabic becomes Nablus, since

there is no "p" in Arabic so they make it a "b"; and Nablus is the town of the Samaritans; it is right here on the shoulder of Mt. Gerizim; and it is there that Jacob's well was, and still is today, of course. And the city of Samaria, that is not shown on this map here because it did not exist in the time of the division, was built later on by Omri and is just a few miles further east.

Then south of this region of Samaria, the hills become very rough through here. There is a section which is spoken of as the "Valley of the shadow of death." Now that is just a poetic name that has been given to it; we do not know exactly what region David referred to in the 23rd Psalm; but this region is a valley where it goes through, with the hills so high on both sides that you can hardly see the sun at all; a place where it would be very easy to ambush a traveler; and so it has been given that name in modern times. It is a very rough hilly region; and you come off the side of the road a ways, you come to Bethel here and Ai; and through this hill country until you come down to Jerusalem, along the top of the hill country.

From Jerusalem you can go to Bethlehem—about 5 miles, fairly level, only little low hills. But Jerusalem today is held part by the Jews and part by the Arabs; and the road between is held by the Jews; and so instead of going in ten minutes by car from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, as we used to do, this summer I had to take forty-five minutes in a car; and instead of going five miles, we went about 12; and in doing that you go away from that backbone of the mountain; and the result was that you had to go down and way up, and way down and way up, very steep and difficult going, and it takes forty-five minutes to go the 12 miles instead of 10 minutes to go the five as it used to be. It gives a very vivid idea of how rough this hill country is; a rough region, and yet with many more or less flat areas in it with many little springs.

Now we are at present dealing with a section we've inserted between the world before the patriarchs and the patriarchs. We will now look at

4. The Trans-Jordan

[This section is missing.]

B. Archaeology in Palestine.

1. The Moabite Stone. The Moabite Stone was discovered by Frederick Klein, an Anglican Missionary, at Dhiban, Jordan (about 10 miles east of the Dead Sea, in the ancient Kingdom of Moab) in 1868. When discovered, it was intact, and he immediately made a papier-mâché impression. The Turkish official in charge of the area heard about it and decided that anything that valuable shouldn't go out of the country; in fact I should have it myself. So he sent word to them that they were to under no circumstances to dispose of it until he had seen it; but the

locals, realizing that these Europeans wanted so much money for this thing; they knew of course that it must be something magical, or it must be something of great importance, or they wouldn't be willing to give dollars for it. They didn't want the Governor to get it, so they heated the stone on a big platter; and when they got it good and hot, they poured water over it; and it cracked into about 89 different pieces, and each one of them took one of these pieces, figuring that they probably would get a high price for it.

Well Frederick Klein, then, took a thousand dollars and went around to the natives, one by one, and he managed to get about four-fifths of them; and with the pieces that he had, and with the help of the papier-mâché impress, he put these together; and it is in the Louvre today, and is known as the Moabite Stone, or the Mesha Stele.

It was immediately claimed that it was a forgery; and that was a very good thing, because it led to a thorough investigation of the matter, and let people come to an agreement about it. But after much discussion and investigation, eventually all scholars agreed that it is genuine.

It comes from Mesha, the king of Moab who is mentioned in Kings, in the time of Ahab, II Kings 3. Mesha revolted from paying tribute to Israel; and Ahab came with the king of Judah and re-conquered Moab. We have the account in the Bible, and we have more detail on the stele; and there are certain points on which we don't know just how the two accounts fit together; but both are very brief accounts, and there are points of overlap. It is an interesting corroboration of the accuracy of the Biblical account, with the addition of certain other details; so it is one of our first important archaeological discoveries in Palestine.

It is very important for the history of Hebrew writing: for the details of Hebrew language at that time; the Moabite language, which is evidently very similar to the Hebrew language; and it was a very important and valuable find; I think most scholars would rather that the thing were complete and whole in the Berlin museum, than have it be in this fragmentary condition in the Louvre instead; but we have most of the content of it.

We might just mention at this point that the interest in this stele led some people to make forgeries. There was a Jewish family named Shapira, which soon after that time discovered in Palestine the original document of Deuteronomy as it came from the hand of Moses. They were offered a half a million dollars; and they tried to get a subscription in England to get people to contribute in order to get the half million dollars to purchase it from the Shapira family. Then a French archaeologist Clermont-Ganneau, and British scholar Christian David Ginsburg, were able to prove that this was a forgery before they were paid their half million; and so it was not purchased. But there were a good many forgeries made now at this time; but people learned how to detect forgeries, and how to

distinguish what was actually genuine; Clermont-Ganneau and Ginsburg helped greatly in this.

In 1854 the Palestine Exploration Fund was founded in England, for the exploration of Palestine. This organization hired two men to go to Palestine—two army officers—and make a survey. There was no decent map of Palestine as yet, and these two men—Lt. Kitchener and Lt. Conder—proceeded to make a survey. Lt. Conder continued in Palestinian studies for many years, and during the succeeding forty years he was active in writing about Palestine. He did good work, although not outstanding work.

The other man, Lt. Kitchener, spent a brief time working on this; then he transferred his activities to Africa. He became one of the great British military leaders in Africa; and at the beginning of World War I in 1914, he was put in charge of all of the British forces, and then died in 1916 when his ship hit a mine and sunk.

Kitchener was one of the best known names of British military authority, and it is interesting that he was in the original survey in Palestine in 1872–1878. He spent parts of 6 years surveying western Palestine. They did nothing east of the Jordan, but their maps were the standard maps for many years for that area. Later some Germans made a survey of Eastern Palestine.

Now the Exploration Fund wanted to excavate in Palestine; and they began excavation and they carried on some during the next few years. The Exploration Fund studied at Jerusalem, and investigated something of the ancient walls of Jerusalem; found some early materials related to Jerusalem; but archaeological excavation was in its infancy, and they were not ready, really, to fully understand what they did. Thus their work is not of great importance except as pioneer work in the excavation of Palestine. The fundamental principles of Palestinian excavation had not yet been discovered.

2. Palestinian Research from 1890–1920. The most important event in Palestinian archaeology is the six weeks in 1890 in which Petrie laid the foundation of all subsequent work in Palestine. So we will call that

a. Sir William Petrie. Sir William Petrie was a man who had by this time for many years been working in Egyptian archaeology. He wrote a good book shortly before his death, *Seventy years in Archaeology*⁵⁴. He was over 90 when he died, and he had started as a very young man, taking an interest in archaeology; and he continued up until his death, about 1935. And in his book on his career in archaeology, his experiences in 1890 in Palestine are quite

⁵⁴ Sir William Matthews Flinders Petrie, *Seventy years in Archaeology*, (1932). Commonly known as Flinders Petrie.

incidentally touched upon. He does record a few little interesting incidents there, but doesn't give much attention to it.

I was quite interested to see what he would tell about it, because from his viewpoint it was a little incident in a great career. From the viewpoint of Palestinian study what Petrie did during his six weeks in Palestine is the foundation of all subsequent work. He made two discoveries which are the fundamental discoveries upon which all subsequent Palestinian study rests.

He does not actually get results of any importance during that period. The very place that he examined has subsequently been judged not to be the place he thought it was; the dates that he had suggested then have been changed; and the dates that he gave for other later work in Palestine are not accepted by other scholars.

Petrie's results are not to any great extent considered correct by other scholars, but the methods which he started are the methods which have been used ever since that time and which are foundational in Palestinian research.

Now, of course, to go into the matter of study in Palestine proper, we would need at least a semester or two; but it is important, I think, for every student to have a little idea of these fundamental principles of Palestinian research without which you cannot properly understand any discussion of any study in Palestine since that time. And so I am going to take a little bit of time in giving the two great discoveries of the Petrie method.

I have been mentioning a little about Petrie's career. As a young man, he was greatly interested in archaeology and went to Egypt and started excavation there. It was he who put excavation in Egypt on a scientific basis. Before him it was largely a matter of treasure hunting: trying to find something that would look pretty in a museum; trying to find one beautiful and interesting object. Quite often you will find things that are not so beautiful and are not so interesting, but their relation to each other; the way you find them; the general situation; will tell us far more for archaeological study than some individual great find. And Petrie began trying to learn everything he could about what was found, the exact arrangement, etc.

He went to Egypt as a very young man, and he had a very little money for the purpose. He would buy cases of canned foods—it was cheaper than getting individual cans—and then every day he would eat a can of pineapple; and then when he would finish the case, he would open a case of spinach; and in his early days—that way—he submitted himself to all sorts of privations in order to save a few cents so he could excavate a little bit longer. It was a good many years before he acquired the fame and standing and recognition which led various groups in England to get behind his work and put it on a basis where

such considerations were not so important. This was one of the methods that he used for saving money. He evidently was not such an expert in diet as he was in archaeology. But in Egypt, he studied the material he discovered, and he explored all of Egypt. He has written 50 or 60 books on Egyptian studies.

A friend of mine whom I met in the Cairo museum in 1929; and who had spent a month before that in the Cairo museum; studying everything there, as much as he could in that month; told me that for many of the ancient Egyptian objects in that tremendous museum in Cairo, they put the name of the man who discovered it, or who had excavated it. He thought four-fifths of them at that time would have Petrie's name on them.

He was of tremendous importance in Egyptian excavation and Egyptian studies, even though in Egypt there are many points at which his conclusions have been revised. Others are not, but the method that he used was recognized there, as in Palestine, as having laid the foundation. Petrie was asked by the Palestine Exploration Fund to begin excavations in Palestine in 1890; and he only worked there six weeks. Others took it up at that point and went on.

When he began, he came up there and looked around; and they asked him to excavate the ancient city of Lachish; and from the references to Lachish in the Bible—the second most important city in Judah—I imagine most of you know what the first one is. He looked at the map, and then he studied what there was in the Scripture and then decided about where it was; and they sent him there to excavate.

We know now that wasn't the site of Lachish. Books written about the work there called it Lachish, even books on archaeology as late as 1940; you have heard of the work of Petrie there. This doesn't matter, because what he established there was methods and it was the vital method which has been used in studying the archaeological sites.

(1). The importance of the Tell. Now the two great principles that he discovered. The first of them was the importance of the tell. When the map was made of Western Palestine, they were very, very careful in noting everything that they thought was important, and particularly everything that could be important for the study of Palestine in Bible times; and so when Kitchen and Conder would find a little ruin somewhere, they would inquire from the natives, "What is this? What is the name of it?" They would get all the information that they could, and they would decide on the name; and they would be sure to put it on their map; and these little ruins would often bear the names of ancient Biblical places; and they had them on the map; but very often near the ruins, maybe a mile away, maybe three miles away, somewhere in the neighborhood there would be a hill up there and they might say "What is that?" "Oh, that is watch hill" or "That is the hill of the grandfather," or some such name. There

were all sorts of common names given to these hills and sometimes they would put them on their map and sometimes they didn't. They were not particularly interested in these hills. They were particularly interested in all of the ruins; and all of the ruins are marked on their maps, and in places these little hills are too.

But Petrie discovered that these hills were far more important than the ruins. He reconstructed the situation in ancient Palestine. There, the people lived in separate towns. Often they were independent of one another. Often they were wild, marauding people. They often placed a town where it could be defended; but in order to defend a town, it was quite usual to put it up on a hill. It was much easier (without modern weapons) to defend yourself, if you are on a hill and can throw things down on people, than if you are down on the plain and have to throw them up at them, or if you are level with them. And so most of the early towns are built on hills. Maybe not a very large hill, but something of an elevation.

But in addition to that, it is necessary that if the attacking army be stronger than you are, you will be able to resist a siege for a while at least. There is always the possibility that your people will be away and you have to hold out for a few days until they get back. Now, if you have no water supply in your town, and every day you have to go down in order to get your water, the enemy can just cut off your supply of water; and in two or three days they would simply have you before the folks would get back; and so it was necessary that the town be built at a place where there was a good natural source of water.

You don't find such a great many places that have these two qualities together; and so that limits the number of good places, that are good, up until the time of King Omri.

About the time of King Omri, they discovered how to make good cisterns; and once they could make good cisterns, they were more or less independent of springs. They would make a big cistern, and collect the water supply in the winter, and then have it for the summer; so Samaria, with a very little spring, was able to build a great and important city at the time of King Omri; and it continued so through the rest of Biblical times and straight through the New Testament period; it continued a great and important city because of the fact that they were able to use cisterns, and were not dependent upon that one little spring. But previous to that time, they still had to have the spring, and so all of the ancient cities of Palestine had to be near a good spring, and preferably have the spring actually on the hill, where they could build a wall around it to protect themselves.

Then, of course, it was vital to build a big wall. You had to have a wall or it would be practically impossible to maintain your safety. So these towns had a wall, but none of them was impregnable. In every case, eventually an enemy

would come strong enough to conquer them; and when the enemy conquered the city, they might kill the people; they might drive them away; they might knock down part of the wall; they might knock down the houses, and take what they found of value, and go off and leave it in ruins. Or they might decide they wanted a city there; and after the battle was over, they would proceed to build something themselves. Then again, it might remain a ruin, and perhaps ten years later—perhaps a hundred years later—somebody would want to build a town in the neighborhood.

But in any case, the number of places where you could build a decent town was limited; and so it was quite likely that the next town would be built on exactly the same place as the previous one. They would take out of the ground all the things that projected out that looked worth something; the large stones you pull up, and use them for your new building. You flatten the thing over, and leave the rest of the ruins underneath. You'd build your walls a little higher, or perhaps make new walls. And the result was that one town would be built upon another.

In 1929 when I visited Megiddo, I saw a trench there that had been dug across that hill twenty years before by some German explorers. And looking down on that trench, we could see the foundations of eighteen different cities, one above the other. You would see the foundation, and things coming up anywhere from four to ten feet. Then you'd see the foundation of another city. Eighteen cities—one right above the other. Well, this explains how it comes about that we have these cities of the ancient world, one above the other—often a great many of them—and of course, the area varies somewhat; it may for quite a while remain about the same, then perhaps it is narrowed at certain sections and broadened at certain sections. But to quite an extent the walls are one above the other. And the wall keeps the debris in; keeps it from spreading out all over the plain; and as you keep building it up, it keeps getting higher and higher.

And sometimes—in Mesopotamia there is one town that was established about 4000 BC. It was a fairly good-sized hill; and then, as they built town after town on top of it, it got narrower and narrower, until finally it got too narrow; and then they abandoned it. And the result is that, by about 800 BC, this place was abandoned; it was just a little hill, and simply was forgotten until it was excavated in recent years.

Well, all the ancient cities of Palestine were somewhat like this. And after you have studied them a little bit, you learn to recognize them. It doesn't take much time to get to the place where, as you look at a hill, you know right away whether it is a natural hill; or whether it is an artificial mound which you would call a "tell." These tells make rather steep sides more or less parallel to each other, and we get to recognize that particular formation of a tell. And so, even in a brief period there, I learned to recognize them, so that as I went along on

horseback, I'd say, "What's that tell over there? Look at that tell over there! And there's one over there." And you see four or five of them; and then you'd see eight or ten other hills that were not tells, and you'd recognize which they were. Well, nobody had known this before Petrie, and so Petrie went to a little village which had a name which sounded like "Lachish." And looking at this village, with its name like "Lachish," he excavated there and he found ruins which went back to about the time of Christ and stopped there. And then he saw, not far away, a hill which was called "The mother of Lachish." Of course, the very name may have suggested to him something of the idea of the one place being the original town; and going over there, beginning to dig, you found remains from the time of Christ back. And so he brought forward this important fact: that the ancient towns are all in tells.⁵⁵

Well, how is it that we don't have the original names kept today? Why do they call them "the hill of beans" or some such name? Well, that was due to Rome. The Romans established such peace in Palestine as had never been known there before. Herod the great was really a Roman, but he was an Edomite. He had been educated in Rome; he knew Roman customs very thoroughly, and he had Roman soldiers helping him. And Herod the Great, up in Galilee, tried to root out the bandits.

In some of those hills, the bandits would have their caves, near the Sea of Galilee, where they would be absolutely safe up on the side of the hill; and there would be a little bit of a place coming up, a little trail where only one person could come up at a time, and the bandits would be perfectly safe up in these caves. And so Herod the Great had the Roman soldiers come, and they guarded the bottom of it; and they held the bandits in there; and of course, if one of the soldiers started to come up, the bandits above could easily throw things at him, and could kill him; and make it impossible for a force of any size to get there; but the Romans went around to the top of the hill; and they made a sort of platform with ropes, and they dropped it down; and on it there would be several soldiers with full armor; and when it would get opposite the face of the cave, these would meet the bandits, and would destroy them. In that way, Herod the Great rooted out banditry to a large extent in Palestine.

Well, the Romans established peace in Palestine such as there never was before—and has not been right up to the present time. And when this peace was established, walled towns were no longer of much importance. And people would be off doing some work in the fields, or doing something somewhere; and they'd come home, and they'd have to climb up to the top of the hill. Originally a hill; and then town after town built on it, so that it would be quite a climb. And then in the morning, he would have to go off down there again.

⁵⁵ His discovery is now known as Tel el-Hesi; Lachish is at nearby Tell ed Duweir (also called Tell Lachish).

And people got tired of that. They said, "What is the use of living up here? Why don't we go down and make our houses down there in the valley somewhere?" And so most of these towns, in the Roman days, were abandoned; and the people left them, but they took the name with them. So they built a new town with the same name in the valley, anywhere from half a mile to six or seven miles away. And so you have your new village down in the valley six or seven miles away, which often preserves the name which was in use from perhaps as early as two or three thousand BC; and the name has been transferred to a new village that has been founded in Roman days; and the hill there within a few generations was forgotten. We have no records of this having happened in any case, but you have the fact visible there. It is circumstantial evidence; it is evidence of the strongest kind, absolutely unquestioned.

Well now, this discovery was itself a tremendous thing; this discovery that Petrie had made. It revolutionized our understanding of Palestine; our understanding of where to look for things; our understanding of where today to find what is important in ancient Palestine.

(2). The importance of pottery. But Petrie wasn't content with having made this great discovery; he made another one which was equally important. His second discovery was the importance of pottery. Now, that was a thing that he had learned in Egypt. Petrie had excavated in all sorts of places in Egypt; and Petrie had learned there what might be obvious to anyone; and yet no one in Palestine had ever thought of it before—no discoverer or explorer there: that people always, since about I guess 3700 or 3800 BC when pottery was invented, people have always used dishes since that time.

Before that time they didn't have dishes; they may have taken a piece of wood or something, some piece of a fruit, or something to put fruit in; but then they began to make dishes. After that time, wherever people are, there are dishes. And these ancient dishes we call "pottery." They are made usually of clay. Of course, there are metal dishes; but they are not so common. Dishes are mostly made of clay, which is usually fired; and these dishes we call pottery.

And Petrie discovered this about them: that they had to have a great many dishes, and they are not tremendously valuable. And since they are brittle, eventually every dish gets broken if it is used. Unless you put them up in your closet and forget about them and keep them for souvenirs, they will eventually be broken. And once they are broken, it is not often worthwhile to take the time and effort to mend them. We have a couple at home that my wife mended a couple of weeks ago—they broke again. Unless you have some very special reason to want to mend it, you don't usually mend dishes. You buy another one; and when you do mend them, you find that it is usually not very satisfactory. Dishes all eventually get broken, and when they do, you are apt to get new ones.

And so, wherever people live for any length of time, there are broken dishes; and of course, nowadays we have men who come around in trucks, and carry them away. But you didn't have that in ancient times. And so, wherever people have lived, you find bits of broken pottery. And pottery looks different from anything that is natural. You take some dishes, and you break them, and you leave them there, and anybody can recognize them; no matter how small the pieces are, you recognize what they are. You will never take them for bits of stone, or bits of natural earth. You will recognize immediately that they are parts of pottery. And so, if anybody tells you, "Here is a place where people lived in ancient times," and you look around, and you don't find any pieces of pottery there, you know that they are wrong. People did not live there. And on the other hand, whenever you find pieces of dishes, you know that people did live there at some time; at least, someone lived there for some length of time; and if you find very many of them, you know there was quite a settlement there.

Well, this would be important in itself; but far more important than that, Petrie had discovered in Egypt that the people at one time used a certain kind of dishes; and as time went on, the dishes changed. If you take a picture showing Delaware Avenue out here in 1819, you will be greatly amused at the clothing people were wearing, particularly the women. It would look very strange to you—utterly different than anything which you would see women wearing today. The styles of our clothing are changing—the men's to some extent, the women's to a great extent. Well now, this is true with dishes also. The style of dishes changes; and the style can change in many different ways. That was one very fine thing about them. They had a certain shape. In time, it changes into a different shape. You have certain favorite types of dishes; certain favorite styles or shapes; and in time, these are abandoned and others take their place. The shapes of them can change. Then, the way they are made can change. Sometimes they bake them so that they are hard. You touch them and get a metallic sound. At other times, there is no such sound as that.

There are many ways that pottery is distinctive. A great many dishes are colorless; and then they put what they call "slips" on them, just a small amount of coloring that covers the whole thing; and so your clay would be a certain color, and there is this little bit of covering all over. The slip of some light color will be put on it; and in certain periods, one type of slip is preferred more than others; and then sometimes they would take the little top, and they would add a little ornamental fringe to it. The shape of the handle will vary from time to time. Sometimes the people will like to have them with pictures painted on them: animals and different things painted on them. Sometimes they like to have a little writing on them. Sometimes they'll be all in one color, with some black marks on them; and at other times, they will put two or three colors on them, painted with beautiful decorations. There is such a tremendous variety

possible and a certain pattern is followed. And people have a certain habit and then they get a different one.

And you take all these possibilities of variation and, as you trace it through century after century, you have a marvelous means of telling periods of time. Petrie had examined this in Egypt. He had learned it from what he discovered there in Egypt; and had learned the variations in pottery. Well, now, Petrie went to this hill that they thought was Lachish; and he began studying it; and he found that on this hill there were a great many little bits of pottery scattered over the hill. And then he found that on the hill there was a little stream that came down the side of it—or like a little stream bed, at least, where at some time there was water flowing—and when it would rain, it would dig in to that waste; and on the sides of that you could see the pottery sticking out; and he went up and down the hill with his trowel; and he would pull out the pieces of pottery from different levels up and down the hill; and he would examine them and compare them and see the differences between them; and the difference between the type of pieces that were left at a certain level and a level up a certain distance, etc. And so he studied these and he established the great importance of pottery.

The writings may lie, but pottery never lies. There is probably no one here who will not next month write a letter with a date up at the top of it. There is probably no one here but that will receive a letter next month that will be dated January 1950, and someone put 50 when it should be 51. People make mistakes that way in dates. Sometimes you can get the date completely wrong and not notice it. People lie or people make mistakes. Inscriptions often are very unsatisfactory for dating.

There was one ancient Palestinian town where they were digging and they were very anxious to learn something of the date, what was the time of it and then as they dug along a certain place they found a side of a brick there that had some writing on it and they said, "Oh, now we will learn something of the time of this place, and of the people who lived here," so they very carefully took it off; and they looked at the writing; and the writing was carefully cleaned off and they read it and it said, "My love Isabelle". Well that didn't tell anything about the date, (laughter). Inscriptions are often like that. They are something that some person has put up as an incidental of some sort which doesn't tell you anything about the history of the people or the town of the people; but pottery doesn't lie, because the pottery that you use at one period is different from another; and it is not worthwhile for people to alter or change it; and especially if you have many pieces of broken pottery, you get quite a bit that is perfectly clear.

The only thing that has been deceptive about pottery has been some of the activities of the Americans who were in research in recent years. In 1929 when I was there, if we would go to a place and we would come to one of these hills;

and we would go all over it, and we would find these pieces; and we would take one up and see the jar handle; and the leader of the expedition would say, "That is a typical jar handle of about 1500 BC"; and then we would find another one and he would say, "That is typical of about 800 BC"; and we would get these, and fill our pockets with them; and then we would go and visit another place, and find a lot of interesting specimens; and we would take these out of our pockets and put the others in; and the result is that a later explorer might be deceived at first by finding some that we had carried from one site to the other. (laughter) And of course when you had begun exploration, there was no such deception anywhere; and even with this, there was comparatively little of it. You might be deceived with the first few pieces that you found, but that wouldn't go very long and if they are buried, there is no such chance of error at all.

And so Petrie's six weeks in Palestine seemed very unsatisfactory to many people. What did they discover? They found that Lachish was up on a hill instead of down in the valley there where he said; and we now know that it wasn't Lachish at all. And he got some pieces of broken dishes there, and what does all of that mean? And 30 years passed by before the whole scholarly world recognized that Petrie had been right; but now it is recognized that it is also of even more importance than thought.

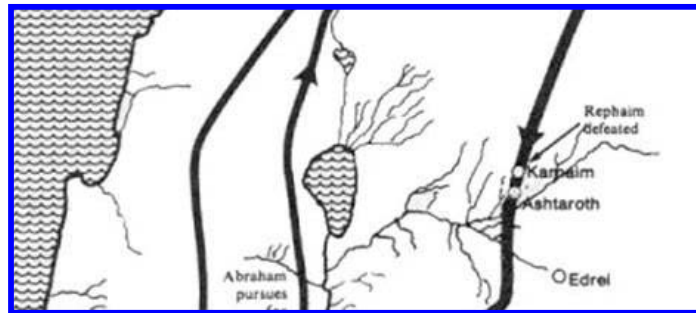
You take a Palestinian city, and you excavate it; and it is a great deal of expense and a great deal of hard work. Well, you can do that on a comparatively cheap basis; too much money, too much effort involved. But after you have done that to a few, and you get a break and a burnt layer of ashes; and you have another city underneath, and a burnt layer of dishes here; and sometimes you find complete ones, and you find many fairly large pieces. After you have done this, you make up a table of variation; and these are the distinctive pottery of the different periods.

Then, when you go to another place—and without ever having to excavate at all—you just hunt around on the surface and see what you find; and you are apt to find enough to tell you when this town was occupied. And that way, for the effort that it would take to excavate one city, you can examine a hundred. You will not learn a great deal about them, but learn the approximate period when they were occupied; and when it comes to establishing the location of various things in ancient Palestine, you can see what a tremendous step has been made simply by being able to tell at what period there was a town here, or there was a town there.

Now as an interesting illustration of this, I call your attention to Genesis 14:5. You read that

And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emins in Shaveh Kiriathaim, 6 And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto Elparan, which is by the wilderness.

Now these peoples are on a good many maps and I am surprised that they are not on these particular ones; but at any rate it wasn't long before they discovered Ashteroth Karnaim and Shaveh Kiriathaim; these two places were found, and they were in Eastern Palestine. They were over here. Here is Ashteroth and here is Karnaim, they are two neighboring towns which were found over there, and Shaveh Kiriathaim is down here near the Dead Sea. [[Full map](#)].



Now you have this over here, and this down here, and the result is that it would sound as if Chedorlaomer and the kings came down this way; but in historic times all of our records show the kings coming down over here. They always went down through western Palestine. There was no instance of their coming down through Eastern Palestine; and therefore some said, "Here you have two places named here on Eastern Palestine; the route they came; and there never was an expedition from Mesopotamia that way; and therefore this story in Genesis 14 is just a fictitious imaginary story."

Well, they examined it and they found that in addition to these two places, a third mentioned in between the two, Zuzims in Ham; now what is that? Well, two researchers had previously noted on the map of western Palestine, among the hundreds of villages named there was this little town of Ham there. There is this little village among many villages over here, and there is the name Ham still preserved by a village over in between Ashteroth Karnaim, and Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the name Ham is the second one in between the two here.

Now it could be that there actually was an actual line, like a route over there at that time. Well, in 1929, I went there with Dr. Albright of the American Schools of Oriental Research; we went on horseback with Professor Jirku⁵⁶, from a German university, and Prof. Lee of Yenching Univ. of China. The four of us went over through this section here; and we were anxious to investigate this properly; and so we came to this area, where this little village of Ham was located on the [map](#); and when we came near that village, we looked up, and right over here, only about a mile from the village we saw a small hill which by

⁵⁶ Anton Jirku (1885–1972). See [Jewish Virtual Library](#).

its shape was very definitely a tell. And as we looked at it, it was easy to see that though it was fairly small, we could make out the outline of a triple line of fortification on the top. Three walls on the one town, showing that it was evidently a fortress which required very strong protection; and now we had evidence, we went up to it and began to examine it carefully and we found pottery there from before the time of Abraham, and from most periods.

And so we found evidence that there had been a continuous settlement there since before the time of Abraham; so, a settlement of his time. There was a strong ancient fortress there completely buried, There has been no excavation done on it—a strong ancient fortress in use at the time of Abraham—and right there the name of Ham has been preserved through the ages, and is used by an Arab village there today; and it was right between these other two places and here it says that they came and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim; and so the evidence of the pottery there, and of the tale, go together with the arrangement of the names here, and the preservation of that name there to show that we have here in this record—not somebody's imagination but an actual record—of a campaign that took place in the time of Abraham; and that is an illustration of the importance of this matter of the tells and the pottery, the two foundations upon which all subsequent study of Palestine rests.

In 1926, John Garstang dug at Lake Huleh, the "waters of Merom", just north of the Sea of Galilee, the site of Joshua's victory over the Canaanites in Joshua 11:5. He made a very brief excavation digging into the ground a comparatively short distance, but getting parts of several different strata; and from it he took 30 pieces of pottery—a little bit of the edge, a little bit of the handle, something of a clue perhaps as to what they might be. Some of them were better than others. He took these thirty pieces of pottery and he came to see Professor Albright, and he asked him what time-period these pieces of pottery came from.

Dr. Albright looked at one. He touched it and swept the side of the clay; he saw the color of the slip whether there was a little light color on it or not; what kind of decoration; what sort of shape that he could see and so on. Some of them were fairly small pieces. He gave a statement regarding each of the pottery pieces as to what he thought about them.

And then Professor Garstang returned to England; and in Paris he visited Pierre Vincent, whom Dr. Albright always used to refer to at that time as the leading authority in the world on Palestinian archaeology. P. Vincent was at the school many, many years and had kept up with all of the different excavations, but P. Vincent was now in Paris; and Garstang told him about his excavation. He said that he had some pottery with him and Vincent expressed the desire to see it; and Garstang showed it to him. He asked him what he would think was the date

of the pottery; and Vincent went through them and he named and took each piece of the pottery and told him about what century or half century that he thought it came from.

And when he got through, Garstang took out his notebook and compared what Albright had said with what Vincent had said; and he found that in all but three cases they agreed exactly as to the century from which it had come; and in the case of those three, each of them had said, "This piece is not particularly distinctive. It is hard to tell from what one this one is; I would guess that it might be this." So they had differed as to their guess on three of the pieces which were not particularly distinct, but they had each labeled those three as somewhat uncertain. And so Albright thought that this was a very remarkable test which showed that here were two men independently looking at this pottery and reaching the same conclusions about it and showed that it really was on a solid scientific basis.⁵⁷

Of course, that was 1927—a long time after 1890. Petrie merely laid the foundation of method; and after six weeks in Palestine, Petrie returned to Egypt and continued his work in Egypt; and it was many years before he again carried on work somewhere in Palestine.

Now, we started to look at Palestinian Research from 1890 to 1920 and the first heading under that was Petrie. Now, one of the most important excavations after Flinders Petrie's work was the excavation of the ancient city of Gezer. From the viewpoint of our knowledge of Palestine, Gezer has given us far less information than have various other excavations. This is partly due to its being one of the first great excavations made in Palestine. However, the fact that it was made so early tremendously increases its interest and its importance in the history of the development of Palestinian archaeology.

b. R. A. Stewart Macalister at Gezer. The great work that was done during this period was the work of Professor Macalister at Gezer, a town which was mentioned a good many times in the Old Testament [see [map of Ancient Palestine](#)]. Professor Macalister was an Irish professor of Celtic archaeology, whose primary field was not the study of Palestinian archaeology, but who was very well versed in general archaeology; he went to Gezer under the direction of the Palestine Archaeological Society of Great Britain—went there and carried on the work almost single-handed. It was marvelous industry, the work which he did at Gezer over a series of years, but he was insufficiently helped. He was in a position where it was necessary either to pay too little attention to the direction of the excavation, or too little attention to the reporting of what was discovered; and so, being alone, his work is nothing like what it would have

⁵⁷ John Garstang's discovery was Tell Hazor, which Wikipedia calls "the largest fortified city in the country and one of the most important in the Fertile Crescent... It is the largest archaeological site in northern Israel."

been if he could have had more competent assistance. Also, of course, it was greatly hampered by the fact that you have to learn on various tells before you can learn how to do it. You have to try different places and learn by experience, and Gezer was one of the places where they learned by experience

Macalister went to Gezer and excavated there from 1902 to 1905 and 1907 to 1909; and during this time he uncovered a great deal of material at Gezer and some very remarkable things indeed.⁵⁸ Gezer is mentioned perhaps 20 times in the Old Testament; it is also mentioned in I Maccabees a number of times, and mentioned in other ancient records; and there at Gezer, which is 19 miles northwest of Jerusalem, there was this Tell 1700 feet long, 300 to 500 feet wide.

The French scholar Charles Claremont-Ganneau in 1873 had discovered a boundary stone with an inscription that said "This is the boundary of Gezer"; and from that he concluded directly that this Tell was ancient Gezer; and Macalister dug into it and he found among other things a great rock, with 80 steps going down 94 1/2 feet, made about 2000 BC and abandoned about 1400 BC [*ibid.* p.262]; and the top of it completely covered over, and other settlements above it. He found an open cistern from a far later period, which would hold 2,000,000 gallons of water. He found a great high place with eight large columns, representing ancient Canaanite worship before the time of the Israelites. He found a wall 13 feet thick with towers every 90 feet [*ibid.* p.238].

I am just giving you a few illustrations to show that he found the remains of a great city, which had existed long before the Israelites were there, and was important through the Israelite period. It was the first really large excavation in Palestine, and it aroused tremendous interest. It is not nearly as important to us now as a great many other subsequent excavations. It is not so important for two reasons. One was the fact that it was the pioneer excavation. There had been no other large Tell excavated before; and when you are doing a thing like this for the first time, you learn a great deal.

I picked up a book today that says if you want to learn to be a writer don't start writing short stories. Write a novel. The reason—it said—is that if you write a short story and send it to a magazine, you will get it back rejected; and if you write another, you will get it back rejected; and by the time you have enough practice at writing anything that is any good, you have probably lost all confidence in yourself. You probably won't keep on writing. Or if you have any confidence in yourself, the magazine will be so convinced by all the rejected material that you sent them, that it was no good, and they would probably not read what you finally wrote. But he said, the way to do it is to write a long novel; and then when you get to the end of it, look back at the beginning of it;

⁵⁸ R. A. Stewart Macalister, [*The Excavation of Gezer 1902-1905 and 1907-1909*](#), John Murray, 1912.

and with all the practice you have had in writing the whole thing, you will be astonished at how poor the first part is; so he says, you go back and start over again, and do the whole thing over; and when you get to the end, then you go back, and still you can see how poor the beginning was; and he said, after you have gone through it this way about four or five times, rewriting it so many times that finally you have reached the conclusion that you have something worthwhile; and maybe you will have by that time, and you may be able to get it published right away.

Well, now that is an illustration of the fact that if you are going to do anything worthwhile, you have to work on it; and you have to spend time; and you have to learn how to do it; and you learn a good deal by making mistakes. And when you finish, start over again.

But you can't take a big mound full of remains of ancient times, and start at the top and excavate it down to the bottom; and when you get through, go back and start and do it all over again. Once it is done, it is done. Once the material is taken out of the ground it is gone. You will learn a certain amount from the relation of the things to one another. You'll have certain individual objects from it which are interesting in themselves; but they don't tell you one tenth as much out there alone as in their relationship to each other.

A tremendous amount of knowledge is buried in that Tell; and it will stay there for centuries if you leave it there; but once you take it out, only what is taken from it while you are excavating it remains; and consequently for any great excavation that is carefully made, there is the ability attained to do better the next time. And, of course, a certain amount of that knowledge can be passed on to others; and consequently excavation has progressed; and as we have done each one, in general there has been an upward curve in improvement.

This was a pioneer excavation at Gezer, and a great deal was learned about nothing in it; for it is very, very difficult to excavate in such a way as really to discover what is there. It is easy to strike a big mud wall—a very important mud wall—and dig right through the dirt and never see it. It is very easy to do. You have to learn just exactly how to do it.

It is easy to be utterly mistaken about what a thing is; and you dig it up and destroy it before you realize the true situation.

There are two difficult things to do in excavation. One is to direct the men as to exactly how they are going to do it, because there is a tremendous lot of work to be done; the leaders cannot possibly do all the mechanical work; you have to have a great many natives working, and yet they have to be very carefully directed to be sure that they actually discover, and do not destroy. And then there is another equally important task; and that is to record what is found. And

you find something that is of very little importance. It seems to be the relation of two things, the arrangement of something. What you find may seem of very little importance; but as you go on and find other things, this is the clue to them, and they to this; and if this isn't correctly and accurately recorded, you lose a great part of its value.

These are the two difficult things: the direction of it and the recording of it. And some excavators are good at direction and poor at recording; and some are good at recording and poor at direction; it is too much of a job for any one man to do both in any satisfactory way. Macalister was almost alone in doing this. He had one or two western assistants from time to time, but no one near his own stature. He had to carry on the work himself the best he could. It was a marvel of industry. It was a remarkably excellent piece of work which this archaeologist did, and his first work there in Palestine; but it was nothing to what could be done if you had several men who would work together and take care of different aspects of it. Macalister neglected the careful control in order to get the recording right, which is perhaps better than the other way, but either is bad. But one man can't do both; with the funds he had, he probably did about the best that could be expected on a pioneer excavation like this.

There was a great deal learned from it. Any book that was published 40 years ago about Palestinian excavation would have most of its pictures dealing with Gezer, with Macalister's excavation at Gezer. Any book on the subject is apt to have a good deal about it; but it is not near as productive an excavation—naturally—as some later, which have the experience and the knowledge and the observation of that first excavation to help in doing that one.

But there was another thing that was not Macalister's fault at all; and it is one which many an archaeologist finds, especially in Palestine. Right on the top of the mound was a tomb of a little Mohammedan saint; and very often you find that. A Mohammedan saint has been buried right on the top of the hill; and there is a little shrine to him; and nobody pulls the turf back. He would cause a riot and massacre if he disturbed that; and consequently this particular section could not be disturbed; and evidently that was right where the citadel of Gezer was. He found a few inscriptions in the early Hebrew writing, one of them giving a list of the months of the year, and telling what crops to plant in each particular month. It was called the Gezer Calendar. It is an interesting thing. It is quite brief, it doesn't tell us a great deal. He found a few little inscriptions that are the sort of thing that we would expect children to scribble on the wall somewhere. They don't tell much. They tell a little bit about the grammar and the language. They don't tell anything about the history.

He found two cuneiform tablets, and that is all the writing that he found in it. Now in a city of the importance of Gezer, if he could get to the citadel, he would probably find hundreds of cuneiform tablets. Of course, the one

disadvantage in Palestine is that they had good papyrus to write on, but papyrus doesn't last. Well, it does last much better than our paper, but at that it doesn't last well enough to last through the centuries. The papyrus disappears. Clay cuneiform tablets, these clay tablets written in the cuneiform language of Mesopotamia, are the most durable things; and most probably, from that early time, there would be a great many of them left if you could get to the citadel, but he didn't get there.

3. The Stone Age, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age. We speak of the Stone Age as the period before 3000 BC; and we call that the stone age, not because they didn't have copper then. In the last few centuries of it, they had a good bit of copper, but they used the copper like stone; that is to say, they would get a piece of copper, and they would hammer on it, and they would beat into it; and they would break off a piece of it; and they would get it into a certain shape, just as you would take a piece of stone. Before that we had the most exquisite work—not so much in Palestine, as in Mesopotamia—we had before 3000 BC the most exquisite work made out of stone. People in the late Stone Age had lots of copper, and they made very artistic things out of the stone.

And then about 3000 BC somebody in Mesopotamia, probably, discovered how to take copper, and not treat it like a stone, but smelt it and put it into the shape, the exact shape; and you could do this much faster than by treating it like a stone. You could do it much faster, and you had a far greater variety of shapes; and that was one of the great technical advances in the age, when they learned to smelt copper; and in about 3000 BC, you have a complete change in the civilization of the ancient world with this discovery about copper, because that was the discovery that didn't stop; it spread through the world.

Immediately, when some regions were able to smelt copper, the stone age was over; because those who could smelt copper could make weapons much faster than the others could; and they could make a much greater variety of weapons than the others; and the result was that, if they had proceeded immediately and quickly, they could have conquered the world; but they didn't do it, they proceeded slowly; and the result was that before they established peace using the new weapons they had, other surrounding cities learned to handle the copper, too; and the result was that they attacked them and destroyed them first.

And so there is hardly a town in Mesopotamia—perhaps not anywhere in the Near East—that was not destroyed and burned at about 3000 BC. Once the copper smelting was available, it meant that—until everybody had it—whoever had it was superior over those who didn't have it. And it caused complete turmoil and complete havoc, and upheaval and confusion, until finally things settled down into a new regime; a new system, larger political units than

before; better organized armies than before; a condition which made it possible, and necessary, to introduce the widespread use of writing.

Writing begins about the same time copper begins; and so history begins when you have the writing; and so just about 3000 BC history began; and it is the beginning of the Bronze Age—or you can call it the copper age if you want. You can call it the Bronze Age. I think that everyone should know that bronze is an alloy of copper. I think that any alloy of copper, you would call brass; but if you put a little tin in with it, you would call it bronze.

I was told once, by an expert for a copper company, that if you take approximately 60% of copper and, I think he said, 40% of zinc—which is nearly the composition of one of our pennies—you get a certain alloy which is much stronger than the copper is alone. But then he said, if you will take one half of one percent of tin and add it to it, the result is two and one half times as strong as it was before. That tiny bit of tin makes that whole thing much stronger. Well, the result is that our pennies are bronze, not brass.

In the Bible, there is no separate word for brass or bronze or copper. The Hebrew word *n'chosheth* means any one of the three. It really means copper; but in the Old Testament for some reason—I wish I could ask the King James translators why on earth they did it—for some reason they always translated it brass; and you read in the Old Testament that this is brass and that was brass; and part of the image was of brass; and to us today, brass sounds cheap and unsubstantial; but actually you might just as well translate it as bronze, which is tough and strong and durable and useful; and if you translate it simply copper, which is a general metal, you avoid the question of which or what kind of an alloy it is.

But these alloys were, of course, bronze alloy. We call it the Bronze Age, and make it the alloy; they often seemed to have found the copper not in a pure form. It was really a bronze which they found. But the introduction of the Bronze Age established a new equilibrium in the world. About 3000 BC there was a tremendous overturning and upheaval and destruction through the world; after this, which lasted maybe a century, there was an equilibrium established which lasted in general for about 1000 years. Of course, there were upheavals and changes in it; but there was more or less of an equilibrium for about 1000 years; and that we call the Early Bronze, the period to about 2000 BC A period which was of much faster tempo of life than the previous Stone Age, but yet in general, a fairly slow tempo of life.

The people who first had the copper, and didn't have sense enough to use it immediately, were killed off; and the others who got it next established themselves. You have a general equilibrium—more or less general—for about 1000 years. Then we call the next period the Middle Bronze. And that lasts only

about 500 years. And then for about 400 years we call this period the Late Bronze.

The Middle Bronze period is another time of upheaval for everybody; large numbers of people moving from one area to another; and you have more divisions, more great breaking down, more destruction in these 500 years than in the previous 1000 years. That is the Middle Bronze period; then you have the Late Bronze period, which lasted until about 1200 BC; and then after the Bronze period, we have the Iron; and the step forward from Bronze to Iron is not a fraction as great as the step forward as from stone to bronze.

It is a real step, because they were able to do things with the iron they couldn't do with bronze; at least, they had a good deal more of it than they had of the bronze. Once they really got the iron, it made quite a difference, but nothing like the difference made in getting the bronze. So about 1200 BC, or perhaps a little before, is the beginning of the Iron Age. And that immediately reminds you all of King Og. Why is it that it reminds you of King Og? It reminds you of his bedstead. Now, King Og, we read in the Bible, had an iron bedstead. Why on earth should you bother to mention that the man had an iron bedstead? Well, probably nobody knew, in the time of the later Israelite kingdom, why he should bother to mention this fact about King Og; and probably through the early years of the Christian era, the people wondered why on earth should this be mentioned that he had an iron bedstead?

And now we know that it is right at the time of the beginning of the Iron Age; and iron was rare then; and he was the King, and he got an iron bedstead; iron was beginning to come in, and if Og had been a little more on his toes, and had gotten a little faster progress with it, the Israelites would have had a far harder time conquering him than they did; because you remember he was conquered by Moses over on the other side of the Jordan. King Og let the other nations get ahead of him technically just enough that he lost out, but the iron bedstead connects up with the beginning of the iron age.

Well, then you have what we call Early Iron, Early Iron I and Early Iron II—we make the division according to the country usually. We divide the Israelite period into Early Iron I and Early Iron II; then we speak of the Persian period, or the Hellenistic period, the Roman period, the Byzantine period, the Arabic period; and some people facetiously call the latest the Electricity period, but that is not a term used by the archaeologists.

Well, this is the way in which the pottery is divided up into general terms. It is better to refer to it when you begin your work by terms like this than by centuries, because you may have to revise your whole chronology two or three centuries ahead or back in an area, because naturally the pottery is very different in some places than what it is 500 miles away; and it is very different

from one people than it is from another people; but you can trace in the pottery in the Near East, how a people spread in one direction and bring in a certain kind of pottery. Here we have a region here, and suddenly you begin to find painted pottery; and then you will find two or three centuries before, 500 miles over that way, there was lots of painted pottery; and it has been coming over this way. And then you will find, perhaps, 3 centuries later will be another type of pottery, that comes from the opposite direction; and this way you can trace the spread of Israel, and the spread of different races; and it is a very complex and extremely interesting study, particularly in the prehistoric periods; after the history begins you have a great deal of additional material to use in gaining your knowledge, and you are interested in many other features. The pottery is extremely important for noting relationships to other places that have not yet been excavated, and determining what places are really worth excavating.

So much then for the discussion of pottery and the brief mention of Gezer. We could spend a long time on it; but for the purpose of this course, it would not be wise. I'm going to briefly mention a few of the excavations during this period.

4. Other Excavations 1890–1914. Now there were a number of places at which excavation was done between 1890 and 1914, most of which had further—on excavation made after the war—after 1926—and carried on the work considerably further than the point that had been reached prior to that time. We mentioned last fall, in connection with the story of Solomon, the excavation of Megiddo in 1904; and the discovery there of one column, a square column, with a hole across obliquely from one side to the other, a problem the explanation of which was not known until further excavation from 1927 on.

The city of Jericho was excavated at about the same time. The material throwing light on the situation of the walls at Jericho was not gained until the late 1920's. At this particular time, the main sections of Jericho were mapped out; and it was discovered that Jericho had a big gap in its history: that from the period of Joshua up to the time of Ahab there was no fortified city at Jericho; and that, of course, fits into the Biblical account that Joshua made a curse upon the city of Jericho, and cursed any man who would rise up and rebuild the city of Jericho. And then, that in the time of Ahab, we are told in 1 Kings 15, that he and the Bethelites rebuilt Jericho; and that when he rebuilt it, the curse of Joshua was fulfilled upon the city, showing that there had been no walled city at Jericho during all those centuries in between. Well, thus far did excavation go at Jericho prior to the war.

Now, in any discussion of the ancient Old Testament Jericho, you will find that they will talk about the Canaanite Blue City, and the Canaanite Red City; and they sound like very romantic-sounding terms; and you wonder just how they know what were the colors that were characteristic to those cities at those

times; but on inquiry you will discover that when the archaeologist excavated Jericho in about 1906, he found the wall around it, and then another wall of a later period; and the two don't exactly follow, but they cross a bit; and in order to make it clear on his map, he drew one of them with blue ink and one with red—the Canaanite Blue City and the Canaanite Red City of Jericho; and that is the way the names have stuck. Much more was discovered about Jericho 25 years later.

Samaria was another place where excavation was carried on in 1907, this time by Harvard University. There they found the palace of King Omri, and the palace of King Ahab, and the palace of Jeroboam the Second. And many interesting things at Samaria including a good many pieces of pottery with writing on them, in ink; records—receipts they were—from the royal treasury. Lists of material; lists that are not very interesting. They were rather dull, but they give a lot in information when you fit them together. And there was some excavation by a German at Shechem in 1913–14, which has never yet been published; and it is one of the most promising sites, so it is very unfortunate that it never was published.

A street called Straight was built through Samaria by the Romans, when it became a Roman city; and this gives, of course, an interesting analogy to the similar street which the Romans constructed through Damascus when they took that city—the street called Straight which is mentioned in the Book of Acts.

Before the time of the Romans, you would not find a street in any city that you could call a street called Straight. The streets all went around, all crooked in every conceivable direction; but it was part of the efficiency of the Romans, that when they captured a big city, they just cut a street right through the middle of it and it made it easy to find your way from one section to another of the city. I think even today there are some cities that could profit by having a straight street go through them. I am sure London would. It seemed to me over there in London as if just about every street went only about a mile. It would go a mile in this direction; and then you would have another street that would go that way for a mile; and another street would go this way for a mile; and they would just twist all around, as they were built up through the ages.

When I was in Leyden, Holland—they have a straight street there that comes right from the city hall right down to the canal—and I was over at the other side, at the University, about half a mile across from this street; and when they told me at the University how to get back to the center of town, they said, "Walk around the canal down here to this straight street and then go straight up." "Well," I said, "That's a mile and a half and it's only half a mile across; why not go straight across?" He said, "You'd never come to it." The streets all twist and turn so in those medieval cities. It is only very recently that we have reached, to some extent, in city planning the idea which the Romans already had

established in most of the cities that they conquered before the time of Christ. So that phrase in Acts, "the street called Straight," recalls the efficiency of the Romans—an efficiency unparalleled in other countries in ancient times, and in most countries until within the last century.

And then, in Jerusalem, in 1911, they discovered the Siloam inscription. The Siloam inscription there at the mouth of the tunnel which King Hezekiah dug to bring the water of the Gihon spring into the City of David, in order to protect them against the Assyrians. And since Jerusalem was then [1911] owned by the Turks, this inscription was cut out from the rock in the tunnel and taken to Constantinople; and it is in the museum there today. It was then the earliest inscription we had in Hebrew. We have older ones now, but it was from the time of Hezekiah.

We just mention that just before the war in Jerusalem, there was a certain amount of excavation carried on by a sea captain, Captain Montagu Parker, who seems to have been actually looking for treasure. He had managed to bribe the Turkish officials to permit him to go into the most sacred Mohammedan site in Palestine, right on the Temple Mount; and there, in the center of the temple area in Jerusalem, to go in the dead of night and to dig in that ancient, famous sacred rock; and today you can see the holes in it where these men dug at night. Word got out of what was happening, and all sorts of wild, rumors spread around; and it is a wonder every white person in Palestine wasn't massacred by the Arabs.

Parker and the men escaped to the city and got away safely; and the whole thing would have been an utter disaster, except he had asked advice from Louis-Hughes Vincent, the famous archaeologist of the French Dominican school at Jerusalem; and he permitted him to be present at the very excavations which he carried on and to study them; and so later on this was published as *Underground Jerusalem* [Louis-Hughes Vincent, *Underground Jerusalem: Discoveries on the Hill of Ophel, 1909-1911*, London, Cox, 1911]; it was underground in more than one sense, but it told of the discoveries by this work of Parker and gave valuable insights into the earlier history of Jerusalem.

Now from 1914 practically to 1920, you have naturally a complete gap in Palestinian archaeology. Now, however, after the First World War, archaeology opened up again in Palestine, and might be said really only to have begun then. Before that time Palestine had been under the control of the Turks; and if one wanted to excavate in Palestine, he had to get permission from the Turks; and that usually meant bribery; and it always meant the whim of the particular Turkish official. It might be given with no particular reason; it might be suddenly taken away with no particular reason. Conditions were extremely unsatisfactory prior to 1914 in Palestine for excavation.

5. Palestinian research since 1920. After the war, Palestine was under the British mandate; and conditions were so greatly improved that Palestinian archaeology can almost be said only to have begun in 1920. One thing, of course, which made it so much superior to past times, was the greatly increased number of expeditions. From 1920 on there was far greater interest in archaeology; and there were far more different places being excavated at any one time than at any time prior to 1920.

A second factor, however, which was perhaps equally important, was that after 1920 there was cooperation between the different expeditions—that is most of them. Before that time, each excavation in Palestine had been pretty much carried on in ignorance of what was happening elsewhere; and the attitude of the different excavators was, "I am here to make a real discovery; and I don't want this other excavator to know anything about what I am doing, for fear he might get the credit for some of what I am doing; or it might help him make a great name for himself where he is excavating." Now after 1920 there was a remarkable amount of co-operation secured in Palestine with all the excavators except Sir Flinders Petrie. Sir Flinders Petrie returned to Palestine in about 1926, when conditions became very difficult for excavation in Egypt. He moved his work up to Palestine and carried on work there; but he felt he could do better work by not letting his thinking be disturbed by the theories of others; and the result was that Petrie's theories after that time are quite different from those of any one else; and anyone else using his books has to revise and change around his statements, studying his facts and reaching his own conclusions. He was separate from the rest and very non-cooperative in general interpretation. He used his own phraseology, and he refused to try to work in cooperation with the others. This was a real handicap, yet his work was well done; he was one of the greatest excavators in history, and so the facts which he has published have been of real value to us.

All excavators recognize that Sir Flinders Petrie laid the foundation of Palestinian excavation; but subsequently they felt he had continued on the foundation he laid, but that he had gone on in a different direction; and this, of course, means that his excavations stand more or less in a unit by themselves after that time.

One thing that greatly increased cooperation between the others was the fine work done by the leaders in the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem at this time; and one of the best things that they did was to use their influence in getting the Palestine Oriental Society organized in 1921. Men from the various nations in Jerusalem were induced to come together and become members of the Palestine Oriental Society; and in this society, they met every month through the winter, and gave papers, and discussed their work; and each profited by the work of the other. It was an interesting experience to attend a meeting of the Palestine Oriental Society. I had only been in Jerusalem three or

four days when one was held. They had representatives there of all the different religions that you would find in Palestine, and of most of the different languages that you would find there.

You would have a paper given in English by a leader in the British School or the American school; then a German would get up and discuss it in German; an Arab would get up and give his opinion in Arabic; a modern Jew would get up and tell in modern Hebrew what he thought of it; and they would argue back and forth; and then the next paper might be in French; and the next one after that might be in Hebrew; and the next one, perhaps, in German. Thus you had these representatives of different nationalities working together there harmoniously, in order to promote the understanding of Palestine; and the Palestine Oriental Society was the great instrument in backing this cooperation. Another instrument was Dr. Albright, who was for nine years during the twenties the director of the American School of Oriental Research. Dr. Albright did not come to Palestine till after the Palestine Oriental Society had been organized, but he took an active part in it from a time very soon after its foundation; and they all came to recognize that Albright's advice and interpretation of what they discovered was very helpful; and at the same time to recognize his attitude, that whatever they discovered was theirs; and no matter how much he knew about it, he would say absolutely nothing about it until they had published it.

That is recognized in archaeology—the right of the discoverer to make a first publication—and of course that is something that makes people more willing to tell what they have found, when they know that others won't say anything about it until they have published it first. And yet it has its very great handicaps, as when the University of Chicago discovered in Mesopotamia in the twenties an Assyrian king list; and they announced in one of their publications that they had discovered an actual complete list of the ancient Assyrian kings in Mesopotamia, and it was being brought back to Chicago for study; and all over the world everyone who was interested in ancient history began to think that his whole idea of chronology would have to be revised as soon as this was published; and then the professor in Chicago who received this for study, already had three or four other things he was studying; so it remained on the shelf for nearly ten years before he got around to study it and to write it up. In the meantime the rest of the world wondered and questioned and asked what was in it; and nobody was allowed to even have a look at it until the professor was ready with his publication. That's the disadvantage of it; but the advantage, of course, is that people are now ready to say a little about what they have found if they realize that they are going to be given the credit for it and that they will be allowed to publish it.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ [dcb] This right of first publication led to abuse in the publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the latter half of the 20th century because certain scientists refused to make timely release the

I was told in Chicago just this week of a man who had been very anxious in a popular magazine to publish something about the new manuscript of Isaiah which was found last year in Palestine; and he went and asked for permission to publish material about it, and was told by the man who happened to be present at the American School when the Arabs got it around and sold it; and who, therefore, had part of his rights on it, that after April 1 they could publish anything they wanted to about it, if they paid a proper royalty for so doing; but that before April 1 they must not publish anything about it, because his own publication was to come out about that time. Consequently that meant that they had to leave it out from all present plans.

Of course, though, these are just some of the problems that enter into cooperation with different leaders in the field like this. In a field of science, where there is money to be made out of discoveries, there is great jealousy; but in a way it can be forgotten—a good bit of it—because after all the one who makes the success secures a monetary reward from it; but in any field of scholarship, you find that it is very easy for a terrific jealousy to come in among individuals who are anxious that they get credit for being the first one to make a discovery; and sometimes it makes co-operation extremely difficult, as I found myself on certain projects which I have worked upon with non-Christian scholars.

So in Palestine it was a real triumph that so large a measure of cooperation was accomplished. I remember Dr. Albright's telling me an experience that throws a little light on this. There was a great excavation in Palestine, conducted by a great American university, which I don't want to name because of the thing I am going to tell about it. But Dr. Albright went there to visit the excavation; and the man who was the second in charge took him all around and showed him everything and discussed it with him. A new man, who was in actual direction of it, had just arrived from America a month or two before; and he had his own ideas of what was profitable for the honor of his university, and for the honor of the work they were doing; and so as the second man, who had been there for a long time, took Dr. Albright around, the first man came around behind different monuments, and took pictures of it to show how this man was actually showing Dr. Albright everything that they had discovered. He snapped these pictures in order to send them back for evidence; and then that raised the point where he saw that Dr. Albright was actually being shown their most private discoveries there, he came up to the man and told him that he thought it would be much better if these things weren't mentioned to him as yet. In fact, he said that Albright had seen enough of the mound and he suggested that it would be just as well if he go on to other places now. Well, the second in command, it happened—while he wasn't recognized as a director and the leader—was a

texts to the public, presumably to gain an advantage at the expense of other scholars. The refusal grew to scandalous proportions before the texts were made available.

great specialist in a certain area; and he immediately sent a wire back to the United States to the university, saying that he was resigning immediately, if Dr. Albright wasn't permitted access to their work. And the thing was patched over then; and the other director was moved on to a different country and a different place a short time after that; but it just shows the spirit that was so common before, and that would have become dominant there if it were not for the fact that this spirit of cooperation had begun to make its way and succeeded to a very large extent during the period between the two wars.

Now a third factor which made for great improvement in Palestinian excavation after 1920 was the fact that there was so much better a relationship with the government. We noticed that the Turkish government, before the war, had been so arbitrary in whom it would permit to excavate and whom it wouldn't; and it depended in a very large extent on who paid the biggest bribe to the Turkish official. Now, the British government put the matter on a solid scientific basis. They established in the government in Palestine a department of antiquity; and this was given the authority and the responsibility to encourage excavation and exploration in Palestine, but also to oversee it and guard it that it should be done wisely; so it was made a rule that anyone could excavate in Palestine if he had proper qualifications, but that no one should do it without proper qualifications. And proper qualification involved two things. In the first place it involved experience in excavation and knowledge of the field of archaeology proper to take hold of the matter and to do a decent job; and just because a man raised some money, and went over to make a name for himself in excavation was no reason why he should be allowed to excavate; no reason he should take material that has been preserved from ancient times and destroy it—as you inevitably do when you dig up a mound—if he is not qualified to interpret what he's found; enough to preserve for posterity the knowledge that has been buried there all through these centuries.

But the second qualification which was required was a sufficient amount of money to carry the work through properly. There was no sense in allowing a man—no matter how well qualified he might be—to start in the work, and just get the ground nicely opened up, and then have to stop for lack of funds; or work for one year perhaps and get the problem nicely entered into, and then not be able to come back the next season because he wouldn't have funds enough to carry the work through to a proper end; and so if you took a great ancient city in Palestine, which it would take twenty years to excavate properly, if a man had only funds enough to excavate for one year, naturally he would not be given permission to do it; but if you took a small city there, which would be comparatively small and much simpler to handle; and if a man had funds to work one or two years, he might be allowed to start; and thus the Department of Antiquity tried to put the whole business on to a workmanlike basis, and it was a tremendous improvement over the previous situation.

Now a fourth feature which was greatly productive of advance in the mounds of Palestine after this time was the presence in the twenties and the thirties of certain great expeditions in Palestine. That is to say, it was very useful in Palestine, to have a mound there of a small city, and excavate it, and learn of its accomplishment; but all the usefulness of the excavation of small cities was tremendously enhanced by these few great expeditions which took very large cities and examined them on an extensive scale. Often as you look at the results of these great expeditions, you feel of them as if the work was disappointing, and often you get half or two-thirds as much knowledge, it seems, from a small city as you do from a great city, of which the excavation costs are, perhaps, ten times as much; and so you feel in a way as if it wasn't worth the extra expense; but the fact of the matter is that the excavation of the great cities laid the foundation upon which the excavation of the small cities could be successfully carried out.

Just to give an illustration of what I mean, remember the city of Megiddo which we mentioned in connection with the study of Saul? Megiddo is one of the largest cities in ancient Palestine. Since the time of Christ it remained simply a ruin, simply a large hill there. There has been no settlement of any account there since that time. Now this is such a large city that there are over twenty cities there—one above the other—and it rises to a very great height; and it takes a large force of several hundred men working a whole season to open up and examine the whole of any one of these cities; one mound, and of course your levels are one on top of the other and it isn't level at the top of any one—it varies up and down—and there is a certain amount of overlapping as it was done, of course, in a very haphazard fashion when the city was destroyed, or left deserted, and then a new one built on top of it; and so it is a very complicated matter. But the way that a big city like this is excavated, the attempt is made to examine everything you find there.

Now you have a certain layer there. You are absolutely sure. This is the layer, say, from the period of about 800 BC. You have material coming from 700 just above it; you have material, say, from 850 just below it; you are sure that this city is just about from 800 BC. Well now, in the remains of that city you may find thousands of pieces of pottery, and some pots are fairly complete. You may find there a few things in writing; but you'll find a great many things throwing light on the exact customs and habits of the people of that day. Well, this makes it in some ways a tedious study, because you have these thousands of objects to examine as they are discovered; to photograph; to classify; to draw; to write up. It makes a very extensive and often tedious study; and you wonder, at point after point of the thousands of facts, just what this has to do in increasing our knowledge of ancient history? But when you get through with it you have a picture of life in many, many details at each one of these particular periods. And then you take a small city, and you excavate there and you find one percent as much stuff is here, but you can interpret your material from the

small city in relation to this great extensive volume of material from the large cities; and the result is that you are able to learn facts about the history of the small city which that would be absolutely impossible for you if you didn't have this great, extensive amount of material from the large city here, with which to compare the results from many small cities; and some important city in the Philistine domination of Palestine, and also in the previous Egyptian domination; and so Beth-shan, which was excavated by the University Museum of Philadelphia; right along with Megiddo, which the University of Chicago excavated; our actual increase and wider understanding of Palestinian history naturally comes to a far greater extent from the small cities than from the few big expeditions. But it would not be nearly as successful or effective if it were not for these few great expeditions that have been carried out.

Now I want to mention to you now just three great expeditions.

a. Megiddo, which the University of Chicago excavated. They began at the top and they went on down; and they gathered material at Megiddo from way back in prehistoric days. It must have thrown light on later Israelite history. It must have thrown light on the period of David and Solomon. It must have thrown light on the early history, going back into prehistoric days. It was one of the greatest expeditions that has been carried on in Palestine.

The work at Megiddo began in 1925 and was continued until 1937. There was very little intermission at Megiddo. The work was carried on with money furnished by J.D. Rockefeller Jr., with the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Rockefeller gave the Oriental Institute about 12,000,000 dollars; and they carried on great excavations in different sections; and they spent their money like a drunken sailor. It seems as if there would be no end to it. It meant that there was a good deal of wastage in money, and at the same time there were a good many very worthwhile things done that probably wouldn't have been done if you didn't have unlimited funds to do them. And as long as Prof. James Henry Breasted, the head of the Oriental Institute lived (he died in 1934), the money came in in great amounts and wonderful things were done; it was just poured out lavishly; and then Breasted died, and Rockefeller didn't know who was to succeed him; and he decided he had given enough money for the time; and so they had all these great works in different parts of the world, and they had to stop or slow up—try to get along with what they had and with what gifts that came into them—and they sold off an awful lot of what they had; and it made a tremendous change. The men at the Oriental Institute on the whole feel that it was a change for the better; the general situation was much better, when you were watching your money and spending it carefully, than in the previous situation when Breasted had all he wanted; and ordered the rest of the men around like labor in the work; but yet it was a great thing for archaeology that they had all that money. Breasted was able to establish these great excavations in Egypt and Mesopotamia and in Palestine; and this one in

Pa1etine at Megiddo was that which gave a continuous history from very early times right up to the Persian period. It is the place where the book of Revelation speaks of Armageddon, and of course, Armageddon means the "hill of Megiddo."

b. Beth-shan. ([See Palestine Topographic Map](#)) Megiddo is the fortress which guards the passage across the mountains, across Mount Carmel from the highway by the sea—the way of the Philistines, as it is called in the Pentateuch—over into central Palestine, and so it has a strategic and tremendously important situation. It does not feature in Israelite history beyond the time of David. At that time it was abandoned for a time; then later on re-established. So there is considerable there of history, not a great deal, but considerable. After that time it became one of the cities of the Decapolis—one of the ten Roman cities. It was one of the Egyptian headquarters before the time of the coming of the Israelites. It has many relations with Egypt and with Mesopotamia.



Beth-shan guards the passage from the center of western Palestine down to the Jordan valley. It is about on a level [north-south] with Megiddo only quite a bit further east; and we read in Samuel, that Saul's body was fastened to the wall of Beth-shan; and the men of Jabesh-Gilead came over and took down the bodies of Saul, and of his sons, and gave them a decent burial.

It was not a city which was especially prominent in the Bible. We do not have much there after the tenth century BC until comparatively late. During the period of the divided monarchy, the city seems not to have been active; but later on it was quite an important place. It was one of the ten cities which was the Decapolis in the time of Christ; and before the time of David it was a very important city in the Philistine domination of Palestine, and also in the previous Egyptian domination.

It is such a tremendous job to excavate a place like Beth-shan that it could never be done by an ordinary excavator. It takes a great deal of support back of it. And so Beth-shan was excavated by the University Museum of Philadelphia right along with Megiddo, which the University of Chicago excavated. These were two of the three great excavations in Palestine. Both of these excavations

were begun during the twenties, carried on to quite an extent during the twenties and then on into the thirties.

c. Lachish. Now the third great excavation—there have been a great many smaller ones—but the third great excavation in Palestine is the excavation at the real Lachish. We mentioned that Tell El Hesi, which Petrie excavated in 1909, was thought then to be Lachish; and even in books as late as 1925. we find Petrie's works called the excavations of Lachish.

Lachish was the second most important city in Palestine. King Sennacherib, the great Assyrian ruler—far across the desert in Assyria—in his palace put up a great stone relief on the wall, which shows Lachish in the land of Judah and the armies of Sennacherib attacking this great city of Lachish; overcoming it; knocking down the walls; the people marching out of the city with their hands raised above their heads; and the king making judgment as to who should be killed and who should be taken off to slavery. Now, King Sennacherib was ruler of an empire many times as great as the kingdom of Judah; and King Sennacherib had conquered many cities far greater than Lachish. He had done many things that would seem to be out of all proportion to the achievement of conquering Lachish; and yet this is the great wonderful monument which you find in his great Palace in Assyria.

Prof. Albright, who was director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, 1920–29, decided that the tell where Petrie had dug was too small to be Lachish; and studying the different tells down there and examining the pottery of them and their relation to one another—the geographic situation and so on—he decided that another hill was Lachish rather than where Petrie had excavated; and about 1925, Dr. Albright presented this theory, but nobody paid any attention to it for 20 years.

Now in the beginning of the thirties, the British School of Archaeology began excavation; but meanwhile they kept on calling Petrie's work the Lachish excavation; and then Petrie did some excavation in Palestine again; and his successor, trained under him, began the excavation of Tell El Hesi (Petrie's Lachish); and there they found the written evidence of what it was; and Albright's conjecture made on the basis of study of location and study of pottery ten years before was proven to be correct. So any book written after about 1935 will refer to Petrie's work as Tell el Hesi, the actual name of the place, rather than Lachish, the erroneous name.

The excavation of Lachish gave abundant proof that this was indeed the site of ancient Lachish, the second most important city in Palestine; and the site has given a great body of material, as did Megiddo and Beth-shan, for the comparing of material from other sites all over Palestine. In addition to that, it has given some especially outstanding specific discoveries.

Now at Lachish the work was under the direction of James Sparkey, one of the most expert excavators whom modern Palestinian study has seen; and it was very unfortunate that one evening as he was driving in from Lachish to Jerusalem some Arabs stopped his car, made him get out and then fired several shots into his head, and left him there dead. It was thought later they had taken him for somebody else. Whatever the real cause of it, the fact is that in this fight between the Arabs and the Jews, in which Sparkey had taken no part, he was the victim and it put an end to the life of one who was as promising an excavator in Palestine as anyone ever was in that land. I think Dr. Albright perhaps was a little bit excessive in his statement when he wrote his memorial to him, when he said, "As long as the Bible shall be honored the name of James Sparkey shall also be honored." I think that is a little bit extreme, but I think nevertheless that we should give him honor for the fine work he did, and regret greatly that he did not live to continue another five years; his death brought a pause to the work in Lachish; and much that would be of tremendous importance in the light it would throw on the conquest of Palestine at Lachish has never yet been discovered because of his death. Let us hope that the work at Lachish can be continued again some time in the not too distant future.

Now those are four matters I have mentioned of great change after 1920 from the situation. There is a fifth to be mentioned,

6. The Presence of Specialists By the 1920s there were a number of individuals who had gone to Palestine and worked there, or who went during the twenties, who came to be specialists in particular fields of study. Some were specialists in details of excavation.

a. Clarence Fisher. One of those was Clarence Fisher, of Norristown, Pennsylvania, who went to Palestine—went to Egypt first, and worked in excavation in Egypt, learning much of solid method in excavation; care in distinguishing the different languages; and reporting what was found; and then in Palestine, he was the first Director of the work at Megiddo and at Beth-shan.

Fisher does not seem to have had the ability to be a director. He was not continued at either place as director very long. The particular knack of administration, of directing a large excavation like this, does not seem to have been his; but he is recognized as being as fine a master of the specialized details of proper conduct of an excavation as has ever been produced; and fortunately Dr. Fisher remained in Palestine, taking a great interest in excavation; and almost every excavation which he carried on in Palestine for a number of years—for a period of ten or fifteen years—benefited by his knowledge. He was constantly called in as an expert; called in for advice; hired for a period of time to give suggestions; to carry on a certain part of the work; and Fisher, and others that were in Palestine over a period of time, took an

interest in various excavations; and gave a unity to the method of work done; through the discoveries which could not possibly be attempted when you have simply a little group coming from America, and working, and then leaving, and another group coming from another country, and working, and leaving. These specialists give a unity to it.

b. William F. Albright. I think you might perhaps call Dr. Albright, who was there for nine years as Director of the American School of Oriental Research in the twenties, a specialist in human relations, as he took an interest in all these different mounds. I remember one—the excavation of Shiloh—which was begun by the Danes; and there were two Danes there who were working—both of them very excellent in their own field—but they just couldn't get along together. I think about every week, one or the other would get thoroughly grieved at the other; and he would come down to Jerusalem looking for sympathy; and they had come to—both of them—know that they could get sympathy from Dr. Albright; and so every week, about, Dr. Albright took a little time out from his other duties to smooth the ruffled feelings of the particular one of these two Danes who came in; and to fill them with renewed enthusiasm for the work; and to get him to go back; and to get along with that other disagreeable fellow for the sake of the good work that had to be done; and he was a great help as a specialist in this line, in keeping the work moving; and of course, as he circulated around among the different excavators, it was very helpful to the general collaboration and cooperation among them. He also carried on a number of excavations at different times—fairly small excavations—but they had results of considerable importance.

Now, there's one type of excavator that is rather unfortunate to have, that they have in other countries and you have in Palestine. I just mention, when I was there with Dr. Albright, we went on a horseback trip through the country; and we came before long to a great mound where we stopped and visited. There was a great modernistic professor from California, who had been worsted in a debate on the accuracy of the Bible; he had taken a very radical stand, and been rather worsted by some of the students with whom he had been rash enough to debate on the subject; and desirous of recouping his professional standing, he had announced that he was organizing a great expedition to go to Palestine and make great discoveries; and then he went there, and instead of doing as most excavators would like to do—finding a place way back in the back country as far as possible where you can carry on your work without being interrupted—he found a very splendid mound which was just about fifteen miles from Jerusalem and right on the main road; so there as you go on the main road, you see that great hill rising up; and on top of it you see men rushing around carrying baskets; and you see work going on; and I said when I was over in Jerusalem, car after car would come through with these visitors from all over America; and they would stop and go up the mound; and here was the very noted excavator, standing there at the entrance to the building, welcoming all the visitors; and

he would welcome a visitor, and have you write your name in his guest book, and show you some of the things that had been discovered; and you'd come back to America and tell how you had met the greatest authority on Palestinian excavation himself there and at work.

Now with all the time he spent in greeting visitors, the work could very well have been another failure; but fortunately he was able to get ahold of some specialists in Palestine who really knew what they were doing; and he had sense enough to let them really conduct the work, and only to be the figurehead himself; and so they carried on the work; and they were competent, and there was some very good work done. The only thing he insisted on was "This is Mizpah we are excavating," because he announced before he went that he was over there to discover Mizpah; and when Dr. Albright said, "It may be Mizpah, but I think it is more likely Ataroth," it didn't appeal to him much that it would be the Ataroth expedition, so he called it the Mizpah exposition, and made a good deal of that; but whether it was Ataroth or Mizpah, there were some very valuable things found there; and there was real advance made in Palestinian archaeology, even though many hundreds of American tourists were given an utterly distorted idea as to who the real leaders in archaeology are, as a result of the way this particular work was carried on.

Now this professor died after the work had been carried on for some years, and before much of it had been published; and some others had been studying, examining the great amount of material which he brought home; and the volumes are just beginning to appear on it now; and it should be really very much worthwhile. Of course, many another who will go with the same sort of ideals which this gentleman had, are apt to neglect the work; or would rather do it themselves, instead of having sense enough to leave it in the hands of those who are competent; so it simply points out one of the dangers of this sort of thing. The publicity that may be connected with it is apt to be a danger, and to hinder the real accomplishment which should come from this type of work.

Now of the many excavations which have been made in Palestine, I don't think we'll take time in this class to go into any of them particularly in length; but rather to look at the results which have been attained at various points in our study of the history upon which they throw light; and thus to note different ones; and we will constantly be referring to these principles of Palestinian study which we have observed in this hasty way.

C. The Relation of Palestinian Archaeology to the Patriarchal period.

Now, here also we will have to be brief and hurried because our time has gone more rapidly than it should have this semester; but our history in the Bible in the period of the patriarchs begins with Abraham coming out of the Ur of the Chaldees; and we will refer to that in connection with the brief introduction to

Mesopotamian archaeology next semester; but it is described where he went from there up to Haran—the city which you all, of course, mentioned on your paper that you turned in to me—and then he went from Haran on across from the Northern desert there, along the Euphrates River, and then came back down from the North into Palestine; and then we read how he came into the land of Canaan; and he passed through the land; the Canaanites were then in the land, a statement that many have taken as throwing question on the Mosaic authorship of the Book of Genesis; but there is no reason why it should because it is simply pointing out the situation when Abraham came down there. He didn't come into an empty land; he came to a land in which there were strong people round about him, and people of warlike disposition; and here we read that in [Genesis 12] vs. 8, he came down, and he removed unto a mountain on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent; having Bethel on the west and Hai on the East. We usually call this Ai. The H would have come in through the Septuagint from a rough breathing, but there is no H in the Hebrew. It refers to Ai; and then from there he went down into Egypt; and then he came up out of Egypt; and we find after that that Abraham moved back and forth in the land of Palestine. We find him sometimes living up north here, near Shechem up in this area; and we find him living down here near Bethel and Ai; and we find him living down at Hebron—quite frequently near Hebron—and when Jacob left Isaac, to go to the land of Mesopotamia, up there at Haran to see his uncle. When he left, we were told where he was, and where the previous things happened; and we have about two chapters describing events that happened in this place; but there is only one mention of the place when we are told how he left it.

And in the previous two chapters, you will question where did this happen? What was the name of the place? And you all know that it was Beersheba. Now Beersheba is way down here in the south. Well, now this is interesting isn't it? That Abraham was sometimes up here, and sometimes here, and sometimes here, and sometimes here; and it shows that his life was a semi-nomadic life. We don't find him moving down here, except in the famine, when he went down to Egypt. We don't find him moving down into the Jordan valley. He would go to these places for a particular purpose; but he lived back and forth, up and down here, and so did Isaac, and so did Jacob—in this hill country of Palestine. And so we find various places mentioned in which he lived at this time. Now that we know how to recognize a tell; and now that we know how to tell from pottery when a place was occupied; it has been interesting to try to locate the places mentioned in Genesis. *And every place of importance, mentioned in Genesis, in Palestine, has been located*; and an interesting thing is this. As you go on, later on in the OT History, you find places like Shiloh and Samaria and other places that are mentioned there, but they are not mentioned in Genesis; and some of those later places have no remains earlier than the later period; but pretty nearly every place mentioned in Genesis there—except one—has been located, with pretty definite evidence of actual occupation at that time.

Now the one that has not been accurately located is Hebron; and no one raises much question about Hebron, because it is called the "fourfold city" (*kiriath arba*); it is in a valley where four little streams come in. It is a place of ideal situation; and it would be very strange if there was a time when it wasn't inhabited; but it is a rather large area, and it is rather difficult to find all the remains that are there, particularly when you have a thriving and a very modern town there today.

Probably the greatest Jew-haters in all the land are the people of Hebron; and they have been that way for many many years; it is a place where you have all these different houses scattered through the valley, a difficult place to examine and study thoroughly; and as I say, they are about as tumultuous a people as any Arab village in Palestine anywhere. One of them claimed to me that he had personally with his own hands killed 15 Jews when I talked with him this summer; another one thought he was boasting, and said it was only 12; but it is not a good place for excavation. (laughter)

But it is a place, which in view of its general situation, it would be strange if it would be left without a town for any long period. Now this is the only place where there is this much question about it. In all the other places named in the Book of Genesis we have actual pottery evidence of a settlement at that time. While in places like Shiloh and Samaria and many other places named later, we do not have any evidence before the later period. Now some of the later places were also in use in the time of Genesis, but in every one of these there is evidence of occupation at that time. If the book of Genesis—as the critics claim—had been written hundreds of years after the time of Abraham, that would be very strange indeed. If one of you were to describe a man in 1850 visiting an American university, you would have to do some research to know which universities were in existence then. If you were even in Wilmington in the last 25 years, and you were to try to describe Wilmington 15 years ago, you would have a difficult time remembering which buildings were here then and which weren't.

And for anybody to have written Genesis at the time of the later Israelite kingdom, and he went to all of these places, it would be strange indeed if he didn't mention some in his imaginary stories that had not come into existence until the later period. However, that is not the case; a pretty good evidence that Genesis was actually written directly at the time when it occurred. I don't mean to say that it was written in its present form, for that came from Moses; but doubtless Abraham and the patriarchs wrote down most of what we have in the book of Genesis. Now that, of course, is very important evidence from Palestinian archaeology on the dependability of the narrative in the Book of Genesis.

Now we find Abraham went down into Egypt in chapter 13; he came up out of Egypt, and it says here that he came up into the south—which we have already mentioned is the Negev—and there we read that there was strife between Abraham and Lot; and we read here that when the strife reached a certain point, Abraham suggested to Lot that they divide the country between them. And in chapter 13, we read here how they were up here between Bethel and Ai, and Abraham invited Lot to select where he wanted to live; and Abraham would take the other area; and we read that Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of the Jordan, and it was well watered everywhere. "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar." And up until 1925, this didn't seem at all to fit the situation there; but we now know that by discoveries and tells in this area, and pottery there, we know now that at the time of Abraham this region here, which is today a very desolate area—and has been ever since before the time of Joshua—was an area which had forty or fifty towns in it; which meant of course, that they were using the water there for irrigation purposes, and that it was a very fertile and flourishing region. He was right up here between Bethel and Ai; and from there you look down at the Jordan valley here, and then you look along it. It is a good story to tell in Sunday School in America, how Abraham was so unselfish and Lot was so selfish; but as you go there today, and find this, it just doesn't seem to fit a bit. Dr. Harris and I stood there awhile there this summer; and we looked across here; and you couldn't find a more desolate looking region in the world than the Jordan valley looks today. There is nothing in it that seems to be attractive—nothing. It is an area in which there is no green.

I don't know whether the region would still support what we would call today agriculture, but at least it was good enough to support these forty or fifty towns at that time; so it was a very nice section, nothing like it is today.

But when you think of its being abandoned as early as perhaps 1600 BC; when you think of 3600 years with a good many cloudbursts, and it changed in that length of time, I don't know whether there would be much evidence. You don't have much rain there; you occasionally have a cloudburst up on the hill here, and you have a tremendous amount of water pouring down over the hillside, and it wouldn't take many of them to destroy evidence.

In 1924, Dr. Albright and a group of students from the American School of Oriental Research went down there into the valley and they looked for tells down there and they found pottery and examined it and they found no pottery from much after the time of Abraham, although they found great amounts from before that time.

In 1929, I was one of a party of four—four men from four different continents—with Dr. Albright, who was born in South America; and we four were traveling on horseback through the Jordan Valley; and we found several tells there, on which the pottery came from a very very early period; nothing after the time of Abraham. Some of them stopped earlier than that. And up here, south of the Sea of Galilee, along the Southern edge of it there, there is a place where we call Beth-yareah, the city of the moon, a place which runs for half a mile along the southern edge of the sea; and the level of the town rises up well, it is pretty near as high as this building; and from the top it just looks like a long, long hill. And when you start to look at it, you see bits of pottery all over it; and you find that all the pottery on this hill comes from before 1700, 1800 BC. There is nothing there that is after the time of Joshua—absolutely nothing—except a small room and garden stationed on top; nothing since that time, but it was a large and important town before that time.

Now, this of course, is evidence we can get, once we know how to use pottery for dating, and once we know how to recognize a tell. We have those in our hands without excavation—but resting on the results of excavation elsewhere—for we can date these various times by pottery; and so it was a number of expeditions between 1924 on; but the result was between 40 and 50 towns located in the Jordan Valley, all of them from this early period; and Jericho would have been, at the time of Joshua, just about the only town left in the Jordan valley; and so that this description of vs. 10, Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as thou comest unto Zoar. It describes the situation as it appeared at the time of Abraham; and so this story here exactly fits with the situation then, and would not have fit even in the time of Joshua, or any subsequent time; and it is impossible to imagine anybody having made up such a story at a later period.

You take the New Testament Jericho, several miles away from the OT Jericho south of it; and in the NT Jericho you have a very advanced, sophisticated city, a Roman city of the time of Christ; and there in that city you had—it is up from the river quite a bit—but you have a little stream that comes down the hill to it, just a little tiny thing. They took the water, and made fountains, and all sorts of pleasant arrangements; but when they began excavating there they found the whole thing was just covered with big rocks. They excavated, and they told me that they took out of it rocks by the tens of thousands and thousands of thousands. Just tremendous numbers of these rocks, which of course had been washed down from the height above, probably in just a few cloudbursts.

I think that is all we will take up at this time of the relation of Palestinian archaeology and geography to Genesis. We will note other interesting features in relation to other parts of the Old Testament later on.

III. The Patriarchal Age, Genesis 12–50.

A. Historical Background

We could take a semester on the historical background; but we want to touch on the most important phases of it, because you can't properly understand Abraham and his successors without knowing something of the historical background, most of which has become known to us—what we know of it—through archaeology.

1. Mesopotamia. ([see Fig. 1](#))

We will try now simply to put the patriarchal period in its proper place in relation to Mesopotamia. We have no date given in the Book of Genesis—that is, unless you look in the margin, of course. It doesn't tell you whether it was BC 1920 or BC 1620 that Abraham performed a certain act; nor do any of the records that Abraham left have precise BC dates, and so there has been a good deal of discussion. People have tried to add up dates subsequently in their history, but there are a good many places where we are not given precise dates that can be added up; and so any date from that period is extremely conjectural.

I remember seeing the statement made by Dr. Albright about fifteen years ago. He said that some people try to make out that Amraphel of Genesis 14 is Hammurabi; but he said this is utterly impossible because he says Hammurabi is about 2000 BC and Abraham is the seventeenth century BC. It is three hundred years later.

Then a little later in the *Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research*, of which Dr. Albright was editor, he put in a headline "Revolutionary Change in the Chronology of the Near East. New Discoveries made at Mari on the Euphrates prove that Hammurabi comes from the Seventeenth Century BC instead of the Twentieth, as previously thought."⁶⁰ And so you move Abraham up; then you move Hammurabi up; and again you have them near each other, but just how near we can't be sure.

Dr. Albright was one of the first to suggest this moving up of Hammurabi; others thought he was rather crazy in such a wild idea, and now they practically all accept it; and so Hammurabi is now pretty well recognized to be at that later period, and it is most likely Abraham was contemporary. And it is a period

⁶⁰ W.F. Albright "A revolution in the chronology of ancient Western Asia" BASOR 69 (Feb 1938) 18–21. The third revision of this paper set the date for Hammurabi at 1728–1686 BC. See also O. Neugebauer [The Chronology of the Hammurabi Age](#), J. Am. Or. Soc 61#1 (Mar. 1941) 58–61. The present date attributed to the Hammurabi code stele is 1754 BC [Wikipedia].

which was quite a little later than your Ussher date would say in the margin of your Bible. It was a time when the city of Babylon was a city of great importance—during the time of Hammurabi or a little later—and the code of Hammurabi which we mentioned last semester; but its relationship to the code of Moses is not very close. The laws of Hammurabi are a commercial law—a law for secular life; the laws of Moses, a law of religious life, a law for a sanctified people. The emphasis is on religion here, the emphasis is on commerce there; the overlapping is comparatively slight between these two sets of laws, but the code of Hammurabi was the type of law which was in use in Babylonia—from which Abraham came out—and in Genesis, at point after point, we find in the life and activity of Abraham and his family, that there are practices, and there were things done, which are hard for us to understand just why they would do them this way, until we read the laws of Hammurabi and see that he was simply carrying out the established custom and established law of Babylonia of his day.

Now in northern Mesopotamia at this time, Assyria was developing into a power of some importance, though still quite small, There was another power of much greater importance, the so-called Mitanni. Mitanni is the name of the kingdom. Mitanni was a kingdom in northern Mesopotamia for a long period at this time. The people of it are called Hurrians. The Bible speaks of them as the Horites, and we have many contacts between them and the history of the patriarchs. We will look at them a little bit tomorrow afternoon.

2. Egypt in the time of Abraham. ([see figure 3](#))

Abraham, as you know, is a good bit before the time of Moses; and people sometimes think that the Israelites in the time of Moses in their oppression built the pyramids of Egypt. Actually the pyramids of Egypt were at that time just about as old as would be something which Charlemagne, the emperor of the Franks in 800 AD had built, would be in our day. Now, it was at least eleven hundred years before the time of Moses when the pyramids were built, so you see the pyramids in their building have absolutely nothing whatever to do with the oppression of the Israelites. Of course, the pyramids are interesting in showing the great slave power of Egypt—the great big number of people who were gathered together to perform a tremendous, utterly useless task—to build these mighty monuments that have no value on earth except to contain the decaying body of a dead pharaoh; and yet millions of people were compelled to work on this tremendous, absolutely useless undertaking. They show us, then, something of the power of the Egyptian monarchy, but they have nothing in the world to do with the Israelites.

As we begin the study of the patriarchal age—the first place where Egypt enters into the Biblical history—it is desirable that we say a little about Egypt just to have the background of Egypt in mind.

You all know of course, that Egypt is the land which is southwest of Palestine—the part of Africa which is nearest to Asia. I don't know whether all of you are familiar with the fact that Egypt is a land which is different from most countries of the world. It may be spoken of as a land with one dimension, a land with length but without width. That sounds strange, but the explanation of it is that—except for the Northern portion of Egypt—Egypt is along the narrow area that winds next to the Nile River. The Nile River flows through a great desert area; and here the river brings water and the possibility of growth; and this little narrow area there is the area of—really of life—in Egypt. It is desert, absolutely barren on the sides.

This was greatly impressed upon my mind when I climbed the great pyramid; and there as I stood on top of that pyramid, I looked on this side and it was the Sahara desert, brown, dry territory—nothing there, nobody there; and I looked, on the other side and there it was green and fertile, and great crops growing, and thousands of people packed into the small area. It is a land where you have absolute desert except as that Nile river flows down from central Africa; and as it flows down—in altitude, of course—but "up" as we think of south and north, it flows up from central Africa there, through that great desert region; and it fertilizes the land for a short distance on both sides of the river. So it is a land with length but without breadth. It is a land which had a unique opportunity to develop civilization. It had this wonderful fertilization from the river, which would bring water, and also would bring soil, down from the heart of Africa; and it would overflow its banks and it would fertilize the land there. So not only was there water, but also other necessary materials, which the Nile spread all over them; and it made it one of the most fertile sections of the world.

But another great advantage of Egypt—in addition to this unexampled prosperity which it enjoyed through this great river—was its isolation. Great deserts on both sides with practically nobody living in them. What is the result? The people are fairly safe from attack. Egypt has always been a difficult country to conquer. Rommel found that out in this last war. With that great army he made his way along North Africa to attack Egypt; and when he got there he found himself shut into a very small area, by those great salt wastes to the south and the sea to the north, and it was right at the strategic point there, that General Montgomery succeeded in driving him back and utterly disrupting his attack on Egypt; and that has occurred in history time and again.

The one who controls Egypt has something that is not difficult, as a rule, to defend against attackers. And so Egyptian history is at first sight far more interesting than Babylonian history, because it has more unity to it. It is a continuous, unified thing; it is easy to understand, and to see how things develop and progress, because you don't have so many different influences coming in from different directions, and conquests, and overturnings, and changes. You have much influence from other countries, but it comes in, in a

more systematic way, with the dominant power in most ancient periods held right there in Egypt. And so Egypt is a land which is very interesting historically, and extremely interesting archaeologically; and many think it is much more interesting than Palestine or Mesopotamia archaeologically.

The land of Egypt is near Palestine. The land of Egypt has very important contacts with Israel; and yet our archaeological relations with Egypt, important as they are, are not one-tenth as important as those with Mesopotamia. Now, why is that? The reason for that is in the nature of those contacts. The Israelites, in their relation to Egypt, had a relationship which was something of which the Israelites could boast in the rest of their history. They could glory in the fact that their God had overcome the tremendous power of Egypt and delivered them. That was a great reason for prominence of Egypt in Israelite history and thought; prominence in the Psalms; prominence in the prophets; prominence all through the Bible; but it is not a reason for prominence of Israel in Egyptian monuments.

Now you go to Paris today—you can visit the tomb of Napoleon in the great Hotel des Invalides where they have that great, large room devoted to the tomb of Napoleon and the monuments round about—and you find monuments to great battles which Napoleon conducted; and as you look around the room, you see no monument to the battle of Waterloo. The French did not put up a monument to the battle of Waterloo. That was something which they would just as soon forget about. We would not know about it if we had to depend on the French to tell us about it; and we need not expect to know about the delivery of the Israelites from Egypt if we have to depend on the Egyptians to tell us about it.

At one time the Egyptians were conquered by a great foreign power known as the Hyksos. These people came in from Asia. They overran Egypt. They held it in subjection for perhaps one hundred and fifty years; and then the Egyptians drove them out of the land; and you will find in ancient Egypt not a single monument put up to celebrate the driving out of the Hyksos. The Egyptians were simply ashamed they had been there. Most any other nation would have put up a monument to liberation, but they didn't even do that. They just forgot the Hyksos had been there. The very existence of their control over Egypt was forgotten, except for a few of the nobles of Egypt in their tombs telling how great men they had been on earth, and said, "I took part in the driving out of the hated invaders; I fought at such a battle," and so on; and from their tombs we get something about the driving out of the Hyksos, but nothing from the monuments that pharaoh put up for the public to see. They would rather just forget they had been there.

And so it is not at all unnatural that the tremendous thing of the exodus from Egypt is not even mentioned in Egyptian inscriptions. But the Israelite

relationship with Egypt is such that we need not expect to find a great deal in Egypt about it. Many say, "Yes, but the Israelites lived in Egypt for a long time. Surely they left some traces. Well, the Israelites lived in northern Egypt. Egypt is divided into two parts. Northern Egypt is the wider area, that great fertile delta area of Egypt, north of Cairo. Southern Egypt is a narrow stretch along the river Nile with the wilderness on both sides.

The Israelites were in northern Egypt. The greater part of the events important in Egyptian history have taken place in northern Egypt—or lower Egypt, as we call it—but nine-tenths of our historical remains from Egypt come from upper Egypt, where the Israelites never were. The reason for this is that lower Egypt is a region where the river is always overflowing; it's building up a larger and larger delta area there; it's fertilizing the land; it is extremely fertile land; the land rises higher and higher as the water deposits more soil there, and all is used for crops. You go in there and try to excavate there. You'd have a terrifically expensive bill to pay to rent this fine farm land to excavate in; and you wouldn't get very far down into it before you'd strike the water level underneath; and everything underneath there is apt to be pretty well decayed from being sunken under the water there; and so it is not a good place for excavation—lower Egypt—even though it is the main center of Egyptian history.

We have some things from lower Egypt, but not a great many; but upper Egypt is a region where you have that long, narrow stretch of fertile land beside the Nile; and then on both sides of it you have the wilderness; and it is very easy to go out into that wilderness, where there is nothing, and put up a monument there; and so the kings, even though they were active in lower Egypt, most of them came from families in upper Egypt; they went up to upper Egypt every year or two; and they put up a monument there to tell the people in the old home town what great people they had become. So you have thousands of great monuments from upper Egypt, in which the pharaohs tell of their great deeds—but they don't mention their defeats—and we have a great deal of knowledge of their actual life of upper Egypt in past times, but the Israelites were not in that region.

So under those circumstances it is not strange that though we have some very important archaeological material from Egypt bearing on the Bible, it is comparatively small in relation to the amount that we have from Mesopotamia, even though our total amount of actual Egyptian archaeological material is very great indeed.

Now we should know a little bit about the background of Egyptian history; and it might be said of it that in studying ancient Egyptian history, it is customary not to divide the history up as we divide the history of most lands—this period reaching this long and then a break and this period—but it is customary to think of the high points of Egyptian history; because there were three periods

to greater or less extent in which the Egyptian empire was at its height; and we call those these the old kingdom, the middle kingdom and the new kingdom; and the new kingdom we often speak of as the empire period.

Now these three periods are not periods that come one right after the other. There are periods of disintegration, of decay, in between each of them and the next one; and during the periods of greatness—the old kingdom, the middle kingdom, the new kingdom—you have tremendous numbers of records and monuments put up to celebrate the greatness of the pharaohs. And during the days of decay and decline you have very little; and the result is that we know events year by year in the great periods of the pharaohs but when you get to the periods in between, the periods of decline, sometimes scholars have differed by as much as three thousand years as to the length of a period in between. One would say: "This period is two hundred years in length;" the other would say, "This is thirty two hundred years in length."

Now why should there be such a great difference as of nearly three thousand years in the ideas of scholars as to the length of these periods? The reason for that is what is called the Sothic cycle. Now I don't want to take much time on the Sothic cycle because we are not going into Egypt to any great length in this course; and so if you find it complicated, don't worry too much about it; but it is a very interesting thing and I think worth taking a minute or two to point out just what it is.

The Egyptians had a far better idea of the calendar than any other ancient people; and consequently their calendar is worse than that of any other people! The reason for that is this—the Babylonians, the Hebrews, they make them up, following the moon. The moon goes around the earth and there's a month; and maybe it's twenty-nine days, maybe it's thirty days. They watch and see whether the moon starts a period again or not. And so a month goes by the moon. Well, now you take the number of times the moon goes around and divide it into the number of times the earth goes around the sun and it doesn't fit in exactly. They just don't fit together; and the result is that their moon calendars were way off; and so they would have so many moons, and then they would see summer's come again, so they start another year; and that way they made their years rather arbitrarily; and in time, they developed a system that came rather close to being an exact number of years.

But the Egyptians had a far better system, and so it worked out in a way far worse. That is, their system was so good that it didn't need to be corrected year by year. And so the imperfection in it remained, instead of being taken out the way they were in the Babylonian calendar. The Egyptians in very early times knew that the year had 365 days in it and that is remarkable. You take any people and you figure that a year is three hundred and sixty-five days: that is a marvelous feat.

Well, to figure that it is 365 days and 11 hours and six minutes and twenty seconds—is that right, Mr. Ailing?—to figure the exact length there, the way we do with our modern astronomical instruments, is something that we can't expect the ancient Egyptians to do. They got it down to 365 days and that was mighty fine but it was a quarter of a day off. Now, of course Julius Caesar knew about the extra quarter of a day and he introduced a leap year every four years and then—it isn't exactly six hours, its about half an hour off from that; and consequently in the course of sixteen hundred years we got eleven days off. And now we've corrected that; and every century we omit the leap year, except on the fourth century when we keep the leap years, so we have this complicated system we use now to try to get it nearer the exact length of the time.⁶¹

But the ancient Egyptians had a calendar which was very excellent—365 days. Now, with a calendar like the Babylonians' you'd go three years, and you'd see that you were seeing summers beginning when it was half over and you'd say, "All right, we'll leave out an extra month so as to make it put in a whole change of a month this year"; and that would straighten it out, but with the Egyptians when you only got one day off every four years, why eighty years would go before you would be twenty days off, and so you wouldn't notice it. Most of the people who had noticed eighty years before were all dead now; or if they were living, people thought they were getting into their dotage and didn't pay much attention to them, and so the Egyptian calendar was established in very early days as 365 days a year; and they kept it up, and the result was that in the course of 1460 years the calendar went clear off, and the first of January stopped being in the middle of the winter; and in the course of seven hundred years, it was right in mid-summer. In another seven hundred years, it had gotten back to mid-winter again; and so it went, clear around. And that we call a Sothic cycle

.

Now we have certain astronomical records which tell us that, on a certain date a certain star arose, and we can figure when those stars rise—we can figure it out astronomically—and so we know that the Egyptians called it January 1st in a certain year, when it was actually July 1st, and knowing that we know their calendar was six months off and so we know it was seven hundred years from the time, when January 1 hit January. Now does that make this clear? It's the general idea of the thing. That is what we call the Sothic cycle.

And so we have a few of these records and we are able to say of certain events, we know when a Sothic cycle ended, shortly after the time of Christ. We have a record of that. This was the beginning of the Sothic cycle. Well, we can figure back 1460 years to get another one, and another 1460 years, another one. Then you have a record from a king, which proves to you that this event this

⁶¹ This is the Gregorian calendar which has been used since 1582.

king did was in year 700 of a Sothic cycle. Well, was it the first, the second or the third, or the fourth Sothic cycle?

And so if you take a book on Egyptology published thirty years ago it will tell you a certain thing happened in the year 7300 BC Then you take a book written few years later and they make it 1460 years later than that, and they say it was 5900 BC; and then you take a book written still later and you move it up and make it about 4300 BC; and you take a recent book and you'll have it up to 2700 BC, which is probably correct. So the old statements you find in some old books, which show how Ussher's chronology can't possibly be right, because of a great Egyptian event thousands of years before the time of Christ, those claims are absolutely out of date today.

*Ancient Times*⁶², a book used—I don't know whether it is today but I know fifteen years ago it was used—in high schools all over this country as a standard text book of ancient history; and that great scholar of Egyptian history says 4241 BC is the earliest fixed date in history because that is the date the Egyptians got their calendar.⁶³ No scholar of any standing—so far as I know—today thinks the Egyptians had their calendar before 2700 BC, but you see that fixes the time the Sothic cycle would have begun; he says, "That is when the calendar started," and he said, "Of course, it couldn't be as late as 2700 because the Egyptians were too intelligent to go that long without a calendar so it must have been 4241. That is when the calendar began."

Now, nobody follows that now. Mr. Wilson? (Student) Sothic. It comes from *Sothis*, which is Sirius, the dog star, the big dog star [chief star in *Canis Major*, big dog]. If you happen to go outdoors in the evening lately, you'll see it very prominently up in the sky. It is the brightest star in the northern heaven, or in any heaven, for that matter—Sirius, the dog star. And the cycle is based on the time when Sirius arises in the morning just before the sun rises. But those details aren't so important. I think the general system of it, though, is quite important and very interesting; and it shows how so many calendars have differed by 1460 years or 2900 years in their dates; and these differences are not regarded in the length of the middle kingdom, the old kingdom or the new kingdom, but in the length of the period between the middle kingdom and the new kingdom or the middle and the old, because those periods we have very little information about. The record is extremely scanty regarding those periods; and that's the time the pyramids were built.

⁶² James Henry Breasted, *Ancient Times: A History of the Early World*, (1914) with many updated editions up to the present.

⁶³ "This convenient Egyptian calendar was devised in 4241 BC, and its introduction is the earliest dated event in history. Furthermore, this calendar is the very one which has descended to us, after more than six thousand years." *ibid.* p.45.

We also divide ancient Egyptian history into a number of what we call dynasties. They're rather rough divisions. They're not very scientifically made. They are the divisions we find in the writings of the Egyptian priests about 300 BC, who told us about the history of their country; and we have taken this enumeration—it is a rough arrangement but it does set terminology—and so we think of Egyptian history as divided into about thirty dynasties. Some of these dynasties had two kings in them and some just one. They varied greatly; but of these dynasties, some are extremely important, some aren't very important.

a. The Old Kingdom: 4th to 6th dynasties. The Old Kingdom, so-called, is the fourth, fifth and sixth dynasties; and that was the time of a very high point in Egyptian history, when Pharaoh reigned supreme and his word was law; and he could order millions of people to come and devote most every year to working for nothing with any more sense to it than the building of this big monument to him where his body could decay after his death; and where he thought nobody would get at it to desecrate it; but his thoughts were wrong in that regard, because so far as I know, every one of the pyramids—well, we'll say, there were several hundred pyramids, and practically every one at least—was dug into by grave robbers in ancient times; and the pharaohs' bodies taken out; and all the jewelry and everything that was put with him was taken out; so all these millions of men working for decades did not save the body of the pharaoh from corruption, or even from desecration by human beings, later on.

But it was a tremendous amount of power in the land. When that pharaoh who was the king of the northern kingdom and the king of the southern kingdom of Egypt—they always thought of them as two separate kingdoms and yet united by the pharaoh—even though they never again were two kingdoms after the first dynasty. The king of these two kingdoms built these tremendous pyramids largely near Cairo where Upper and Lower Egypt come together. There they were built simply as graves for himself.

Now if you take a line and measure out the entrance to any one of these pyramids—you take a pyramid; you have his body in here somewhere and you have a way in here to get to his body. There is a passageway, which is closed up outside. If you will take that passageway; and take this distance from here to here, you can divide that exactly into the number of divisions that there are years in the history of the world, from the creation up to the end of the world. You can divide it exactly into that many divisions and you could do that with every one of these pyramids. In some cases the division may be half an inch in length; in some cases three quarters, and in some cases it may be a foot in length, but in every case you can divide it into exactly the number of divisions that there are years in the history of the world from the creation up to the end of the world; and so you see these pyramids throw a great deal of light upon the history of the world; and there are long books written on prophecy contained in the pyramids.

I hope you all see the principle of the pyramids. Well, the pyramids, as far as any relation to the Bible is concerned, I don't think we can say there is any, but they are tremendous works of man and show the great power of ancient Egypt.

b. The Middle Kingdom. Then there is a break up in Egypt; and we call this the first period of disintegration, a great break-up after the old kingdom; and then we have what we call the Middle Kingdom; and the middle kingdom is the eleventh and twelfth dynasties; and this period runs from 2160 to 1788. The scholars call it 1788, but you cannot tell the exact year; it is approximately this; and 1788 is the number that has been picked and is accepted by most scholars—that this period, then, is the period of the eleventh and twelfth dynasties; according to their records, they were great kings and mighty conquerors; but as despots, they were not in a class with the rulers of the old kingdom.

That is to say, this is more of a feudal period. It is a period in which pharaoh has great glory and quite a bit of power; but a period in which the nobles had far more individual power than they had either under the Old Kingdom or under the New Kingdom; and so the Middle Kingdom in Egypt is not the time of great military glory, though there is considerable; it's not the time of the great dictatorship of the pharaoh; but it is the time when the Egyptian spirit was able to exercise itself, and the classics of Egyptian literature were written; and the foundation of Egyptian culture in many fields is laid in the Middle Kingdom; and for centuries after, they look back to this period as a time of great classics and of great writings written about this time; and as you read them, they are like many of our great classics of modern days. They didn't say very much, but they said it beautifully, so beautifully that they just loved to read it over and over and over

And so we have our great ancient Egyptian classics from this period. Just an illustration of one of them is a story of an event just before the Middle Kingdom during the period of disintegration. It was one of the great classics of the Middle Kingdom period. It was a time when the pharaoh was rather weak. A man lived in an oasis a little distance over from central Egypt; and according to the story, he left his wife there one day and left provisions, supplies for her, and made a trip into the main part of Egypt; and he came in with his donkey; and as he came in, he came to the estate of one of the Egyptian nobles; and this man saw him coming, and he looked down and he said, "That's a beautiful donkey. I'd like to have that donkey," and so he ran out to where the laundry was hanging up to dry and he took a beautiful sheet and he spread it out on the grass so that it spread across the path a way, so that as the man came along with his donkey he came to that place and he couldn't go straight across without treading on this beautiful piece of cloth there; and so he led the donkey

a little bit to the side; and the result was it got up into the field and it took a bite of some of the grass that was growing on this nobleman's property.

And so the nobleman ran out and confiscated the donkey for the loss that he had suffered through it. And so, he having taken the donkey, the peasant appeared before him and pled with him to give it back; and he refused to do so, so the peasant went to the town a few miles away, which was the headquarters of the pharaoh; and appeared before the minister of justice of the pharaoh, and he pled with him to give him back his donkey and he addressed him, "The one who is outstanding in nobility, grandeur, and character, the one who always gives justice—oh," he says, "give me back my donkey." And he said, "If you give me back my donkey, all future ages will regard you as a paragon; they will consider you as the greatest example of justice and righteousness Egypt has ever seen; and if you don't give me back my donkey," he said, "even though through misunderstanding, future ages will curse your memory and think of you as one who has caused Egypt to suffer and to be in misery." And so on.

And when the official heard him talk for an hour this way, he says, "Well, go on and I'll hear you some more tomorrow," very gruffly; and then he went over to the pharaoh, and he said to the pharaoh, "I saw a peasant who really can talk," he said, "you ought to hear that fellow," and told him about it and the pharaoh said, "well, keep him talking"; so the next day, he came back and they had a secretary hidden behind a screen, who took down every word he said; and the peasant made his very beautiful, eloquent plea for an hour, and he gruffly dismissed him again; and he did that seven successive days, and at the end of the seventh day, they then brought the peasant in and gave him back his donkey; brought him before the pharaoh who honored him and gave him a beautifully written copy of all the speeches which he had made. One copy was kept by the pharaoh and that is one of the great classics of Egyptian literature, the story of the eloquent peasant.

Now there are others. They are very interesting, the type of these different stories which come from this period of the Middle Kingdom; but you see there is not an awful lot to them. There is one which is a conversation of a man with his soul; and he talks to his soul and he says, "Soul, what do think of living any more. Don't you think we ought to die? What's the point of continuing to live?" And then the soul answered and said, "Well, I don't know. It might be worth living a little longer"; and they talked back and forth and people find all kinds of philosophy in it. It's got quite a number of verses in it; and if you look carefully, you can find all the philosophies that you want buried in this beautiful conversation of a man with his soul. However, if you are not particularly good at digging out imaginary meanings from recondite statements, you may think that it is just rather awkward words; but it is one of the great pieces of classical literature in ancient Egypt; and these which were written in the Middle Kingdom were read and copied on through the next period.

And even in the time of the New Kingdom, when Egypt commercially was way ahead of what it was in the Middle Kingdom, and when the pharaoh was far stronger, people tried to ape the language of the Middle Kingdom; and this was a beautiful written language; and their spoken language in ordinary use—language for ordinary business—was quite different, as the languages moved on; but they imitated the language of the earlier period, the great, classical period, from 2160 to 1788.

And then after the Middle Kingdom comes the period of disintegration between that and the New Kingdom; and in this period, we have a group coming from Asia and conquering the land, a group which we call the Hyksos. Now we don't know a great deal about this period. We have very few monuments left to tell us about the period. We know that during this period, these people came in; and it used to be thought—some thought they reigned three thousand years, some fifteen hundred and some only one hundred. Today it is down to about a hundred to a hundred and fifty years. It is pretty well agreed. We also know now that they were not numerous. They were a comparatively small group which came from Asia and succeeded in conquering Egypt; and we know how they managed to conquer Egypt. We know that they had a new weapon, a weapon which the Egyptians didn't have; and that with this weapon they had means of overcoming far greater forces; and this weapon which they had was the use of the horse.

The horse was unknown in Egypt before this time. The Egyptians had the donkey, but a donkey doesn't move particularly fast; he is not particularly strong; and when these very vigorous men came down from Asia, with little chariots fastened behind horses, they would dash in with these horses, and they would disrupt the body of the Egyptian troops and—Egypt was probably already disintegrating after the end of the Middle Kingdom—and they dashed in and overcame section after section, and all of lower Egypt. The northern part of Egypt, was held by the Hyksos; probably not upper Egypt at all; but lower Egypt was held by them for a hundred to a hundred and fifty years; and their leader pretended to be Pharaoh; they took over the titles and all the forms of the pharaohs during the time that they were there in Egypt.

It was the use of the horse which enabled them to conquer Egypt; and we have found in the last twenty years interesting evidence about this; we have found that while the Hyksos had their great headquarters, they built an unusual type of establishment. They had a center for the dwelling of their leaders and of their people, their headquarters where the horses were kept; and then they would have a large area which would be closed in with a rampart which was beaten earth—it wasn't built of stone, it was just beaten earth, They would pile up the earth and beat it in fairly hard; and they would have this around a large area, perhaps a mile square; and the result was they had this large area in

which they would practice with their horses, maneuver with their horses and all that; and it was protected by this rampart; and as an enemy came from outside they were protected from attack by the enemy; and it would take quite an attack to break a way through this rampart. It could be done in time; but the Hyksos would have plenty of time to get well ready for answering the attack; and then all of a sudden, they would burst out through their gate with the horses and attack the enemy and destroy them and drive them away.

So they had their special type of establishment which they built—which was never built before or since—these large areas walled in with these high ramparts of beaten earth. We find these up through Asia Minor; we find some of these down through Palestine and down into Egypt—these particular types of remains from the time of the Hyksos—showing the course of the Hyksos in coming down there, and then eventually being driven back out of Egypt.

Now the Hyksos were conquerors of Egypt, and they established themselves and brought in new customs, some of which remained there after they themselves were driven out. And eventually the Egyptians in upper Egypt developed to such a power that they drove down into lower Egypt and drove them out; and then you have the New Kingdom; and it is rather hard to say when the New Kingdom ended, and it's rather hard to say exactly when it begins, because the seventeenth dynasty introduced the New Kingdom, but it didn't last long.

c. The New Kingdom. The seventeenth dynasty is a dynasty of men from Upper Egypt who succeeded in overcoming the Hyksos and driving them out. It was almost immediately replaced by the eighteenth dynasty, which is the first great dynasty of the New Kingdom.

Now that final date of the New Kingdom is a little hard to set because the nineteenth dynasty unquestionably belongs to the new kingdom, and the beginning of the 20th dynasty does, certainly, but then as the 20th dynasty sort of peters out, and the 21st begins, it is not a sudden end of the New Kingdom, it is a sort of dying down of it; and so 1167 is a date which a good many set for the end of it, but it is rather hard to say just when it ends. But in this New Kingdom, or Empire Period, are two main sections, and they are the 18th dynasty and the 19th dynasty. We call them the First Empire and the Second Empire, the 18th dynasty and the 19th dynasty. They represent a time when the power of pharaoh was perhaps not quite so absolute as in the Old Kingdom, but when it was far greater internationally than even during the Old Kingdom.

During this period the pharaohs conquered the regions around them. They carried their troops far south. They came in contact with Negroes as they penetrated into Africa—into central Africa. The troops went westward into

Libya, and they went eastward into Asia; and in the 18th dynasty we have certain Egyptian kings who were outstanding in their power.

(1) Hatshepsut (1479–1458 BC). The first one which perhaps I might take time to mention here as the first king of particular interest to us then, was a woman. Hatshepsut is probably as good a way as any to put into English. Now this woman, Hatshepsut seems to have been a legitimate daughter of one of the pharaohs.

She was married to a young man, who was probably the illegitimate son of the same pharaoh; and he was probably much younger than she was; and as long as she was in power, he was a sort of a flunky; he didn't have any particular standing. She was the king; and Egyptian pictures in the Egyptian monuments, and in the tombs, where they have beautiful colored pictures of them, they always show the Egyptians with shaven faces. An ordinary man had to shave his face. Now, of course, the king had a beard as a sign of kingship; and a god had a longer beard. That's a sign of deity—the real long beard—but a king would wear a good-sized beard; and in Hatshepsut's pictures, she always wears the beard, because she was the king; and she wasn't such a good conqueror, it would seem. She would send out the troops on commercial expeditions, and she increased the standing and wealth of Egypt; and she built two great monuments in southern Egypt showing her greatness; telling of how the gods blessed the time when she was born and decreed she would be the great ruler of Egypt; and then telling of her great expedition down into the land of Put, which is Ethiopia, and South Arabia; and how they brought back ebony and gold and incense; and it shows her husband, the young man—he is off in a corner weighing out the gold, doing a side issue during her reign. She put up great, beautiful obelisks celebrating the great events of her reign.

She was indeed a powerful ruler; and then suddenly she disappears, and what happened to her we don't know—whether she was driven out, whether she was killed, whether she fled, we do not know. But at any rate, Thutmose III (her husband) begins to reign:

(2) Thutmose III (Tothnes III) (1479–1425 BC). And he took her monuments, and he knocked them over; and he went into these beautiful great temples she built in southern Egypt; and he went through all these beautiful pictures, and he simply had her face just covered over, just scratched out of the picture.

We have the beautiful pictures, but where the queen is you may see a little of the beard showing but the face has just been rubbed off. I found one place on one of them where they had overlooked an actual picture of her; but for all the rest, you see the pictures and then her face is just rubbed off, because he felt rather bad about the way she had treated him during these years; and now he established himself as the king of Egypt.

Now, spelling his name into English has been done three different ways: Thutmose, Thutmosis or Tothnes. It doesn't matter so much which spelling you use. The old Greek way, which was used before the recent discoveries, is probably, after all, as good as any. That was Tothnes; and he built great obelisks—more than anyone before him—and of the obelisks which Tothnes III built, we have today one standing in Constantinople, one in Rome, one in London and one in New York; four great obelisks which have been brought from Egypt and stood up in these of the four greatest cities in the world—all coming from this same Pharaoh, from Tothnes III. You can see the one in New York any time if you are up there; go into Central Park. It's right out there in back of the Metropolitan Museum there.

Now Tothnes III—this young man who had been held down by his wife while she was queen—now immediately after he was brought into power, asserted himself; and he started in making war-like expeditions; he is very interesting to us because he led expeditions up through Palestine; he started out to conquer that whole territory, and his armies came up through Palestine; and one of his great feats was the conquest of Megiddo; and in his account he tells us how he conquered Megiddo. He tells us about the plan of the battle; about what he found there; he describes place after place in Palestine which is conquered: his accounts are tremendously interesting to us for the light they throw on events in Palestine at this time. Now Tothnes III was a very great conqueror; and best of all, he left us pretty full records of what he did; and it gives us much light on ancient Palestine at his time.

(3) Tothnes IV, Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV. After him came Tothnes IV and a number of other kings, leading up to Amenhotep III, and his son Amenhotep IV, the one with whom we should be familiar. Amenhotep IV is also called Akhenaten. He is one of the most interesting characters in ancient history—this man Akhenaten, Amenhotep IV—because he is different from all the pharaohs before him. Some have called him the first individual in history. Some have called him the first monotheist in history. There was a period about thirty years ago when it was customary to exalt him and think him to be the greatest of all the ancients; and then there came a reaction from it, and scholars began running him down and saying he never amounted to anything; and everything good we find from his reign was done by some of his men and not by him at all; and it is pretty hard to prove it one way or the other.

But the fact is, whether he did it or whether he was somebody else's puppet in doing it is an interesting thing to work out; and there have been those who have said that Moses couldn't have been a monotheist; monotheism must have developed by an evolutionary process, and come out first in the time of the great seventh century prophets, Amos and the others. They invented monotheism. It was unknown before that time. It came by this evolutionary

process. And now we find ancient Egypt; and we find that Akhenaten was a monotheist, and there is no question about that. He was a monotheist; and no one can say that it would be impossible to have monotheism prior to the seventh century BC, because here seven centuries earlier we have true monotheism, as I believe all scholars recognize today that Akhenaten was a monotheist.

And so, naturally, if you want to attack the Bible for sure, and you find this approach in the Bible, then you say there was no monotheism that early; but then, after this discovery, you jump from the opposite side and attack from that side; and that's what Freud does in his book *Moses and Monotheism*. He says that Akhenaten was monotheist; that Moses got it from him; and that this Egyptian pharaoh was the first monotheist, and Moses just got it from him.

Well, of course, that is a very good strategy; if you can't attack the Bible from this side satisfactorily, just jump over to the opposite side and attack it from there. Don't say monotheism must begin with the great discovery of the great prophet; say it is very early, but the Hebrews didn't start it. They just took it over from the Egyptians. But the trouble with that is that the monotheism of Akhenaten and the monotheism of the Bible are definitely different. There is nothing spiritual about the monotheism of Akhenaten. His god Aten is the material disc of the sun. It is a materialistic religion, not a spiritual religion; and it is a religion in which there is no trace of anything ethical. It is utterly different from the ethical monotheism of the Old Testament, despite Freud and his book, *Moses and Monotheism*. He just ignores that statement; but it is true that in the writings of Akhenaten, we have beautiful observations of nature; we have wonderful hymns to the material disc of the sun; but we have no recognition of anything ethical in the relation of the worshiper to his monotheistic god. It is purely a matter of being obedient to this one powerful god, drawing your strength from him. There is nothing of ethics as in the Bible, and so Akhenaten was a man who proved that monotheism is not a late development as the critics claim. It was known in that early time; and his is not the monotheism from which Biblical monotheism comes, because the two are utterly different. They agree in being monotheism, but they are utterly different.

Now, of course, personally I think that the explanation for it is the other way round. I think that Akhenaten was influenced by the Israelites; and I think that he secured his ideas of monotheism from them without having gotten a very full or complete idea of it; and that it is a perversion and a corruption of the teaching of the Israelites. Now, that, of course, is something you can't prove. It is conjecture, and it may be entirely false. He may have dreamed it, or imagined it, or something. We don't know; but it certainly is just as reasonable a guess as the other, and I think far more reasonable; because it is an isolated occurrence in ancient Egypt. It is not something that is characteristic of ancient Egypt. It is an isolated occurrence, that one king here turned against all previous Egyptian

viewpoints, and all subsequent Egyptian viewpoints, and adopted true monotheism and broke with the previous Egyptian religion.

And subsequent Egyptians called him "that criminal." They looked down on him; they destroyed his name from the monuments, because of the religion which he tried to enforce in Egypt for the brief period of his reign; and so to say that this separate, unusual thing that occurred in Egypt then is the origin of all that we have in the Old Testament is much less reasonable than to say that from the Hebrews this young man got this idea, but he didn't get the full idea from the Hebrews; and thus his monotheism came to pass there in Egypt.

Now just a further word about this queen Hatshepsut. She was a very interesting woman and a very powerful ruler and you will find some books on archaeology today which will tell you that she is the daughter of the Pharaoh who pulled Moses out of the bulrushes and brought him home; and you will even find one or two books that say that is absolutely proven. Well, as far as any proof of it is concerned, it is just entirely in the imagination of the writer. There is absolutely nothing to show with any evidence whatever that she was the daughter of Pharaoh who did that. We will say that out of (say) three hundred daughters of different pharaohs at different times, any one of them might have been the one. So there's one chance in three hundred that she is the one. We can't say she wasn't; but I think it is perfectly absurd to say she was, even though I don't deny the possibility. I think that a guess like that is a way to hinder true Bible teaching and faith in the Scripture. And then to be dogmatic about it, rather than to say anything that is in any way helpful to faith. There is absolutely no evidence to connect her up with Moses in any way, but she is the most outstanding woman in Egyptian history at that time. She may have been the woman who drew Moses out of the bulrushes, but there is no reason to think she was.

Well, now, this man Akhenaten came quite a little time after Queen Hatshepsut. He didn't reign so many years, but his years were years of greatness because he moved away from Thebes, the ancient capital of Egypt; he did this because of its worship of the god Amun—misspelled in English, Amen—"A-moon" is the correct pronunciation of it. Of course, it used to be they didn't know how to pronounce it, and they wrote it "Amen"; but the god Amun was the great god of ancient Egypt and Akhenaten disbelieved in Amun.

He believed in Aten so his name Akhenaten means "the living image of the deity of the sun"; and he moved away from Thebes and he built a new city Akhetaten, which in modern times is called Armara (excavated by Flinders Petrie); and consequently we speak of it as the Armara age, because it is the age when the headquarters of the king was at that place which today is called Tel Armara; and that was to be a city where only the one god of the sun would ever have been

worshipped in that place; and he moved to that place and lived there a few years, and then he died and left no male heirs.

His wife wrote up to the king of the Hittites, and she said, "Send me a son to marry me and carry on as ruler of Egypt," and the king said, "I haven't got any son I can spare. They're all busy here." And she wrote back and said, "Well, then send me anybody who says he is your son. The Egyptians won't know the difference and that way I'll continue as queen and he will be king." And they sent somebody, but he was killed on the way; but her son-in-law succeeded her as ruler; and then he died, and another son-in-law succeeded him as ruler; and this second son-in-law was the one who moved the capital back to Thebes.

He had his grave hidden a little better than most of the others; and the result is that they found his grave there in Egypt. The grave of King Tut has been discovered there in modern times. He was one of the least of the pharaohs, but he comes toward the end of a period of greatness; and the gems and the precious things and the wonderful productions that were in his tomb are almost unbelievable until you see them.

When I went into the room in the Cairo Museum, where they had the gold work, and the jewels, and the mirrors, and all the fine things brought out of his tomb, I went there with a young man who had just been at the Tower of London; and he said to me, "The crown jewels of England don't compare in value or in excellence of workmanship with the material that was taken from this one tomb of this one pharaoh here, which is in this room in Cairo, and he was one of the lesser of the pharaohs," and that gives you an idea of the wealth of the pharaohs in this period.

Freud's book *Moses and Monotheism* is a very interesting one, with its description of the wonderful monotheism of Akhenaten; of the fact that Moses was an Egyptian noble, who was tremendously impressed by the teaching of the great sage, King Akhenaten; and who, after the pharaoh's successor succeeded in destroying it in Egypt; went to a group of Hebrew slaves and taught them the teachings of his master, Akhenaten; and then, according to Freud, he led them out of Egypt. This Egyptian nobleman was the guide and helper and leader of these poor Hebrew slaves, and he helped them to improve and advance in many ways; and all the time he taught them his wonderful teachings that he had got from Akhenaten; and then finally the people got so infuriated at him one time that they rose up and killed him, so nobody knows where he is buried. But when they had killed Moses it made a trauma in their consciousness; it affected the sub-consciousness of the people; and consequently, although they tried to put him out of their minds, it remained in their sub-consciousness; and this was passed along from generation to generation for a number of centuries,

until it reached the time of the great eighth century prophets—Amos and the others—who invented monotheism, according to the critics.

But Freud says, they didn't really invent it; it was taught by Moses and it remained in the subconsciousness all this time; and it had been caused to remain there by the great shock to the consciousness caused by their having killed Moses; and now it came out in full bloom. It is a beautiful psychological theory. The only trouble with it is there are no facts to support it.

I saw a discussion lately of somebody who had written a book to prove that the seven days of creation are not actual days of creation, but they are days in which the story of creation was revealed. This is based upon a statement over in Exodus where it says that in six days, the Lord made heaven and earth; and the author said the word *asah* which is translated "make" there can just as well mean "show"; so in seven days, the Lord showed heaven and earth; and that means that it was like a picture—the seven days God took in revealing a picture to the writer—and therefore he puts it in seven days; and it really doesn't mean that the seven days have anything to do with the creation of it.

Now that is a very interesting book, and very well-written, by a man who is anxious to maintain the truth of the Scripture; and an organization recently put out a discussion of this book; and the discussion rather amused me, because it was written by a man who went into the material and he said, "In the first place, if we accept this theory, it doesn't solve the problem of the relation of geology to the Bible," and he discussed that; and then he discussed the fact that it doesn't solve the problems of relation of anthropology to the Bible, and he discussed that; and then he discussed the relation to the various points, and so on; and he showed that we wouldn't find what we really need by accepting this theory; and then after he had discussed that a long time, down in the course of the discussion, he incidentally remarked that after all the theory had no exegetical foundation, because the word *asah* never means "show" except ten times and those are always in the phrase "to show mercy" and it doesn't mean to reveal something but to perform something.

It seemed to me that, if there is no exegetical foundation for it, then that is all that there is to it; and what's the use of spending a lot of time discussing whether the theory is satisfactory from other viewpoints? Is it in accordance with the facts? And there is absolutely no factual evidence for such a theory, because the Hebrew word does not mean that. That is enough to settle the matter. That should be all that is needed at all in that connection; yet it was put incidentally down as a minor point towards the end of the paper.

Well, now in this particular case, Freud has very beautiful theories, but the trouble with them is that they do not rest on a foundation of fact. He has, it is true, built a good bit of it on statements made by well-known scholars, who

have accepted these as facts. Thus Professor Lee, professor at the University of Berlin when I studied there—professor of Old Testament there—had written a book to prove that the Israelites killed Moses. And authority is authority. He took it on the authority's word. But when you read the book, although he was a great scholar, his evidence was pretty slight that the Israelites killed Moses. Now, of course, that is getting a good bit ahead of our point in the history. We are only noticing the importance of Akhenaten in theorizing about the origin of monotheism.

The fact is that Akhenaten was a monotheist. The fact is that any argument that monotheism could not have begun before the 8th century BC is contrary to fact, because here was a monotheist several centuries before. The fact is that the monotheism of Akhenaten is very different from that of the Bible. It does not provide a sufficient starting point for the monotheism of the Bible. These are the definite facts. Akhenaten believed in the material disc of the sun as the god which had created all things, controlled all things and in the light of which we should all live. The principal difference between it and the Biblical religion is that there is no ethical element. Our God is a God of justice and righteousness. His god was a god of absolute power just as much as ours, and a god of personal planning, but was not a god of ethical righteousness as far as the evidence goes. That is the teaching on that vital point of Biblical monotheism. That God is a Just God and a Righteous God is something which we find no trace of in Akhenaten's monotheism.

Now, another thing about Akhenaten's reign that should be noticed is that that Akhenaten was so interested in his theorizing, and his attempting to get the people to worship only the one god instead of the many gods of Egypt, that he didn't pay much attention, it would seem, to the administration of the empire. And so the Egyptian empire fell to pieces during his reign. His grandfather had been a powerful conqueror; his father had to some extent maintained the tradition of his grandfather. He himself, paid no attention to these matters, and the reputation of the Egyptian power sufficed for a time to hold Palestine and Syria in subjection; but as the years went by, people began to forget the reputation of Egypt and look for realities. They began to look for some power, and no power was forthcoming; and in his archives there is letter after letter from his representatives in Palestine saying, "Pharaoh, if you will just send us a few Egyptian troops, with just the sight of a few troops we'll be able to impress people with the power of the Egyptian arms and maintain the power of Egypt in this area; but if you don't send us any power, we will very soon reach the point where Egypt will lose everything in this area." These letters constantly plead with him for help, for financial help as well as for sending of soldiers.

3. History of Palestine.

Many of the letters are from the kings of the various Canaanite cities, and the kings of these cities say to him constantly, "All the other kings are turning against you. They are plotting behind your back, and making schemes to gain absolute independence of Egypt. They are joining with your enemies. I am the only one in the area that is loyal to Egypt. And then another king will say the same thing; and each of them accuses the other one of being false to Egypt; and the fact of the matter, of course, was that each one of them was looking out for himself, and was ready to stand by Egypt if Egypt would give them protection and the best guarantee of safety. But was ready to go against Egypt if Egypt did not do so, just like most leaders in most countries in the world. They are looking first to their own interests; and they would be loyal to Egypt if that was what was best for themselves; but we find these various letters, conflicting with one another and contradicting one another in this way; and yet out of it we learn a great deal about the history of Palestine at this time. We learn to know dozens of individuals in Palestine and Syria; and one interesting thing in these letters in Palestine and Syria is that occasionally they speak of a people called the Habiru; and the Habiru is a people which seems to be in eastern Palestine, and which seems to be conquering various cities; and sometimes they say if the king doesn't send help, the Habiru will conquer the whole land. Now the term is only used two or three times, but they used a particular ideogram.

Now just a word about this matter of ideogram. In the Babylonian there is a custom which we use in English—only they use it much more than we do—that is the writing of ideograms. In English, very often as you read you will come to an ideogram—I got a letter the other day asking me to go and speak to ten people at a place where I was (they didn't tell me how many there would be). I arrived at the place, and they handed me the letter; and the man asked me to phone him, and he said, "Friday night I wish you could come and address a meeting of teachers, pastors, laymen, etc." And when I saw them all together, I wondered what the etc. was for. You come to "etc." and you may say "etc."; You might say "et cetera," but you're not apt to pronounce it in Latin. You are more apt to say, "and so forth" when you come to it; and yet the words "and so forth" and "etc." have only one letter in common; that's the "t" between those two different phrases. We have a number of these marks in English where we write Latin and yet we don't pronounce the Latin, we pronounce the English, as a rule.

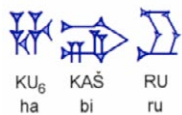
A few decades ago they would probably have pronounced the Latin. Now this is a habit which we might see as an ideogram. That is, we wrote letters, but we don't read what the letters say, but the idea that is in them, so we pronounce something entirely different from what the letters actually stand for, the writing that we put down.

Now, the ancient Babylonians did the same thing. They had taken over their writings from the Sumerians, just as we took ours over from the Latin; and so

they would often put Sumerian words in, and they would usually pronounce them in their own language; but often we're not just sure how to pronounce them, and here is a case of it. In this writing, in the Babylonian language written by the kings of Canaan who spoke Hebrew, to a pharaoh who spoke Egyptian; but in these writings, they often write a hieroglyph meaning "Habiru" or one meaning "Israelite", but it is pretty well recognized that they are the same thing—if they're not identical they are close to being the same thing.

[Note: I believe the lecture showed hieroglyph and cuneiform names but I don't

know what they are. Wikipedia has hieroglyph  (which reads-- using the sound-values for the hieroglyphs--counterclockwise from upper left: huh + b or p + ru, with the sitting symbol "people" or "man") and cuneiform



for Habiru].

Was Abraham an Israelite? Well, if we name any descendant of Abraham we are apt to call him Hebrew; and the Bible speaks of him as Abraham, the Hebrew, early in the discussion of Abraham, in such a way as to suggest that there were other Hebrews, and he was only one of them. Well, the term Hebrew is a wider term than Israelite and yet the two correspond nowadays to such an extent that we are apt to think of them as almost identical; and, of course, Jew is a smaller term, which means one of the twelve sons of Jacob but which we use commonly now to refer to all the sons—all the descendants of Jacob. Now, whether these terms are identical or not, they cover much the same ground at least, and when we read that the Habiru or the Hapiru are coming from the east of the Jordan and are conquering many sections of Palestine, it is pretty hard to keep from saying right away, "There you've got the Hebrews," and the Hebrews are conquering sections of Palestine.

There is an account in these letters which fits with the account of the conquest of Canaan. Immediately one is apt to come to that suggestion. All we know about these words is their usage. That is, we read about it and then we have to infer what they are. We have to take it from a few usages, put them together and try to reach a conclusion; and the conclusion we reach is that at this time, they were a people who were invading Palestine. We reach that definite conclusion, but of course then, we find that word in other Babylonian texts much earlier than this and some somewhat later.

We find them being slaves up in Mesopotamia. We find them attacking in various other regions. We find them attacking not simply in Palestine, but way up north in Syria, where Joshua and his men never went; so the term is used in a much larger way than anything that the Bible describes for Israel; and whether

it is these Hebrews or the Hebrews of another tribe is a question on which we need more information.

I remember picking up two articles by two learned Biblical scholars in 1928 and one of them said, in view of a certain particular piece of evidence which has come to light, "We can see that there is no longer any reason whatever for doubt that the Habiru who are described in these letters and who are now attacking Palestine are the Israelites under Joshua." And then I picked up another article by an equally learned Biblical scholar who said, "In view of this particular evidence there is now no longer any excuse for thinking that there is any connection between the Habiru mentioned in the letters of Akhenaten and the Hebrews under Joshua." Now these are absolutely antithetical conclusions taken. The fact is that the evidence is not sufficient yet to reach a conclusion and of course if we knew when the Israelites came into Palestine then we would be in a position to make a much better decision, that is, if this is a hundred years or two hundred years before the Israelites came in, it naturally can't be the Israelites.

But of course there are things in this which are very similar to the Israelites' coming and there are things which are very different. They attack Syria as well as Palestine, and we find other things about them earlier that are not known of the Israelites; and consequently, there are reasons to question it, and yet reasons to say it is so; and it is a matter on which we have a certain number of vital facts, but we have as yet insufficient facts to reach a positive conclusion.

(Student) Yes, Akhenaten was just about fourteen hundred, just a little before fourteen hundred.⁶⁴ (Student) The Sumerian seems to mean "fighters with a net"; and it is hard to get much connection, but that is what the actual signs seem to mean. There is practically no Babylonian anywhere that doesn't have some Sumerian words scattered through it, but you read them in Babylonian. That is extremely common, and then when you get to Hittite—when you read Hittite—the Hittite uses Babylonian ideograms, and also Sumerian, and sometimes the two in combination; and you get the same thing carried one step further there; but in any Babylonian reading you will find ideograms, which are Sumerian words written but pronounced as Babylonian. It is a very common thing, but of course often you know exactly what a word means, but you don't know how to pronounce it, unless you know how the Sumerian does.

Well, now I merely mention this to show how interesting Akhenaten is to us from so many different viewpoints. We have these Amarna tablets from his reign which tell us more about conditions in Palestine and Syria at that time than we know at almost any other time in ancient history. They tell about exact details of events in Palestine and Syria; and yet they are not a connected historical account of the land. A lot of letters—the carbons of the letters that pharaoh

⁶⁴ Present estimate of his rule is about 1350–1334 BC.

sent to them, and the actual letters that they sent to him. We have many letters both ways. While the bulk of them go to Palestine, many go to Syria; and there are also some letters to Babylon, and to the Hittites, included in them.

Now these letters were discovered at the place where Akhenaten had made and placed his headquarters—his new capital at Akhetaten, the modern name of which is Amarna—so we call them the Tell el-Amarna letters. They were discovered there about sixty years ago by Flinders Petrie and others. Some of them are in the British Museum; some are in the Berlin Museum; and there are a few in other places; but these letters have been preserved to us because of Akhenaten's monotheism. You see how that is. If Akhenaten had stayed at Thebes, the ancient capital, these letters would have had the fate of the other archives which came to the pharaohs in Thebes before and since—they've been lost. We might find some of them some time, but we have not found them yet—the archives of the Egyptian kings before or after this time. But Akhenaten moved his capital over to Akhetaten, and then his son-in-law moved it back again to Thebes; and when it was moved back again, all these old letters from the reign of Akhenaten's father and himself seem to have been missed in the move and were left there, and they were discovered recently. We have no such a trove of letters from any other site and if Akhenaten hadn't moved his capital that way we just wouldn't have them.

Well, now I mentioned that Akhenaten died at quite an early age, and so scholars today are divided between those who call him the first individual in history; the first monotheist in history; praise him as one of the great leaders. People who like to run down Moses and Biblical accuracy talk of what a wonderful man he was; and what wonderful ideals he held. But there are other Egyptologists who have reacted against this; and they have examined his finances, and tried to show that he lived like a man who didn't have much sense; and that he, after all, died pretty young; and how could he have done all this before that? And they say he was worthless; and he was just a puppet; and he didn't amount to much; and so you find heated arguments on both sides of this. But when you get down to it, the big argument as to whether Akhenaten was a great man or a weak man doesn't matter much. The important thing is that the activity of the king—whether from his own ideas or from somebody else's ideas—the activity of the king at this time was devoted to advancing monotheism of that particular type in Egypt. That is the fact. Whether we are able to say who gets the blame or the credit for it is after all of minor importance. The fact is that he moved the capital and then later it was moved back and these tablets were left there.

The Germans excavated El Amarna. They brought the material back to Berlin; and they fixed it up in Berlin in such a way as to be much more interesting than the material in most other museums in the world. Instead of putting up a lot of little things in a show case, and you look and say, "Here's something from

Akhenaten; and here's something from his great, great grandfather"—a lot of little things in a show case and you look at one thing after another and read a little writing under it—they arranged a room to be one of the rooms of his palace; and they put the things they found in the palace in just the right place as they had found them; and tried to reconstruct it in such a way that you could see the way the things looked at his time; and you get more of a vivid realization—or you did before this last war—of the actual situation there in ancient Egypt, from the way in which the Germans in the Berlin Museum display the things which they have excavated at El Amarna.

After Akhenaten's death the priests of Amun-Ra, the traditional Egyptian Sun-god and the king of gods, succeeded in overcoming those who were the followers of Akhenaten's sun god Aten. They succeeded in getting his daughters pretty well under their control. He left no sons. We noticed how his wife tried to get the king of the Hittites to send a son to marry her and failed; so the power passed to his sons-in-law, and they were rather weak and incompetent; and one of them held the power and lived two or three years and died; and then another took over and he was a young man and he died before such a long time; but he lived long enough to have the capital transferred back to Thebes and to have the priests of Amun get complete power in the land again.

The language used in the Amarna letters was Babylonian. Canaanite, which is very close to Hebrew—the Hebrew language—was the language spoken by the king in Canaan. The kings in Egypt spoke Egyptian but on these tablets they used a language that was a foreign language to both of them—the Babylonian—to write on the tablets; just as if you today were in Italy and wanted to send a telegram to somebody in Germany, you'd probably write it in French; because English would not be an acceptable language in the country, but French is acceptable all over the world; or at least was before the war. Well, at that time, Babylonian was similarly the *lingua franca*, the language of diplomacy, and so he wrote in it; but every once in a while, there was a word they wanted to express that they didn't know just how to express in Babylonian—because after all the customs were quite different—and so in those cases they did the word in Babylonian as they understand it, and then they'd put in parentheses the Hebrew word so as to say, "Well, now, if you don't know what we mean by the Babylonian, here's the Hebrew word, maybe you'll understand that."

And so they were put in by the original writers, but they're not part of the sentence. They're an explanation of the word for it in the other language, in the Hebrew language. The Canaanite language and the Hebrew language are the same substantially. But we have discovered in Palestine in the last few years quite a bit of material from ancient Canaan, quite a few brief inscriptions which were nevertheless long enough to tell us quite a little about the language although they don't tell us a great deal of it. And then in northern Palestine

we've discovered a large number of clay tablets with actual Canaanite written on it; and this is from quite a distance from Israel, and quite a bit earlier. The language differed a good bit, but yet it is close enough to see it is the same language. It differs about as much as the English of England and the English of American would—perhaps a little bit more—but it is quite definitely related.

After Berlin fell in 1945, before any of the other allies came in, the Russians went through and picked up anything they felt like and took it off. And in the Berlin Museum two days after the conquest the Russian officers walked in and they just scooped up everything they saw that looked good to them and took it off, and so they took—for instance, they had the best collection of silver seals in the world and of those ninety percent were taken but there were a few off in a corner they didn't see.

Well, now as to these El Amarna tablets, whether they took them or not, I do not know, but they took a good deal from this museum. The men who came in were men who knew something about the field and knew what they were worth; and so they seized just about everything of value. In many a house in Berlin, a Russian truck would just back up to the house and they'd go in and they'd line the people up and take away any rings they had, or anything like that; and they'd take up the bath tub, and take the door knobs off the doors; and the radiators, and anything metal, and carry it off; and that was often done by people who didn't have much idea of what they were doing; they just took anything that looked valuable; and they say that a lot of that stuff was just dumped about a hundred miles from Berlin and left there. But the museum seems to have been visited by men who really knew what they wanted; and so they probably took most of what was of value and left quite a little that wasn't of much value; but these tablets—there was no great loss to the world even if all these El Amarna tablets were now destroyed—because they have been copied with as much care as any set of Babylonian tablets ever have been. Their great importance was recognized.

There are many tablets right here in the University of Pennsylvania Museum that may be of tremendous importance, but their importance has not yet been recognized. They have never been copied; and, of course, there are far more like that in the British museum. A German scholar once said it was more profitable to excavate in the British museum than in Babylon, because there is so much there that has not been studied or copied; but these El Amarna tablets, the importance was universally recognized; and they have been copied so carefully and photographed and everything so much, that if any of them were lost there wouldn't be any tremendous loss. We have definite records of just exactly what they contain, even though there are many, many points about the El-Amarna tablets which are not yet fully understood, like any letters. A letter doesn't explain everything. It takes a good deal for granted.

When I was in Palestine I'd get a letter from my mother in Los Angeles, and she'd say, "Last night Sam came over and we had a very nice visit with him," and I would write back and I'd say, "Do you mean Sam Watson or Sam Sullivan?" And she'd get the letter six weeks after she wrote it; and she couldn't figure which; and she'd take a week thinking and inquiring about it, and she'd write me the answer; and I'd get the answer six weeks after I wrote the question, and by that time I'd forgotten about the question.

Well, in many letters you get, there are statements like that. People don't explain. They just name the person, and in those cases you know from the context what they mean. It wasn't quite that way in diplomatic letters; but nearly as bad, if read by people who don't know the background or the situation, and that's the situation we are in. They are letters, and there is much taken for granted; yet we have a good many of them; there are a great many parallels; and we are in a position to explain a great deal about them; and there is a great deal more that we can explain with further study, and also with bringing them into relation to more material as it comes to light; so they could be a great source of knowledge of Palestine for many years to come, even though they have been carefully studied and very excellently taught.

The El-Amarna letters, then, are one thing for which we have Akhenaten to thank for. His monotheism is the cause of their having been preserved. Now Akhenaten's son-in-law—his second son-in-law who became king—Tutankhamun. Tutankhaten, the living image of Aten, the one true god, the material disc of the sun, the god in whom Akhenaten believed; and you can be sure that Tutankaten always called himself Tutankaten, or he wouldn't have married the daughter of this very fanatical advocate of the religion of Aten; but he was a weakling and in his reign, his kingdom, the capital was moved back to Thebes; and there at Thebes, the old capital of Egypt, when the capital was moved back, the priests of Amun reestablished their power in Egypt. Amun was the chief of a dozen, in fact hundreds, of gods. He had come to be the chief one because king after king had given such great gifts to the temple of Amun, even though theoretically he had not been—he had risen from a small deity in a small village of upper Egypt—but he had come to be the leading deity of Egypt; and now this king took up as his name the one whom the priests took up—Amun, the living image of the god Amun—then he died and was buried, and they hid his tomb better than any other ancient Egyptian tomb in that time.

Once the god Amun was re-established, they took off Akhenaten's name everywhere they found it, and they never referred to him by that name; they called him "that criminal." But this son-in-law, Tutankhamun or Tutankhaten, in his tomb, left dozens of fine wooden chairs and beds, all sorts of things made of wood, and, of course, very elaborate jewelry, very splendid works of fine jewelry, almost inconceivable; the amount of treasure that was found in this tomb of one of the lesser of the pharaohs. But the interesting thing is that

almost every chair, every statue, every bed, almost everything, you have on one side the name Tunkankaten and on the other side, Tutankamun; so he literally carried water on both shoulders. He was the great representative of Aten, the one and only true god; and also he was the true supporter of Amun, the great enemy of Aten; I call him the first modernist in history. He was the one who used the terminology of both gods and carried water on both shoulders; and consequently he made a good transition figure from the monotheistic religion back to the polytheistic religion that followed and took complete possession, so that Aten was completely forgotten. The modernist is after all a transition. He does not have anything that will last, but he is a half-way that makes it easier to pass from belief to unbelief.

Now, just one incidental word which I don't think I have mentioned in this class before though I've mentioned it in many places because it is important in this connection. That is the curse of the pharaoh. Everybody, nearly, who was reading the newspapers in 1924 was aware of it. There are probably many who have not heard of it, but many will come across it in different things, the fact that when they opened up the grave here of Tutankhamun or—aten, they found over the door the curse of the pharaoh that anyone who shall enter this tomb or shall take anything out of it, the curse of death is laid upon him by the great gods of Egypt; and a similar thing was found above the entrance to the tomb of every pharaoh; but the newspaper men who entered this tomb hadn't entered any of the other tombs; or if they had, they hadn't been able to read the Egyptian, and hadn't asked anyone what it meant; but they noticed that on this, and they thought that was quite a striking thing to write up in the newspaper articles; so the articles came back and tell how these men had gone in and had braved the curse of the pharaoh, and had braved the fact that the curse was laid upon them; and it was only about six months later, that the third cousin of one of the men who went in died; so the papers got a headline, the curse of the pharaoh has been fulfilled; and the fact of the matter is that within the next twenty years, every single man who went into that tomb had either an uncle, a cousin, a grandfather or some other relative who died—every single one of them—and so you will hear people telling you that the curse of the pharaohs was fulfilled. And it was, but that is how it was; and the same thing is probably true of every other tomb that has ever been entered, and of everybody who either has or hasn't entered any one of these tombs.

Now this ended the 18th dynasty of Egypt. The 18th dynasty, which had been so glorious, ended with chaos and disaster to the land. The Egyptian empire was lost, and within the land of Egypt there was very little power in the hands of the pharaoh; and the line died out and a high priest of the god Amun became the king of Egypt; and this man who became the king of Egypt, some lists record as the last king of the 18th dynasty, and some record him as the first king of the 19th dynasty; and it doesn't matter which you call it, he is the transition figure between. He took over the power and he reestablished things

in Egypt; and he traveled all through the land, and established the government on a firm basis again after a period of anarchy between; and he got things well established again, and he was succeeded by a king named Rameses, who was of no importance because he lived such a short time. He lived a year or two, and I wouldn't mention him except that other kings of the name were of tremendous importance. He was Rameses the 1st, but his son Rameses II was a young man when he became king, because his father died so soon, and this man Rameses II is the pharaoh who has left as great a mark as any pharaoh in all history.

Rameses II reigned for many years. His reign was over fifty years in length. He had fifty sons and a hundred daughters. When he died his oldest twelve sons were all dead so he was succeeded by his thirteenth son Merneptah, and he was already 60 at the time, so you see Rameses' reign was a very long reign. He was a great builder.

You find all over Egypt the great monuments which he put up, temples and palaces everywhere. He loved to put up his statue. We find statues of Rameses that would reach twice as high as this room. They stand—dozens of them—many places in Egypt. He put up dozens of these statues of himself all over; he loved to make himself out as a great, powerful conqueror. He would show himself shooting his arrows into a great mass of his enemy, to win fame for himself; and he led his army up through Palestine and won back the empire, reconquered most of Palestine and Syria.

One occasion Rameses was foolhardy, and got himself into a condition which might have proven serious; but he was fortunate enough that reinforcements came just in the nick of time and saved his life, and snatched victory out of defeat. When this happened he had a poet put it into beautiful poetry, describing how they were about to be destroyed; and Rameses himself single-handed overcame the enemy, and established the victory. He had good press agents; and so we find copies of this poem all over Egypt describing the great victory of Rameses. Rameses was about 1300, a little after 1300.

And so Rameses II was a great conqueror, and especially a man who loved to boast; and he had good press agents, and so he did do a definite thing. He got credit far beyond what he had actually done; and then he conquered a great deal; and had a great deal of plunder; and he used it for building these great things all through Egypt; and he doubtless used a great many slaves in doing it; and it has been quite generally thought that he was the pharaoh of the oppression of Egypt, though we have no proof of it.

Now we don't need to go into the details of the reign of Rameses in this class, but to mention that at his death he was succeeded by his thirteenth son, Merneptah; and Merneptah was an old man already when he became king, so he only reigned a very few years. Merneptah probably wasn't much of a conqueror.

He was too old. But he did have some good press agents, so he took some of his father's poems and just put his name in them in place of his father's; and the school children had to learn the poems with the name of a new pharaoh in the place of the old one. We have some of those poems which are word for word like the ones written for Rameses II.

And so we are at a little difficulty in knowing the historical events of his reign, because of this tendency to claim credit for things he didn't deserve. I even know of one statue which is the statue of Tothnes III; and at the back, down between the shoulders and back, it says Tothnes III, in very small writing; and one of the scribes seems to have overlooked that, because on the front they chiseled off the name of Tothnes III, and had put in the name of Merneptah; and so this beautiful wooden statue, which is in the Berlin Museum has the name of Merneptah on the front, but written in little small letters on the back, if you look close you can see the name Tothnes III. So he took over poems and statues, etc., and tried to make people think he was as great a man as his father Rameses had been. Well, it has been thought by many that he was the Pharaoh of the Exodus. There's no proof of it, but if Rameses II was the pharaoh of the oppression, Merneptah would be the pharaoh of the exodus.

And an interesting thing is that a monument has been found describing—claiming to describe—a great expedition of Merneptah into Palestine; and it names various places in Palestine which have been destroyed, or which are in misery as a result of the conquest; and the monument says "Israel has no seed. Israel has no seed," mentioned among the others. Well, now, some take that as the earliest place we find the name Israel, and some take that as proof that Merneptah was the pharaoh of the exodus, and that he was killing the Israelite children, and so he said, "Israel has no seed." Now others take it as proof the Israelites must have gone earlier than this; they must have been in Palestine; and that this would mean that all their harvest was taken away from them; and they had no seed with which to start a new harvest. The word "seed" has both meanings in Egyptian just as it does in English. And so we call it the "Israel monument", because the word Israel occurs in it, though it is only one of various words in it. It has been a cause of much discussion, and we need further light to be sure exactly what it means; but it is a very interesting monument connected with this man Merneptah. And another interesting thing in it is that the other places in Palestine named have the Egyptian mark before them which means the name of a place; but when it mentions Israel, it only has the mark for the name of a people—not a place—and that would fit with the idea that the Israelites, who were recognized as belonging in Palestine, might have been still actually in Egypt in subjection to him, and mentioned in connection with his account of the people in Palestine whom he conquered here: these Palestinian people who are slaves in Egypt. Now that's a possibility, so there are arguments which can be made both ways, but the fact there is a connection with the name of Israel.

We have mentioned the leaders of the 18th and 19th dynasties, and it would probably be a good thing to give you the principal dates of two or three of them. These dates are fairly definite and so I think that it would be a good thing for you to have them at least in your notes and have a pretty good general idea of them in your head. Tothnes III may be placed from 1482 to 1450.

B. Abraham.

1. Material Aspects of his life. The Bible tells us that Abraham came out of Ur of the Chaldees. Most modern scholars think that that is a late insertion in the Bible and undependable. That comes from the P document, and they say that you can put no confidence in it; and I have often heard men speak of northern Mesopotamia, Haran, as a place from which Abraham came, and they based it largely on the fact that when Abraham sends his servant to Haran, to get a wife for his son, (Gen. 24:4); he says, "Go to the land of *moledety*, and our English version translates *moledety* "my kindred", the land of my kindred. Many scholars today say a word that begins with an "m" like that must indicate a place; and so it doesn't mean kindred, but it means birthplace. Go to the land of my nativity, and this proves Abraham was born up there.

That is an argument based purely on philological matters, upon the *formation* of the word. I took the word once, and traced it through Genesis, and found a number of cases where "kindred" fits excellently and "birthplace" doesn't make a great deal of sense for the translation of the word, and I think that the old translation which the versions have always had, "the land of my kindred" is one for which a mighty good argument can be made.

The Bible, as we have it, says he came from Ur of the Chaldees. And the only argument against it is, that it is in what is said to be the P document, and therefore it must be a late addition. As a matter of fact, we found in excavations in Babylonia that Ur was a very ancient city. It is one of the earliest cities of Babylonia. Now if they said Abraham was born in such and such a place, and named a city which wasn't even founded till a thousand years later, why it, of course, would be a glaring inaccuracy in the Scripture. But there is no such inaccuracy as that anywhere in the Scripture. It says he came from Ur of the Chaldees. Ur of the Chaldees may be a late term to describe the place. That is one of the arguments expressed against it—that the people whom we call the Chaldeans probably didn't come in there till hundreds of years after the time of Abraham—but that is no objection to Abraham's being born in Ur if the Bible describes Ur by a term for it which was not used until a later time.

We might say that the Norsemen came to America about 1000 AD—Leif Ericson came to America. Well, you say, Americus Vespucci wasn't even born till 400 years later and how could Leif come to America? I don't think anybody today

would quibble over that. You say "America" and you mean this land here; and he came to this land, and we use the term used today for this land. We know this—that at about 1000 BC or a little later there were a people there called the Chaldeans. It is usually thought that they didn't come in until about this time. So when Abraham lived there, it would be Ur but it wouldn't be called Ur of the Chaldees. It would be this Ur, which was later called Ur of the Chaldees, but it would be called Ur in Abraham's time.

Then, in Laban's time it may be that the Chaldees weren't yet there; the phrase "of the Chaldees" might have been inserted later on—not written there by Moses but inserted there later or simply as an indication of the location of the place which Moses described as Ur, to point out where it is, in that area which we now call the Chaldean area. As to whether it was so called in Moses' time, there is no present evidence it was; but there is no proof that it wasn't in Moses' time; but it seems highly unlikely that it was called Ur of the Chaldees as early as Abraham, and it may not have been as early as Moses; but it was called Ur, and it was in the region which later was called the region of the Chaldeans. It might have come in as people were studying the Bible—studying Genesis 11:28—they might have come to this name Ur and some of them might have written in the margin "Ur of the Chaldees" simply to make it a little easier for people to understand where this Ur was.

But if it was, it is nothing whatever against the inspiration of the Scripture or against the Mosaic authorship, and if it was written by Moses, if it was called that as early as the time of Moses, that would certainly be no objection to the statement if it wasn't so called in the time of Abraham. That is, it may have been so called in the time of Abraham, but we have no evidence that it was. It is less likely to be so called in the time of Abraham than in the time of Moses. We have no evidence as yet that it wasn't called that in the time of Moses. At any rate, there is a city of Ur in that region.

At any rate, however, the city of Ur we have known since the early 2,000's BC; it was in existence at the time of Abraham, and was already then an old city. It was a city which is one of the earliest cities in Mesopotamia. It was one of the great cities in Mesopotamia. It was a city which we know, from excavation, had a standard of living; had a splendor—the luxury of the houses in Ur at the time of Abraham was as great as that of Babylon a thousand years later. Babylon in the time of Nebuchadnezzar was the great city in the ancient world, but it had no further advanced house building and general comfort in the houses than Ur had in the time of Abraham; so this city of Ur was a sophisticated, cultured, advanced city in the time of Abraham. It was already there and it had all this; and when God said, "Come out of Ur and go out into a land that I will show thee," he was calling him to go out from a highly developed, cultured, comfortable place—go out into what seemed the backwoods into the distant wilderness.

Well, now, we read in the Scripture that Abraham and his family, including his father, left Ur to go into the land of Canaan and they traveled from the city of Ur northward a long distance along the rivers; and when they got perhaps a little less than half way to Canaan, they came to the city of Haran; and there they stopped; and they stayed in this city of Haran until Abraham's father died; and then Abraham went on from there further on into Palestine.

Well, now why did they stop at Haran? Why did they leave Ur and go off there? And why would they stop in this particular place, rather than any other city along the way, before or after Haran? That is a question which you might ask, and the Bible doesn't tell us; and so we are not in a position to give an answer; but if we can find something which seems to suggest a probable reason why Terah stopped in Haran, a reason which would make it the natural thing for them to stop there rather than any other places—and the Bible says he was at Ur and then went to Haran—that would be, in turn, an added weight to our confidence to the accuracy and dependability of the source, and here we strike a most interesting thing.

The city of Ur had its great central temple devoted to Nanna, the moon god—the moon god of the ancient Sumerians, Nanna, at the great temple there in the city of Ur. That was the central deity of the place; it was distinctive of Ur; and when you go up through the land of Mesopotamia, you occasionally find small temples of Nanna; but it always is quite subordinate, subsidiary. Other gods are the main gods of every city until you come to Haran; and when you come to Haran, you find that Haran was the other one of the great cities of ancient Babylonia which worshipped the moon god as its principal deity.

Now, you know in the book of Acts how, when Paul was in Ephesus and they found he was interfering with the worship of Diana, the goddess of Ephesus, they had the great uproar, and they called, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The worship of Diana was a central feature in the life of Ephesus and the making of images—you remember the silversmith Demetrius, who was one of the leaders against Paul. There was a great industry that centered around the worship of a particular deity.

And that would give a central similarity to the two different cities in which Nanna was central, much as the same industry would make one city like another. I remember years ago when I was a boy and lived up in Calumet, Michigan. It was, at that time—well, I'll say a little before that time—it had been the leading copper mining district in the United States; and then they used up a great deal of the copper ore in Calumet, and other copper districts began to develop in the United States; and the next one which came into prominence was around Butte, Montana; and that became the second great copper mining district in the United States. And then the third was found down in Arizona; and

there have been a few ever since. I remember up in Butte talking to a man who told me that he went to a district just a hundred miles away from Butte and got a very good job mining coal; and he said he went into the mines and worked one day, and then when he finished he didn't even stop to ask for his pay. He just started out walking and he didn't stop until he got back to Butte. He said he had heard it said that the copper miner never does coal mining, but he hadn't realized what it meant until he tried a day of coal mining. There is a difference in the industry; a difference in the type of life; a difference in the type of people in a coal mining center and in a copper mining center.

Well, now, my father and I left Calumet and made a trip out west; and in the course of the trip, we changed trains at Butte; and we were there about an hour and a half, I guess; and there in Butte I went for a little walk for a few minutes; and I must say, as I walked along the streets and saw the houses and saw the people, everything struck me as—I felt more at home than I had felt anywhere since I left Calumet. There was a similarity to the general type of life in the place which centered around copper mining, different from that found any other place in the country which did not center around copper mining. And I remember we were in the station; and a man came in, and my father looked up, and he had known the man twenty years before. I think he ran into two or three others in the hour and a half he was there; and my father said to me, he said, "You know I could pick up the phone book here and run right down it, and I could probably pick out a hundred people that I have known in Calumet; they have moved away, and they have gone to another copper mining settlement. There is that similarity between places which center around the same industry.

Well now, it would seem very reasonable that there was the same similarity between Ur and Haran; and old Terah as he traveled along was probably disliking the discomforts of travel and thinking of their home back in Ur and saying to Abraham, "Why on earth do we have to pick up and leave? And we had a good place to live like that, what's this crazy idea of yours going way off in a far country there to Canaan?" And as they went along Terah became more and more homesick, and wished they hadn't started; but at other times, he'd be quite happy about the traveling; and he'd see the people in different places and he'd say, "Oh, my, I wouldn't stay here if they'd give me the town. Let's go on further," and then they came to Haran and immediately he felt at home. There was a similarity between the places, and very likely he ran on to people that he knew in Haran—just as we did in Butte, run into people we had known in Calumet, even though that was fifteen hundred miles. I remember my father telling of being down in Arizona, a third great copper mining district; and he was driving along in his car and a man hailed him and asked for a ride and he picked him up; and he started talking to the man and he said, "The first place mentioned was Calumet, Michigan." And there he was two thousand miles away down there in Arizona, but he was in a copper mining area. People naturally go back and forth among the same places with the same interests, and so here we

have archaeological evidence which makes it seem quite natural that an old man leaving Ur would think of Haran as a reasonable place to stop, and a place where he would feel, "Well, I feel at home here. Let's not go any further. This is good enough for me right here."

And the Bible simply tells us the fact that they left Ur; they came to Haran; they stopped at Haran; they stayed at Haran until Terah died, and then they came on out. There was this one deity that was the distinctive god of the two places, Ur and Haran, though of course both places worshipped many other gods; and many other places worshipped the moon god, but the moon god would just be an incidental deity in most places. In this place it was the leading deity of the place. Well, they didn't fit in; at least Abraham certainly did not fit in. Just how much spiritual nature Terah had we do not know. There is an old Jewish tradition that he was an idol maker, but we just don't know. We don't know anything about him. And I think, even aside altogether from that, I think that a person that knows the Lord will certainly not, or at least should not, feel at home anywhere in this world; because the usages and customs of this world, and the whole attitude of the world is very, very different; and America certainly is a pagan land; and why should you feel more at home here in America than you would feel in some other country?

However, I remember that after I had been a year in Germany, I was wont to come back to America for the summer; and I went into a bank and asked for some money and I gave them some German money; and I asked for \$100 in American money and they handed me 10 American 10-dollar bills. To me it was merely a commercial transaction. I went in to get that money, but as I received that money from him, cold shivers went up and down my spine, and I had a thrill such as I have hardly had in my life before or since. It just reminded me of the background and the situation to which I was accustomed. And even though the Christian is one whose home is in heaven, and should be a stranger as much in one part of the world as another, with its worldliness and its wickedness, yet the fact is that the particular sort of background with which you are accustomed gives you a great thrill when you come back to it. And when you come on to something quite similar, it is going to give you the same effect; because even though our citizenship is in heaven, we always are pretty well tied in with this earth. I wouldn't build a great argument on it at all, but I do say that it [relation of Ur and Haran re/ moon god] is an interesting little incidental point which looks in the direction of historical accuracy. It is not a lonely little fact devoid of all others when you get a lot of little incidental points which look in the same direction cumulatively. It makes quite a strong argument and this is just one of them—that is all.

Now we come to a question which perhaps is more striking than this. That is that we find Abraham coming over into the land of Palestine; and there in the land of Palestine we find him traveling up and down and through the center of

that land; and there we find him described as one who with flocks and herds camped at one point and moved north and south between points along the hill country in Palestine. He does this when he first reaches Palestine. When he returns from Egypt with far greater property, he does it again. He has his flocks and his herds encamped at Beersheba in the far south; at Hebron further north; or up near Bethel, or even further north up in the region of Dothan; or in regions of the north of Palestine, but always on that hill country area.

As we read this of his traveling up and down in that hill country area, we might wonder, how it is that a man with flocks and herds would travel up and down in that hill country area in this way? You would think of the area as taken up with cities and with people, while here and there it would be densely enough populated, that a man would not be able to camp in just one place with all his property; and then to move to another and camp; and wander back and forth up through that hill country. This particularly is the case when we notice, in later history, that in the time of the later Israelite kingdom we have great cities right in this very hill country; and today it is up in that country that the great bulk of the population lives, except of course those down in the Philistine plain. The Jordan valley in the time of the Israelite kingdom was rather a desolate region with very few people living there; and same was the situation in the Jordan valley in recent years. Well, under those circumstances, it is an amazing and interesting thing that Abraham should have wandered back and forth encamping in different places in this hill country region here.

We find this, perhaps, brought more particularly to our attention when we turn to Gen. 13, after Abram had been down in Egypt; and we find what happened when he came back up into the land. We find that there again he was traveling back and forth with his flocks and herds in this hill country. And then, when Lot went down into the Jordan valley, we find that Lot set his tent towards Sodom, and eventually went right into the city of Sodom. That is when Lot went down and gave up the itinerant habits of Abraham, of camping here and there. And he settled down in one definite area; and he remained in that city of Sodom, doubtless having steady and permanent pastures for his flocks and herds right in the neighborhood.

That 13th chapter is a very interesting one. As you read that 13th chapter, of how Abram and Lot were so rich after they had been down in Egypt, how they came up into the land. Then—you find that they had a certain amount of difficulty in this hill country. We read in the 3rd verse how they camped there between Bethel and Ai; and we read there that the land was not able to bear them—that they could dwell together; for their substance was great so that they could not dwell together. And there was strife between the herdsman of Abram's cattle and the herdsman of Lot's cattle. And it is easy of course to reconstruct the scene of what must have taken place. They were settled there on that hill country, and camped there between Bethel and Ai; and we'll say one

morning Lot's men went out 5:30 am to take their flocks and herds out to pasture; and they found that all the places where there were good springs near where they were encamped, were taken up with Abram's flocks who had gone out at 5:00 am. So Lot's men had to travel quite a long distance to get past them, to get to good springs, good pasturage. And it made quite a disagreeable long trip for them getting past Abram's flocks; and the same thing coming back at night. Doubtless the next morning they went out at 4:30 am to get ahead of Abram's men; and Abram's men would find themselves in the same plight that Lot's men had found themselves in the day before, and they would have to go further. And so the next day they would doubtless come out at four o'clock; and pretty soon, they wouldn't be getting any sleep at all, if they used purely peaceful means to see who would get there first and get the good pasture land, of which the amount nearby was quite limited. And so there naturally was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and herdsmen of Lot's cattle; and they began to say, "We have had this side," and the others would say, "No we were here first. You have to go further up!" and so there was strife.

And Abram said, "We must put a stop to this, for it is dangerous"—for the Canaanite and Perezite dwelt then in the land, we read. And so Abram, we imagine, came to Lot's tent and they walked out together and after awhile Abram said to him "Let there be no strife between me and thee, and between thy herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are brethren; and is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself I pray thee from me, I pray thee. If thou wilt take the left hand then I will go to the right. But if thou wilt depart to the right hand then I will go to the left."

We read.

And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. 11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. 12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

What is this phrase here "as thou comest into Zoar" in the statement here? As the Scripture stands in the English it seems ambiguous; but when we check it with the facts, we find that one way of interpreting it is right and the other way is wrong. Lot fled to another place in the Jordan valley, so that would suggest that when it says "when thou comest into Zoar," it means that he beheld the plain of Jordan that it was well-watered everywhere, and especially as you come to Zoar. That is, he saw the Jordan valley stretching down there clear to Zoar; and it was all well watered in all that area towards Zoar and up to where he was. He saw the Jordan valley as you come down toward Zoar: you look at that whole

valley and he saw that it was well watered everywhere before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt.

And so we have here this place Zoar, down at the end of the Jordan valley, way to the south; but we have the rest of the area, and all that above, which Lot looked at; and Lot saw this well-watered land everywhere; and so Lot says, "That is a wonderful place to be!" and Lot chose the plain of Jordan; and he journeyed east, and they separated one from the other. A wonderful story to show the selfishness of Lot and the unselfishness of Abraham; and how Abram was rewarded for his generosity and unselfishness later on—a very fine story to bring out if you are telling the story in America; but it is not a good story to tell in Palestine, simply to read from the Scripture there, because if you stand between Bethel and Ai in Palestine—I remember when I stood there and looked, here came along a man with little pipes in his hand, holding them in his mouth and playing on the pipes. And behind him came his flocks and his herds, following along behind him; as he went along there, heading off towards the nice springs and pastures up there near Bethel and Ai. And then we look down there in the Jordan valley—down there from three-quarters of mile above, we saw that barren, arid land—a little muddy stream flowing, weaving back and forth in a depression in the middle of that valley; and on both sides of it there is quite a rise up from the river; and then a very flat area, with hardly a thing growing in that part of the valley—further down, you see a lot of weeds growing. And that is the way it looks today; and that is the way it looked a hundred years ago, the way it looked a 1000 years ago. It looked that way in the later Israelite kingdom, when the critics say the story was written. It looked probably almost like that in the time of Moses and Joshua. You wonder why on earth anyone would make up a story like this: why did Lot choose a land like that as the well-watered region?

In the days when Abram was unselfish—it doesn't say that he was unselfish, but it certainly suggests it when it tells of God's rewarding him later, it certainly suggests it—why was Abraham unselfish in staying up here in this kind of section in this part of the land? And so it looks that way to us—that part of the land and the story just doesn't seem to fit the situation; and you wonder why on earth—why anybody when the P document was written—made up a story like this? Or even when the J document was written, why did he make a story up like this?

The trouble is that the story was doubtless written at the time the story occurred; and when a story is written at the time when the events occur, you don't bother to explain the things that are really obvious to everybody at the time. If you say that you went from N.Y. to San Francisco you probably would not bother to say, "N.Y. at the extreme eastern end of U.S. and San Francisco is at the extreme western end." Everyone knows that, and if they didn't, they could look on the map and find it out very easily. You just wouldn't bother to explain

that. But 1000 years from now—if both of them were ruins and forgotten and people no longer knew even where the cities had been—your story might be rather obscure about what you meant. And if you were writing a story like that about some place and something that happened long ago, you no doubt would qualify it, and say something about it. It says that it was well-watered everywhere, so it does have a qualifying statement here; for it says "it was well-watered before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah." Just even a little later, the changed circumstances—with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah down there—might need a little explanation.

Well, the story seems to the critics to be a story which did not fit the background—to those of them who knew anything about Palestinian geography. Even Eduard Meyer, the great German historian—probably the greatest authority on ancient history who ever lived—writing in 1928⁶⁵, pointed out the essential inaccuracy of the story. He said in 1928, the Jordan River flowed down through a desolate, barren valley. Never was the attempt made to harness the river and use it, to draw water from the river for irrigation purposes, and thus to make a garden out of the desert, as was done in Egypt under almost identical circumstances. That's the statement Eduard Meyer made in 1928.

Of course, here is a comparison to the land of Egypt, which is very similar. The land of Egypt would be largely a desert if it were not for the irrigation, for which the Nile water is used for the area around it. Well now, when Eduard Meyer made that statement In 1928, he showed that he was getting old; he was about seventy when he died a year or two afterwards; and he wasn't as up-to-date as he would have been ten years before. He certainly would have known then any discoveries that had been made because he kept right up to date during most of his life.

He wrote that great series of histories of the ancient peoples, and the history of the Mormons, for which he made a trip to the United States to gather material, first-hand; but in 1924 and '25, there had been made discoveries here which, if Meyer had known about them, he would not have made this statement. In those years the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem made an investigation of the Jordan Valley, and examined the large number of small hills down there in that desert area. In 1929, I was with a party which examined a few more of them; and we brought further evidence of the fact that the Jordan Valley was not always a desolate region, but there was a time when the Jordan Valley was filled with little towns; and the way we tell that is that we noticed that many of these little hills looked like tells; and we went close to them, and examined them carefully, and we found pottery strewn over their sides which would not be there if they had not been actually settled places; and as we'd look at the pottery, we'd learn something of the great numbers of people who lived in these different towns at one time; and that shows us that the irrigation must

⁶⁵ Eduard Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums* (1928)

have been extensively developed, because otherwise you couldn't survive in towns down in that area; but with using the Jordan, the way the Nile has been used, to irrigate the soil there, you could make a very fertile region out of it; and with irrigation you could keep these many towns in prosperity, which existed there in the Jordan valley at that time.

Now we ask, "At what time were these towns there?" I remember when we rode on horseback down along the Sea of Galilee and into the southern end of the Sea of Galilee, we saw there at its southern end a town, Beth-Yerah, the city of the moon, a town which ran for nearly a mile along the southern edge of the Sea of Galilee. It rose quite high there, and on examination you find that most of the pottery—practically every bit of pottery there—comes from a time previous to about 2000 BC. At that time, the City of the Moon was an important city there in the Early Bronze Age, but the Middle Bronze hadn't much more than started before the town was deserted; and Beth-Yerah was thereafter never settled again, except for a very small Roman fortress on the top of it in Roman days.

And the same thing is found in city after city down through the Jordan Valley. In dozens of instances it is found that the cities were deserted before the time of Moses; and so it becomes evident that in this region, at the time of Abraham, the situation was that the Jordan Valley was built up—many towns in it—lands doubtless fenced off into pasture lands, which was owned and settled and used; and a person could not travel north and south in the Jordan Valley. They couldn't be here for a few weeks or a month, and there for a few weeks or a month; he would run on to too many fences, too much area cut up into pasture, too many towns.

The hill country was way behind the Jordan Valley at that period, quite contrary to the situation in later years. And then the Jordan Valley underwent a change; we find that, after the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, there was a great change which took place; and we find that at the time when Joshua came into the land, there was Jericho, that strong fortress down in the Jordan Valley, but very few other towns; and you remember Joshua destroyed Jericho and laid a curse upon anyone who would rebuild the city; and it was not rebuilt until the time of Ahab; and so we have a long period there with very few towns in the Jordan Valley—practically none—and that condition has existed more or less up to the present day. There was the situation, and a complete change.

Now why did this change take place? I think it is fairly easy to see why it took place. First, Sodom and Gomorrah are destroyed; that means that quite a lot of the people are gone. Well, the rest of the people, seeing what's happened to them, might begin to think, "This begins to look like an unhealthy place to stay in. Maybe it would be good to look for another place." Perhaps some of them act on that; perhaps they don't; but an effect soon comes from the destruction

of Sodom and Gomorrah. There are a great many irrigation ditches in that area which are no longer kept up, no longer maintained, and the result is that little ponds of water settle in these ditches, instead of it being kept for running water; soon you have perfect breeding places for malaria; soon you have malaria spreading in the area; and the whole valley does indeed become, as the area around Megiddo did later, depopulated. The two areas became great breeding places for malaria. People died off or fled the area; and the area came to be almost devoid of people. And so this story [of the thickly populated Jordan Valley] is one which no one living in Palestine today could ever have invented; and it is extremely unlikely that anyone in the time of the later Israelite kingdom would have invented it—a story like this—but we now know from evidences discovered beginning in 1924, we now know that this fits with the situation prior to—quite a bit prior to—the time of Moses. In fact, the depopulation might even have begun to take place in the time of Abraham; but it evidently had not gone very far at that time.

You don't recognize the tells here quite as quickly as you do out in the hill country. Of course, some are very definitely and clearly tells; but most aren't so distinct a tell; and these are—some of them—fairly wide but rather squatty. You don't recognize them quite as quickly as you do some of the tells out in the hill country somewhere in the more isolated situations; but after you become used to looking at the tells, you begin to suspect them; and that, of course, requires quite a bit of following up. So far as I know, no one of these has really been investigated. There has been a little excavation down near Jericho—in that general area. A Jesuit has excavated somewhere in a town which he wanted to prove was Sodom and Gomorrah—and all other scholars are convinced that it is not—that it is a site over a thousand years older. As far as I know, there has been no other excavation in that area, but there has been quite a little examination of pottery, and the pottery compared with that from mounds that have been excavated.

This hill country up here—which goes from Beersheba in the south up through Hebron, Jerusalem, Gibeah, Shechem—this area here, this hill country is where Abraham traveled back and forth; and in that area, that is where the great towns were in the time of the Israelite kingdom. But in Abraham's time, about half these cities had not yet been founded. It was an area which was comparatively little settled. It was an area which had good springs here and there on it, and which—with comparatively small settlement—made a fine situation with large flocks and herds to go back and forth; stay down here until the pasture land is pretty well used up, and then move up to some other place; and stay there a few weeks, and move up to another. And then he moves up; and then he comes back; and then he goes up again; and so that was good in that day. It would not have been good in the time of the Israelite kingdom, because there were too many towns there.

On the other hand, this area down here in the valley is an area which is fine if you irrigate; but if you don't irrigate, it is empty; and nothing grows unless you take the water out of the Jordan and irrigate; and it had not been irrigated in times of which we have any record. The only reference that I know of, in any literature, is this reference here. In the later times it was pretty much a barren area.

Many of the town names weren't originally Hebrew. They were names from some other language before the Hebrew or Canaanite-speaking people came into the land; and then often they just twist it a little, into a word of the language of the people who were there later.

Now this, then, is the background of Palestine at the time of the patriarchs, which fits in with the life as described in Genesis—which is a very interesting point about it. There are perhaps two-hundred tells in Palestine; maybe fifteen or twenty of them have been excavated, and it is a question where you are going to excavate. You have to have money to excavate; it takes quite a little money. You have to have a qualified staff, and there aren't many men who are qualified to serve on such a staff; and then there have been so many periods of war or internal turmoil in the land in the last twenty years, during which you couldn't excavate; so that, when it boils down to it, not a tenth of the excavation that could be profitably done in Palestine has been done; it is a matter that many factors enter into, where a particular excavator decides to excavate.

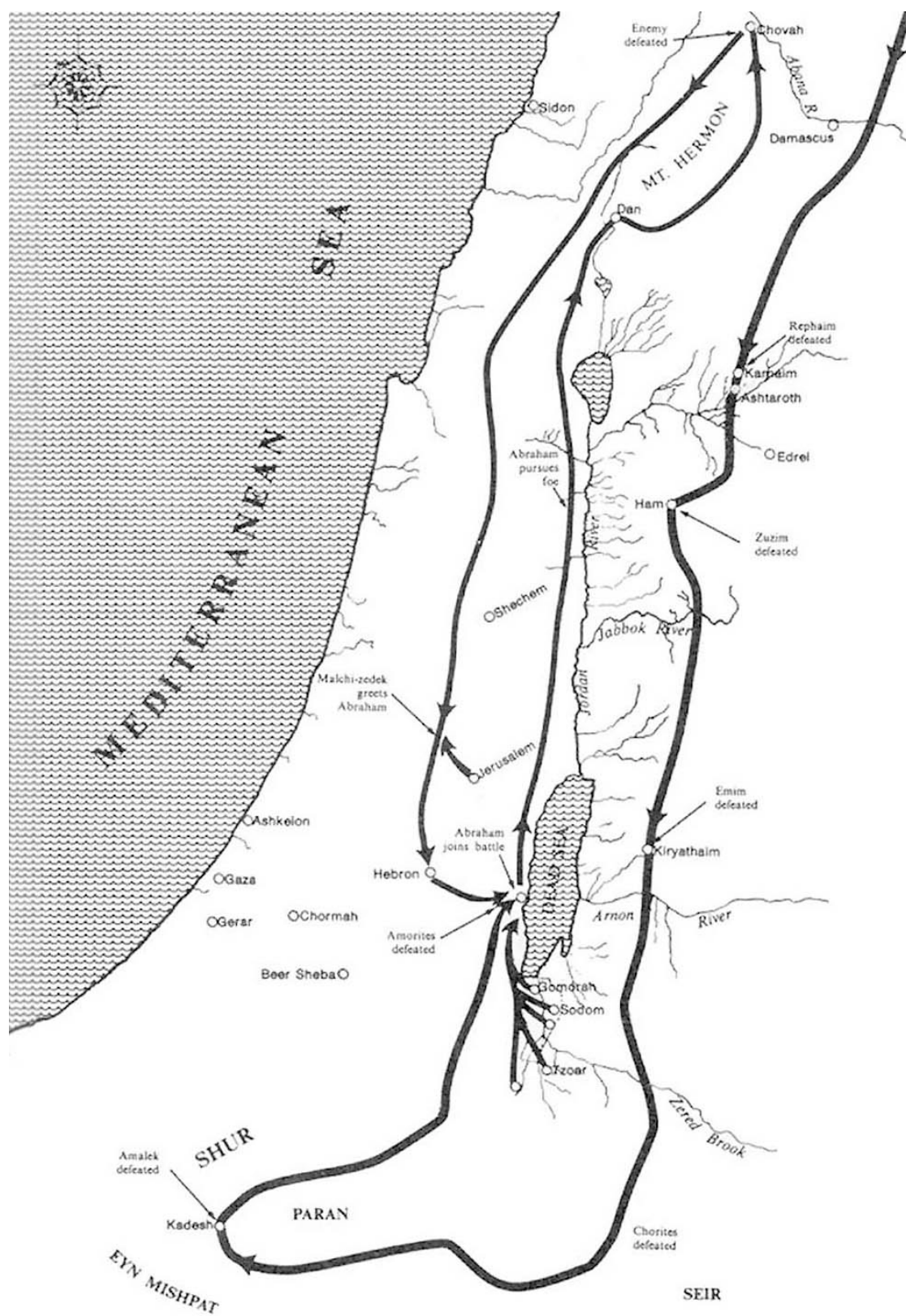
Now another thing, of course, would be this: that most excavators who go to Palestine are interested in finding something which bears light on the Bible; and all these towns in the Jordan valley, which were destroyed before the Israelite occupation, have little contact with the Bible; so most sponsors of archaeological digs would be much more interested in excavating up in the hill country, where they'd have a city that plays an important part in Bible life, rather than to excavate down there in the valley, where you have a city which might throw tremendous light on ancient civilization, but which wouldn't have much to do with the Bible.

Now, of course, there is Jericho: Jericho had a great many contacts with the Bible; it's down in the Jordan Valley; and those contacts were very interesting. Sir Charles Martin gave a good bit of money for Professor John Garstang to be excavating in Jericho; and then, when he got down below the Biblical period and he had other strata buried there in Jericho, down into prehistoric times, he was very anxious to go on excavating down to that; but Martin was interested in something which would throw light on the Bible. So after they got down two or three layers below what had any connection with the Bible whatever, Martin preferred to give his money for an excavation up the other side of the hill country, at Lachish, where they had many definite contacts with the Bible.

And it is rather easy to see why it would be. Of course, the region that everyone would like most of all to see well excavated, is the Philistine region, because we know very little about the Philistine region; but the trouble is that in the Philistine region, you have a high civilization all through the Hellenistic age, reaching on into the Roman period, and for a long period afterwards; and the result is, you have to excavate through hundreds and hundreds of years before you get to this; and very few people are willing to give money for all that excavation of later history; and no government with any self-respect would allow a man to go in there with a steam shovel, and just throw away the remains of later periods; so the Philistine period is a period in which the Philistines themselves are comparatively unknown to us; and we would be much more interested in them than we would in the early civilization of the Jordan Valley.

What Abraham did after the move to Haran was simply carrying out of the customs with which he was familiar from his bringing up in Ur of the Chaldees. It would not mean, of course, that this was the law which he was trying to carry out. It was not the law of Palestine. He was pretty much a law unto himself at this time. He did not have to do this; but it simply showed how easy it is when you are brought up with certain customs, certain habits, certain background of law—how easy it is when you are in a situation where that is no longer binding upon you—simply to go ahead and follow those same customs or those same laws and assume that that is right; and how very hard it is to break people away from that to which they are accustomed, unless you can definitely bring them change their customs.

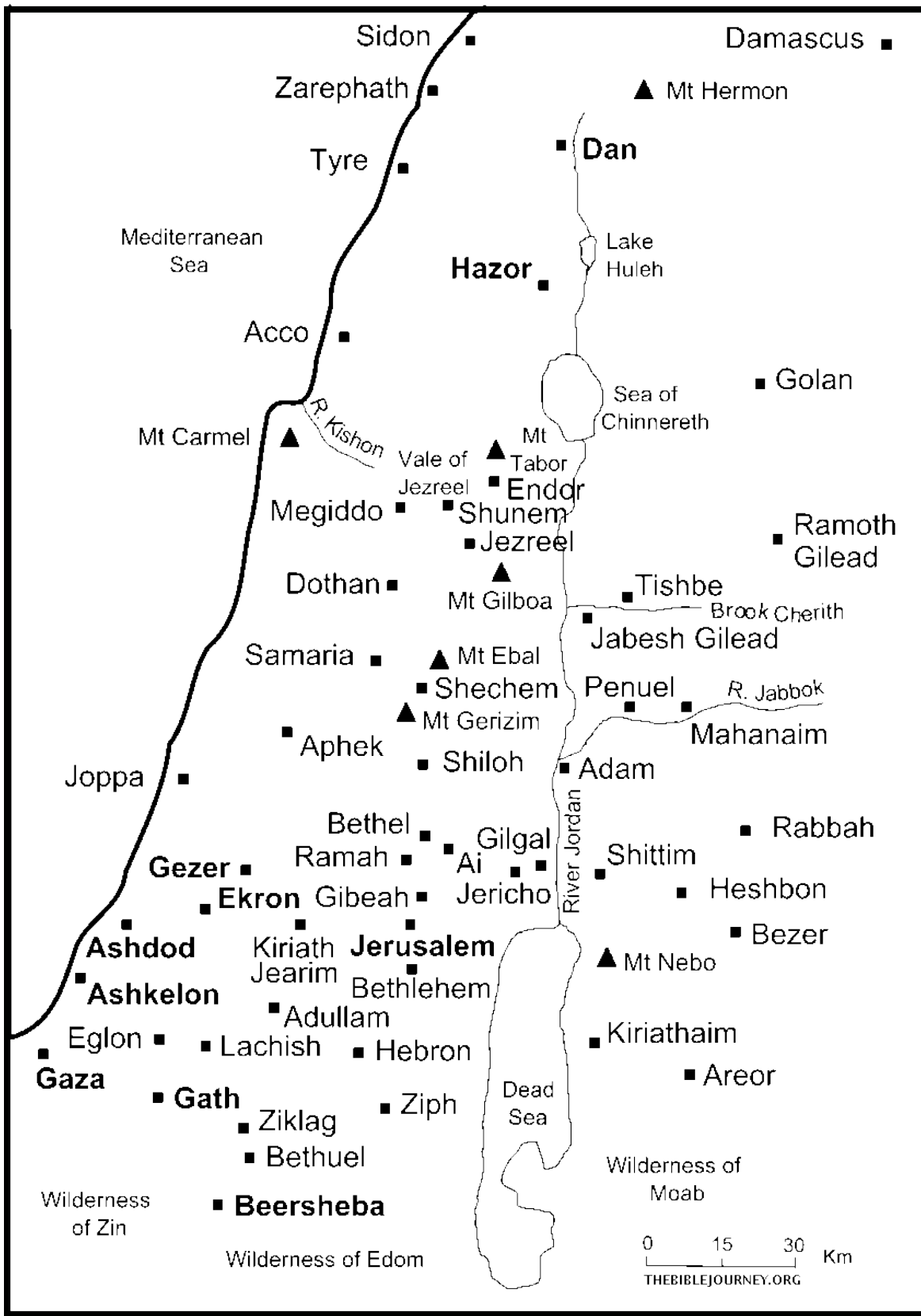
[Break in records. Possibly discussed the campaigns to rescue Lot.]



Abram's Rescue of Lot

to

<http://www.betemunah.org/edom.html>



Ancient Palestine

Now, evidently God had made no revelation to Abram of a requirement for change in this regard; and when he got into this situation [no heir by Sarai; she agrees to give him her maid Hagar as a concubine], he and Sarai simply carried out the customary law to which they had been accustomed. Of course, we knew nothing about that law till 1901, when the code of Hammurabi was discovered; but we've had Genesis all through the ages, with this description of what Abram did, and it is very interesting that it throws light on the background of the story, and fits in with the Biblical statement that he and Sarai came out of Mesopotamia.

2. Spiritual History of Abraham.

a. General outline of the material aspects of his life. As to the spiritual history of as Abraham, we will not be able to take as much time as we would like to on it. Most of you are quite familiar with most of the details. We will just mention

b. His call. God calling him out to leave his family, to leave his kindred and separate from that which was evil; to go out into Palestine to a land which God would show him; and yet we notice how much he took with him of the life from which he came as he went there; how much of custom, of habit, of background he took with him as one inevitably does; as he was led out into a place to where, through him, there could be raised up a group of people to whom God would give His revelation; people through whom the revelation would be brought into the world; through whom it would be preserved; through whom the preparation would be made for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into the world. So there is a call to Abram to come out and a wonderful record of how Abram obeyed the call. Now,

c. The altars. Abram built altars down here ([see fig. 2](#)) through the land of Palestine—at Shechem; between Bethel and Ai; at the oaks of Mamre, at Hebron; at Mt. Moriah in connection with the offering of Isaac—we have these altars up and down the land. Everywhere he went and stayed for any length of time, he established altars. He knew that God was there, and he established there a place where he would particularly remember God, and render his service to God. Then

d. God's Covenant with Abraham. We find the covenant God made with Abraham brought out in three places. We find it brought out in Genesis 12, in Genesis 15 and in Genesis 17. Now, we might look at those briefly.

(1) Genesis 12: His original call. This is the covenant made in connection with his original call. What do we find promised to Abram in his original call, in verses 1–3? The Lord had said to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house, to a land that I will show thee, and I

will make of thee a great nation." God is to prepare a people, through whom to give His revelation and to bring His Son into the world; and Abram is leaving his kin, is leaving his background. Christ said, "Anyone who leaves family or houses or lands for my sake," he said, "he shall receive them a hundredfold in this life"; of course, that doesn't mean everyone is going to receive back whatever they give up for the sake of the Lord; but very frequently we receive them in this life; and always in eternity, we find that we haven't really given anything up for God, because He always repays with abundant interest. And so Abram is leaving all his old associations; his many friends and kindred there; as well as a highly developed civilization. God is going to make of him a great nation. "And I will bless thee and make thy name great." And how literally that has been fulfilled! Is there any other name in the world as great as the name of Abraham?

Certainly among all Jews, the name Abraham is one of the greatest names there is. Among all Christians, it is one of the great names; and among all the Mohammedans. Is there another name? Is there any other human being whose name has been quite as widespread among different groups as the name of Abraham? "I will make thy name great and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless him that blesseth thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Now these are the things promised. God is going to watch over him; care for him; bless those that bless him; curse those that curse him; and then the great thing—that through him will come blessing to all the families of the earth.

There have been those in recent days who try to make it, "In thy name will all the families of the earth wish themselves good fortune." They give him as an example of a successful man. Well, that is certainly a modernist interpretation. The traditional interpretation, "In thee shall they all be blessed." And *mishpachoth* is certainly used in that sense enough times in Scripture. It is a passive very frequently even, though originally, of course, it is a reflexive.

And that is all that we find in the original covenant. But you might say we find a postscript to the covenant—a few verses later—where he has left Mesopotamia and come clear across to Palestine. He is now down in Palestine here, and we have this postscript. The Lord appeared to Abraham and said, "To thy seed will I give this land." Not to Abram. Abram will own nothing in the lands, until he bought the burial place for his wife. He owned nothing in the land. He wandered back and forth; he was a sojourner in a strange land, but God told him that his descendants would receive the land in which he was now traveling. That is a sort of a postscript there.

Some people talk as if that were the main thing of the covenant with Abraham—the getting of the land of Palestine. He was in a much better land—from the viewpoint of the standards of that day—back there in Mesopotamia. And he gave it up and went to Palestine. The giving of the land is in a way a postscript

to the covenant. It is certainly not the outstanding feature of the covenant given to Abraham.

Some people try to make a system out of it—that whenever his people were in the land there is blessing, when they left the land and went somewhere else, they were out of God's favor. There is no such suggestion in the Bible anywhere. This was the land in which God prepared to raise up His people in it. It was His will, ordinarily, that they should be there; but certainly when they went down into Egypt, it was through God's direct leading, and was in no sense forsaking the covenant.

(2) Genesis 15. Now we have the next presentation of the covenant in Chapter 15. When Abram gave back to the king of Sodom all the booty that had been taken, he said, "I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet. I won't take anything that is thine, save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me." Abram was giving up his claim to any share of the booty; but the men who had gone with him and helped, they were entitled to their share; and they got their share, of course. Let them take their portion. But Abram received nothing from it. He had done it to help Lot. He had not done it to enrich himself. He refused to take anything from it. It is often very common to make these wonderful renunciations in the midst of a big meeting or a big occasion; and then when everybody departs and you are alone, there is apt to come the depression and the gloom afterwards; and you wonder whether you were right. Probably that is the reason that God immediately came and comforted Abram.

Abram had given up his chance for these worldly goods—all this booty he had taken and could have kept half of it. The king of Sodom said, "Keep all of it. Give me the people and keep all the stuff that you've captured." Abraham could have had it, but he refused to accept any of it; and the word of the Lord came to Abraham in a vision saying, "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy reward is very great." Now you can render it that way or, "Fear not Abram; I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." Both are good translations, and both are true. If God is his reward, surely his reward is very great; and yet God was going to bless Abram and his family in material ways as well as spiritual ways.

And Abraham immediately—when God said, "Thy reward is great"—I think it is better than "thy exceeding great reward" in view of the next verse; because Abraham immediately asks a question. He's not showing skepticism; he simply is asking for details. He says: "Lord, you say I am going to have a great reward. Well, what good will that do me? What will you give me, seeing I go childless and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus. I haven't got any progeny. There is no posterity. What's the good of heaping up goods, if you did give them to me? There is no place for them to go except to this stranger here? And he would be the heir because there is no one of the family."

And the word of the Lord came to him saying: "This shall not be thine heir, but he that cometh forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir." And he brought him forth abroad, and said, "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them," and He said unto him, "So shall thy seed be." And so again He promised him, as before, a great posterity, a great continuation of Abram's seed. That is the first great element of the covenant promised to him. We find that brought out here in verses 4 and 5. He said, "I am the Lord, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees to give thee this land to inherit." He is to have a seed; and the seed is to have a place to live, a place where they can develop to fulfill that which God wishes them to do.

And then in verse 18 again, He speaks about the land. The Lord made a covenant saying, "Unto thy seed, have I given this land"; and then he names the other people in the land from which it is to be taken to be given to his seed.

(3) Chapter 17. In Chapter 17 we have a repetition of the covenant again; and in Chapter 17, we have the sign of the covenant. In 17 the Lord is making His covenant with Abram, and He says, "I am El Shaddai: walk thou before me and be thou perfect"; and then the first element of the covenant in verse 4, "My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations." And now He changes his name from Abram to Abraham, "For the father of many nations have I made you. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful; and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generation for an everlasting covenant." Again the seed. And then in verse 8, the seed is to have a place to live, "And I will give unto thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger. All the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession: and I will be their God."

And then in the succeeding verses, He gives him the sign of the covenant; that God is giving Abraham His blessing; and it is a blessing which is to continue through many generations, and to continue from father to son; and He orders him that every son, at eight days of age, should be circumcised; and then we read that the same day Abraham was circumcised, when he was ninety-nine; Ishmael was circumcised, when he was thirteen; and thereafter all the children were to be circumcised, as a sign of God's greatness, and of God's mercy given to Abraham for his faith and to his continuing prosperity.

And this matter of circumcision here is interesting—the discussion of it which we find, by Paul in Galatians 3:13–16—where he points out that Abraham was blessed of God in uncircumcision. His blessing did not come through circumcision, but after he believed; he was circumcised as a sign of his faith, as a sign of his cleansing and of his ingrafting into the family of God, and of God's blessing which continued upon his posterity.

It would be best to look at the statement which Paul made about this covenant with Abraham, which we find in Galatians 3. In Galatians 3:14, we read,

That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. 15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

And here, as you see, we build a whole argument upon the fact that the singular, and not the plural, is used of the Hebrew word. That is what you will find in many books on verbal inspiration. Here is the proof of verbal inspiration. Paul built a whole argument upon the fact that the promise to Abraham was "to thy seed", not "to thy seeds".

The Hebrew, the English and the Greek—all three—have a word "seed" which means grain, or posterity, and it is taken like as you speak of a group. It refers to the totality of it, whether there be much in it or little in it; and so that, as you speak of "seed", you say "The farmer's going out and planting seeds." No, you wouldn't say that. You'd say "he is planting seed." He went to buy seed, and you speak of a man's seed. The word is used in a collective sense, which may include one or may include many. The only time the word "seeds" is ever used is when we speak of individual, separate bits of grain in English, in Hebrew or in Greek.

Now of course, you cannot depend upon it ordinarily that there will be such a parallel usage in two languages even at that; but here we do have this in English, in Greek and in Hebrew—this exact usage—and so when Paul says "Not unto seeds, as of many," he is, as you might say, inventing a word. He is using a word which doesn't refer to posterity at all. It would refer only to individual seeds of grain. He is putting in this plural form simply to indicate what is not meant there; not to indicate what isn't said, because such a thing never could be said. It never, in any book, in Hebrew, Greek or English, speaks of a man's seeds as indicating his posterity. It is always his seed.

And so Paul, in this case, is not building an argument upon the exact Hebrew word. He is interpreting the Hebrew word. He is saying the promise—that in Abraham's seed shall all the earth be blessed—this promise is given, not to the whole posterity of Abraham, but is given to the one individual who is the promised seed. He is stating that the Old Testament doesn't mean plural, and consequently he uses a plural—which doesn't exist—simply as a means of showing, not plural, but singular. Does everybody understand that? I think that is rather important, and if some one of you doesn't understand it, please ask

about it. Paul here is interpreting, rather than building an argument on a word. And so Paul says that these promises are to Abraham and his seed; and that when he says his seed, he means one posterity, one descendant, not the group of descendants, and so he says, he doesn't mean "seeds" as many, but he means "seed" as one, even though the word "seeds" is never used to mean the many descendants of a man. You would call that "seed", but he uses the word in a way in which it is never used simply to bring out the idea—that the idea of this is not a plural idea but a singular idea.

The blessing of Abraham is the promise that, in him shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; that that promise is a promise which is given to Abraham and to his seed, meaning one particular one of his descendants, rather than to his seed as meaning the whole of posterity. He is not meaning *all* the promises, certainly; because you read in Genesis 13 there, you read, "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth." And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that, if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." Now, very evidently, that doesn't mean Christ. That means all his posterity. Like the dust of the earth, like the stars of the heaven. That means the great number of—but the promise, the specific promise of the blessing is to come to his seed, and the blessings of God's promise to the seed of Abraham; these great salvation promises are not to a great mass of descendants, but are promised to Christ. That is an explanation for it—not an argument based on a word—and so Paul ties up the promises to Abraham very definitely with this one individual seed which is coming, which is Christ. Now

e. The Seal of the Covenant. That is given in Genesis 17:7–14. Paul has made a great deal of the fact that the blessing of Abraham comes upon the Gentiles because the covenant is with Abraham and his seed—the covenant of salvation—the covenant of blessing. It is Abraham and his seed. And the seed to whom it is given is Christ; and now we find, that in chapter 17, verses 10–14 a seal of this covenant, a seal of this promise of blessing was given; and there God told Abraham, "Thou shalt keep the covenant between me and you and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you and thy seed after thee," and then it goes on and gives the order. He circumcised Abraham; he circumcised the other male members of his family; and then thereafter every child that is eight days old is to be circumcised; and this is to be carried on continually as the seal and sign of the covenant.

Now what did this circumcision mean? What was the point of it? Was it just to mutilate the body in some peculiar way so as to indicate that the person was a special one set out, like when you take cattle, you brand them and put these marks on them so that anyone can see that this cattle belongs to this individual? Is that all there is to circumcision? Is it just some sort of a boundary mark that sets these individuals apart as belonging into one group? Well, surely

that enters into it a little bit; surely that is true of all the sacraments, that the sacrament is a seal and the sign of our in-grafting into Christ; that it is a sign set apart that indicates that we belong to Him. That is certainly not the whole meaning; but it certainly is a portion of the meaning. But there is surely much more meaning than that to it; and we find considerable discussion of it in the New Testament; and while we don't want to go into that much at length here, I just want to indicate a few of the passages and briefly to note what the New Testament says that this circumcision means.

(1) Philippians 3. Now we find that Paul speaks in Philippians 3 about circumcision. In verses 4 and 5 he says,

Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day."

Paul had this circumcision; so he was one of the Jews, who had this which the Jews might depend upon; that through a performance of rites and ceremonies, he had been circumcised at the proper time—on the eighth day—but in the verses before he declares this, he says in verse 3,

For we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.

and therefore we see from that that we cannot say, "Here is the spiritual religion—the Christian religion that Paul is now advocating; there is the circumcision—the Jewish religion—and what we want is not circumcision but the spiritual religion." That is very evidently not Paul's idea at all; and so he shows there that circumcision, like any other rightful ceremony, is a thing which can indicate a spiritual blessing, or which can become a merely external, formalistic thing that gives no value in itself. So he says, "I can't trust in the flesh—in the fact I was circumcised the eighth day," but he says, "We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit," so that circumcision is just a spiritual matter. It is a thing which has a spiritual significance; and you cannot trust in a mere physical thing; but the spiritual thing which it denotes—which it indicates—is very important. Now in Philippians here he doesn't go further into the meaning of this spiritual thing which circumcision denotes, but in Romans he does. In

(2) Romans 4, Paul has quite a discussion in verses 7–13 of what did circumcision mean as far as Abraham was concerned; and he said,

David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man

to whom the Lord will not impute sin. 9 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. 10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.

So Abraham was not saved because he was circumcised, but his circumcision was a sign that he was saved. It was a sign and a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed to them also; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had yet being uncircumcised; for the promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. So circumcision was the sign and the seal that Abraham was a believer in Christ. It was the sign and the seal that Abraham was saved; was saved by faith; was saved by the grace of God; and this was the sign and the seal of it which God gave to him.

We've had it back in Romans 2 also, from 25 to 29. Paul says,

For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. 26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? 27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? 28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

So that circumcision, then, is a physical thing, which like any physical thing, profits nothing in itself, but it is a sign of the spiritual blessing; and it is the sign which God gave to Abraham, the sign and the seal of the relationship which Abraham had to God, because righteousness was imputed to him as a result of his faith; and so the circumcision indicates the cleansing—the setting apart—all of which comes through faith in Christ; and through the grace of God, which is shown through what Christ did later on; and that is the meaning of circumcision; and that is the sign and the seal of the covenant which God commanded Abraham to take upon himself, and to extend to all those who should come to believe in God, and be brought into the family of Abraham by being adopted into it because of their belief in God; and also which Abraham

should perform on every child, on the eighth day after he is born, the sign of the blessing of God.

Many of these things seem to us strange when we first examine them; and we have to try to figure out just why did God do them this way? And what did He mean by them? But the fact is, that is the way God did it. God gave Abraham circumcision, which is the sign and the seal of his faith, and of his being saved through belief in Christ. He gave him that sign and that seal; and then He told him that he was to give that seal to his children upon the eighth day; and as to the exact details of this, there has been much discussion and much disagreement as to the full interpretation of some of the details. That, of course, is a matter properly for theology, rather than for Old Testament history; but the thing that we are stressing here is the point that God did give circumcision as the seal of salvation through faith; and then He ordered that it should be given to the children; and we certainly can infer from this that God put a difference upon the children of believing parents like Abraham, a difference upon them from the situation of other children.

And my own personal belief regarding it, is that God indicates that if those who are in the covenant with God; who have believed in Christ; are born again and members of God's family; if they fulfill their part in the upbringing of their children; if they pray with them and for them and teach them; that they do not need to be worried and anxious—"Is this child going to believe? Isn't this child going to believe? Is this child that I am bringing up going to be a son of perdition who is to be lost? Is this child one who is to be saved?"—that they can have faith that God, who has given them salvation, is going to bring this child to the outward signs of conversion, and to a definite visible salvation in His own time; but that already He permits them to give the seal and sign to the child as the evidence of their claiming the promise of Abraham for the child.⁶⁶

Now that is the way I interpret this thing, and other people may have different details in their interpretation of it; but the vital thing is the fact that God did give it; that God gave circumcision as the seal and sign of salvation; and then that God ordered Abraham to give it to his children; and that's the fact. Now as to the interpretation—the details of it—theologians differ; and that is a matter for theology rather than Old Testament history; but the fact is that which we must recognize, that it had the meaning of the seal and sign of salvation, and that it is commanded to be given to the children.

(3) Colossians 2. Now there is one other New Testament passage that we will just glance at, and that is Colossians 2:10–12,

⁶⁶ [dcb] This is Presbyterian covenant theology. As remarked in the next paragraph "other people may have different details in their interpretation of it."

And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: 11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

That means, of course, by the fact that Christ was circumcised; but it means by the circumcision which Christ provides—that is, by the spiritual death of which circumcision is a physical sign.

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

And so here we have the same application that we had in the other verses: that circumcision is the sign of the cleansing, of the ingrafting into Christ, of the turning away from darkness to light which God gave to Abraham, and which belongs to Abraham's seed hereafter; but of which the particular detail of the sign, God might change in a particular period, but the meaning of the sign was the same.

So circumcision, then, indicates that we are Christ's. It is the sign of the ingrafting of Christ. It is the sign of cleansing. It is the sign of true faith in God's unmerited grace. It is a sign that children can be saved only by God's grace. The fact that one was a child of Abraham was not enough to save him. It was necessary that something more be done. It was necessary that the seal and sign be given that child as an indication that something must be done to the child more than that he just have a natural birth; that there be a cleansing; that there be an ingrafting into Christ; and so the circumcision of the child is the indication that the child is not a member of God's family simply because he is a child of Abraham, but that God has promised His covenant to continue to Abraham's posterity if Abraham will fulfill his part; and that the continuing posterity, as they are given a sign of the covenant, that they have a blessing. But that the blessing can come upon them only as God by His marvelous grace performs a mighty miracle upon them and ingrafts them into His kingdom.

So it is a sign that race is not enough; but also a sign that there is special blessing for the children of Abraham; there is a special mercy that God gives to the children of those who are God's. Now

f. The high point of Abraham's faith. We have, of course, many high points in Abraham's faith, but there is one which seems surely higher than any other; and that, of course, is just one thing. That is the time when Abraham, who had been promised blessings to come to all the earth through his seed, finds that he is commanded to kill his son; and he is to give up the one who is not only dearer to him than any other one on earth, but the one who is—as far as he can see—the one through whom the blessing of God must come. In fact, he has been told, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called."

The blessings must come through Isaac, and yet God commands that Isaac be killed; and Abraham here, having absolute certainty that this was God's word to him, there was no question that it was God's command, "Take thou thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee to the land of Moriah and offer him there." Abraham didn't stop to argue with God, or to say, "Well now this can't be. I'm sure this can't be. This is the seed through whom the blessings are to come. How can it be that God wants him offered as a burnt-offering?" But as Hebrews 11 says, he accounted that if it were God's will the blessing should come through Isaac, God was able to raise him from the dead, if that should be necessary; and so, as Hebrews 11:8–19 shows, this was the great high point of Abraham's faith, in which he took not only that which was dearest to him of anything on earth and laid it upon the altar; but he took that which, as far as he could see, was the only means whereby there could come to pass the promises that God had given; and he was ready to lay it aside and sacrifice it at God's command.

"To cause him to go up," is a term which might be used of simply lifting something up in the ordinary sense; but when used in connection with a burnt offering, which you lift up on the altar and you consume with fire, to lift up a burnt offering would seem quite definitely to mean to burn; to kill him and to burn him. That would seem quite definitely to be the command; and so there is a very interesting point there; that God told him to take Isaac and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him as a burnt offering; and that later God showed him that the whole command was not to be carried out; but Abraham followed God's command as far as it was made known to him—as far as he understood it—and then God showed him in the end that there was another aspect of it which Abraham had not known in the beginning.

I think that probably the Hebrew could be translated altogether properly, "Take Isaac whom thou lovest and go to the land of Moriah in order to offer him"—that is, it is literally "and," but go there for the purpose of offering him. That is, I don't think there is a contradiction in God's command—that he says, "Now offer him" and then says, "Don't offer him"—but he says, "You take him and go there to offer him"; and then, when he gets there and he is ready to do it, he is ready to carry out God's command, then God interposes and shows him that the command is not to be carried to the full extent.

Of course here there is a great example of faith; and at the same time, we must be very, very careful to recognize that in this case God spoke to Abraham in absolutely unmistakable language; and that today we have God's Word here; and when we get a revelation of such things allegedly from God which contradicts anything in His Word, we must say, "The Word of God here is our revelation today; and we must be very careful that we do not today do something that contradicts God's revelation, thinking that it is God's command to us." God does not give us commands that contradict His revelation; but in Abraham's day, the full revelation had not been given; and consequently God spoke more clearly and directly to people than He ever does in our age; and we must consider that there was absolutely no doubt God had given this command to Abraham.

You'll find many a person today who claims that God has given them a command that definitely is contrary to His revelation; and we know in such cases that the devil and not God has given the command. God never tempts any man in the sense of inciting to evil. Of course, God tempts in the sense of putting them in a situation where they feel tempted. That is—we find it in Jeremiah, that our English translation speaks of God as having—Jeremiah says, "God, you've tempted me." He says, "Deceived me." He uses various terms there which are given a most specific meaning. The Hebrew means to tempt, or to lead in a direction contrary to that which Jeremiah is going. It doesn't mean to deceive or tempt in our modern English sense. Of course this is a translation.

When you have two commands—like when Joseph said to the men, he'd tell them what they could do; he'd say, "Now you go and don't ever come back," it's perfectly all right; but if you want to see my face again, you do so and so. This do and live. Now he is not ordering them to live. He is ordering them to do this in order to live. This is the means through which they live. It is a very common Hebrew expression. The word "and" in Hebrew has a broader meaning than it has in our English.

Now, then, this is the case where Abraham showed his faith in action most positively and most definitely; and of course it is an illustration to us of the fact you will find so many people today who will do something that is contrary to God's will, and then will argue that they are doing this in order to spread God's Word. They will compromise in most inexcusable ways, and they will say that they are doing it in order that they may get a bigger hearing for God's Word. They could have a larger church. They can reach more people if they will do such and such a thing, and therefore they should do it.

Well, now Abraham here was told of the promises God was giving; and all of these promises were conditioned upon the continuing life of Isaac; and yet when God's command came, "Go and sacrifice Isaac", Abraham was ready to do

it. There was no secondary objective which stood to him before the objective of doing God's will, of carrying out that which was definitely revealed to him as the thing God wanted him to do.

Today a person who is commanded to sacrifice his child, to kill his child, would know that that was contrary to God's revelation. It is contrary to the will of God. We certainly would not do it. In Abraham's day, the revelation had not been given as fully or as clearly as it has today; and in addition to that, all around him there were people who were observing these practices, and therefore it seemed to him a more natural thing to do than it does to us today. Just like when Abraham took Hagar; in taking Hagar as a concubine, he was doing something which would be contrary to the revelation of God's more fully known nature, but probably not contrary to any revelation that had been very clearly made known to Abraham up to that time; but it was acting in accordance with the customs of the people with whom he had been in contact, and to which he had been accustomed; and God certainly never praises Abraham for having taken Hagar, but He doesn't condemn him specifically for it. He was following the practices which were customary; and it had not yet been made clear that those customs were definitely contrary to God. And in this case, if Abraham had understood that the killing of a child like this was contrary to God's will, it certainly would have been wrong for him even to have started; but the fact that people all around him were doing that sort of thing made it easier for him not to know that it would be a thing in itself contrary to God's will. I doubt if we could prove from anything in the Bible previous to this time that it is definitely contrary to God's will for human beings.

There is the question of actual leading and the question of the providential action of God. I would think it altogether possible that God might in His providence have a certain individual here figure on a specific ministry for God; and might be planning on that, might even think God had led him to that ministry specifically. Now I don't think ordinarily in our day God does take an individual and say, "I want you to work at this place. I want you to do this thing." He wants us to study the Scripture; see what the things are that He wants done in general; and then figure out where we would best fit into that plan; but in His providence, He would permit a person to either feel he had a definite sign that was the thing he should do; or to feel that after studying the Word and studying himself, that was where he best fit in the needs of God's kingdom; and to go ahead and work for a definite objective; to work for it and plan for it and everything; and then the time comes up he is ready to enter it; and perhaps he finds providentially that circumstances are such that he can't go into that, but that he has been prepared by his training and by his spiritual experience and all that; and by this spiritual experience of being stopped at that point, he has been prepared for another work, by which he might do a far greater work for God than the particular work he had aimed for.

It might even be simply a ministry of prayer. There have been invalids laid aside on beds of pain for thirty years, who have wrought as much in prayer as any other three or four people put together; almost have wrought in hard direct work for God. Moody attributed the great success of his tremendous campaigns in England to a bedridden invalid in London who had been praying for ten years that God would bring great revival; and we cannot tell just what may be God's particular will for us, but God providentially might prepare you for this work over here having you go in this direction.

I remember hearing one of our graduates testify as to how when he had been in college he had taken work in drafting. He had taken a lot of work in the study of mechanical drawing and planning buildings and that sort of thing, intending to become an architect; and then that the Lord had touched him and had led him to devote his life to the ministry; and he had turned his whole course in preparation for seminary, and had taken work that would be more adapted for the preparation for seminary work; and he said in those days, he looked back on the couple of years that he put in doing all this study of mechanical drawing and drafting and that sort of thing and thought, "What a awful waste of time! If only two years earlier I had set face toward the ministry, think of how much time I would have saved and how much further along I would be." And then after he was out of seminary three or four years the Lord put him in a place where the church was terribly cramped and crowded, and they needed a new building; and the war was just coming on, and it was getting hard to get materials and so on; and he jumped into the thing and worked his head off for about six months, along with his regular church work; working with the architects; and making the plans; and gathering the materials; and he said that the Lord used all that preparation and training that he had there, that seemed to him absolutely wasted, to make it possible that the building should be put up before the war made it absolutely impossible to get material; and to save a tremendous amount of money in saying how this particular thing and that particular thing could be done in just this way.

Now, it would be very foolish for a man, thinking, "I may sometime build a church," to go ahead and say, "Well, now, I'd better spend two or three years studying architecture." That certainly is not God's will—that we think of all the possible contingencies in our life and prepare for them—but here was a case where God had providentially caused that that man should have that particular training that that particular man would need in this special crucial situation; and so God providentially very often leads us in places we don't understand; and we look back and see how He was leading and how everything was directing us toward the place that we eventually reach.

I would say that, in our age, in our day, God leads almost entirely through His Word; that the direct individual leading which He gives is very small in amount; and it comes, I would say, only at particular vital turning points which God can

see but which we can't tell which they are, and therefore I would say, be very suspicious of a particular, specific leading to you or to someone else that is aside from or in addition to the specific teaching—I don't mean just a verse here and there—but the specific teaching of the Word. Test all things by the Word. If that message was one which would edify the Church in building up, and would help in the progress of the knowledge of Christ, it might be something that is very definitely God's will. If it wasn't, it was very definitely not God's will, and a person would have to judge it on that basis; and no one could say—it is like the preacher who went to a man and said, "The Lord has shown me that you are to give a thousand dollars to the church"; and the man said, "Well, now, if the Lord meant that, I think he would have shown me that He wanted it, too."

I know one minister whose wife died and one of the women of the church came to him and she said, "The Lord has shown me that I should be your next wife," and he said to her, "Well, I think the Lord would show me also." Certainly, one man has no right to say, "The Lord has shown me this," and all the people differ with him, and they are wrong. The question is, "What does the Scripture show?" Well, that is the principle involved and it is a matter of application in each case.

Well, now, in this case, then we have this high point of Abraham's faith, and Paul says that Abraham was saved by faith and not by works; and James says that Abraham was saved by works and not by faith alone; and James says that faith without works is dead; and they both are true. There is absolutely no contradiction between them, because you could do all the works in the world, and it would profit absolutely nothing. You could do anything in the way of definite service to Christ, and there would be nothing gained for you if you don't have the faith which is the vital thing; but if you do have the faith, you are going to have the works. Faith without works is dead; not in the sense that there is any reward for works, *per se*; but that if the faith is real, it is a faith that works. James says that, as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. It is a better way to say, perhaps—that is, a clearer way for us today perhaps—to say that it isn't faith at all. I think that is what Paul would say.

Faith without works isn't faith at all, because the faith that is true faith will show itself in works; and of course that is the thing that people can't understand. You take Preserved Smith in his *History of the Reformation*,⁶⁷ and he tells about Calvin and these crazy doctrines that Calvin taught, that people were predestined from the foundation of the world to be saved; and that God had done it all; it was all of God's grace and there was absolutely nothing that you

⁶⁷ [dcb] I have been unable to locate a book by this title. Perhaps this refers to Preserved Smith, [*The Age of the Reformation*](#), (1920). However that book does not appear to have the quotes attributed here (perhaps they are paraphrases). I have tried to note apparently related quotes in the following footnote.

could do about it; God had saved you. And he points out the terrible, awful doctrine Calvin taught; and then he goes on to say, "And yet the strange thing is that these doctrines, which you would think would make a man just lie down and do nothing, actually resulted in producing a race of people who worked as no other group of people in the world did." He says, "They worked, and they toiled, and they struggled, and they just did everything possible to accomplish the thing that they believed," and he said, "How can you understand? it is strange, but these doctrines have produced these results."⁶⁸

And of course, the fact of the matter is that the faith is of God; and the faith is all of God; and it is only of God's grace that we are anything; and yet if we have the true faith, we will work, and we will work harder and more effectively and more intelligently, than anyone can work who is merely doing work to win God's favor. So this is a high point of Abraham's faith and we would have to take two or three hours on it instead of a few minutes if it were not for the fact it is such a familiar passage and everyone of course, is fairly familiar with this 22nd chapter.

Now before we go on, I've been asked a question about chapter 15. I think we might take just a minute on it. We find, in chapter 15 here, that we read that the Lord spoke to Abraham; and Abraham (verse 6)

believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness. 7 And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. 8 And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? 9 And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not, and when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

The Lord ordered Abraham to divide up these animals and put the two pieces on the two sides but the birds he simply laid there without dividing them—they being quite small—and then the fowls came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away; and he sat there, and then as it got toward the evening—and he'd probably been working ever since three that morning and he

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 167 " 'The God of Calvin,' exclaimed Jerome Bolsec, 'is a hypocrite, a liar, perfidious, unjust, the abetter and patron of crimes, and worse than the devil himself.' ¶ But there was another side to the doctrine of election. There was a certain moral grandeur in the complete abandon to God and in the earnestness that was ready to sacrifice all to his will. And if we judge the tree by its fruits, at its best it brought forth a strong and good race. ...These men bore themselves with I know not what of lofty seriousness, and with a matchless disdain of all mortal peril and all earthly grandeur. Believing themselves chosen vessels and elect instruments of grace, they could neither be seduced by carnal pleasure nor awed by human might."

was getting pretty tired and a deep sleep fell over him and a horror of great darkness fell upon him. He fell into sort of a trance—very sleepy and when things seem sort of unreal; and in this condition, he received a message from God; and God now gave him some specific information about the nearer future. And how often you find in the prophecies that there is a trance, somewhat similar to what we have here. Early in the chapter, God gave him predictions about the distant future; and now He gives him more information about the nearer future. Very often God gives to us His great promises, and then He gives us an earnest of their fulfillment with something that is near—not arranging it in chronological order, you see—in the reverse of chronological order but in a rather logical order that way; and so when Abraham went into this sort of a trance, the Lord gave him this specific information, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs." It is a plural pronoun here, in connection with the seed, and referring to his posterity. "And they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, which they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation, they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."

And that was quite a bit of specific information for the near future, given Abraham in order to encourage him and his descendants, that these things which God had promised were to come to pass; and as they saw the earlier things coming to pass, they would also realize the later. And the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. The Amorites down in Sodom and Gomorrah, their iniquity was full and God judged them; but the rest of the land was moving rapidly in that direction, and it took a period yet before it reached that point where God rooted them out entirely.

The fourth generation here is the fourth generation—not after Abraham—but after they went to Egypt. "The sun went down and it was dark; behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces." Here were these pieces of the sacrifice which were there; and as it was getting dark, Abraham saw this thing like a saucer—I suppose, sort of bright and shining that came up between these pieces there—and it was a sort of a peculiar vision which he had, which drove home to his mind the fact that God was really speaking to him through this very unusual situation. Passing between pieces—symbols of a covenant—to impress on Abram's mind the fact of this very unusual revelation of information of what was to come to pass in the fairly near future. But at the same time this particular form, in this passing between those pieces, it would seem like that the Lord would have used something that corresponded to something in Abram's experience in order to make the meaning clear; and so I think it would not be inferring too much from it to say that possibly there was a custom in Abram's time of sanctioning the covenant

with going through some form somewhat similar to this, but I don't know of any such evidence that that was so.

g. Abram's Lapses. The Lord has given us this wonderful man Abram; this man who was the friend of God; this man who had the name greater than that of any other individual probably, who has ever lived on this earth; this man who is the great example of faith in God and of salvation by faith in what God has done.

This man had two very regrettable lapses: one described in Genesis 12, one described in Genesis 20; and of these two lapses we can notice this—that in both of them he failed at his strong point. There is many a man who fails at his weak point. In fact, the ordinary person will fail at his weakest point. He is always falling down where he is weak; but for the one who is to be a Christian leader; for the one who is really outstanding and unusual and different from the general run of people, I think there is a special warning that you may fall at your strongest point; at a point where you feel most secure; a point for which you are most praised; the thing of which you are most certain; that right in that, you win your great victory; that is the very point where Satan may catch you off guard and take you.

And Abram's great point was his faith, and he failed at this very point. He went down to Egypt, he went over to the land of the Philistines; and in each case he said, "There is no knowledge of God here, and therefore I'd better resort to underhanded strategies in order to make myself safe," and he did that which was not God's will for him in order to make himself safe in these places.

He failed at his strongest point, and his failing showed itself in his telling a white lie. What is the difference between a white lie and a black lie? Well, both of them are lies; and the difference is that the white lie is a lie which you think you can consider to be excusable. That doesn't say God excuses it, but you think you can consider it to be excusable; and so in this case Abraham went down into Egypt; and he entered the land, and he turned to Sarah and he said, "Now I know you are a fair woman to look on. The Egyptians will see you and they will decide to kill your husband in order to get possession of you. And so", he said, "if you will just tell them you are my sister—after all you are." Sarah was Abraham's sister; they were half-brother and -sister and it certainly is not a lie to call our half-sister a sister; so that the statement made was a true statement; but the statement made was a statement which covered up a more important fact, and a fact which people had a right to know—that though she was his sister, she occupied a relation to him much closer and much more important than the relationship of a half-sister. She was his wife.

And so he told a half-lie in Egypt, and the same half-lie in the land of the Philistines; and in both places, the half-lie which he told brought harm to others, and it put him into a situation from which it was necessary that God

extricate him; and God extricated him because of Abraham's importance in the work of God. It was necessary and desirable that Abraham be enabled to carry on the work, and God extricated him. But it brought definite harm to others; others were injured on account of Abraham's white lie.

And perhaps the greatest harm that it brought was, that when his trusting son Isaac—who idolized his father and copied his father and imitated his father in every possible way—found himself in a similar situation, Isaac told, not a white lie but a black lie. That is, Isaac said that Rebecca was his sister; and she was not even his half-sister at all. She was only a second cousin; and the influence upon others was perhaps one of the worst features of Abraham's act: that which he did, which was within the technical bounds of truth, led to an act on the part of his son which was definitely outside of those technical bounds; and so these are Abraham's definite lapses—Genesis 12 and Genesis 20—and then Isaac followed in the footsteps of Abraham. One of them, of course, is the J document, and one is the E document, so you have simply the two documents telling the same story with variations; but the trouble is, you get a third instance, and that also in one of the same two documents—not in the P document—so that you have one of the documents telling it twice; and if one of the documents could tell it twice, why couldn't the original story tell it three times?

Every man whom God has ever blessed has been a sinner; and every sin that anyone has ever done has brought harm and injury to others—has brought the curse upon others as well as upon ourselves; and God does not bless us because we are righteous and not sinners, but he blesses us because we are saved; because He sees us in the person of His Son, not in what we are; and because, as a result of our salvation and of our justification, we are moving on a road of sanctification; and even though Pharaoh might be a far better man, as the world sees him, than Abram (I don't say he was, but he might be); and even though Pharaoh might have wonderful virtues which Abram didn't have; yet Pharaoh was moving in this direction and Abram was moving in that direction.

And there is many a man living today who—as the world sees it—is not a specially fine character, who is a true Christian, but he is struggling against a terrible background and terrific handicaps and making real progress, and who is a far better man in God's sight than many a man with the finest of backgrounds and most respectable of character, who is moving in the opposite direction. I think it is a very good thing—a question like this with the unbeliever—just to bring up the fact that it isn't because we keep the Golden Rule that God blesses us, but it is because we are saved through Christ; and that means that eventually we will keep the Golden Rule far more than the one who is not saved, but it isn't our present condition. It is our relation to Christ which makes our eventual condition, and it is not based upon our present condition.

Abram had doubtless had severe chastening from God; but we are not in position to measure the chastening in comparison to the particular deserts of each individual. We can't do that. I was talking to a dentist who told me he had a Spiritualist girl who came to him for work on her teeth; and "Oh," he said, "I'd prefer her to any patient I've got." He said, "Because when I take that girl and dig into her tooth and it hurts I say, 'Oh, is that hurting you?' she says, 'don't bother, don't bother,' she says, 'I'm just being punished for my sins. That's something I did yesterday that I am getting punished for now.'" And he didn't have to worry about hurting her. Well, that is not what the Bible teaches; that we suffer or are happy in this life in proportion to the sins we do in this life. If we suffered in proportion to our sins, every one of us would have an eternity of suffering ahead; and it is only through the grace of God that any of us escapes from it; and God's dealing with us in this life is calculated to bring lessons to us, and to improve us, and to give us that amount of chastening which will have the desired result in our case.

Just how much chastening Abram got we don't know; but it is true that as far as chastening is concerned, a great deal depends on the individual. There is one individual to whom a harsh word upsets them so much; one harsh word upsets them so much that they can't sleep for nights. They are just terrifically upset. And there are others upon whom a real hard beating has little effect; and you have to decide on the particular type of chastening that will bring about the desired result upon the particular individual; and God's wisdom is far beyond ours. We cannot judge of the righteousness of His acts, but we know they are righteous.

Pharaoh was plagued because of Sarai. As far as Pharaoh's life was concerned in this world, Pharaoh might have a very happy life or a very unhappy life in this world. It doesn't make much difference really, because his misery through millions of years hereafter is so great a part of his experience, that the little more misery or little more happiness in this life doesn't affect it one way or the other. He wasn't plagued in this life on account of his sins. He might go to the dentist and his teeth might hurt him hardly at all. He wasn't plagued for his sins; but he was plagued in this case, in order to bring to his attention the fact that there was something wrong in this matter of sin. God did it in order to free Sarai from the situation, not in order to punish Pharaoh for what he had done.

In the case of Abimelech, Abraham was recognized as a true servant of the Lord. Now, whether there was a definite relationship between Abimelech and the Lord we simply are not told; and I don't think we have any right to assume there was, when we are not told there was. But it is a fact that the picture we get of Abimelech here, is not quite the ordinary picture you would expect. God spoke to him in a dream. Well, of course, God might bring a dream to anyone, an unbeliever, for a specific purpose. That might be, too. It is altogether

reasonable to think that God has moved very specially upon the hearts and in the minds of unbelievers to accomplish specific purposes.

h. The Question about Hagar. Was it a lapse on Abram's part to follow the custom of his day as described in the law of Hammurabi? And when Sarai gave him Hagar for a concubine, to take her in order to try to have a son in that way? Well, we must say this: that regardless of what the attitude was toward his following the customs of the time, rather than the higher standards which certainly are taught in the Scripture—explicitly in other parts of the Scripture and certainly implicitly in earlier parts of the Scripture, regardless of that—this we must say; that it was at least, to some extent a lapse of faith, his looking to Hagar to raise up one to be his seed, when Sarai had no son. It was to some extent a lapse of faith—not a striking lapse of faith as these other cases—because Sarai had gone so long a time with no child, that it certainly seemed to everyone as very, very unlikely that she ever would have a child. In fact, Sarai didn't believe it when God gave her the promise about it. It seemed to her absolutely impossible; and so there is not as great a lapse of faith as the other two; but it was at the point of his faith; God had promised that he would have a seed. He entered into a particular scheme, you right say, in order to bring God's promise to pass.

And there is one place where I think David gave a very wonderful example. David fought and worked through his life to accomplish what he felt to be right; but God had promised David that he would be king; and it was God's definite promise; and that definite promise, and this particular special blessing to come to David, which God had made, was one which David never lifted up his hand to fulfill. When Saul was right before him, and he could have killed Saul so easily; and Saul had been trying to kill him, he said, "I will not lift up my hand against the Lord's anointed." And he refused to take advantage of the opportunity which he had. And then after Saul was dead, he waited until the people came to him; and they came to him and made him king of the kingdom of Judah; and that was only about a quarter of the whole land at that time; and he took that position, and then never raised his hand to try to take control of the rest of the land; and instead of that he was very careful to abstain from anything that looked as if he was trying to take a hold of it. God had promised him, and he knew that God would fulfill it; and he trusted God completely in the matter of the particular blessings that God had promised him. I think that at that point David was a wonderful example of faith in God's promises—in not lifting his hand to fulfill the promise of what God was going to do with him.

We have the opposite extreme in the case of Jacob; though God had promised that the older one should serve the younger and that Jacob was to receive the birthright, nevertheless Jacob was so anxious to get it that he resorted to the trickery of getting Esau when he was awfully hungry, and getting him to give him the birthright; for Esau said, "What's the good of a birthright to me if I am

going to die anyway of hunger?" And so he gave him some food and got the birthright from him. And then later, on he disguised himself as Esau to get his father to give him the blessing. Both of these belonged to him. God had declared they would come to him. They were his in God's sight; and it was not necessary that he resort to any of these things in order to get them. He would have had them just as much without it.

(Student: What about Jehu?) In the case of Jehu, God had selected Jehu to do away with the Baal worship and to root out the house of Ahab. That was a different case, because God didn't tell David to root out the house of Saul, to overcome him. David was simply promised he would be king. Jehu was specifically appointed to root out Ahab's house; but then Jehu, once he got started, was seeking his own advantage rather than to do God's will; and therefore he received condemnation, not for the thing in general which he did, but for the way he did it, and the extent to which he carried it.

God blessed all the seed of Abraham. There would be one seed through which his promise was to come, but all the seed had blessings. There were blessings for Ishmael; there were blessings for Esau; there were blessings to all of them, and opportunities for all of them to maintain the relationship to God and to receive God's blessing, but the line of Jacob was the line specifically selected for the bringing of the promise to the world.

Esau was the progenitor of the people of Edom, but the blessing given Esau had very specific promises of blessing in it the same way Ishmael did. I don't know to how great an extent Arabs would consider themselves the descendants of Ishmael, but I know they would consider themselves descendants of Abraham. They all do regard him as the father of the patriarchs, and they look to Abraham as one of the very greatest of the fathers; and there are blessings promised to Ishmael. God does not confine his blessings to one group or to one race or to one section, but He worked out the great blessing of bringing Christ into the world through one line.

The seal of circumcision did not represent the fact that Christ was going to come in the line. It represented the fact that God would bring blessing to the individual. The seal of circumcision represented the individual's relation to God rather than the promise that Christ was going to be born of that line. That's the birthright.

When you figure the way that the lines of descent go, it would seem most likely that most of the earth would have some of Ishmael's blood in them and also some of Isaac's blood, but probably more of Ishmael's. I figured my genealogy up once, and I traced it back to about 700 AD; and on three different lines, I came to Charlemagne; and I thought that was very interesting to be able to trace back on three lines to Charlemagne; and I wonder how many people today

are descended from Charlemagne; and so I figure that you have two parents, four grandparents, eight great grand parents and so on back. When you get back to Charlemagne there would be, I think, about five hundred million ancestors, if none of them overlapped; and of course there were not probably more than fifty million people in Europe at the time of Charlemagne; so I think you can say that every person who has any ancestors from Europe is a descendant from Charlemagne, whether they can trace it or not. It goes out that way. Well now, whether Ishmael—I would think it likely that if Ishmael had descendants in Arabia who lived as much as five hundred years, the relationship would have spread out to the extent that everybody today would have been as one of their descendents.

God did not introduce circumcision as a new thing at this time, but God caused that this rite which was already known in certain sections should be adopted by Abraham and his people. Not merely for hygienic reasons, but more particularly as a symbol and seal of the covenant; and it received a meaning among them. Now you can have circumcision without it's having any such meaning. I imagine that three-fourths of the babies born in our hospitals today are circumcised, but in most cases it has absolutely no meaning. It simply is a hygienic thing, as it was in Egypt. The Philistines apparently did not practice circumcision, but about others I don't know.

i. Melchizedek. Well now, the matter of Meichizedek. We've already mentioned the statement of Paul that there may be those in any land who are accepted of God; that it is not the knowledge of God—particularly in that early day—the knowledge of God was not restricted entirely to the Chosen People. Originally of course, all our ancestors knew about God; but people shut God out of their hearts, and they turned away from God. As Paul said, they willingly forgot God; and God gave them over to believe a lie; and it may very well be that there were more—aside from the direct line of God's revelation—there were more who retained something of the primitive revelation at that time than there would be at later times.

At any rate, we have Melchizedek—and one thing that has been a problem to some people about Melchizedek is what Hebrews says about him. In Hebrews 7, we read about Melchizedek, the one to whom Abram gave a tenth part of all, "first being by interpretation king of righteousness, Melchizedek, and also king of Salem, which is king of peace." Now, of course, his name is Melchizedek: king of righteousness, and Salem means peace, so he was king of Salem, he was king of peace; and "he was without father and without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, abideth a priest continually." That is to say, Genesis doesn't tell us anything about any ancestors or any descendants of his. It doesn't tell us when he began his life or when he ended it. From Genesis, he is simply a figure who comes into the narrative, appears briefly and disappears, but of whom none of

these specific details are stressed as they are in the case of Levi. Levi received his priesthood because of his descent from Abram, because he is the one selected from Abram. And his descendants receive it because they are descended from him, but as it says, "in the loins of"—that is, the Levitical priesthood is a matter of specific regulation in accordance with a physical relationship, for the purpose of good order.

But Melchizedek is one of whom we have none of these things told to us. He simply appears as one who is indeed a priest of the Most High God; and so he is in that way a symbol, a type of the situation of the Lord Jesus Christ, who appears from outside the line of direct descent of the promises of God, though he is also within it. He is the son of Mary, but he is also the Son of God. He appears from outside. He is the great seed by virtue—not of his place in descent—but of his relationship to God; and so Melchizedek here is simply given as an example; because of the fact that he did not have his position because of any of these particular things; but he appears in Genesis without any stress laid on any of these particular things. I don't think that the author of Hebrews would mean to say that Melchizedek, the king of Jerusalem, was one who had always been there from the time of Adam and who is there today still; or one who was simply a separate creation of God, unrelated. He certainly had a beginning of his time there; he certainly had an end of his time there, but these things are not told us in Genesis and his relationship was not based upon them.

The record begins with stressing the fact that Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine and was priest of El Elyon. That is stressed immediately. Then after that is stressed, he blessed Abram. He said, "Blessed be Abram of El Elyon, the possessor of heaven and earth and, Blessed be El Elyon who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand." It is very definitely a religious context, and in the middle of that religious context Abram gives the tithes; so I don't see how you can get away from it that it wasn't that Melchizedek was a powerful noble who held the road and you had to pay him toll to get past, but it was a religious arrangement.

(Student What document is this assigned to?) Well, it doesn't particularly fit into any of the documents. Of course, now in Ugaritic you have the god El, which some say is related to this, but that is highly questionable. Of course, nobody could have said that until recent years, because we had no evidence anywhere bearing on any such name until the discovery of the Ugaritic texts; and in the Ugaritic texts they are grabbing everything they can that seems to have any relationship to the Bible, and using it to explain the Bible; but there are so many explaining it from different viewpoints that they contradict each other; and it will be some time before a consensus of opinion is arrived at; and so we do not have it as a definite position as yet. There is great divergence as people are making new theories, and giving them up, and making others. It is such recent

stuff, this Ugaritic. It is pretty hard to say what the view will be after a few years. Well, now,

j. Abraham's Meaning for Us. I've put this under two heads.

(1) He is the one through whom God gave us the promises and prepared the way for Christ. That is his most vital place in God's economy. He is the one through whom God gave us these promises; the one through whom He prepared the way for Christ. Abram was an instrument of God in order to set apart this people, through whom he would bring His Son into the world, and through whom He would give the Scripture, give us the revelation; and

(2) He is an example to us of faith and faithfulness. This, of course, Hebrews 11 stresses greatly in verses 8 to 19. Abram has a specific place of importance in God's economy. Abram is an example in himself for us.

Both are important, both are vital; but we must not simply stress one and overlook the other. He could have been the one without being the other. There are many who are wonderful examples of faith, who have no particular place in the general structure of the progress of His Kingdom; there are many who have important places in the Kingdom, who are not the great examples that Abraham is, but he combines both. So much for B, Abraham.

C. Isaac.

I don't want to take much time on Isaac because there isn't a great deal that is important. Isaac is a lesser figure between two great figures. He is a weak figure between two strong figures. He is a necessary connecting link, but a connecting link between two vital characters. I remember when I was in seminary hearing Dr. Eerdman say that people always wanted the Episcopal marriage service because they thought that it was such a beautiful service; and the Presbyterians were always saying, "Oh, let's use the Episcopal service." Well, he said, "It is a beautiful service, but is it quite so true?" He said, "It says in it, 'May they be blessed together as Isaac and Rebecca were,' and after all, when you think of how Rebecca cheated Isaac and deceived him and so on, are they the best sort of example for conjugal happiness?"

Well, it is true that Isaac here is a secondary figure, in between the two great figures, and yet his position in between the two makes him a vital connecting link so we can indeed speak of the three great patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Isaac seems to have been a pale copy of his father Abraham. Whatever Abraham had done, Isaac did. He copied his good points; he copied his bad points. He deserves credit for copying his good points—he deserves great credit—but he also deserves criticism for the bad points he copied. Fortunately there weren't so many bad points to copy. But Isaac did have an attitude of trust

in his father. He had an attitude of submission. He made no objections when his father took him up to sacrifice him. He went off, walking up the mountain. He absolutely trusted his father—he put him on the altar and began to tie him up. He doesn't seem to have offered any objection. He was very loyal to his father; and if you have a father like Abraham to be thus loyal to, it is wonderful; but the trouble is, there are very few fathers who deserve to rank with Abraham; and whether they be physical fathers or spiritual fathers, there is a real danger when one takes the attitude toward any human being of putting that human being up as an example—and an idol—between him and God. There is a great danger because any human being can fail, and can fall, and can have lapses. Abraham had few of them, but Isaac imitated those few which he had.

It is remarkable how many things there are which Abraham did and which Isaac also did. He camped at the same places. He went up and down there, camping at the same places that Abraham had; and he carried forward in this, detail after detail, even to calling his wife his sister, just what Abraham had done right through his life. I think the danger is one that is vital for us all to guard against, the danger of taking any lesser ideal.

I remember my mother saying when she was a young woman, there were two preachers who were having evangelistic meetings; and oh, how they poured out their souls to lead people into the kingdom; to get people to believe in Christ and to be saved. These men were just giving themselves unstintingly for the Gospel. And my mother said, as long as these two men have the faith that they have, she would never waiver in her faith in the truth of the Scripture and the truth of salvation through Christ; never, as long as these two men stood so true.

And then thirty years later, I saw both of the men. One of them had gradually lost his belief in the Scripture, and had become a strong modernist. They visited in our home and he talked about the gospel of the shambles—had absolutely no belief in the teaching of Calvary, and of salvation through the blood. The other one became a great social leader—a great leader of social service and a professor of social work in the University of Chicago. Both of them turned absolutely against the thing they had been teaching as young men and which had impressed her so much. And that happens repeatedly; it happens so often; and I think one reason the Lord allows it to happen is because He wants us to put our faith and our trust in Him alone.

We noticed a little bit about the character of Isaac, and his position in relation to Abraham and Jacob. If you take all the sections of Genesis that are simply talking about Isaac, you will find that it is a comparatively small section. As I recall, the chapter that tells about Abraham's death tells about Jacob's birth; and Abraham and Jacob really cover practically the book of Genesis between them—that is, between the beginning of Abraham and the end of Jacob—and

Isaac is a rather incidental figure in between. He is important because he is one of the three, but he is by far the least important of the three. He is the connecting link between two important figures.

Now,

D. Jacob. And under this

1. General outline of the material aspects of his life. Now, of course, under that

a. His Youth in Canaan. Jacob was brought up in the home of Isaac; and there of course he learned a good bit about conditions in Canaan; and he was one who was quick to take advantage of everything which he learned there. He was able to adapt himself to different types of work; to take hold of them and to learn to be quite good at them. He was always looking out for that which would accomplish something, and which would advance the objectives which he had in mind.

As to the general background of his youth in Canaan, I think we have covered that fairly well in connection with this story of Abraham in Canaan, so we will move on to

b. The Light from Mesopotamia. And you know it was very early in the life of Jacob that he left home and made that long trip up into Mesopotamia. His mother with her clever scheming had tried to get for her favorite son everything that she wanted him to have. It so happened the things she wanted to get for him, God had promised him, and they would have been his anyway. Isaac was trying to keep him from having them, because he wanted them to go to his favorite son, Esau; but the Lord had already declared who would receive them; and so Rebecca's schemes resulted actually in nothing but what would have come anyway, but they did result in her losing her son, her favorite son Jacob. He went off into Mesopotamia and she never saw him again.

Now when he went up to Mesopotamia, it brings him into contact with a civilization and culture very different from that in Palestine at this time. He was up in northern Mesopotamia, in the land there where Abraham had worked for quite a time with his father Terah; and where Terah had died; the region in which a good many of the relatives were still living. He came in contact with a different type of civilization, a civilization of which not much was known until comparatively recently.

We have a good deal of information about Palestine from the Bible; and we have learned some new material about Palestine. We've learned, within the last century and a half, a good deal about southern Mesopotamia and central

Mesopotamia; but northern Mesopotamia is on the outskirts; and in addition to that, this takes place in the second millennium BC; and the greater part of our material from ancient Mesopotamia comes from the first millennium BC; and the second largest amount from the third millennium BC. This is in between the two, in the period of which less is known, and the section of which less is known until comparatively recently.

Now, recently there have been some discoveries made in that general area; discoveries made up further east than where Jacob was, but in that general area. It is near the modern city of Kerkuk, a great oil center in modern Iraq; and not very far from this town of Kerkuk, in 1926 there were discovered some clay tablets, which show that there had been a small town there in the second millennium BC, a town which bore the name of Nuzi.

Now there are some who try to say it is Nuzu, and some who say it is Nuza; and the fact of the matter is we are not sure which it is—Nuzi, Nuzu or Nuza. But the early publications called it Nuzi; and we have it often referred to in the tablets as Nuzi—perhaps far more often than either Nuzu or Nuza. Nuzi is the form that has become pretty well established, although there are a few books which now call it Nuzu.

These tablets at Nuzi were very interesting because they were different from any previous tablets known to us. They were clay tablets written in the Babylonian language; and yet written in the Babylonian language about the way that English would be written by some Frenchmen who didn't know a great deal of English. That is to say, it is the Babylonian language which is used—very definitely—and the words and the construction in general have the same meaning as the Babylonian writings, but there are certain things they get all mixed up.

They get their case-endings constantly mixed up; and in their spelling, there are certain sounds that they can't distinguish. They can't tell a "t" from a "d," and so they may write one or the other. They can't tell a "k" from a "g", and they write whichever one is easiest to write in any particular word. There are certain sounds that way, which these people evidently found absolutely unfamiliar to them, but which are very regular in the Babylonian writing, and they confuse them constantly in the writings. And then there are some expressions which they get mixed around. After you have looked at a few of these, you get used to the main peculiarities of them. It is Babylonian written by a people who did not speak Babylonian; and so, in these tablets, in the Babylonian language, we learn something about a culture which is quite different from the Babylonian culture.

Now there is one great advantage of these tablets over the great bulk of tablets that are familiar to us from the Babylonian culture. Most of our other tablets are the inscriptions of kings telling of what they have done; or are various

important pronouncements by the state dealing with particular matters considered to be of general importance. But these tablets from Nuzi are not that sort at all. These are private archives of certain families. The great bulk of them come from one particular family; and in that family, they give us the business transactions of that family through four generations; and thus you find the wills of the members of the family; their marriage contracts; you have their business contracts with hundreds of other people of the community; and you learn a great deal about the ordinary life of the ordinary middle class people of this community.

For instance, a great many of them are legal texts in which this family—which was a very industrious, clever family—had had litigation with other families in Nuzi; and this family practically always wins out in the litigation. Now in Nuzi there was a law, much like the law of ancient Israel, the law that land must remain in a family. You couldn't sell land. In these texts we find that this family, from which most of these texts come, got around that law. The head of the family makes arrangements whereby evidently a man would come to him and say, "I'm up against it. I need some money. I'm broke. Will you lend me some money?" and the head of the family would say, "Well, how can I lend you money? What have you got for security?" and the man would say, "I have nothing left except my land and I can't sell that," and he would say, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll lend you this money and then we'll work out some arrangement." So the man would borrow the money. Then two years later the man had spent the money and had not made back all that he expected to; and he comes to him and says, "Well, what shall we do about it?" Well, he said, I can sell you as a slave for the money—I could make you one of my slaves; but, after all, you are not worth it. I don't want to do that. I'd rather have your land." "Well," the man says, "how can I give you the land?" "Well," he would say, "all you have to do is adopt me." So they would make out an adoption; and so the adoption paper is made out; and in this paper it tells how this man of his own free will—it nearly always says, "of his own free will"—he adopted as his son and has given his adopted father a present; and that is the amount of money loaned him and it tells of this present he has given; and then it names just exactly where the property is and describes it quite fully and quite exactly; and it says if any litigation comes about this the adopted father is to pay the cost of the litigation; and then the contract is made, the family head is his adopted son and this particular land is designated as the share that this adopted son is to receive of the man's property.

This man was adopted by over four hundred different citizens of Nuzi. And thus from these tablets we see, how in those days—as in our present day—people found ways of getting around the law; and even though the law tried to keep the land cut up into little holdings, with each family holding its own land—holding it theoretically from the king, and paying the king a certain amount of work each year for this land that been assigned to him—yet this great amount

of land came into the family of the family head. And then we have some lawsuits in which, after two or three generations, we find that the grandson of the man who had adopted him, takes the land and seizes it and says, "This is my land, inherited from my grandfather" and then goes to law about it, the thing is looked into, the tablets are brought, the judges give their decision and they decide whom the land properly belongs to, and that the other man is to pay the costs.

And so we have hundreds of these—there are some thousands of tablets altogether, hundreds of these adoption tablets, hundreds of legal tablets, many other types, from these families—and we see the life of these individual families. We know a great deal about all the different features of the way in which they lived in this area at that time.

The town of Nuzi was destroyed when it was conquered by the Assyrians in about 1500 BC; so we have here a town which was destroyed before 1400 BC; and so through a period of between one hundred and one hundred and fifty years, we have all this material on the events in that town at that time. There is a book published by the University of Chicago, Volume 57 of the Oriental Institute Publications⁶⁹ of which I am one of the three authors, which contains within it—I won't say the telephone directory of ancient Nazi, but perhaps we'll say the directory of the people—because it lists the individuals mentioned in this town. It tells their relationship with one another, tells which tablets they are mentioned in, the nature of their names, what we are told of their racial background, etc. from the names found in this town of Nuzi.

Now for the student of ancient culture, these tablets are among the most interesting tablets which have ever been found anywhere, because they show the contact between two cultures: the Babylonian and the culture of the people here, the Hurrian people of this community. They show the contacts between them, the effect of one upon the other. They show us the life of this community of that ancient time. It throws a great deal of light upon the details of ancient history. For the Biblical scholar, these tablets are extremely interesting because they give us so much information about the life of this area in which Jacob lived during a number of the formative years of his life; and so it is very interesting for the light it throws upon the background of the Bible; and it is interesting for the fact that at a number of places it—in very interesting ways—confirms the accuracy of events in the Scripture; or perhaps I should say, it makes us see how naturally they fit into their background, rather than that it so much proves any one particular event there.

Now, one interesting thing in these tablets which we find is the matter of land tenure. I mentioned how the land there theoretically belongs to the king, and he

⁶⁹ Gelb, Purves & MacRae, [*Nuzi Personal Names*](#), Oriental Institute Publications Vol. LVII, University of Chicago (1943).

parcels it out among the different families and they have their tax to pay for the land to the king. You do not have, strictly speaking, private ownership of the land, even though in the degenerate days with which our tablets deal this law becomes to quite an extent a dead letter; and following the schemes which this clever fellow worked out, he has devised a way of getting around this law. But we see a system of land tenure there, very different from anything that was known in Palestine at that time. Now it is interesting that when we find, in Genesis chapter 47, that Joseph was down in Egypt, we find that Joseph there in Egypt, when he was in charge of the land for Pharaoh, changed the land holding system of Egypt. Previous to this time, in Egypt the land was held by individuals, regular private property in land; but we read here, in verse 20,

And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's

And thus we have it shown here that Joseph got the land for Pharaoh; and verse 26,

And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part, except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's

And so you have, previous to Joseph, private property in land in Egypt. After Joseph, you have the land in Egypt belonging to the Pharaoh, and the people paying a fifth part of the produce to Pharaoh as their rent for the land. Early Egyptian documents show that before the time of Joseph the land was privately owned. Late Egyptian documents show that the Pharaoh owned all the land and the people paid one fifth of the property to Pharaoh, except the land of the priests, which was not touched, land that remained in their hands. And so the Bible says Joseph made the change in Egypt. Egyptian records show some time before Joseph the one situation, and some time after the other situation.

And now these tablets from Mesopotamia give us a clue as to where Joseph got the idea. As a boy he heard his father Jacob tell about his experiences in Mesopotamia, and describe how different was the landholding position in Mesopotamia and in Palestine; and now when Joseph goes down into Egypt and is working for Pharaoh, he sees an opportunity to change the land system of Egypt from the previous system to the system with which his father had been familiar up there in Mesopotamia. It is just one other little piece that fits in to the whole situation and shows how it all fits together. That would naturally be how the idea of the landholding system way up there came down into Egypt when Joseph introduced it there.

Now another interesting place here where these tablets from Mesopotamia throw light upon the statements of the Bible, relates more particularly to the situation when he returned to Canaan. I think, however, since the light on it comes from Mesopotamia we might well discuss it under this head. This relates to the attempt of Laban, Jacob's uncle, to recover the teraphim, or household gods, which had been stolen.

You remember that we are told in Genesis chapter 31, that Jacob left the land of Mesopotamia rather suddenly, and he started back toward Palestine; and we read how Jacob rose up and set his sons and his wives on camels and carried away all his cattle and all his goods which he had gotten in Padan-aram, to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan; and Laban had gone to shear his sheep; and Rachel had stolen the images (the Hebrew word there is *teraphim*), the teraphim or household gods, the images that were her father's. (Gen. 31:20ff)

And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled. 21 So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face toward the mount Gilead. 22 And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled.

Jacob had a three-day start, and Laban

took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.

Now here is Jacob, down here in Mt. Gilead; and Jacob had with him all the flocks and the herds which he had earned up there in Mesopotamia: earned partly by hard work, his hard unsparing work, and partly by his cleverness in securing the utmost possible result for his work; and so he had a large number of flocks and herds, and naturally a large number of men to take care of the flocks and herds; and here is Jacob with all of this number of servants with him going over into Palestine, with all these flocks and herds; and Laban pursues after him for seven days, and overtakes him; and when he overtakes him, he is quite upset because Jacob had left suddenly without saying good-bye, without giving him a chance to say good-bye to his daughters and to his grandchildren; but the thing that Laban is most excited about is the fact that Jacob has stolen his household gods, and he wants those household gods back. That's the big thing that interests Laban; and though he feels badly that Jacob has left suddenly and has taken with him all these flocks and herds that Jacob has earned from him; taken Jacob's wives (his own daughters), taken his grandchildren (Jacob's children), the thing that he is most upset about is his household gods.

Jacob too is quite upset. Jacob said, "I wouldn't think of doing such a thing. What an awful thing to accuse me of!" He said, "With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live." He says, "Before our brethren, discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee." For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them. So Jacob just opened everything up and said, "Come in and hunt through everything, and see if I have done such a despicable thing as to steal your household gods." And so Laban simply started out, and went right through them, and hunted for them. And Jacob, we read, was quite terrified of what Laban was apt to do in the situation. We read that God had said to Laban in a dream at night, saying, "Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad," so evidently Laban had brought with him a large enough expedition that, despite the number of flocks and herds that Jacob had—and consequently the men to take care of them—Laban had a large enough expedition with him that he could have overcome Jacob.

That would be an expensive thing for Laban to do. A seven day trip. You would have to provide for expenses of travel of the people there, and back again; you'd have to provide for all their living expenses on the way; you'd have to give them reasonable compensation for it. What was there that made it worth Laban's while to go to this expense and this trouble to pursue Jacob in order to try to get back those household gods?

Well, that is a problem that has puzzled commentators on the Bible through the ages; and some medieval commentators suggested that those household gods probably were made of gold; and that was why Laban was so anxious to get them; but if the household gods were made of gold, it would take quite a bit of gold to pay the expense of such an expedition as that. He knew that Jacob had a three days' start over him, it took seven days to catch up with him. They would have to be pretty good sized. Now how big were the household gods?

Well, we read that Laban went into Jacob's tent and into Leah's tent, into the two maid-servants' tents, but he found them not. And then he went out of Leah's tent and entered into Rachel's tent; and Rachel had taken the images and put them in the camel's furniture and sat upon them and Laban searched all the tents but found them not; and Rachel said to her father "Let it not displease my father that I cannot rise up before thee, for the custom of women is upon me." And he searched, but found not the images. And so Rachel was sitting on these images, and as she sat there she said please excuse me, father, I don't feel well today. Excuse me that I don't get up. You can search everywhere in the tent all right and see that nothing here is stolen from you without my getting up, so he peered all around; he looked on all sides of her and everything; and you can be quite sure that after this, if he was convinced that the household images weren't in the tent, then they were not particularly big. Anything that she could sit on and hide so well that he wouldn't even suspect that they were there and wouldn't say, "Well, now, I hate to trouble you, daughter, but here is a chair

over here. If you will just move over here, it's just three steps over, and if you will just move over, here I'll look there where you were sitting. Evidently, they were small enough that she could hide them that way and he would not suspect it.

And so we find that the theory that they were made of gold does not account for their being worth all this trip, and the expedition, and the excitement on Laban's part—or the excitement, on the other hand, on Jacob's part. Because now Laban has looked everywhere and hasn't found them, we read in verse 36, "Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass?" That's the first time I ever noticed that word chode there—c h o d e. I don't think I have ever used it in a sermon in my life. He chode with Laban, and Jacob answered and said to Laban, "What is my trespass? And what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me?" And he went on here—we have nearly a column in which Jacob told Laban what he thought of him for accusing him of such a terrible thing and pursuing him this way. "Why, of course I haven't stolen them. I've been absolutely honest all the way through. Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty."

And so he tells him just what he thinks. And so it leaves us with this question. Why on earth was it worth all this expense and bother on Laban's part to try to get these household gods? And why was Rachel anxious to steal them in the first place, to take them along? And why was Jacob so upset that Laban would suspect him of such a thing?

Well, it is a thing which we couldn't understand until within the last fifteen years, until the discoveries were made at Nuzi. There is no explanation for it in the text. It doesn't state why they were important; and that is natural enough if, in the day when this was written, everybody understood; if all Jacob's family knew perfectly well the importance of these household gods, there would be no need of writing it down; and then later on, when it is forgotten, there simply is no explanation included here as to the reason for it. And so there was no satisfactory explanation for the reason. It was a mystery to us through the Middle Ages. It was doubtless a mystery in the time of the later Israelite kingdom—when critics say this story was written. The reason for it had doubtless been forgotten.

But now these Nuzi tablets have been excavated and read; and from them we learn that there in Mesopotamia, the region in which Laban lived, that up there it was customary that when a man died, if a son-in-law could go into the court, and could bring with him the household gods of his father-in-law and say, "Here, my father-in-law gave me his household gods to take care of," instead of one of his sons having them—which would be the natural thing—that was acceptable in the court as proof that this father-in-law had passed over his own

sons, and had designated this son-in-law as his proper heir and successor to all of his property. So it is clear enough why Rachel stole the household gods. Jacob already had a large part of the property of Laban. She figured he might as well get all the rest of it; so she took the household gods; and after Laban's death, Jacob could go into court with them, and could present them, and receive all the property that was left to be divided among Laban's sons. And it is easy enough to see, then, why Laban was so excited about it. He wanted to save as much as he could for his sons to have after his death.

That explains why Laban was so excited about them. It explains why it was important to him to get them back. It explains why Jacob was so disgusted that he would be accused of such a thing. And it shows—makes it seem extremely unlikely—that this story was written, as the higher critics say, in the days of the later Israelite kingdom; because if it had been, and they had imagined an antiquated custom like this no longer known in their day, they surely would have explained just what its importance was. As it is, probably, by that time the explanation had been completely forgotten.

And so this is a case where we have light thrown on the Biblical narrative; we can understand it better by this material that has been discovered within the last fifteen years. And in addition to that, it makes the critical theory seem extremely unlikely; and it fits in with this account having been written at the very time of the events described.

Now another thing that is interesting about the background of this trip to Mesopotamia, is that these people in Mesopotamia among whom Laban lived, that is Laban and his family, were not Hebrew-speaking but Aramaic-speaking; and we find that brought out in this very same chapter at which we have just been looking. We find it here in chapter 31; that after Jacob had accused Laban of falsely suspecting him, then Laban wanted to play it safe; and so Laban said, "Now, look here," he said, "I don't want you coming over and making me trouble with these things after I'm dead." He didn't say this in so many words but that doubtless is the idea. He said, in verse 44,

Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee. 45 And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar. 46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap. 47 And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed. 48 And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed;

Laban called, it *Jegarsahadutha*, but Jacob called it *Galeed*. In other words, they both called it, "Stone of Witness." Only Laban calls it Jegarsahadutha, which is stone of witness in Aramaic, and Jacob calls it Galeed, which is Hebrew for

stone of witness. So you have the same—this stone is put up between us; and they give it the name in Aramaic, which is Laban's language; and in Hebrew, which is the language that Jacob and his family had learned in Palestine and that they now talk in their home; and they give these two names to this stone.

And then Laban says, in verse 52 he says,

This heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm.

In other words, Laban said, "If you've got those *teraphim* somewhere, and in some queer way I haven't been able to find them in all the search I've made, we make this covenant. You won't pass this spot and come back to injure me with them, to use them against me. And so they put up this stone of witness and they say, "Here is a witness between us. You are to stay on that side and not to come over here and injure me by producing these things in court if you have them. I won't pass over there to injure you with my stronger force of men. We'll make this dividing line between us." And therefore they call it Galeed and Mizpah, a watching place. for he said, (verse 49)

The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

You don't cross over here to hurt me and I don't cross over there to hurt you, but each of us stay on our own side, and stay separate. So there we have the origin of that beautiful Mizpah benediction, "Don't you injure me and I won't injure you. We'll each keep on our own side."

(Student "Is this legally binding?") Well, it is a fact that most people have the idea that something like that oath is binding upon them. You will find that, among most peoples, there has been the attitude that, if I take this particular type of a promise, why you know I wouldn't go back on that promise. You remember the story they tell about William the Conqueror and Harold, who was the last king of the Saxons? They say that Harold was visiting in Normandy and—he wasn't yet king; Edward the Confessor was king of the Saxons; and William the Conqueror said to Harold—he had entertained him pretty well at his home there; he wanted to say to Harold, "I want you to leave on good friendly terms with me; otherwise you might not leave at all," but he said, "I want you to leave on good friendly terms with me" and he said, "It is understood between us that I'll have a right to the throne of England, and after Edward the Confessor dies, you promise to support my claim to the throne." And "Oh", Harold said, "Sure, I'll support your claims to the throne. I've got to run along now." And William said, "Well now, let's make a vow on it." and Harold said, "Well now, what kind of a vow do you want?" and so they say, William the Conqueror

placed on the table there a couple of old relics, relics of St. Dennis and St. Anthony, And he said, "Now you put your hand on these relics and you say, 'By all that's sacred under my hands here I vow that I will maintain the cause of William of Normandy to be king of England,' " and they say that Harold looked at him, and he said to himself, "Oh, what are these? Relics of St. Anthony and St. Dennis? I can swear on them and it won't matter at all. So he put his hand out and he made his great oath and then, after he finished the oath, William said, "Well, now let's look under the tablecloth," and so he lifted it up and there were these on the tablecloth, and under the tablecloth he had a hole cut in the table and in there he had a couple of relics of much greater authority; and it was recognized that anything that was sworn to by these you must stand on. And so they thought that he was absolutely right when he conquered England to kill Harold in the battle because Harold had gone back on an oath made over these great relics which were underneath the tablecloth.

That is the story by which they justify William the Conqueror's conquest of England. Well, Harold had made this promise on these great relics; and it is a fact that I think you will find that most people, no matter how lying or how untruthful they are, recognize that you have to have some standard by which you can stand; and that there is something which, if they swear by that, then they expect you to believe it. And in this case, these people were not nearly as reprobate as that—Laban was considered a pretty decent man—and to call God for a witness and eat there together on the heap, established a covenant, they felt; "Well, if you can't trust them on that, you can't trust them on anything. That is just about something that you ought to be able to go by."

(Student "What are these clay tablets called?") Nuzi. N u z i. They're named after the ancient name of the town at which they were found; and they explain thus the whole situation here, which otherwise was rather obscure. Now I think it is very fine to realize that Jacob never did try to use these household-gods in that way. We get over to chapter 35, and we find that Jacob buried them. He didn't quite destroy them. They were still kept, but they were buried. We read there in Chapter 35 that when he came to Bethel, there Jacob called upon the people who were with him, in verse 2, chapter 35. He said to his household,

hen Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: 3 And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. 4 And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem. And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.

And they journeyed on, and he left them; and he never made any attempt to use these in the way Laban feared he would.

(Student) Of the earrings? I should think it likely that they were probably devoted to some heathen deity, or something like that. We don't have light on it, but there may be something in the Nuzi tablets that would throw light on that if one looked for it specifically; but it hasn't occurred to people as a problem, and so they haven't been looking for it.

We find that, at this time, Jacob was trying to bring his whole company more in line with his own ideas. Now, for instance, he says here, "Put away all the strange gods among thee." He knew they had some, but he hadn't done it before; but at this time, he is determined to bring his whole company in line with the idea which he himself had.

Well, now, this light then from Mesopotamia here helps us to understand the passage, and also shows us that it fits in exactly with the customs as they were at the time.

c. The Return to Canaan. This is so bound up with the life in Mesopotamia that, as we look at the material background, there isn't much more to say of it than what we have already said. We will look later, under the spiritual history of Jacob, a little bit at the events at this time when he came to meet Esau, expecting Esau to try to kill him for the wicked deeds which Jacob had done to Esau before he came away; but we find the easy-going, happy-go-lucky attitude which Esau had. Jacob was a man who schemed and planned and worked; Esau was one who would become very angry, and then would get over his anger and be the best of friends.

d. His Life in Canaan. And back there again, Jacob basically spent the rest of his years in Canaan. He lived there a good many years. He who had brought such sorrow to his father in his youth found sorrow brought to himself with the loss of his own son Joseph; and then, eventually, joy coming in the going to Egypt, to be reunited with Joseph. That we will look at under Joseph, instead of looking at it here. And so we go on to

2. Spiritual History of Jacob.

Jacob is a strange character. For Abraham, as you read about him, everything seems in general noble. He had his lapses, he had his weaknesses, but he was a noble character. He was one whom anyone would have loved. As you read of Jacob, it is brought home to you, as you contrast the grasping, clever maneuvers of this rather shady character—in many ways—with the open-hearted, hail-and-hearty good-naturedness of Esau, a man who would get

terrifically angry, and then get over it, and be ready to do anything in the world for the one with whom he had just previously been so angry.

Jacob was characterized by his determination and hard work. It is easy to think that the person that is easy-going is a nicer person to get along with. God doesn't want us to be disagreeable, but he wants us to be people that are determined to accomplish something. He wants us not merely to be good, but he wants us to be good for something. He wants us to be sound, but He doesn't want us to be only sound. He wants us to really be striving to accomplish something along the lines in which he directs us. And Jacob, all through his life, was characterized by his determination and by hard work.

Esau, the rather simple, easy-going type of man, that has more of an appeal for most of us than Jacob has; it shows the sovereignty of God. It shows that it is not our goodness that determines our acceptance before God. It is not what we are, but what we may become. We are all lost in sin; and we are all deserving of nothing good from God; and God chooses whom He shall save and whom He shall make leaders in His kingdom. And often His choice is very different from the choice which we think we would make if we were in His place. It shows the sovereignty of God, the fact that Esau is the one who was laid aside. I don't say "the one who was lost," because Esau has blessings. God gave him blessings; and he had on the whole a happy life; and we have no reason to think that Esau was lost. We don't know a great deal about him; but the great blessing of being the leader in the kingdom; of being the one to whom the promise was given; of being the ancestor of the chosen people; that was what God had planned to give to Jacob before he was even born; because at his birth, the prophecy was made that the older should serve the younger; and God had predetermined before the birth of the two, that Jacob was the one through whom the blessing would come, and the one who would receive the greater blessing on this earth. Now we find Jacob as a young man, grasping, trying to get for himself; but at the same time having a vision; having an understanding of values which Esau did not have. Jacob wanted things which were considered worth-while, which to Esau were just nothing. Jacob got Esau when he was hungry, and he said to him, he said, "If I give you this pottage to eat, will you give me your birthright?" and Esau said, "Oh, if I am going to die, what good is a birthright to me anyway? You take it," and I don't think that made any difference. God had given it to Jacob before he was born. They were both in error in the transaction; for we read in Hebrews 12:16-17,

Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; 16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Here was Esau who simply didn't see the value of it. For one morsel of food he sold his birthright. It is too bad the Old English here says "meat" for of course it was not meat which he gave. Meat is a modern word, which is "flesh" in the Old English. "Meat" in Old English means food. And so Jacob deserves credit for the fact that he could see values, and could see that worth having, even though he went at it in the wrong way. Jacob is characterized by determination and hard work even though through a great part of his life he was seeking for himself rather than for the glory of God.

Then we have that incident at Bethel where Jacob tried to make a bargain with God; where, as Jacob is going off into Mesopotamia, he had that dream in which he saw the ladder, with God at the center of the ladder; and the angels ascending and descending upon the ladder; and where Jacob made that promise, that if God would bring him back to his own land, then he would be his God; and he said, "This stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." We read stories in the magazines every now and then, about some great oil man, or some leader in some line of business, who had made an oath in his early days that he will give a tenth of everything he makes to God; and then how very rich the man has become; and then they will go on in the magazine and tell how the psychologist has explained it; and he says that the fact that the man takes God as a partner, gives the man a feeling that he is going to succeed, a feeling that he can't fail, and therefore the man succeeds and goes ahead. But I don't think the psychologist necessarily has the whole idea of it. There may be an aspect of truth in what he says, but there certainly is nothing in the Scripture to suggest that we have a right to give something to God, and then to demand that God will pay us in a material way in this earth.

Christ has said, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you"; and he says that the one who gives up houses or lands or relatives for the sake of God shall receive them back manyfold in this life; but I don't think He means that in every individual case, God is going to repay specifically, or that we can make a bargain with God. I think what He means is, that God is certainly not going to be in any man's debt; and what we give out of a heart of love to God, he certainly will repay many times over; whether in this life or in the next life; but if a person tries to make a bargain and says, "I am going to do this for God; and now God has got to do this for me—in most cases it won't work. In most cases the result will be very different from what we desire; but in Jacob's case, God stooped to Jacob's weakness and God put this man, with all of his bad qualities—God blessed the good that was in him, much of which was so buried that the ordinary person wouldn't even have seen it, and God transformed Jacob the supplanter into Israel, the prince with God.

Now you find Jacob's attitude toward Laban. Laban misused him; he mistreated him. Laban tricked him, giving him Leah when he thought he was doing work for Rachel; but we find that Jacob continued persevering; submitting to the terms which Laban gave him; and making out as best he could under the terms—the mean, low terms which Laban had made for him—that he persevered and continued, and he secured that which he was after.

What the Scripture says about science [on Jacob's genetic experiments] is true; but what Jacob thought about science is not necessarily so. (question) The present—I shouldn't say present, 20 years ago at least—and it was very definite that acquired characteristics are not transmitted to offspring, and that there is nothing which you can do which influences the character of an offspring. That was the theory on which all agreed 20 years ago. Now it is altogether possible that, 20 years from now, they might take a very, very different viewpoint; but I don't think there is anything in the Scripture that requires us to say that there was. I don't think the Scripture proves either one way or the other on this point. I think it is important that we try to see, what does the Scripture say? When the Scripture clearly teaches something, that is certainly true; but let us not read into the Scripture, or infer from the Scripture, something that is not clearly there; even to get our own ideas out of it, or to try to make it fit any present tendency in science. Because science moves forward constantly and changes a great deal.

It was universally believed, I think, by educational psychologists 25 years ago, that training in one line does not help you a bit for another line. A professor in college said, "If you study French it makes it easier for you to learn more French; and if you learn mathematics it makes it easier for you to study more mathematics; and if you study history it makes it easier for you to learn more history; but no one of these helps in the least bit in getting the other." Training is not transferable from one field to another.

And so that being the case, I was much interested about 10 years ago to pick up a little digest of one of these examination books that sell for about a dollar, that gives a summary of the field of educational psychology. I got it at the University of Chicago; and I read the statement in it of experiments that have been made. Experiments demonstrate that at least a part of the training one secures in any one field is transferable to almost any other field. 95% of the experiments demonstrated this. And especially it makes a big difference if you are learning mathematics. Just in order to learn how to answer some questions, and put them on a piece of paper; it may not help you a bit when you go out and try to measure up the earth; but with the idea of getting principles and getting something that is transferable, it helps you in Hebrew and Greek and botany and every other field, because the methods of study and the methods of interpretation are all definitely transferable, particularly when you get them and you try to make them transferable.

We had a student in this class about 6 years ago; and then he dropped out for financial reasons, and took a job with the Power and Light Company for a while; and lightened up his courses here for a period of time; and they put him to work making a history of the Company. They gave him a job that they thought would take about 10 years, and he could make a good start on it; and in a year and a half, he finished up the job, to their great amazement; and he told me that the abilities which he used in doing it were the principles that he had learned in Old Testament History class. (laughter)

Well, the reason I mentioned this about the book on educational psychology is that it went on to say, "How can it be then, since the experiments demonstrate this, that a few years ago, it was universally thought that the experiments proved the exact opposite?" And it said that the reason is that forty years ago, everybody studied Latin and Greek; and the theory of education was that you would get a general discipline of your mind by studying these languages, something that would train you for work in any field; and then people came around who hated these languages, and wanted to change their education and make it more practical; and they were so convinced that this whole business of general discipline was valueless, that every study that they looked at, they came to that conclusion, even though we now know that 95% proved the exact opposite of what they derived from it. But I thought that was a mighty interesting example of how it is possible for good scientists, with a prejudice, to utterly misinterpret the experiment; and you can come to conclusions which, when you get a little further engaged, are proven to be utterly wrong.

I would not say that there might not be something in what Jacob did which we might not find sometime had some thing relating to it, but I do not think that we are in a position to say that that is necessarily the case; and I am inclined to think that it is not. Because the Scripture doesn't say that God revealed any facts of science to Jacob; nor is there anything to indicate that this is a well-known thing at the time, or Laban certainly would have been on to it. Certainly the whole suggestion is that Jacob did something that he thought would have an effect, and there was an effect. But what Genesis tells about it later is that God did it; and I don't think we have to say that this was a result of Jacob's doing that, any more than Moses lifted up his rod and made the waters part.

And God took Jacob here at Peniel and changed his life around. At Peniel, the name of which means the "face of God," Jacob saw God. Not because Jacob was looking for God then. There are individuals that are looking for God; and God may in his wonderful mercy permit them to see him. He may give them an experience of himself; but Jacob at this time was not so much looking for God as he was looking for a way to escape Esau. That was the time when in the midst of his fear, God entered in and changed his life. Fear never converts anybody, but fear may put a person in a situation where he is willing to look in

God's direction. You hear stories of men who were on rafts in the sea and in danger of their lives and would turn to God and were marvelously saved; and you hear of other stories of men who were on rafts in the sea and made all kinds of vows as to how entirely different their lives would be if they ever escape. Then they escape and are rescued, and their lives a week after they were rescued were exactly the same as they were before. Fear doesn't convert them, but fear makes people ready to look in the direction in which God will look at them; and Jacob was fearful and God met him; but it was God's initiative. God turns Jacob's life around, and God led Jacob, and at the end of Jacob's life he said to Pharaoh, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been."

Many people think of this Peniel event as Jacob's conversion. Whether this is his actual conversion; or whether it is a great spiritual experience in the life of one who actually was converted before this time, but who was to quite an extent in a backslidden state we cannot determine; but at least we do have this strange experience at Penuel, or Peniel. (Both of these terms are used in the Scripture; in fact, used in succeeding verses: And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.) This is strange; where after he had left Laban, and went on, and now he hears that Esau is coming with large forces; and he expected an attack; and he worked out a clever scheme to try to lessen the force of the attack; and then a man wrestled with him at night there; and we read that they wrestled until the break of the day and the man said, "Let me go. The day breaketh." And he said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." And it is not very fully explained exactly what it was that happened. Jacob was alone. He had this experience at night. Was it entirely a spiritual experience, or was it specifically in some regards a physical experience? Whatever it was, we find that it resulted in the change of his name: "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and has prevailed." And He blessed him there.

We find a reference to this in Hosea 12:4–5. There we find a little more explanation of it:

Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us; 5 Even the Lord God of hosts; the Lord is his memorial.

And so Jacob had power with God, and God transformed Jacob into Israel. With all his faults, with all his wrong qualities, he had that in him that which the ordinary person could not see, but which God had put there; and God made him a successor in the line from Abraham, the line through which the chosen people came and through which the oracles of God were given.

Now after Peniel, then Jacob came on to Shechem; and there he had experiences with his sons in which the wickedness which had shown itself in Jacob's grasping youth, now showed itself in his sons in their grasping youth. And then we have his grief over Joseph; so the end of his life was filled with sorrow. God turned him to Himself. God made him a vital part of the progress of God's plan of redemption and the preparation for Christ, the vital link between Abraham and Christ. He gave him a very important place in God's redemption plan; but the end of his life was not happy. That is, the part up to near the end; the latter part of his life was not happy because of his tremendous grief over Joseph. God gave Jacob material blessings, but he did not give him true happiness except during a very brief portion at the end of his life. He was one whom God used, one to whom God gave a great place in His kingdom; one whom God used as an instrument to show us a great deal about how God deals with him.

But the actual joy of Jacob was largely confined to the very end of his life, when he was too weak to appreciate it to the full. This terrible grief over Joseph was the thing that Jacob could not control in any way. Jacob had striven to get the spiritual values. He tried to seize the birthright and to seize the blessing—which God had already said would come to him, and which were intended for him. There was nothing he could do about it, but he tried to seize them in his youth. But now he finds that in spite of everything he could do, that which meant most for happiness was simply taken from him when his sons turned against Joseph and sold him into slavery.

And so the greatest pleasures and the greatest joys of life simply cannot be received by our striving; they must be given by God's grace, by God's providence, by God's blessing. God wants us to strive; and he wants us to struggle; and he wants us to work hard; but he wants us to do it in order to advance his kingdom, and in order to advance his purposes, not to advance our own projects and to secure us our own spiritual values, but to advance our own service to him; then he will give us the spiritual joy at such time as it suits his plan to give them to us, whether in this life or in the future.

=====

(Review) We have been discussing the history of Jacob, and we had mentioned Peniel just at the end of the hour. We noticed that at Shechem he buried the false gods that any of his party had. There is no reason, of course, to think that he had ever shown any worship or adoration of any false gods. Up to this time he had not insisted on bringing his whole company into conformity as he did now. Then, of course, in the character of Jacob, there is quite a picture of his terrific grief over Joseph. One must tremendously sympathize with him in his feeling of the death of Joseph; and at the same time one must recognize this

great partiality shown to Joseph and to Benjamin; that while his love of Joseph was a fine characteristic, yet here was perhaps a flaw in it, his partiality as over against his other children.

The latter part of his life it would seem as if he did a good bit of meditating upon the Word and upon God's will for him, because we find him having this definite revelation from God that he is to go down to Egypt, not to fear; and then, when he is down there, we find in Genesis 48:15 that he looks back over his life; and he finds all these experiences through which he has passed, and he makes the statement, "The Lord has shepherded me." He says,

God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long

The word used for "feed" there is the word *ra'ah*, the Hebrew "shepherd". The Lord is my shepherd is not an exact rendering, of course, of it. Shepherding has as a large element of it feeding, but it means much more than that. It is caring for him, directing him, watching over him all his life.

3. The Prophecies of Genesis 49.

And then at the end of his life, the Lord permitted Jacob to give those prophecies in Chapter 49; and that is a very interesting chapter; from the viewpoint of Hebrew language, it is the hardest chapter in the book of Genesis.

If you want to take the book of Genesis for first year Hebrew and read it straight through, you will find very few parts of it that are particularly difficult for the last semester of first year Hebrew; but when you come to this portion, it is much harder reading, because there is less context. It jumps around, and it has a larger vocabulary, and this poetic language. It is quite difficult to interpret, as he takes up each of the sons, and in these very poetic ways describes the various things which are to happen to them in the future.

Now this chapter is one of the hardest things in the book of Genesis fully to understand; and one of the reasons for difficulty in understanding chapter 49 is that here, as very frequently elsewhere in the Scripture, we find that a prophecy is given without our being told about the fulfillment of it.

The blessing that God gave through the Patriarchs was a glimpse of something that was going to happen to them or to their descendents. And so God permitted these different Patriarchs at times to tell something of how God was going to lead; and what God was going to do in the lives of their children; and here Jacob starts telling about his sons; and you might think that he was going to deal with their immediate lives. But then, as the English has said, "I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days." And this leads most

interpreters to jump from one extreme to the other; instead of dealing with the sons by themselves, they think he is telling of what is going to happen 3000 years later; and they think that everything here mentioned must relate to the very end of the human race; and they find that there are one or two predictions that relate to Christ; and so they think that they must come at the time of Christ and afterwards; and then they get into all kinds of difficulty in trying to determine what is meant by these different predictions.

I saw a thesis once presented in another seminary, in which the man who wrote the thesis took this chapter for his subject for an M.A. thesis; and he started in and went through many different theories people had advanced in interpretations; and tried to show how they differed from one another, and his conclusion was we don't know what any one of them means; you never know what prophecy means anyway. If it tells something about Christ, and the NT says it is fulfilled, that's that; but if it doesn't, it is just a statement that had no bearing upon it. Well, that is just throwing up your hands and saying that we can't do anything with it. And if you give me a textbook on advanced electronics to read, it would perhaps be wise for me to throw up my hands and say I can't do anything with it. But if I really want to do something with it, the thing to do is to take the more elementary sections, and go through them and learn the principles.

And the same thing is true of prophecy. It is very easy for people to take some difficult advanced prophetic statement and try to interpret it; and they get into all kinds of trouble; and then when you compare what they have done and you say, "Look here you can't know anything about it." Well, that is true, if you started just into the advanced parts without taking up the preliminary material. There are many people who have studied difficult prophecies of the Scripture. There are very few who have tried to study the easy parts of the prophetic discourse. To a large extent they are left by the side and neglected.

The fact is, if you are going to understand the difficult portions, you must have studied the simpler portions. You must take the easy things and get the principles. You must learn the way of God's dealing in the easier things, and then go from that into the more complicated things. And you get the principles where it is clear how they were dealt with. Very few students of the prophetic books bother to pay much attention to the account of Elijah and Elisha. And yet you have in Elijah and Elisha, and in the historical books, the historical situations where the prophet makes a statement and something happens, and you can see the whole situation. In the prophetic books, you know just what was said, but you don't have much about the situation; you don't know anything about what happened later; and if you don't understand it, there is a great deal that you simply don't have the full facts for; you can infer a good deal, if you know what happens in the cases where you do have the whole story. And so in

Elijah and Elisha, and the historical books are in my opinion, the correct place to begin the study of the prophetic books of the OT

Now in this particular case here, those words "in the last days" are very misleading. They are an English translation—a literal translation of the Greek translation—but I doubt if the Greek translation here is a very exact translation. The Hebrew, I think, translated, is very well rendered "after a time," "after a while," "that which comes beyond the days." Now that might mean two or three weeks have passed, and then after that something will happen; it may mean two or three years will have passed and then after that; it may mean two or three centuries; and it may mean two or three millennia, but the emphasis is on passage of time and then it comes.

And if you interpret it that way, it is perfectly simple to see that what is said here is something of the future history of these tribes beginning after a time; and often here, the "after a while," is after they left Egypt and went back up into Palestine; and you find there are a good many of the predictions here that can be found literally fulfilled in the recent work in Palestine; and I feel that a great many more were literally fulfilled at that time, if we knew the whole history of events during that period; but of course, we don't. A lot of predictions here were very important for the tribes during that period, but the fulfillment has not been recorded in the Scripture—the entire fulfillment of it.

A very interesting case is verse 5: "Simeon and Levi are brethren," and then he tells what was wrong about them; and then he goes on to tell what is going to happen to them. "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." And you find that the tribe of Simeon, when they went into Palestine, was given the extreme southern end of the territory; but before long they disappeared—they disappeared as a tribe. "They were divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel." The curse then upon the people of Simeon was a fulfillment of that right here. But he says here upon both Simeon and Levi; they are both given a curse. But in the case of Levi, in the wilderness when the people turned against God, the Levites stood with Moses; and they stood for God in the wilderness against all their brethren; and the curse was fulfilled in the Levites having the special position of being the priests throughout the land. The Levites were similarly divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel. Simeon was given a tribal area in the beginning. Levi's tribe was scattered, but they were scattered for blessing, blessing to them and blessing to the people around them. They were scattered as God's representatives all through the land. Their towns were scattered here and there, but there carrying on as servants of God and representing Him.

And so the exact statement here was a curse for one and a blessing to the other. It was a statement which was given as a rebuke and as a curse for the wickedness of the two men, but as it was carried out, the descendents of Levi

followed God and the curse was turned into a blessing. And no one can ever say, "I can't help myself because of my heredity, because of the unfortunate situation I am in. There is nothing I can do." No one can ever say that. The situation can be turned into a blessing if one truly turns to God.

There are various places in Jeremiah and Isaiah where some critical scholars say the prophet made a false prophecy. He declared that this is going to happen and it didn't happen; and their knowledge that it didn't happen rests upon the fact we have no statement of its happening; but even if the Bible were strictly a human book, it is hardly likely that Jeremiah would predict something that was to take place five years later or ten years later; and then that after that time, his book would be widely distributed, and that they would include in the book passages which predicted things as certain to happen, and then those things didn't happen at all. It would be too simple a thing, just in editing, to have left out those sections if it were a purely human book.

Now, of course, we do not believe it is just a human book. We believe it is a divine book. But whether you take it as human or divine—in either case—it would not contain predictions by the prophet of something going to happen in his lifetime, if it happened, before the book was actually distributed much, and it would simply be included as a prediction, and nothing more said. That is simply unthinkable in it as a human production. And as a divine production, we know, of course, the prophecy is given to the prophet for truth, and so from either viewpoint you would have to say that when Jeremiah or Isaiah declared that something is going to happen within the next few years, before his book was entirely written, or before it was distributed much, you can be quite sure that that event did happen; and so it is certainly sufficient evidence that the Lord does not always tell us about the fulfillment of predictions. When He tells us of a prophet's word, sometimes—in fact, quite a number of times—the prophet declares that something is going to happen in the near future, or in the distant future; and it is not necessary for God's purpose in the Bible to give us the full explanation or the details on how that particular prediction was fulfilled.

=====

(Review) Now, we take up this prediction, this prophecy here, Genesis 49. You will find, that there are a number of the predictions which it is very easy for us to see how they were fulfilled. We don't want to go into detail on this now; that belongs in the Prophets course rather than in this course, but I just want to bring out just a few main principles of interpretation of it. There are quite a few of them, or several of them at least. It is very clear how they were fulfilled.

Take verse 5. "Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations." Why was that? He said that, of course, because of the way in which Simeon and Levi had treated the people of Shechem, had made this alliance

with them and then had killed them; and Jacob was very incensed at them when they did it, and he said, "You arouse the enmity and hatred of all the land against us." And so here he gives his curse upon Simeon and Levi: for that He says,

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. 7 Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel:

Now up to this, it is all general rebuke to Simeon and Levi. Then he says,

I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

And it sounds like a punishment upon Simeon and Levi for the wicked deeds which have been done and the prophecy is literally fulfilled about both of them.

How is it fulfilled about Simeon? If you look on any map that shows the tribal boundaries—in the back of most Bibles you will find a map that shows the tribal boundaries—as the tribes were distributed under Joshua and you will find, that Simeon is way in the south. As you look through the history, you don't find anything about events in the tribe of Simeon in the south; and when the kingdom is divided, Rehoboam has only the tribes of Judah and part of Benjamin in the south and Simeon is not mentioned there; while you are told that ten tribes are in the hands of Jeroboam; and so it is quite clear that the tribe of Simeon, though they had this territory, this borderland territory on the edge of the desert, where there were Nomad tribes and danger from the Egyptians and the Persians, they did not stay there. The people drifted away from it and were scattered in Israel.

I don't think there is any doubt whatever, historically, that that is what happened to Simeon. There was thus fulfilled in Palestine, in the time of the Israelites in Palestine, the prediction which he made here about Simeon, a prediction which was a punishment upon the nation for the actions of its ancestor.

Well now, here is Levi, and you would expect the same thing to happen to Levi and it undoubtedly would have happened if it were not for the fact that in the wilderness when the people turned away from God and made the golden calf, the tribe of Levi stood with Moses; and they stood when Moses called, "Who is on the Lord's side?" They came to him, and they stood with him; and he used them as his representatives in carrying out the Lord's will in relation to the rest of them; and then the tribe of Levi was given a special blessing. And so on account of the fidelity and loyalty of the people to God they were given a blessing.

And thus no one has any right to say that I am cursed for the wickedness of my ancestors. We are placed in difficult situations on account of their wickedness, yes, but if we are truly loyal to God, the curse can be turned into a blessing; and that is what happened in the case of Levi. And so the tribe of Levi was told that God would set them apart for His own glory; He would give them a special place with Himself; and instead of their being scattered as Simeon was by simply finding the place they were was unsatisfactory to live in, and drifting through the rest of the land; instead of that, they were deliberately placed all through the land; and the Levites are given cities of their own all through the land and they are appointed God's representatives in the different sections of the land; and so the Levites are the people who got the message of God to the others all over the land; and they had a very special place in connection with the worship of God; but they were scattered, and that which was a curse originally is thus literally fulfilled upon Simeon and upon Levi, but in the case of Levi it is changed into a blessing instead, of being a curse.

Well, now after going through the tribes in order like that, the order of birth, after Simeon and Levi they come to Judah. Here the statements given about Judah certainly refer to two things. They refer to David, a son of Judah, who becomes a great king; and that, of course, does not come until long after this time; but it is here definitely predicted; and then, of course, the prophecy of Judah also, the prophecy of David, naturally includes the prophecy of David's greater son; and so it is surely a Messianic prophecy, a Messianic prophecy which includes David and the promise is to David as David's greater son.

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be,

until Christ Himself should come.

The scepter came to Judah when David took it; and the control, the leadership belonged in the House of David until the One came who truly possesses the leadership and from whom it shall never depart. And so here is a wonderful prediction for Judah.

And then Jacob departs from the normal order; and Zebulun, whom you would think would be placed much later in the list, is placed right next, out of his normal order; and some think that that is done because of the fact that Christ, though born of the tribe of Judah, was brought up in the land of Zebulun. Now that may be rather of a jump. I don't think we should be dogmatic about it. But it is interesting to note that they go through in normal order except for this one who is out of order in this way.

At any rate we have here these definite predictions about Simeon, which we know how it was fulfilled; the definite predictions as to Levi; the definite predictions about Judah. I at one time was Assistant Professor of Old Testament; and the Professor of Old Testament then had a man writing a thesis for him on the study of Genesis 49; and it happened that the Professor was out of town for a week, and so the student came to me, and asked if I would look it over and see if I could make any suggestions, so it would be ready when the Professor returned to town. In other words, to satisfy the professor, to get a general idea of it and help on minor points, if it is all right that I should do that.

But I was interested to see the direction in which the professor had led him in his interpretation of this chapter, and the method which he had used for it. He went through these predictions, one after another; and he took the predictions, and he tried to show that you couldn't find anything in history with most of them that showed how it has actually been fulfilled; and that the people who think they are still future have disagreements as to what these predictions about the different tribes mean; just how they are to be fulfilled we can't be sure, and therefore his conclusion was that prophecy, after all, is not a literal matter, but a matter of presentation of great spiritual truths; and the purpose of the chapter simply is to show that God's blessing is to be upon the Church and that there is nothing specifically literal which we are to seek for in the interpretation of the chapter.

Now, of course, that is a method which is found in certain circles of interpreting prophecy, which tries to reduce practically all prophecy simply to a general matter of saying, God is a great God and gives great blessings; and there are many enemies, but God will deliver His Church from them; and you can express the meaning of all prophecy in about six sentences that way; and it does away in most cases with any specific literal meaning of prophecy.

I think that is an utterly wrong approach toward interpretation of prophecy. If you are going to use that with prophecy you ought to use it with theology, too, as the modernists do; and if you are going to use it with theology and with prophecy, or with doctrine, you might as well give up the Bible and get your ideas themselves from observation; and then do as so many, many preachers do, look for a text upon which you can hang the idea you have in mind.

I remember some years ago—maybe I have mentioned it to you—going to a great church where a great Christian preacher was preaching; he was a real gospel man, but one who—at least in that instance—instead of studying the Word and saying, "What does the Word teach? Let's get my ideas from the Word and then go out and present them," went to the Word saying, "Here's something I want to get across. Where can I find a text to hang it on?" And so he gave a sermon on the power of saying "No." And it was a wonderful sermon, and after hearing that sermon you would feel that it is mighty important when

temptations come to you, if there is any difficulty or anything that would lead you astray, that it is very important for you, instead of going after it, to stay on what you think is right and saying, "No, I will not follow it."

I thought the sermon was very good, but it would have been much better if he had said, "I am going to give you a sermon on the power of saying "No" and left the Bible out of it. It was a good ethical sermon. I think if [Harry Emerson] Fosdick had preached the sermon, it would have been very helpful to his congregation, as I am sure many of his good ethical sermons have been; but this was a sermon by a man who was a true believer in the gospel, who ordinarily preached the gospel; even so, I don't think there was anything wrong with the sermon; I think it was a good sermon; but I think that actually the sermon would do more harm than good because of the fact that he tied it up with a text that had no connection with it. And that is doing despite⁷⁰ to the Word of God.

Here is the text which he used for it. It is in Judges 4; and we read how Sisera fled when Deborah and Barak defeated his forces; his army was annihilated, and he fled down to the valley there; and he came to the house of Jael, the wife of Heber; and he came in there, and she was afraid of him; and so she pretended to do whatever he wanted, and he said to her, "Stand in the door of the tent," (verse 20 tells us, of chapter 4) "and it shall be that when any man doth come and enquire of thee and say, 'Is there any man here?'—I can still hear his wonderful voice yelling that out—Thou shalt say 'No!' " and then he gives this wonderful sermon on the power of saying "No."

Well, the text is certainly about a wicked man fleeing, from the righteous vengeance of God's people, telling a woman to tell a lie in order to protect him from his just deserts; and to take a verse like that and upon those words, "Thou shalt say unto him, 'No!'," to hang a beautiful exhortation on the power to say "No".... The sermon was good; it would do good; but that sermon tied to this text would create in people's minds the inevitable impression—if they read the context at all—that the Bible is just a collection of words which you can take a few words out of anywhere and hang an idea upon them without any relation to context; and to my mind the spreading of faith in God's Word—that it isn't what we think that matters, but what does God say—is far more important than any ethical exhortation we may give, no matter how strongly we may give it; or even, I must say, the presentation of some great doctrinal matter that is clearly taught in the Word of God.

⁷⁰ [dcb] Do despite = insult. Hebrews 10:29 "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

If you present a doctrine that is clearly taught in the Word of God, use for your stating point a text that teaches that doctrine. Don't take a text that teaches some other doctrine, or that has no connection with that doctrine, and then hang that doctrine on it. You are destroying people's faith in the Word.

And I think the same thing applies to prophecy. To take prophecies and to insist that the literal terms don't matter—that it is just great spiritual truths that you could know just as well if you didn't have any of these prophecies—is a method according to which these prophecies might just as well not be in the Bible at all. It is doing despite to the Word of God.

There is much in the prophecies that we do not understand, just as there is much in the doctrines that we do not fully understand. The Bible is an infinite book and it contains a great deal that we do not have the full facts or material to understand entirely. It contains many teachings that will be tremendously helpful in one period or another of the earth's history; and when you get to that particular situation, and you read that Scripture in the light of the situation, you just see how it fits and applies to the situation; and God gives you direction and leading and understanding from that passage which perhaps is hard for you to understand when you are not in a situation somewhat comparable to it. All of it is valuable. It is all valuable for all Christians, but sections of it are more helpful at one time than at another time; but every bit of it has a meaning, and whatever meaning we can get, we should stand on; and when we can't understand what the particular meaning of a thing is, we should say, "Well, here is a thing that I only see this far into. I do not see further down into it. Perhaps I will later. Perhaps, with further study of it, it will be particularly helpful in some situation which I may come to later in life, or which the Church may come into in some other generation; but it has a truth there; it has a meaning, or it wouldn't be in the Bible." It isn't just a presentation of great spiritual truths that you can already get from somewhere else and don't need that portion.

Every portion of the Scripture is there for a real purpose, and has a definite meaning. And in connection with this chapter here, I personally am quite convinced that this chapter 49 is dealing mostly with the history of the tribes in Palestine. My own impression is that, while there may be something in the chapter that deals with events today; while there may be some things in the chapter that deal with events that are still future; it is my personal belief that very little of the chapter falls into categories such as that. It is my personal opinion that Jacob here is telling his sons what is going to be the future of the tribes during the period between the conquest of Palestine and the exile; that is, that most of it falls into that period; and when you get into the books of Kings, and Samuel, and Chronicles, and Judges, most of what you have there deals with the kingdom as a whole; or it deals particularly with God's relationship with the kings and with the kingdom; it doesn't give us a great deal of specific history of the tribes in their particular local situation, though there

must have been a great deal of that which occurred. There must have been all sorts of events there in which God was active, and which were important in the history of the nation, which God did not include in the history that is given here; and it is my personal opinion that if we had been present there during those years, those generations when the tribes were there in Palestine, it would have been easy for us at point after point to say. "Just look how literally this particular prediction about Reuben or about Gad or Naphtali or Asher or some one of these is fulfilled. Just see how exactly we see here the fulfillment of that which was given."

I think it had a great value for the people in that day, to see these situations and say, "Look here, what God predicted to our father Jacob we see now has come to pass." Should we not then trust this God who could predict the future in this way? Should we not study His Word then to gain other truth from it that is vital for us? Should we not know that what the prophets today are telling us as they speak in the Word of God is just as certain to be fulfilled as we see these things that are fulfilled around us which are predicted by the Lord through Jacob in those times long ago? I think it had a great value and a great purpose for the people during that period; and while there are parts of it which are especially interesting and especially valuable to us today, it is my opinion the main purpose in most of the chapter was for that period, and that it had a very real purpose during those centuries.

And personally, I think that just as much as when Jeremiah said, "The king Jehoiakim is going to be cast out with the burial of an ass." And when we read that Jeremiah said that, and Jeremiah predicts during the reign of Jehoiakim, and during the reign of his brother Zedekiah eleven years later; and after the death of Zedekiah—sometime after that—the Book of Jeremiah is completed, and as a whole is distributed; and in that book, to think that Jeremiah would have included in that book the prediction that Jehoiakim would not be buried, but would be cast outside the wall with the burial of an ass when it wasn't true, but he received a beautiful state burial and was buried in the tombs of the kings is absolutely unthinkable. We are nowhere told that anything bad happened at the death of Jehoiakim. We are just not told. We are simply told he died. That is all we are told. We are not told the details of it, but we do have Jeremiah's prediction four years before.

And then we have many other predictions made a few years later about Zedekiah, contained in the Book of Jeremiah; and either Jeremiah was a false prophet—and not only a false prophet but a pretty stupid man to include in his book definite predictions which everybody knew hadn't come to pass—either that is true, or else those specific predictions about Jehoiakim were fulfilled; and if we have in that and other cases specific predictions made and we can be sure they were fulfilled even though the Bible doesn't tell us the details of this fulfillment, I think that certainly we are justified in taking the same attitude

toward these various statements about the different tribes. They are given in poetic language. Doubtless you couldn't reconstruct the full situation in advance from it, but I feel that is the place you would see—there is Asher, there is Naphtali, there is Gad, there is Reuben—and the different tribes experienced just exactly what our father Jacob said would come to pass.

What a wonderful book this Bible is! And what a wonderful God who made these predictions and had them come to pass in that way. But certainly the great purpose of prediction is not to satisfy our curiosity and to enable us to know just what is going to happen as the things happen in different events, but a great purpose of it is to enable us to see added proof that God is indeed the God of the universe; and that God has spoken in the past, and that we should take heed to the words which God speaks now, and which find anywhere in His Word.

Now let's go on to

E. Joseph.

1. General outline of the material aspects of his life.

Most of you are very familiar with the life of Joseph, probably more than with any other character in Scripture. If you are not, you can easily gain such a familiarity from reading these chapters; for the main events are very clear and very simple. As you know, he was favored by his father. He was the favorite son, and it is strange indeed that one who was so favored as Joseph was, and so obviously favored by his father, does not seem to have been spoiled. At least we find such very splendid characteristics of him that it is difficult to find any sign of his having been spoiled at all.

There are those that would think that there is such evidence in his dreams, but I think that this is a misinterpretation of the dreams. In the dreams he sees himself as supreme and the others bowing down to him. Well, that is the situation that he was in. That is the way his father treated him. But he does not interpret the dreams himself here; it is the others who interpret the dreams. The first dream where they were binding sheaves in the field, and "lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf." Now the brothers interpreted it and said, "Shalt thou indeed reign over us? Or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words". But he hadn't said he was going to reign over them. He had a dream, and he had a vision of that which was going to happen in the future; and indeed they did bow down. The Scripture says that they were from the Lord, and so you know that they were from Him.

Abraham Lincoln—they say with authority—many times during his life as president dreamt the same dream. He would see a ship coming along, and he would dream that he saw this sailboat, beautiful sails flapping in the wind as it was coming along; and the next morning he would come down and tell his dream at the breakfast table; and a little later a courier would come in, and would say that there has just been a big battle; and a certain great crisis had occurred; and these dreams seemed to come just before he got news of an important crisis. And then they say that one night he dreamt, and the next morning he would say he had the dream of the ship again; and he said that he hadn't had it for awhile; and this time the ship came into port and landed. And that night he was assassinated.

Now that is told in Lincoln's biography. There are people who have dreams which seem to tell something of the future. There are people who have feelings and impulses that give them some ideas. They are the result of the experience that you have been having, and I think that for most of us, the less attention that we pay to dreams, the better. But at this time, the Scripture was not yet written, and God dealt with those people in particular ways in which it is not necessary that he deal with us. We have the Scripture, and it is God's desire that we study the Scripture and learn his principles, and that we apply those principles and follow them. And therefore, the element of supernatural intervention is at an extreme minimum in our lives, because it is God's will that we should learn to follow Him simply with our eyes, as he tells us in the Psalm. If He can lead us with His eye, we are so filled with His word, we understand the principles so much that we act in accordance with His will. But those people didn't have the full Scripture. At the time of Joseph, they had very little of it; and at various crises, God intervened in marvelous wonderful ways and particularly in those days as he was preparing the way for the coming of the Son, and seeing the beginning of the outreach of the gospel in the world.

I would not say, personally, that God might not in any particular situation intervene in a similar remarkable way today. I would not say that it would not happen; but I would venture to say that it is an extremely unlikely thing. I think that if you have a strange dream that you are doing the right thing rather than the wrong, I would be extremely skeptical about its having any particular meaning. I would think rather of the experiences that you had, which have been combined in some peculiar psychic way, in order to give you that particular experience—or to check up on what you have been eating, and see if that might not have some relation to it. But in the case of these men, undoubtedly God gave them dreams which gave them visions of the future.

Now we have that story of A. Lincoln; I would not say that it was similarly a somewhat psychic experience that he had; there are other similar stories; but I think that it is in a different area from this sort of thing with Joseph. Here, it was a definite divine intervention. In our cases we have no right to expect such

divine intervention. We have the words, and God is far more interested in our studying the Word and applying it than in any particular specific thing that we do that might require a divine intervention on His part.

But here he did give Joseph these two dreams; and they were fulfilled in the main—that is, the basic idea of them was fulfilled. He had rule over them; he had the rule of Egypt; and they were mighty glad to have his dominion over them, protecting them from the famine. But some people interpret this simply as a picture of the conceit of Joseph; and I don't think that conceit would have been at all unnatural or strange in this situation; but I don't think that they are an evidence of conceit, in view of the other characteristics of Joseph, which we are shown in the history. I don't think that these dreams show conceit, but I do think that God did give this dream in order that they could later look back and see how God had his hand in the whole thing and directed the results.

In the second dream he said, "Behold I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me." And he told it to his father and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, "What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" The first one just had the brothers in it. But now this one has the sun and the moon in it. "His brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying." His father wondered, can there be something to this? Well, now was this dream literally fulfilled, his father and his mother and his eleven brothers, as the eleven stars?

Well, his father and his brothers bowed to him in Egypt; all eleven of them lived to that time when they went to Egypt. His own mother, Rachel, died in Palestine. Leah was the head wife of the family. When she died we don't know. Whether it was there in Palestine or in Egypt, we don't know. But at least his own physical mother did not bow down to him; but it may be that the head of the family and the woman of the head of the family did bow down to him, so we cannot say that this was absolutely fulfilled or not; but the general import of it is very definitely fulfilled. His father and his brethren later did bow down.

His childhood certainly was a favored childhood, and yet I think an unspoiled one; and then the sudden change, when his brethren took him and sold him into Egypt; they sold him to this company of Ishmaelites who came along and took him down into Egypt; and some people find a contradiction in vs. 28; "Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they brought Joseph into Egypt."

Some people say that that is a contradiction, that must show two different documents that have been pieced together; but if the two contradict, what kind of a silly thought it was to try to piece them together; and so they saw some

Germans coming by and so they pulled him out of the pit and they sold him to the Frenchmen. (laughter) Very evidently if it were two documents, and pieced together, the man who pieced together did not think there were any contradictions in the statements—the Midianites and the Ishmaelites. Suppose you say that they looked up and saw some Texans coming by, and they pulled him up out of the pit and sold him to the Americans. There certainly would be no contradiction there. (laughter) Are the Ishmaelites a portion of the Midianites here? Or are the Midianites merchantmen, who were in the Ishmaelite caravans here? So as to the exact situation we simply don't know; but we have no right to say there is any contradiction, because if there were two documents, they were not considered contradictory by the man who put them together into one. The exact situation we do not know. We do not know the full exact meaning of what sort of group was the Midianites, and what sort of group was the Ishmaelites. These names are often used as our word American. What is an American? Well, you go up to Canada and they will say, Oh, there is an American. Well, aren't the Canadians Americans just as much as we are? Isn't Canada a part of America?

Over there in Germany one time I went into a store and a man said to me, "Oh, you are from America, are you? Well, there was a man just here from America, perhaps you know him?" Well, I said, "Perhaps I do. What town is he from?" "Let's see," he said, "Yes, Rio de Janeiro." I could tell him, even without knowing the man's name, that I had never met him. The term America in one sense includes all of South and North America; and in another sense it is used to include only the U.S.A., because our specific name is—as far as I know—the only name of a country that has the word America in it. The United States of America. The rest is the un-united states of America, I suppose.

But the way that these national and racial terms are used, you have to have pretty specific information to say that there is a contradiction. You laughed when I spoke of the Germans coming back, and their selling to the Frenchmen; and yet I ran into some folks in Nebraska and they told me that there was a large group of people out there, and everybody called them the German Russians. Now, they were certainly as much removed from German Russians as one could be. Yet these people there were considered by those people as German Russians. I suppose they were Germans who had lived in Russia for a few generations, and thus had migrated to the U.S. We need to know a great deal more than we know about those times before we can say this is a contradiction. But at any rate, this was a caravan of traveling merchantmen who came by and carried Joseph into slavery; and they sold him down into Egypt; and then in Egypt he is sold as a slave into Potiphar's house; and there in Egypt, by his industry and by his integrity, he rises to a position of trust in the house; and then to the contrary, he finds himself thrown into prison; and there we find the wonderful thing that he does.

Potiphar had purchased him, and then Potiphar put him into the position of master over his house, steward of the house. And when Potiphar is given a false idea of Joseph, he casts him into prison.

Then we have him in prison for a long time. He meets two officers there, does a very fine favor for them; one of them is restored to leadership in Pharaoh's kingdom, and yet he forgets all about Joseph. And so it seems that misfortunes come to him one right after the other; and then one day, as he is there in the prison and it looks as if he is going to spend the rest of his life there, there is a sudden change that takes place; and he is exalted from being a slave who is a prisoner to ruler of Egypt. It all sounds, of course, in a way very fantastic, but it is not at all. It is contrary to what most people experience; but there are individuals who experience remarkable things in their lives every bit as remarkable as this one. It is not the least bit impossible, though very, very strange.

I remember once when I was teaching a course in Babylonian, and I presented a certain dramatic situation. And a student in the class couldn't see any sense to it, "How perfectly ridiculous! How can a language have such a dramatic feature as that?" Well, I didn't know how to show him that it wasn't too ridiculous; but I happened to recall that he, a year or so before, had studied a year of Arabic. And I said, "Well, look here, over in Arabic you have exactly the same sort of thing." And he said, "Oh, yes, of course, well, sure enough it is." And there you have an analogy to Arabic, and that made it easy for him to see the naturalness of the thing in Babylonian. And it is useful to take things familiar to us and use them to make it easy for us to understand things that aren't familiar to us. And so the Lord uses all sorts of types and figures in order to make it easy for us to understand great supernatural things; and certainly there is much in the life of Joseph that is similar to great events in the life of Christ; and the Lord wants us, I believe, to use anything that is a good example, similarity or type of the great spiritual truths that He wants us to present.

But I think it is vital that we distinguish between a type and a teaching. If God says this is so, that proves it; that is that way. Now, a type is not a proof that something is so, but is an illustration. You cannot prove anything by an analogy, but you can illustrate something by an analogy. The fact that that a grammatical situation existed in Arabic didn't prove that it did in Babylonian—not at all—but if anything illustrated it, that made it easy to understand; and if you find something in the Old Testament or anywhere else, that is similar to something in God's spiritual economy—similar to something in the life of Christ—it may be used as an illustration, or a type and is very valuable that way, so long as we use it as something to illustrate and you do not try to prove anything by it, because you cannot prove anything by a type.

Now, it may be easier for us to understand Christ's humiliation—He who left the joys of heaven to come down to us to life on earth—by thinking of Joseph who, on a much smaller scale, not by his own intention, but because God did it, left the place of preference in his family and was sent as a slave down into Egypt. It is a little easier to understand it perhaps as an illustration; and easier to understand Christ's exaltation by understanding something of the exaltation of Joseph. And so many events in the life of Joseph, I think are helpful.

But then when somebody says, "Well, Joseph married a Gentile wife; and that is a type of Christ and the church." I think that is carrying things to absurdity. That is a purely accidental similarity, I would say. I think that the most important thing to remember about types is that they are illustrations and only illustrations and do not in themselves prove anything. I think that if we remember that, we do not need to fear about going too far or not far enough; because after all the vital thing is, what is the teaching, not what is the type? The type merely helps to illustrate. But if you take the attitude that you prove something by the type, once you get that attitude, why then there isn't a type anywhere that is exactly like Christ or exactly like the spiritual teaching God wants to give us; and therefore if you take the type as proving something no matter how careful you are in the use of types, you are in danger of getting off into terrible absurdities and false teachings.

In our Egyptian records, we have evidence that it was customary in the homes of the great nobles to do that very thing—for a slave to be put in a position like this, to take a slave who seemed a bright and intelligent and reliable leader and make him overseer over the rest. This was an actual position: head over the house was a regular position in the homes of the Egyptian nobles. We have evidence of that in their tombs and pictures of their lives and their dealings with their people, and so we know that that is quite in line with the general Egyptian background of them.

And then there are many details of his life in Egypt which are very different from the general situation in Palestine. Naturally there would be the life of a settled community of the type of Egypt; and a community which depended on the river rather than on rainfall; and a community that has such great material prosperity—far beyond anything that Palestine ever had. And so it is interesting to note many little details of the background and the source, some of them such comparatively small things as the fact that the men in the prison, when they had a dream, they were tremendously interested, wondering what the dreams meant.

Well, you might say you find that often in any land, people wonder what dreams mean. That is true; but it is interesting that in Egypt, you have many records of instances where people had dreams and wondered what they meant. It was quite a common attitude in Egypt. In many other lands the attitude is to laugh

at it. It sounds silly, to draw something from your dreams; but in Egypt, they rather expected a dream to have a meaning; and so we find that the chief of the bakers and the chief of the butlers were troubled about their dreams; they wonder what they mean; doubtless the Egyptians, like all other people, had all sorts of dreams that came to them on account of what they had eaten the night before; or they hadn't had enough exercise, or something. But in this particular case, we know the Lord had given them a dream, for a purpose, in order to give an opportunity to set Joseph apart by enabling him to give the correct statement as to would happen in the future to these two men.

Now when the Pharaoh made Joseph head over the nation, we might say, "That's very strange! The Egyptians hated foreigners so. How very strange that they would take one and make him head over the whole nation, who was a foreigner like this." Well, it so happens this was not the only time this was done. We have some records of other Pharaohs who did the very same thing—who took a foreigner whom they thought they could trust; and who, of course, being a foreigner, was dependent on them. He couldn't rebel against the Pharaoh, if he should want to do so; and so there are various instances where a foreigner has thus been the Prime Minister of Egypt; and in fact, that position of Prime Minister is one which you find quite commonly in Egypt, but it is more apt to be in later periods after this, which would perhaps be rather natural.

Now, in Egypt there is a story of the two brothers—which is quite an interesting story—and you will find in many books the statement that the Egyptian story of the two brothers is the origin of the Biblical story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife; and in books on archaeology, or books on the relation of the Bible to archaeology, they will give you the first third or half of the story quoted and translated; and then, as you read that quotation from this story, you see how very similar it is to the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife; and they say, "There's where the story of Joseph comes from; there is the origin of it," and of course you see the implication that it never happened. It is just an Egyptian story which some Hebrew got ahold of and he made up the story of Joseph out of it.

Well, I think it would be much more helpful if they would print the story as a whole, instead of just the first part of it. You'd get a truer idea of the story. Sometimes I have read the story to the class. The Egyptian flavoring is interesting even in translation, but I don't have a copy of it here this morning. I will just give you a brief summary of it.

In the story, there are two brothers; and these two brothers lived in Egypt; and one of them had a wife, there; and the younger brother works for the older brother; and the two of them go out and they work in the field; and the older brother tells the younger brother what to do; and the younger brother does it; and the cattle talk to the younger brother, and they tell him where the best

pasture land is; and he can understand the cattle, so he is able to do many things for them; and he is very strong. He takes great big loads of grain, and carries them on his shoulder. He is of wonderful service to his older brother.

And then the story tells how one day they are out in the field, and there is something they need that is in the house; and the older brother says to the younger brother, "Go back to the house and get me this and bring it up." So he goes to the house; and when he gets there, the story tells how he finds his brother's wife there in the house; and she sees him, and says to him, "Say," she says, "you are very handsome." And she says, "Don't rush right out to the field." she says, "Come here and lie with me, and I will do all sorts of things for you. I'll make you pretty clothes to wear and everything if you will just do this." And he turns to her, and he becomes as angry as a leopard. And he says, "Why, you are like a mother to me and your husband is like a father to me, and should we do this wicked thing?" And he gives her quite a sound rebuke, and then he gets what he needed and he goes out.

And then she feels so disgusted about it that she takes and tears her clothes, and she dirties up her face; and then she lies there weeping; and the older brother comes home; and he comes to the house; and the lamps aren't lit, and the dishes aren't washed, and everything is confusion; and he comes in and wonders what is the matter; and he finds his wife there weeping, and she has made herself sick; and he sees her there in this situation, and he says, "What is the matter?" and she says, "Your younger brother came in from the field, and he saw me here and he wanted to lie with me." And she says, "I told him that it was awful to think of such a thing—wasn't I like a mother to him and you like a father?" And she says, "He struck me," and she showed the blow on her face where she had hit herself, and she said, "He tore my garments but I fought against him, and so he went off." And so the older brother becomes angry as a leopard; and he immediately goes, and he takes his sword; and he stands behind the door; and he is going to kill the younger brother as soon as he comes in. And then the younger brother comes in, the cattle are ahead and he is leading the cattle; and when the cattle get inside ahead of him, they see the brother standing behind the door; so the cattle speak to the younger brother and they say, "Watch out. Don't come in here. Your brother is behind the door with a sword and he is going to kill you." And so he sees through the crack between the door there; he sees his brother's leg as he stands there; and he turns around and he runs; and the brother runs after him; and the quotation usually stops there. Then they say, "What an exact similarity to the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife. How clear it is that this is the origin of the Biblical story."

Now I think it is too bad that they don't tell the rest of the story, because the rest of the story is so different in general tone from this. There are some strange, grotesque things in the story thus far, but not one fiftieth as much as

from this point on. The brother flees, and the older brother comes up behind him; and he is catching up with him, so the younger brother cries out to the gods to protect him; and immediately a great river springs up between them; and this great river is full of crocodiles; and so the older brother can't possibly swim across the river to get to the younger brother because of all the crocodiles in it; so he stays there until morning. And in the morning, he makes out a way to get across; his younger brother has fled further, but finally, eventually, the younger brother is killed; and his heart is buried, and a tree grows up from it; and somebody eats the fruit of the tree; and all sorts of grotesque and strange things happen; and it finally ends up in the palace of the pharaoh with somebody eating some of the fruit; as you read the rest of the story, it seems like such a sharp, sudden change from this first part, which is after all in general a natural, human story, similar to the events which have happened in every country all over the world at many times, but with a few elements of the unusual and the grotesque in it; and then you get all this tremendous amount of the grotesque added to it afterwards.

It is a story which is found in Egypt from a period quite a little *after* the time of Joseph. It is a folk story which was told among the people of Egypt. Now to think that out of this folk story in Egypt there, some Israelite coming in contact with that story; seeing the situation between the younger brother and the wife of the older brother; should take that idea, and then should make the story of Joseph in Egypt out of it, and thus you get the story of Joseph; and to just take that out of the whole story, is—we won't say impossible, but I should say that it seems much more likely to think that what actually happened is that Joseph was here in Egypt—as the Bible tells us—and had exactly the experience that the Bible describes; and then when Joseph became prime minister of Egypt, naturally people were interested in all the details they could get about his history; and the commentators would tell about the little events that occurred during his life; and the stories of events in his life would be spread by word of mouth through Egypt; and then, after this great prime minister of Egypt had died, and had largely been forgotten—easily enough, because the Hyksos were driven out—but even without that, great men like Joseph are forgotten in all lands, in a period of time; and yet stories about them often linger on; and this story, being spread about through Egypt, could, easily become the center of a folk story into which these grotesque elements would be added; and embellished, it passed from mouth to mouth and eventually, when all connection with Joseph was forgotten, you would have this folk story circulated which had its start in this historical event.

Now, it is altogether possible, of course, that the story of the two brothers had absolutely no connection with Joseph at all; but if it does, it seems to me that this is a more natural and reasonable explanation of it; that it, is a folk story built upon an actual fact, than that this grotesque folk story is the source from which this story of Joseph is built; for the story of Joseph is such an utterly

different type of story than most of that story—even in this first section, with these elements of cattle talking to the younger brother.

The Bible has the supernatural in it. God speaks to people. God performs great things; but the supernatural is always very economically presented in the Bible. It has a definite purpose. It is connected with definite events in the plan of God. The Bible is not a story where we find men who can talk to animals regularly, and all that sort of fantastic thing, that easily gets into folk stories. You have only two places in the Bible at all where animals speak: and in one of those it is very definitely stated that God opens the dumb animal's mouth, and in the other case, of course, we know that Satan spoke through the serpent.

The Bible is not that sort of a book. The Bible is a natural, sane history of events that actually happened—including the occasional, wonderful, supernatural intervention of God in human life—very different from this folk story in Egypt. And yet it is simply told as a fact in many books—here is the origin of the story of Joseph, this story in Egypt. To my mind it is much more reasonable to say, "Here in the life of Joseph is the probable explanation of the origin of this particular folk story in Egypt."

Now I just referred to the Hyksos a minute ago. We have already noticed that the Hyksos reigned in Egypt during the period between the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom; that the Hyksos conquered Egypt on account of their new weapon of war—their secret weapon which gave them a tremendous advantage over the people that they fought against—their use of horses. And with that, the small group of Hyksos was able to conquer the far greater number of Egyptians. Then, as time went on and the Egyptians also got possession of horses and learned how to use them, the time came when they were able to drive the Hyksos out of the land; but they differ from the people of most other lands in that the Egyptians did not put up monuments to celebrate the fact that the Hyksos were driven out. They preferred to forget the fact they had ever been there. They were so ashamed of having ever been under foreign domination.

And so in Egypt, we do not have monuments to the expulsion of the Hyksos, though we have a few places in which the Pharaoh boasts of the fine things which he had done in re-establishing order after the Asiatics had been driven out; but the actual expulsion is not referred to in the great monuments. But in some of the tombs we have the nobles telling us the great events of their lives; they describe how they took a valiant part in some of the battles driving the Hyksos out of the land; and so the facts about the Hyksos have come to light little by little as these details have been gathered.

And so, while I wouldn't say we could be absolutely certain that it was the Hyksos kings that were in Egypt when Joseph came in, it seems very likely that

it was. The Hyksos kings called themselves Pharaohs; they took over the Egyptian customs; they pretended to be the great leaders of Egypt, but actually they were, of course, foreigners; and they had little foreign groups supporting them, in those leading positions; and that, of course, would make it still more natural that Pharaoh would be happy to have Joseph and other Asiatics as the leaders of his kingdom; and it would also explain why he caused the Israelites to go into the land of Goshen, rather than to mix with the Egyptians, for he said every shepherd is an abomination.

Then naturally, later on, when the Hyksos were driven out, this great body of Israelites who had been the guests when the Hyksos came, were now looked upon as a potential menace to the kingdom; and the new king "who knew not Joseph," probably because he was a native Egyptian king, and unrelated to the previous Hyksos kings who had so favored Joseph, he would look with suspicion upon the Hebrew people and desire to put them into a situation where they could not be a menace to this land.

Now Professor T. Eric Peet of the University of Liverpool—who was for about a month professor at Oxford before his death—in his book, *Egypt and the Old Testament*, went through the Old Testament and tried at every possible point to make out there was a mistake in the Bible; and he is particularly good at doing this in connection with Assyria, because he is an Egyptologist and doesn't know so much about Assyria; so when he deals with Assyria and its relation to Egypt, he waxes dogmatic and strong in pointing out how these statements are simply utterly wrong in the Bible; but when he comes to Egypt, he knows Egyptology excellently; he is very well versed in the material, and always puts the "ifs," "ands" and "buts" in. Every time he claims that there is some sort of a mistake in the Biblical account, he will say, for instance, in this story of Joseph, "Oh, it is easy to show how much of the background fits with Egypt. It is easy to show, for instance, that the position of head over the house was one which was actually found in the homes of the great nobles. It is easy to show that when Joseph went to Pharaoh, before going it immediately said he shaved; that that was the custom in Egypt, before going before Pharaoh, one would shave and bathe and do as Joseph did, on leaving the prison; even though Pharaoh was in haste to get him, he had to do this first; and that the ring that Pharaoh gave him, and the special things, were just what a pharaoh would give to one that he delighted to honor."

He goes on and spends about a page noticing all these different things in background which just fit; and he says, "Oh, it is easy to show all this from that, and this from that," and then he ends up, "but the fact we notice at the end, is that after all there is nothing to prove it was in the Hyksos time. It might have been in some other period; and after all, it may have just been made up in Palestine. It might never have been in Egypt." And so he takes this very hostile attitude toward the Scripture; but it is interesting to note the admissions that

are made by a man like that, and he makes many admissions of the possibility of the events.

However, we do find a few places where he raises very serious difficulties. One of these I have mentioned to you before in connection with the earlier period of the history about the camels; he insisted that there were no camels in Egypt till the later Persian empire, and therefore that the Scriptural statement about Abraham having camels in Egypt simply shows it was written by someone who didn't know much about Egypt; and of course, that was a perfectly true statement when he wrote that in 1928, because science had not yet caught up with the Bible in that regard. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1930 edition, says that camels were never in Egypt until the later Persian period, 400 BC But we noticed that we have proof now that camels were in Egypt at this time, even though we didn't know it before; and the Bible is accurate on that point.

Now there are a number of points like that, on which Peet makes statements that represent the knowledge that was available to him—the knowledge of Egyptology—at this time. He would say, "Such a thing is unknown in Egypt, as the Bible suggested; therefore, the Bible is wrong." And in some of these cases, we have since found the Bible was right. There are a few in which we do not yet have the evidence; and that is particularly true in connection with this time of Joseph.

One thing that Peet makes a great deal of is the names of the people that Joseph was connected with in Egypt: the name that was given to Joseph; and the name of his wife; and of the priest whose daughter she was. He says these are types of names which are very common in Egypt several centuries later, but which were unknown at this period; and therefore that shows that the story is not genuine.

Well, of course, the difficulty is that from this particular period we don't have much information. If it is the Hyksos period, we have very little in the way of monuments from it. We don't know what the types of names were in general—except the names of the two pharaohs—and therefore it is pretty hard to be sure that these types of names were in use then. He makes a great deal of his argument, but I don't think it is really a very strong argument. It is an argument from silence; and from a place where we don't have much evidence; and I feel sure that we will eventually get evidence to show that such names were used at that early period.

He makes much of the fact that Pharaoh married Joseph to the daughter of the priest of the sun god; and he says the later pharaohs, when they tell about the Hyksos, they say that they were men who ruled in ignorance of Ra, the sun god. Well, now, he says "If the Hyksos were opposed to the sun god, why on earth

would a Hyksos king marry his favorite, Joseph, to a daughter of the priest of the sun god?"

Well, after he says all that, it sounds like a pretty sound argument; but then he goes on to make another admission, "Oh, of course it is true that several of the names of the Hyksos kings, which they took as kings of Egypt, include the name of the sun god as part of their own," or something like that, "but then after all they were just aping old Egyptian custom on that, so it doesn't prove anything."

But it seems to me the exception which he makes there, destroys the whole force of that argument. The fact that the later pharaohs said that these kings—the Hyksos kings—ruled in ignorance of Ra doesn't mean that the Hyksos kings didn't try to conciliate the followers of Ra when they were there; and one of them might very well have taken the high priest of Ra there, and to have married his daughter—the daughter of one of the great old Egyptian families from before the time when the Hyksos came—to his favorite; in this way he could take this young upstart who came from Asia and marry him into one of the old Egyptian families; and at the same time he could show a measure of favor to the old Egyptian family, and thus win its loyalties to the new king; instead of having them conspire against him. It is just the sort of thing you'd expect him to do.

And so we have much of historical background in the time of Joseph, much knowledge that fits in to the account as contained in the Bible, even though Peet tries to push it aside with a wave of the hand.

At the time of Joseph in Egypt, there are only two or three more points that we ought briefly to mention. One is: We find that, in the story of Joseph, the famine was bad in the land of Palestine; and they sent people down into Egypt to get supplies; and that is just what we would expect. Egypt would be far less apt to have famine than Palestine. Egypt was the land with the Nile River bringing a constant supply of water, and constant provision of fertilization for the land, and so famine in Egypt would be very unusual. It would be more or less common, every now and then, in Palestine; and they might naturally go down to Egypt to get supplies.

However, someone would say, the story of Joseph doesn't merely say they went from Palestine to Egypt for supplies, but it says there were seven years of famine in Egypt. Isn't that rather strange that you would have a terrific famine like that in Egypt? Well it is strange. It's unusual, but it not unique. We have an inscription which was found far south in Egypt, which was published and copied as early as 1891, an inscription in hieroglyphic characters, which tells about a famine there; it describes a terrific famine which it says lasted for seven years. It says that for seven years, the Nile did not overflow. Now of course,

immediately it was suggested this was a reference to the famine in the Bible; but this is dated about 2800 BC and consequently this is not the famine under Joseph, but perhaps 1000 years earlier. It does show, however, that there was occasionally such an event in Egypt. It is not something which is absolutely unique and without parallel in that land.

Then we have an inscription early in the Eighteenth Dynasty in which a man tells how he made provision there for a famine; he saved up material so that when the famine came, he was able to care for the people of the city. This sounds as if he did for his city what Joseph did for Egypt. This is dated about 1500 BC or a little before. It is getting nearer Joseph's time. It is hardly, however, the famine to which Joseph relates. There is nothing in this account to suggest that it is quite as bad a famine as that in Joseph's time; and in addition, coming after Joseph's time—after the terrific famine which they had undergone—it would be rather natural that they would watch out for the possibility of future famines, and they would make provision for them. He merely said that he collected corn, and was watchful in time of sowing; and when a famine arose lasting many years he distributed corn to the city each year of famine.

I remember crossing the ocean, in 1912 I believe it was; and we crossed the ocean, and half the people on the boat used to walk the boat at night, night after night, with their life preservers on, all ready to be protected in case they should be plunged into the icy water. The reason for that was because three days before, the *Titanic* had sunk and over a thousand people on board had been drowned; and the result was, all these people were terrified that their boat would sink; and they were in readiness for it, when actually our boat went several miles south of its usual course to avoid icebergs.

I went to bed and slept soundly each night, because I felt the time to be nervous was just before a great disaster, not just after one; because after one, you could be sure that not only would the people be extra careful, but the ship men were extra careful; and they sailed south of the iceberg area, and every precaution was taken. But you will find that special attention taken in order to keep from a repetition of it.

So it seems to me that this is not a fifth of the story of Joseph, but it is just what we might expect would happen after the time of Joseph. If this came from just before the time of Joseph, then it would seem rather strange that Pharaoh would have had to have a warning of the dream to do the same thing again.

So a 7-year famine is certainly an extremely unusual event, but not an impossible one. Of course, there might be famines from a plague of insects that would destroy the crops, or something like that.

It seems very likely that it was during the time of the Hyksos that he was there. It fits about the general period of the Hyksos. The Bible doesn't give the date, of course. Ussher's dates are in the margins and not part of the text. The Bible does not tell you when it happened, but as we fit it in with general events, it comes at approximately the time of the Hyksos. It is very probable that that is just when it was; and if that is when it was, it is very natural that we do not have any inscription or monument put up to celebrate this man Joseph. Now, of course, there might have been one put up, and we just not have discovered it yet; or it might have been destroyed in some way. That is no proof that there was not a great ruler like Joseph in Egypt; but we know that the Egyptians destroyed most of the places left by the Hyksos; and most of their monuments tried to forget the fact that they had been there; and so it is very natural that the precise details of this direction of Egypt under the Hyksos should have disappeared, even though stories of the events then could very easily have been passed on among the people and become folk stories, as I believe in the case of the story of the two brothers—which scholars of the critical school regard as the origin of the story in Genesis. While they recognize that it is a theme which is not confined to Egyptians and Hebrews, the fact that the theme of the Biblical story is laid in Egypt leads them to think it extremely possible that there is a connection between the two.

Now, we notice that we don't know the date of Joseph, but we think that it was in the Hyksos period. That is a very reasonable time to think that it was. In the time of Joseph, there is mention of horses and horsemen; and later on in Exodus, much mention of it. In the time of Abraham, we have no mention of horses in Egypt; and this fits with Joseph being either in the time of the Hyksos or afterward.

And then when we have the king of the oppression, who knew not Joseph; you might have a king who knew not Joseph right in the same dynasty. Such things happen. I was amazed a few years ago, when I was up in the mountains, just after I graduated from college with a group of young college fellows; and we got to talking; and it happened that I had just taken an M.A. in American history, so I had read quite a bit of American history of recent years before that; and talking with these fellows, I happened to refer to E. H. Harriman, who was president of the Union Pacific Railroad, and of about a dozen other railroads, and two or three steamship lines; he had such tremendous power in the United States that cartoons used to show a meeting of the Board of Directors of one of our great railroads; and then the cartoon would show ten people sitting around the table and every one of them would have B. H. Harriman's face on them; and President Theodore Roosevelt once called him an undesirable citizen, and refused to receive him at the White House, because of the great power which he had. He was one of the most powerful men in American history.

His son, Averill Harriman, has been rather prominent in diplomatic circles recently; but nothing like the prominence that his father had; but here it was only about ten or fifteen years after the death of this man; and these fellows, college men, men of intelligence, had never even heard the man's name; and when a man can have such tremendous power—one of the five or six most powerful men that ever lived in the United States—and within ten or fifteen years most people don't even know his name or anything about him, you can easily see how a king could arise who knew not Joseph, a man who was not interested in the events of his predecessor, or who even disliked the people of the predecessor. We have it in Roman Catholic history; we've noticed it in church history, when in the time of the later Counter-Reformation, one of the popes—as soon as he became pope—had the nephews of his predecessor executed, men on whom the previous pope had lavished all sorts of honors and wealth. Such things occur, but it is not necessary to suppose such a thing occurred here. The most likely explanation is simply that the pharaoh of Joseph's time was indeed one of the Hyksos kings.

Now, one other matter we should mention here again very briefly. We have mentioned it before in the discussion of Jacob in Mesopotamia. It was the change in the system of land ownership in Egypt; Peet mentions this in his book and brushes it aside. He says, "It is true that in Egyptian inscriptions before the time of the Hyksos, we find the statement that the land was owned by individuals; and we find definite evidence of that. Now it is true that in the time after the Hyksos, we find evidence that Pharaoh owned all the land, and distributed it among the nobles, and collected a fifth of the produce as rent for it. That is true" he says, and he says, "It was very ingenious of the Hebrew writer to attribute this to the cleverness of Joseph in buying up the land for Pharaoh; but," he says, "actually, of course, it had nothing to do with the change. The reason for the change is perfectly obvious. When the Egyptians drove the Hyksos out of Egypt, naturally all land titles had been lost, because the Hyksos had held everything; and so naturally everything fell into the hands of Pharaoh, and he distributed them as he wanted to." Well when a great scholar and a man with the name of Peet says a thing like that, why naturally it was so; you are tempted to say, "Well, that is the explanation." It reminds me, however, of what Robert Dick Wilson used to tell of the years when he studied the higher criticism in Germany; and in those years, they weren't quite so sure of it as they have been in more recent years; and he mentioned how in those days, when the professors would come to a point on which there was grave doubt, they would say, "Why, undoubtedly, this is the case. Undoubtedly it must have been this way," and when they would come to a conservative theory, which theory they had no evidence to answer, they would just say, "Why, that's impossible. It couldn't possibly be that way." And just such dogmatic statements as that often carried more weight than the piling up of a great deal of real evidence.

Now, in this case, Peet occasionally resorts to that method; and I think when a man uses strong, dogmatic language about anything, it is a good thing to ask "Just what is your evidence? Let's examine the facts and see what they are." Now he says, "It is perfectly obvious that this would have taken place." Well, is it perfectly obvious? When the Egyptians drove the Hyksos out of the land, the desire of the Egyptians was to reestablish things as they had been before. Now, if it was a century or a century and a half that the Hyksos had been there, they might have forgotten how things were done before. They certainly did. Certainly in any such case, many things are taken over from the conquerors after they are driven out, without people realizing that they are taken over from them; but for their simply having driven the Hyksos out, to say, "Now we don't know to whom the land belongs, so Pharaoh will keep it all," is certainly not natural. The people who had stood with Pharaoh in driving out the Hyksos would certainly have risen up in wrath against that; and they certainly would have said, "No, we want our private property. We want something as reward for what we have done. We want definite land." I don't think Pharaoh could have succeeded in putting across a scheme like that simply on the ground that he was the leader of the forces that had driven out the Hyksos, who had taken everything away.

Here was this system which had been established for many years in the land. People would have been accustomed to it, and Pharaoh could very easily slide into the position which the Hyksos pharaohs had had. But for the Pharaoh simply to say, "Well, now, we don't know who the land belongs to, so I'll take it"—it is conceivable that some pharaohs would have thought of that scheme and tried to put it across, but very few rulers are quite able to carry that sort of thing through.

If Peet could give us one or two instances of countries, which have been conquered by an invader, and when the invader was driven out, the land was all simply held by the new ruler of the country, instead of being distributed among the people again on some system of private property ownership, he would; if this was introduced in that connection, he would have some evidence, but I don't know of any such instances; and so when he says it is perfectly obvious, he is simply talking without evidence at all. He should say, "I have evidence of such events occurring elsewhere and therefore that may be the explanation," but as far as I know he has no such evidence.

So I think we must be careful that, in our presentation of the background of the Scripture, we do not say things are perfectly obvious, for which we have no evidence. I don't think we advance the cause of the Scripture in that way. I think that we should give our evidence and be careful of our statements; but when we look at what somebody else has done, don't be surprised if he doesn't follow that plan; and if he is someone who is attacking the Scripture, the more positive he is about his statements, the more reason there is to check up on them and make mighty sure that his statements are correct.

Well, now I think perhaps that will, do for the background of the general outline of the material aspects of the life of Joseph. Suppose we go on now to

2. The Spiritual History of Joseph.

And I will not in this course take much time on this. We can draw many very valuable spiritual lessons from Joseph's life; but most of them are regularly drawn in Sunday School classes; and those which are not, you can easily draw from your own study of these stories. It is very important—it is very worth doing—but there is no special need of our taking time in class here to go into it at much length. We will take it, and try to confine ourselves to those matters which may be less clear, or on which there may be questions.

Certainly there is no doubt that Joseph is the most perfect character presented in the Old Testament. There is no record of anything in connection with him which we feel much reason to criticize. The only thing that one might criticize, perhaps, is his attitude as a child that he would dream that all his brothers and his parents "would bow down to him and serve him," and some think that that shows a rather conceited attitude on the part of the young man. Well, with the acts of favoritism his father showed for him, it wouldn't be at all strange if he got into something of such an attitude; but certainly, if he ever had such an attitude, it didn't show itself in his treatment of his brothers when they came down to Egypt. He dealt with them very wisely there. He didn't reveal himself to them until he had tested them, to see whether their attitude had changed. He was careful in order not to do what would be dangerous for Egypt, and dangerous for his family and for himself; and at the same time, he was filled with love for them and forgiveness, and with desire to bridge the gap, once he was sure that it could be safely bridged; and so he gave them these various tests just to see what their attitude would be when the other brother was taken; and the other favorite son of his father, when Benjamin was going to he held, what would they do? Would they take an attitude somewhat as they had taken in his case, or would they show a change of mind; and he felt it safe to reveal himself to them after he had given them this reasonable test.

Well, these dreams he had, I don't think we can say they show an error in him. I don't know of any evidence in the scripture, showing the faults which we know must have been in him, because he was a human being. But he was a remarkably fine one. He was one of the finest servants who ever lived. The way he stood all this that was brought on him through no fault of his own; and the way he, in Egypt, stood true to what was right, and suffered for righteousness' sake without complaint; and the way that when his brothers came down, he did not hold it against them; he did not try to punish them, or to mistreat them, or anything like so many people would've done.

But on the other hand he didn't do the other thing. Many people would've held their anger against their brothers, so that they would've just been ready to do anything they could to hurt them. I think the majority of people would've taken that attitude, after what the brothers had done to him. But perhaps a third or a fourth of the people would have taken the opposite extreme. They'd be so happy to see their brothers again that they would just throw themselves on their necks and say, "Oh it is wonderful to see you!" and the brothers would say "We're so sorry for what we did; and will you forgive us?" and he'd say "Oh certainly," and it would be all over.

But Joseph tested the brothers. He gave them a test to be sure that they really had repented of what they did, and would not do the same sort of thing to him again. He showed wonderful love, combined with wonderful wisdom. And so he put his brothers through a series of tests before they knew who he was, to find out what they would do about the other brother, Benjamin. When Benjamin's life seemed to them to be at stake, what would they do? Would they give him up in order to save their own skins? Or would they actually try to do the utmost they could to save Benjamin? And when he found them actually willing to do anything they could to save Benjamin's life, he felt that there was a change in them and that he could trust them.

And then he did what he did. He showed wonderful love and wonderful judgment. He was a most remarkable character; and there is one verse in it here which I think shows a wonderful understanding of the divine providence. And that is where, when he reveals himself to his brothers. So now, in chapter 45, verse 4, he reveals himself to his brothers and he says, "Come near to me, I pray you." And they came near. And he said, "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life." And he says in verse 7, "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance." Verse 8, he says, "So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. It was not you that sent me hither, but God."

What an understanding of God's providence! It was God's providence that the children of Israel should grow to be a great nation in Egypt; that they should enjoy the prosperity of Egypt; that they should have the material means to grow from a few families to a great nation down there; and God sent Joseph down there to prepare the way for them. Now it was the brothers who had done it; it was the brothers who, in their terrible wickedness and jealousy, sold him; and they sent him away and concealed it; they made it look as if he was dead; they were guilty; it was human wickedness; but it was part of the divine plan; and Joseph recognized that fact, he had an understanding of it.

And I think it is a very fortunate thing for us, in all of our dealings in life, to recognize that wicked man will do wicked things; and we must test people before we put our confidence in them. We must find out all we can, of what sort of people they are; but we must recognize that even the wickedness that they do is part of God's plan; and we must not hold grudges against them for what they do to us, because God will deal with their character.

God will handle it, because the wickedness they do is toward him, not toward us. But God may use what they do for his good purpose; and we should praise God for what happens, even though it seems very bad to us; and it is, as far as the human instrumentalities are concerned. God does not incite human beings to do wickedness, no. God is not the author of evil; but God uses the wickedness that people do; and God directs the direction in which the result of the wickedness shall fall, which the people do, in order to accomplish his purpose. And so Joseph, instead of holding anger against his brother, gives praise to God for his providence; and God truly works all things together for his purposes.

Now Joseph is one of the greatest instances of trust in God we can find anywhere. Even in the terrific miseries that he came into, through no fault of his own, he trusted God and did not complain; he felt that God had a purpose in it, and God would work good out of it. If one is truly the Lord's, things may go utterly different from that which we expect or plan; and the idea of prayer or faith—that it simply means that we can command God to do what we want Him to—is an utterly false idea of faith; but the idea of faith that God knows what is best, and He wants us to work as His instruments to secure what is best; and if things come utterly different from what we had expected and planned, nevertheless we can be sure that God's hand is in it and trust Him fully—is the attitude of true faith; and that is the attitude which Joseph showed at point after point in his experience.

It was part of God's revelation to show us that His goodness is not a result of works of righteousness that we have done, but of His own choice, and of his own sovereign will. On the basis of the goodness of the two men, Joseph was certainly a far finer character than Judah. But God chose Judah by His sovereign will to be the one through whom Messiah would come. David was certainly the man after God's own heart; and certainly God made great promises to David; and God carried out the promises. That is entirely true, but it wasn't a matter of the goodness of David; it was a matter that David was the one that God had chosen; and then David showed a repentant heart, an attitude of desire to serve God; but certainly when it comes to goodness, the real, downright, wholesome goodness, the evidence we have would make Joseph a far finer character than David, a far more wholesome character, and a far less selfish character; but God chose David as the one who would be the king and the one through whom the work of salvation would come.

David, of course, was not a reprobate; he was one who turned back to the Lord when he sinned; he repented with his whole heart; he was a man after God's own heart; but it wasn't for works of righteousness David did that God blessed him. God selected David for His purpose; and then David did show a proper attitude, though he turned from it many times in the course of his existence.

As to Joseph's youth and his dreams, the Scripture is written in such a way that the reading gives either of two interpretations; and you should decide for yourself which of the interpretations you think is the true one as you read it. If we had nothing given except that first part of the story of Joseph we would indeed be at a loss to know which way to interpret. Was this a conceited young boy, whose father put him ahead of all the rest, and who therefore took it for granted that he was better than all of them, and would probably rule over all of them; and was so sure of it that he proceeded to have dreams which showed the attitude which was in his mind; or was he a very fine young man with a splendid attitude, who was not injured by the fact that his father had made such a favorite of him; but to whom God gave dreams—as He did in Egypt later on in his life—and God revealed certain things in his dreams; and then Joseph told the dreams that the Lord had revealed to him; and his father when he heard the dream wondered about it; that is, on the first interpretation you say, the father said, "Are your mother and I and your brothers going to bow down to you? What kind of a conceited idea are you getting?" On the other he said, "My, what do these dreams mean? Will you be so exalted that your mother and father will bow down to you?"

You have to reach your own conclusion on it, through what you learn of Joseph's character from the rest of the Scripture; and I think what we find of the way he took it, when he was sent down to Egypt, can justify a more humble view of himself. Jacob is merely asking a question. He is not giving a dogmatic statement. Jacob says, when he sees the dream, he says, "Will thy mother and I and thy brothers bow down before thee?" You would think the moon would stand for the mother, wouldn't you? Well, what do most children do when their mother is dead, and there is another wife living with the father? Don't they usually call her "Mother"? Under the situation when Leah was the wife of Jacob, the one who was buried with him in Hebron, wouldn't all the children refer to her as "Mother" and wouldn't he use it? She would certainly have the position of mother and the authority of mother, so that I think that we could take it as referring to Leah; and yet we have no evidence that Leah was living; we have no evidence that she would bow down; and I think that it is a warning to us against feeling that every element in a parallel or a picture must have a full meaning. God didn't say, "Your father and your mother will bow down to you." God gave him a dream; and in the dream, he saw the heavenly bodies bowing down to him. Jacob guessed from it that this means that your father and your mother and your brothers will bow down.

Well, if the Lord doesn't say that is what it means, maybe it meant that the leaders of Egypt were going to bow down to him—the other leaders of Egypt, the lesser rulers of Egypt. We are not told; but Jacob interpreted it that way, and I think rightly, that the family was going to be put in a position where Joseph would have a great position of supremacy. And they did. The brothers bowed to him and had no idea who he was; but certainly Joseph never put himself in a place later on where his father would bow humbly before him. Some men would have done that sort of thing, but Joseph would never do such a thing. So it was not an instance of our being given exact full details, but it is an instance of a revelation in advance of the fact that this one is to have a remarkable position, in which people whom you would not ordinarily expect to bow to him will bow to him.

Well. I think perhaps we will run on from Joseph; we could spend a long time studying this, as I say, with great profit, but it is one of the more obvious sections of the Scripture. Oh, one other thing I think I should stop just for a second on. Some people will say, "Joseph was a type of Christ in that he married a Gentile wife." Well, personally, I think that is rather absurd; I think that it is interesting that we find many striking parallels between the life of Joseph and the life of Christ. I think that is very interesting. I think that, but I am very skeptical as to how much right we would have to predict anything about the life of Christ because of events that occurred in the life of Joseph.

In the tabernacle we have types given us, which God gave in advance in order to represent great truths and great matters; and thus we have types given and we have allegories. We have stories in the Old Testament taken as illustrations, as when Paul said that Hager corresponds to Mt. Sinai which refers to bondage, as Sarah corresponds to Jerusalem, the heavenly Jerusalem. It was taking an Old Testament story simply as an illustration; but the idea that the Old Testament stories are given us to teach us things about Christ, because of superficial or accidental similarities, I think can get us into a rather unwholesome method of interpreting Scripture. I do not think that it is a dangerous enough method that anybody should go forth and feel that it is his duty to become an opponent of that sort of thing, and to fight those who do it. I think that most of those who use this sort of method are glorifying the Lord and trying to advance His cause and I think it is very wrong to think that you have a great duty in life to tear into and expose that sort of thing, but I do think that it is the sort of thing for us to avoid.

I think it is a dangerous method of interpretation. I think that we should recognize there are types and symbols in the scripture given for that purpose; but when there is no statement that something is a type or a symbol; when Pharaoh, the wicked king, the heathen king, told Joseph to marry the daughter

of the priest of the worship of the sun, to say that that is a figure of Christ marrying a Gentile bride, that is going a little far, I think.

Now you will often hear it said: Egypt stands for Evil. I don't think that's quite right. Egypt stands for oppression. Egypt stands for bondage. And it therefore stands for the worst bondage of all, the bondage of sin. And Exodus tells how God delivers the people from the bondage and oppression of Egypt; and it is a wonderful picture of how Christ delivers us from the bondage and oppression of sin. But that does not mean that in the Bible, whenever Egypt is referred to, it is a symbol for sin or wickedness, or a symbol for bondage or oppression.

Here in Genesis the Israelites going down into Egypt was part of God's plan. It came about through the wickedness of the brothers, but it was the plan of God; and God brought them to Egypt to prepare a place for them there, in order that they might be protected from the famine, and might have a place where they could grow into a great nation, amid the prosperity. Then a new Pharaoh came who knew not Joseph; and after they had grown into a great nation, then the oppression came, and Egypt became in the Book of Exodus a fitting symbol of oppression; but Egypt is in Genesis here a symbol of refuge and of God's provision. I think that's important that we realize. The symbol is important.

It's more to us to see how God delivers us from sin through his great power—as he delivers the Israelites from Egypt—than the historic fact of the deliverance. But it is an historic fact. But the figure doesn't have to be taken the same way in Genesis. There was nothing wrong with the Israelites' going into Egypt, because God commanded them. God spoke with Jacob in a dream and told him, fear not to go into Egypt; this is my plan; there in Egypt you will become a great nation, and you will come back out of Egypt. It was his plan. Now there are those who in studying the different periods—or dispensations if you want to use that name—of God's dealings with the people, who try to arrange the parts of it into exact parallels; and in arranging that, they try to make this one end with a great error which is the going into Egypt, when the scripture nowhere says that is an error. It nowhere says that, and God commanded them to go.

Egypt later became the land of oppression; and it is a wonderful symbol of our deliverance from the oppression of sin, a picture of our salvation.

There was no deliverance of Jesus out of Egypt. As a type he was not oppressed in Egypt at all; it was a place of deliverance in the case of Christ; and it is predicted in Hosea that Jesus would come out of Egypt to do his great work. It says, out of Egypt have I called my son, and there he was not speaking of delivering him from oppression, but of bringing him back from the luxury of Egypt into the less pleasant conditions of Palestine, in order that there he could do his work for God and could give his life for our sins. It is not a figure of oppression there; it is the great figure of the oppression in the Bible, but that is

in Exodus and in the many places that refer back to Exodus. But it doesn't always refer to that.

Figure 1. Ancient Mesopotamia.

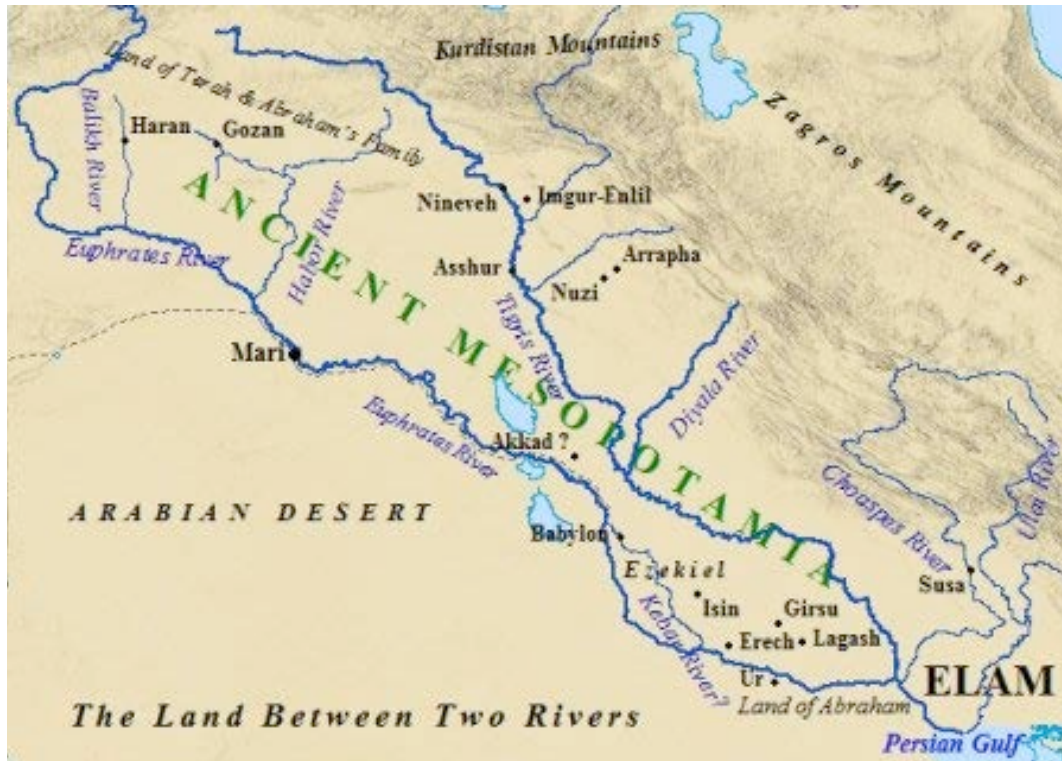
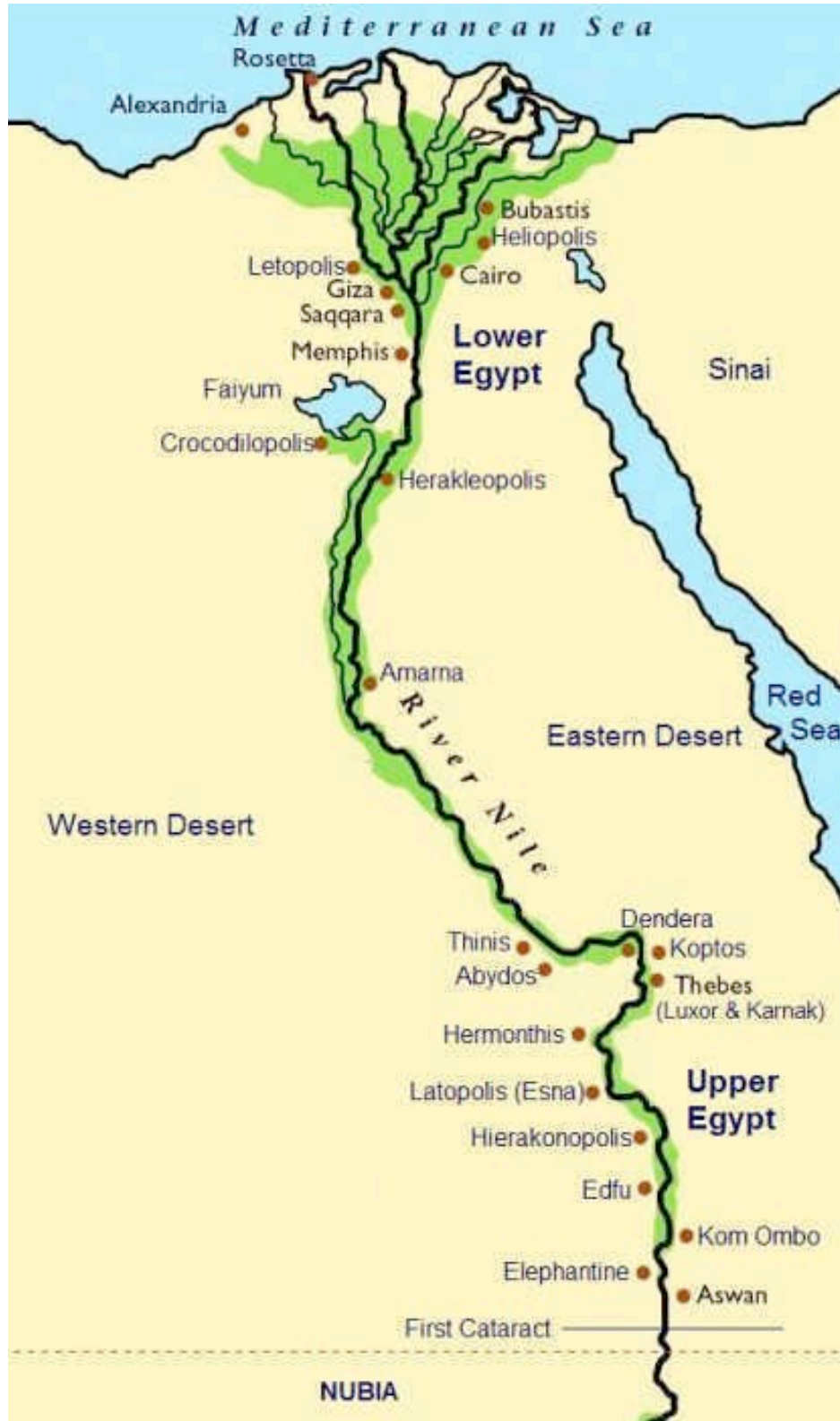


Figure 2. Ancient Canaan.



Figure 3. Ancient Egypt.



IV. The Deliverance from Egypt.

It was God's providence that the children of Israel should grow to be a great nation in Egypt; that they should enjoy the prosperity of Egypt; that they should have the material means to grow from a few families to a great nation down there. And God sent Joseph down there to prepare the way for them.

Joseph himself recognized this, and when he reveals himself to his brothers in Genesis 45 beginning with verse 4:

Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life... God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God.

What an understanding of God's providence! It was God's providence that the children of Israel should grow to be a great nation in Egypt; that they should enjoy the prosperity of Egypt; that they should have the material means to grow from a few families to a great nation down there. And God sent Joseph down there to prepare the way for them.

Now it was the brothers who had done it. It was the brothers who, in their terrible wickedness and jealousy, sold him and sent him away and made it look as if he had died. They were guilty of it. It was human wickedness, but it was part of the divine plan, and Joseph recognized that fact, he had an understanding of it.

And it is a very important thing for us, in all of our dealings in life, to recognize that wicked men will do wicked things; we cannot shut our eyes to them. We must test people before we put our confidence in them. We must find out all we can of what sort of people they are, but we must recognize that even the wickedness that they may do is part of God's plan. And we must not hold grudges against them for what they do to us, because God will deal with their character. But God may use what they do for His good purpose; and we should praise God for what happens, even though it seems very bad to us. God will handle it because the wickedness they do is toward him, not toward us.

God does not incite human beings to do wickedness. No, God is not the author of evil. But God uses the wickedness that people do; and God directs that the result of the wickedness which people do shall fail, in order to accomplish his purpose. And so Joseph, instead of holding anger against his brothers, gives

praise to God for his providence, and God truly works all things together for his good purpose.

A. The Background of the Deliverance.

Well, this trust of Joseph in God is one of his great outstanding characteristics; and Genesis ends with the people of Israel enjoying peace and prosperity.

But if we turn over the page to Exodus, we jump over a period of some centuries, and come to one of the great outstanding features of the whole Biblical history. We find in verse 8, "Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph." And of course that could happen in any country. That can easily occur under normal circumstances—that a ruler will come to the front who has no use for those who were the pets of the former ruler.

When the young Kaiser Wilhelm—Wilhelm II, Queen Victoria's favorite grandson—became Emperor of Germany, in a nation which had been built up through the wisdom, and cleverness—and to some extent the untruthfulness—of Count Bismarck, Bismarck was a great hero of the court. The German Empire was built through his wisdom, his actions, and to some extent his untruth, and his power of will, his great brain. And one of the first acts of the new Kaiser Wilhelm was to dismiss Count Bismarck from his position in the court.

Well, a new king arose who knew not Joseph. The same thing happened in England when George III came to the throne. He turned against the Whigs, the people who had brought his great-grandfather to power—George I—and who had ruled during the reigns of George I and II. He turned against them, and he gave his aid and support to the Tories; and this was one of the great causes which led to the American Revolution. And the people who opposed King George III were called the Whigs, the name of the party which had brought his ancestors into power, and which he had turned against. Those in the colonies who remained loyal to England were called Tories. A new king arose who knew not Joseph. It is easy for such a thing to happen.

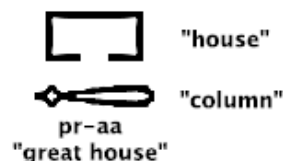
But in the case of Egyptian history, it is perhaps easier for us to understand it, because it seems most likely—though it cannot be proven—that the king who favored Joseph was one of the Hyksos kings; and the Hyksos kings were a foreign group who were controlling Egypt. They held them in bondage we now believe for about 150 years. It used to be thought it was much longer. I don't think anybody today thinks it was more than about 150 years, but that's a good sized figure to hold a people in subjection. And the Hyksos had conquered Egypt because of their use of this great new weapon with which they could make a lightning war on the Egyptians, the use of the horse.

With horses attached to their chariots they had attacked and conquered Egypt, and with this weapon they held them. But eventually the Egyptians got the use of the horse for themselves and they built up sufficient power to drive the Hyksos out. And after they did, Egypt never again let itself get short of horses. Of course, before that they hadn't known the horse as a weapon for war at all. But after that, Egypt became the great land of horses. Never again was it conquered in that way.

So the new king who came into power looked upon the Hyksos as terrible foreign conquerors; and it would be quite natural that he would not feel very friendly towards the people who had been given a favored position by the Hyksos rulers. Now that is not certain, but that is highly possible—I mean that Israel came to Egypt in the time of the Hyksos. I believe that all scholars agree that Exodus was after the time of the Hyksos, and it would seem highly probable that the Israelites coming in was in their reign.

Now the background of this period of the deliverance from Egypt, naturally, will concern itself only with Egypt, because that's where we are at this point. All the events happened in Egypt, or in the desert near Egypt. And the first thought that immediately occurs to us of course is, who is the Egyptian king who oppressed the Israelites? And all it says in Exodus is a new king arose who knew not Joseph. And then it goes on and refers to the king in chapter 2, and following, under the name of "Pharaoh".

During the reign of Thutmose III, the term began to denote a person who was king. The ideograph of "pharaoh" is a combination of "house" and "column":



In ancient times the custom was established in speaking of the "great house," that is "pharaoh," and meaning the ruling power of Egypt; it came to be a general term used to designate the ruler of Egypt, who was thus called "pharaoh." In a somewhat similar way, we refer to the "White House" in America. And so Exodus does not tell us who this ruler is, but it tells us that after a series of plagues, about two million Israelites left the land of Egypt against the wishes of pharaoh.

And [T. Eric] Peet, in his book *Egypt And the Old Testament*, in which he tries to make out that the Old Testament is quite unreliable, feels that it's strange that in Egypt we have no record of the Exodus of the Israelites; but he does say in his book that greater events than this have occurred and left no trace in their records. He makes that admission, which is a tremendous admission.

And, of course, it is easy for us to see why that should be so, in view of what I've already told you of the nature of our material from Egypt. Nobody put up a monument in Egypt to celebrate the great failure of Pharaoh to hold the Israelites there in subjection. You go to Paris to visit the tomb of Napoleon, one of the great sites of Paris, one of the great monuments in Paris. There you see the statue of Napoleon; around it you see these monuments to several great battles, but there is no monument there to Waterloo, absolutely none. They put up nothing in Paris to celebrate Napoleon's fall at the Battle of Waterloo. If you go to Berlin, you'll find a great big statue of a Russian soldier celebrating the conquest of Berlin; but that is because it's currently being held under foreign bondage. You can be sure that if the Germans ever get their freedom, that particular statue will disappear.

No nation puts up monuments to celebrate its defeats. The loss of two million slaves could hurt the economic life of Egypt rather badly; it might be mentioned a great deal in talking about it, but would hardly have a monument put up for it. And our records from ancient Egypt are practically all in the form of monuments, to celebrate things for which they wished to be remembered. And so it is not at all strange that there is no mention in the ancient Egyptian material that we have of the exodus of the Israelites. We do find in Egyptian records mention of a people called the Apiru, and this Apiru is thought by most scholars today to have relation to the Hebrews. "Apiru" phonetically, on close examination, is very close to the word Hebrew. And the Apiru are slaves who are forced to do heavy labor. The difficulty with it is that we find the name applied to people of this type long after the Israelites had left Egypt. And so for that reason there are those who hesitate about being sure that there's a definite connection between the name and the Israelites.

Personally, I would think it most likely that—having this large group formed called Hebrews under forced labor—they came to speak of them under this name, and then came to apply the name to people doing that kind of labor, even when the particular group from which the name started had left the country. You find many similar occurrences in history, where a name has been kept to apply to people other than those to whom it originally applied. So it seems to me likely that the Apiru is a reference to the Israelites as slave labor; but it is not certain, particularly as the name does occur after the people left.

Now this period in Egyptian history—the general period, we might say—we might just glance for a moment at the period of Egyptian history from around 1600 to around 1200 BC. Now this period in general is the period which is called the New Kingdom; and it is also called the Empire Period. And I'd like to ask you to keep those names in mind; that's two names applied to the same thing. We do not speak of the New Empire. We speak of the Old Kingdom, the Middle Kingdom, and the New Kingdom. They are three periods of Egyptian reigns, and

all of them were to some extent empires. And in between each of them there is a period of disintegration. Between these periods there are gaps in the records, and so it is hard to pin down a precise chronology.

The period of the New Kingdom is the period after the expulsion of the Hyksos, and this is a period of great power in Egypt. The native Egyptian rulers were expelled by the 17th dynasty, the brief period we call the 17th dynasty. They are followed by the 18th dynasty, which is a period of very great and powerful rulers. If we had time, we could take two or three weeks telling you about the exploits and the times of the 18th dynasty rulers, because we have much evidence on them. It is a very, very interesting period of history. But in view of the shortness of the year, I think we will content ourselves with just a few words about them, because it cannot be proven at present that this is the period—the 18th dynasty—when the Israelites left Egypt. And since it can't be proven, their interest to us is more or less incidental.

I should mention perhaps the fact that one member of this 18th dynasty was a woman named Hatshepsut. And Hatshepsut reigned for 21 years. She was the pharaoh for 21 years, Hatshepsut.

We have many, many monuments, but we don't have much but what was put up by the Pharaohs in order to celebrate the things they wanted celebrated. And therefore precise details are hard to get, especially the incidental details. But the general idea of scholars today is that Hatshepsut was the daughter of a previous Pharaoh, and was therefore properly in line for the throne; but that it was not customary for a woman to rule, and the next man who would be in line was her half-brother who was much younger; and therefore that she married him and she ruled, but nominally he was co-ruler with her.

And then after 21 years, in some way he got rid of her; we don't know how. We don't know whether she was killed; whether she was driven away, what happened to her; but then he took over; and he is the greatest ruler of that time. His name was Thutmose III, or Tothnes III. It's hard to tell just how best to say it. But it means, you see, Tut is the name of a god; and then the last part, whether you take it as "mes" or as "mosis," whichever part you take, that means gave birth, or had a child. This god had a child. The name Mosis is rather common. It is used with a god's name, to mean "the favored," or "the descendant," or "the child" of the gods. So the god Tut, they claim, is the progenitor of the king.

This king Thutmose was a great conqueror. His predecessor Hatshepsut was not. But she did some great building work; she sent an expedition down to the land of Ethiopia, which brought back gold and spices, and put up a big monument to tell about it; and in these monuments, you see her seated on the throne with her long beard. Because she was pharaoh she had a long beard.

Doubtless it was just fastened on to her, but in the picture it shows her with a long beard, the Pharaoh. The ordinary person wasn't allowed to have a beard; only kings and gods were allowed to wear beards. As a king she wears a beard. And over in the corner you have young Thutmose III waving some material; he was in a very subordinate position during her reign.

She put up a great beautiful obelisk celebrating her great deeds. And after 21 years of her reign, she disappeared. We don't know what happened to her. But from then on we have Thutmose reigning; and he calls it the 22nd year of the reign, since he claims to have reigned all the time she was reigning. And immediately, he started leading expeditions up into Palestine, making great conquests. He was a great warrior; he'd evidently been held down by her all this time; now he goes out to be a great effective warrior and a very powerful Pharaoh.

And he went all through her pictures, in the monuments up near Thebes—all these beautiful pictures—he had his men go all through them and erase her picture. So you have beautiful pictures of these scenes, but Hatshepsut—where she should be seated on the throne—there's just a blank; they've rubbed it off. Except in one place where they overlooked it; so we have one picture, all the rest you have just a big hole. And the obelisk, he put a brick wall around it to hide the pictures—this beautiful obelisk—and during the succeeding ages this brick wall disappeared; and you have the beautiful obelisk telling of her greatness.

Well, now there are those who will tell you that this Hatshepsut is the princess who found Moses; and she brought Moses out from the River, and she took care of him. And she's the best-known woman in Egyptian history. If you just want to make a blind guess, you might as well guess her as anyone else. She was certainly a daughter of Pharaoh. But I know of no other reason whatever to connect her with the story of Moses.

I think it's worth telling you this much about it, because you will come across that theory. You will find some books that say it's proven. No, I don't know how it's proven, just because somebody says it. She was a daughter of Pharaoh, but the Pharaohs had many daughters, and I know of no reason to connect her with Moses.

But she was a daughter of Pharaoh, and she became a great queen. No, she wasn't queen, she was king; she was a Pharaoh; she ruled; and then young Thutmose III got rid of her somehow, and from then on he ruled; and he ruled with great power and effectiveness.

Now the length of this period, the 18th dynasty is approximately from 1580 to 1347. That is approximate. There are those who will put it a few years later, at

one end or the other. We can't be exact on these dates. We have a good deal of evidence, but we don't have complete evidence. If you have a monument put up by a king, which says the 25th year of his reign, we know he reigned at least 25 years; but that doesn't prove his reign stopped after 25 years. We have events given us in the reign, and by those events we know a minimum; but we don't know the maximum. We have quite a bit of evidence, and many points we can be very accurate in; but there more often will be a relative distance between these events that we cannot determine.

Towards the end of the 18th dynasty there was a king Amenhotep III. He reigned approximately from 1415 to 1380 BC. He was quite a powerful ruler. I'll refer to him again in a minute or two, but I want first to go on to his son, who was a very different sort of man. His son was Amenhotep IV who reigned from 1380, approximately, to 1362, approximately. Now Amenhotep IV was—some books will tell you—the first individual in history. Others will say he's the first monotheist in history. Some books will just go into rhapsody—what a wonderful man he is—but others will say that he is a fraud and amounted to nothing; he was an epileptic, or anything you want to say about him. Though hardly anybody thinks of him as an average man in any way. He was either one of the greatest or one of the weakest of people in history. He was a real individual, there's no question of that. Certain things we know definitely about him. He turned violently against the previous religion of Egypt. In Egypt in the early days, they worshipped Ra the sun god. Then the god Amun, the god of the village of Thebes of Upper Egypt, became the leading god of Egypt when the kings of this little village became rulers of all Egypt, in the Middle Kingdom. These men kept constantly giving gifts to Amun until at the end of Egyptian history, the priests of the temple of the god Amun, owned three-fourths of the land of Egypt.

Eventually the Amun leadership got control of practically everything in hand. Amun was just one of many gods, but he was the leading one by far. He had a wife, he had a son; you have the pictures of the three of them; you have various, rather obscene, pictures of Amun, and many of the gods of Egypt. He is not like Ra—a great force of nature, the sun, or something like that. He's a man, not connected with any animals; but he was the god that came to be the most powerful god of Egypt. And the name Amenhotep means "Amun is gracious." The king is named after this god Amun.

(Student: Ra was in the Middle Kingdom?) No, Ra was way back in the early kingdom, the Old Kingdom. Ra continues to the very end; but they say Amun is Ra, they call it Amun Ra. You see it spelled Amen, but the correct pronunciation is Amun, we now know. It was written down before we knew enough about it. The Egyptians don't write vowels; just write consonants; but it's Amun, sometimes written Amon, could be double o or u. Amun was the great powerful god and ruler; but he's just one of many gods, and he's just a man with all

kinds of human failures and frailties and everything. There's nothing ideal whatever about the figure of Amun, in Egyptian mythology, except he's a god; he's powerful, he is Ra, he is the sun god, though that connection comes later. They had Ra long before they had Amun.

Well, Amenhotep IV turned against this whole polytheism of Egypt. He turned against that; he decided there was only one god; that was the god Aten. He called himself, Akhenaten—the name means "successful for Aten." He turned against the worship of Amun. He rejected the old Egyptian system of representing Pharaoh as a stuffed dignified form—always just so formalized that often a king would take the statue of a previous king and he'd rub off the name and put in his own name. It would do just as well for his statue, because the statues didn't look like the men; they were just great beautiful regal pictures. He said "No, we should be natural." He told the artists, draw me as I am. He'd say "No, you're making me look too good, make me the way I look." And so probably in order to please him, they made him look worse than he did.

Some of his pictures look pretty bad. But his wife was a beautiful woman, Nefertiti; and the pictures of her are very attractive, but very different from all the pictures we find before and after. He wanted things natural; he wanted everything to be in the sight of the god Aten, which is the material disc of the sun. You see him holding up his hands like this, and you see the sun's rays beating on the hands, he's connected with his god Aten, the material disc of the sun. And he fought the priests of Amun.

And Akhenaten decided to get away from the cities which had been cursed with the polytheism of the Amun worship of Egypt. So he went out to the desert and built a new city in a brand new place. And after his death, his successors deserted it and left it; and it remained there, and the Germans have excavated it; and we know exactly what that place was like when he was there. We have found many remains from his time. And we call it—the modern name of the place is—El Amarna. Now, you look it up in the index of a book; it may be under Tel-el-amarna, because it is a tell; they may call it Al Amarna, instead of El. They may just all it Marna. It could be under any one of several letters. But El Amarna is a good spelling. And it's approximately that, whatever way you want to do it. You see it's in Arabic and the letters don't exactly correspond to our English. But Tel-el-Amarna has been very, very important for our knowledge of ancient Egypt, because we have found all these remains from the Pharaoh—from this Pharaoh Amenhotep IV—and there are things that were carried over from his father Amenhotep III, who was a great conqueror.

Amenhotep IV was not interested in war; not interested in conquest; he paid little attention to the administration of the empire; but he devoted himself to trying to spread his philosophical and theological ideas. But when he died, the priests of Amun gained their power back.

Oh, one more thing I should say, though, about the importance of El-Amarna. Back before it had been excavated, in the 1880's, a peasant woman living nearby tripped against something. And reaching down to see what had caused her to fall, she found a little rock jutting up out of the ground, but it looked different from ordinary rocks, she dug into it a little—it had queer little marks on it—and so she called a friend, and he began to dig there; and they dug up three or four hundred little things—some of them about the size of a cake of ivory soap, some a little smaller, some quite a bit larger—and he said these are antique things; and there are people from Europe who are foolish enough to want to pay good money to get these things; so he put them in a gunnysack and made the trip three hundred miles toward Cairo. And there in Cairo he went into a little shop and tried to sell these antiques. The dealer paid him a little bit for them, and pretty soon, an Egyptologist came in to buy some antiquities from the dealer; and he said, "Here I've got some antique things found in Upper Egypt." And the man looked at them—saw these queer little marks on them—he said that doesn't look like any antique. It didn't look a bit like hieroglyphics or hieratics (an early Egyptian cursive script). He said it's of no value at all.

So it stayed there in the dealer's shop for a little while. And then a German, who had been excavating in Mesopotamia, made a visit to Egypt before going back to Germany; and he happened to go to the dealer's shop to get some souvenirs to take home to show something of Egypt. And he saw one of these, and he looked at it; and he began to read it right off—Babylonian cuneiform writing—the writing of a land several hundred miles away. And this was found in Upper Egypt, 300 miles south of Cairo. So the German bought all he could afford of them then; he bought a couple of hundred I guess; and then an Englishman came through, and he bought a few hundred. These latter were put in the British Museum. So most of them are either in Berlin or the British Museum, though a few aren't. We call them the Tel-el-Amarna tablets. And in these tablets we have letters from Amenhotep III or IV to other rulers of the day, or from them to him.

They are the archives of state of Akhenaten and his father. And in these archives we don't have a history; it is people writing official letters. They are mostly in the Babylonian language, but it's a simplified Babylonian. It's like today. Well, I shouldn't say today; I speak from my experience of 20 years ago, being in Hungary and wanting to send a telegram to Poland. I could send it in Hungarian if I wanted—the language of the country from which it is written—but I didn't know any Hungarian. I could send it in Polish if I wanted—the country to which it was going—but I didn't know Polish, and neither did the American in Poland to whom I was sending it. Or I could send it in French, because that is the official language of the whole world for diplomacy, or for telegraphy; any treaty between any two nations is apt to have its official text written in French. That's the language of diplomacy. Like German is the

language of science, French is the language of diplomacy, and English the language of business today.

Well, at that time Babylonian was the language of diplomacy and commerce; but it was the simplified Babylonian that the scribes used in Egypt. And so the Egyptian pharaohs who spoke Egyptian, writing to Canaanite kings who spoke Hebrew or Aramaic, they wrote in Babylonian—both ways. And occasionally they have a little bracket; and they have the Hebrew word written in Babylonian letters to show what the word is, if they are not sure of the Babylonian word used. We call these "glosses", and they throw light on the early stages of the Hebrew language.

But these tablets tell us a great deal about conditions in Canaan during this period. And they tell us a great deal about the whole general set-up. Many of them are from Canaanite kings. We have many of the important cities in Palestine named in them; but they also include Babylonian kings, the Hittites, and so on. When Akhenaten died his wife wanted to keep ruling, so she wrote the king of the Hittites and said, "Please send a son down to marry me and be ruler of Egypt." The King of the Hittites wrote back and said, "I don't have a son I can spare, my only son has got to reign here."

"Well," she said, "Send somebody else and say it's your son, so that I can keep ruling Egypt, and marry him." And eventually they did send someone; but he was killed on the way, so it didn't work out. And Akhenaten's sons-in-law, you see, wanted to reign.

But you see, El Amarna is of great importance for the material things found there, with the light that they throw on the general life of Egypt of the day. It's of great importance because these important records contain just about the earliest references to Hebrew known; and they show the conditions in Palestine. It's of importance because others in these records are people named the Habiru, which is very similar to Hebrew, mentioned as conquering Palestinian cities; and some scholars say this is definitely the Hebrews under Joshua conquering, while others say it can't possibly be.

We have the evidence of the monotheism of this king of Egypt, Akhenaten. And Sigmund Freud, in one of the last books he wrote, a book called *Moses and Monotheism*, he said how Akhenaten originated monotheism; and Moses was an Egyptian nobleman who learned from king Akhenaten; and then after Akhenaten died, and monotheism lost out in Egypt, Moses—this Egyptian nobleman—went to a group of slaves in Egypt and taught them his teaching, and organized them, and led them out of Egypt in the Exodus. And Moses, this Egyptian nobleman, did a great deal of good for these slaves, but they were quite ungrateful to him; and one time they got so angry at him they killed him. They killed him and forgot him, so monotheism disappeared. But the act of

killing this great father leader, Moses, caused a trauma in the psyche of these Hebrew slaves; with the result that, though it was forgotten completely for many centuries, in the days of the great prophets Amos—and the others who invented monotheism according to the higher critics—it wasn't an invention out of their clever ideas, it came from this trauma in their brains from their ancestors having destroyed Moses. And the result is that the old teachings of Moses, which had actually come from Akhenaten, came back through Amos, and that is what produced our Old Testament.

Now that's Sigmund Freud's brilliant theory in his book *Moses and Monotheism*. As you see, there are many points in which it is purely his imagination, as in the idea of the trauma, and its effect on that generation. I don't think the admirers of Freud's psychological suggestions give much credence to this particular book. But it had something of a following when it first came out.

Now, to my mind, it would be much more reasonable to turn it around the other way; to say that if the Israelites were in Egypt at this time—as I think it is likely they were—it would not be at all strange if it was through them that the idea of monotheism reached Akhenaten, rather than to say the opposite. It would seem to me much more natural, but we can't prove it either way.

But there have been many scholars—thirty years ago—who said you couldn't have monotheism before Amos, when it was invented. Moses couldn't have been a monotheist, because there was no monotheism till the time of Amos. But here is absolute unquestioned proof that there was monotheism as early as 1380 to 1360 BC in Egypt. It is a true monotheism, a belief in one god who had established and controlled everything.

Now, of course, they go on from that to the view of derivation. They say, "Yes, there was monotheism there; this great individual, this brilliant individual, this pharaoh invented monotheism; and Moses and the Israelites just got it from him, like Freud argued."

But further investigation shows very clearly, that while this is a true monotheism, it is utterly unlike the monotheism of the Old Testament. Akhenaten's god is the material disc of the sun. It is not an ethical god. There is nothing of ethical emphasis in it at all. The god Aten does not call for any higher standard of life. It may call for more naturalness—more openness of showing things—but it is not ethically related to Biblical beliefs at all.

Well, now after the death of Akhenaten, a son-in-law succeeded him—a man who had married one of his daughters. And then, in a comparatively short time after he had succeeded him, he died and was succeeded by another son-in-law; and he too only lived a short time, and he died. His name was Tut-ankh-amun, the living image of Amun. He was a son-in-law; he married the second

daughter of Akhenaten. He didn't live very long; and he died and they buried him in Upper Egypt, in an area where the 18th dynasty kings were buried.

Other pharaohs put their tombs up there, and they all were found by ancient grave robbers. All the others were robbed; and you just have holes in the ground; all the kings of the 18th dynasty, except this one. But this one—one of the most minor pharaohs of all the 18th dynasty—evidently it was the confusion of the times, and the turmoil that led them to hide his tomb. Instead of going into the side of the wall, they went down into the ground in front of the memorial so that the entrance was hidden.

And though people knew about King Tutankhamun from Egyptian history; and they had found the tombs of all the other pharaohs with the names up there on them, but nothing in them; the tomb of Tutankhamun was never found by ancient grave robbers, nor by any modern ones, until (I believe) it was 1922; and then it made a great sensation all around the world, when the tomb of Tutankhamun was found. And someone discovered it there, and when they went into it there, and there's a cave that runs clear back to it, and you go into the ground, clear back there, as far as perhaps four or five times the length of this room. A great big tunnel like a big mine; and in it, all these rooms, and all the things put in there with the dead pharaoh.

They took the jewelry from it and put it in a great big room in the Museum in Cairo. A friend of mine who had just come from London, told me that when he compared it to the crown jewels of England, it impressed him that the jewelry of the tomb of King Tutankhamun was more elaborate, more expensive, and more expensively decorated than the crown jewels of England; and that is what was put in the tomb of one of the lesser kings of the 18th dynasty. And with it there are beds and chairs and all types of things. And on every one of these wooden things, on the one side it says Tutankhamun; on the other side it says Tutankhaten. So his name appears on one side as the living image of Amun, the leader of the polytheistic gods of Egypt; and on the other side as the living image of Aten, the one monotheistic god, the only god who existed, the dire enemy of the gods of Egypt. I call Tutankhamun there the first modernist in history. He carried water on both shoulders. He was a true monotheist, and a terrible enemy of one. What it means is simply he was trying to play both sides and stand for both.

And when the excavators went in there in 1922, they told about a great big inscription over the door which said, "Let none enter this tomb; anyone who comes in here, the curse of the pharaohs is upon him"; and it told the dire things that would happen; and they wrote that up in the papers; and it is a fact that within fifteen years after these excavators went in there—there isn't a single one of those excavators but what within the next fifteen years, either an

uncle, a second cousin, a grandparent or some other relative died. Every single one of them. You hear a lot about the curse of the pharaohs.

Did Moses get his monotheism from Akhenaten? Is there a relationship after all between the two, except on the basic one of monotheism—because there are such sharp differences in other aspects? Was Hatshepsut the daughter of pharaoh, who rescued Moses? They say that's pure conjecture; there's no reason to think she was, though she may have been. Was Thutmose III the pharaoh of the oppression? It's entirely possible; he was a great builder, but so were many of the pharaohs. Did the Israelites leave Egypt during the reign of the man whose name is on one of these slips of paper turned in to me—Akhenaten? It was a time when the administrative power of Egypt became greatly weakened; it was a time when he was so interested in spreading his philosophical and theological ideas that he neglected to administer the internal disorders arising. Externally—as we learn from the Tel el-Amarna tablets—the power of Egypt was waning. His father's and his great-grandfather's expeditions had given a great deal of prestige to the name of Egypt; and many nations remained subject to it because of fear of that prestige; but the power of the prestige did not show itself during this reign. And many letters from sympathizers of Egypt came asking for help, and none came; and so the empire pretty well went to pieces during the reign of his sons-in-law.

And this reign, of course, is of great interest to us, because the grave of Tutankhamun shows the tremendous wealth of Egypt at these times. But during the reigns of these sons-in-law, the weakness which had come during the reign of this king—I don't know whether to call him Amenhotep IV or Akhenaten—the power of Egypt became very small. These priests of Amun took over the power pretty thoroughly during the reigns of these sons-in-law. And they cut down most of the monuments of these kings, these monotheists. They cut down his monuments; they went through inscriptions crossing his name off; as he himself had crossed the name of Amun off wherever he could.

But eventually, one of the men connected with the Temple of Amun took over the kingship, and established the 19th dynasty. I won't bother you with his name nor of his successor Rameses I; they were fairly unimportant kings from the viewpoint of Bible history. The son Rameses I was a king of great power and historical importance, but he only reigned 18 years.

But Rameses I was succeeded by a king called Rameses II; and Rameses II is one with whom you should be familiar. He is the great outstanding king of the 19th dynasty. His reign has been dated from 1301 to 1235 or a bit later. The present tendency is to date it a little bit later—I think, 20 or 30 years later—but it will be approximately that. The first half or two-thirds of the 13th century, about 1301 to 1235 or a little later.

Rameses II took over an Egypt which his father had made great and strong. His father carried on expeditions to Palestine and Syria; his dynasty had reestablished administering power throughout Egypt. Rameses II had a powerful nation, and the habit of carrying on conquests already established; and he proceeded in carrying on great conquests, which he celebrated with mighty monuments that he erected. Rameses II—the name is spelled in different ways again. Those who want to stick as close as they can to what the original translation may have been, are apt to write Ra-mose, the sun god as a child. We are most apt to spell it Rameses. After all, we have the Egyptian writing; and we have no way of knowing exactly how he would've written it in English. But Rameses II was a very powerful ruler, a great conqueror, and he put up many great buildings.

And in Exodus 1, we read that the Israelites built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses. And so people say, Rameses II is the first great king with the name of Rameses; Rameses I, his grandfather, was comparatively unimportant. And the town named Raamses might have been built during his reign; therefore he must be the Pharaoh of the oppression. And surely he would fit it very well, because he was a great conqueror; a great builder with many buildings all over Egypt; he built great statues of himself—some of them nearly as high as this building—which he put up in different places; and these made the name very, very prominent; and he must have had thousands and thousands, perhaps millions, of slaves working under the lash, to put up the great buildings.

Many think—say 60 years ago nearly all—that he was the Pharaoh of the Oppression. Well, he reigned as you notice from the figures I gave you, nearly 70 years. He was over 90 when he died. During the latter years, he had been rather weak; and the son who succeeded him was nearly 70, and so he was a weakling compared to his own father. His name was Merneptah, which again is spelled various ways. His reign used to be dated 1235 to 1220. Present tendency is to begin his reign about 11 years later; we're not certain today. I don't care about your knowing the exact date, but the approximate length of the reign. You see how much shorter he reigned than his father. His father reigned nearly 70 years; the son reigned only about 10. An old man succeeded by an old man.

And naturally, he wasn't as great as his father, but he put up monuments to try to look as if he was as great as his father. He'd take some of his father's statues, and he'd cross off his father's name, and put his on the statue. He put up a monument [the Merneptah Stele] to celebrate the conquest of Palestine; and this monument is the first place where the name of Israel has been found in anything outside the Bible. He says Israel has no seed. Now the Egyptian word seed is just like the English word; it has two meanings: it may be a seed of grain; it may be the descendants of a man. And so people take this—Israel has

no seed—they say he is referring to the destruction of the Israelite children in Egypt. Others say he is writing a story of the conquest of Palestine; and he mentions other nations in Palestine he has conquered; and in the appropriate place between them he mentions Israel; and so they say this must show Israel is already in Palestine.

But then again the first ones say, "Yes, but all the others have a sign before them, which is the Egyptian idiograph for a nation, or for a land; while Israel has before it the Egyptian idiograph for a people; and so it shows that the people Israel who should be in Palestine are not there but in Egypt."



Merneptah Stele

Well, the fact is, there's too little material to build a conclusion on. But this monument has on it the names of maybe a dozen peoples that he claims to have conquered; and Israel is mentioned in the middle of them; because of the great interest of the modern world in Israel, it is called the Israel Stele in modern times. I'm sure Merneptah would have been amazed that his great monument to his conquests would be called the Israel Stele, when Israel is one of a dozen people mentioned, and that the name Israel is somewhere in the middle of it. But to us of course, that's a great thing: the first mention of Israel. But it is cited both for saying this is the time of the exodus and for saying the exodus was already over and Israel was in Palestine.

So there have been those who thought that the exodus took place during the 18th dynasty, and there have been those who thought it took place during the 19th dynasty; and the attitude of most of the critics twenty years ago was that it happened both times. In other words a little group of people left Egypt during the 18th dynasty, and another little group of people left during the 19th dynasty; and Joshua was during the 18th dynasty, and Moses was during the 19th; and the two separate little movements that went into Palestine have become confused in the story and put together as if it was one. Joshua actually was earlier, but came later in the Bible story. That's what most of the critics said about 20 years ago.

But today most of the liberal scholars who really deal with archaeology much have reached the conclusion that the exodus was in the later period, in the 19th

dynasty; and most of them are quite strongly convinced of that today. In one way it's a step forward because instead of thinking it's a composite story of two different movements, they hold it is one movement which took place in the 19th dynasty. But on the other hand, while the bulk of the conservatives 50 years ago took this position, that it was a later period, a good many of them have now moved back to the earlier period. Some of them wax vehement on it. In fact, I am told that a man in this very seminary who, three or four years ago, taught a course in Old Testament History, spent maybe a third of the semester trying to prove that the exodus was in the early period rather than the later period. Personally, I don't see that it makes such a great difference which it was—earlier or later. The scripture doesn't say; it doesn't say who the Pharaoh was, and we don't know. And there is evidence pointing to the 19th dynasty and there is evidence pointing to the 18th dynasty; the thing of importance is that it did occur, and it occurred as described in the Bible. But just when it occurred, we may know some time; a discovery may be made that will prove it. There are those who wax very vehement that it's the late period, and there are those who wax very vehement that it is the early period.

And I personally feel that we advance the cause of Christianity better by sticking to what's clear and standing on it; and when we're not clear, saying, we don't know which it is. We may some time, but the Lord has not yet given us enough evidence in the Bible, or brought enough evidence to light from other sources, for us to know. Now I will say more about this later on. We will not take time to go any further than the brief mentions I've made at present about it, because from Egyptian evidence, this is just about all that can be said, as far as fixing the dates.

Now, of course, the two questions hang together. When was the exodus, and when was the conquest? The exodus means the Israelites coming out of Egypt; and the conquest means the Israelites going into Canaan. They are related, of course. But our evidence on their going into Canaan will come from Canaan; and the evidence for the exodus out of Egypt will come from Egypt. Archaeologically, they are utterly distinct; but historically they relate, and are in relation as I said. Now the exodus didn't take place, and then the conquest was a hundred and fifty years later. No conservative believes that. If the exodus was early, the conquest was early. If the conquest was late, the exodus was late. So the two hang together, and there would be no point in our jumping ahead to look at evidence about the conquest now. So we will come back later to the conquest, and say a few more words about the whole question when we get there, but we will not say much. Because I personally am strongly convinced that there is so much that it is vital we know—that is definite and clear—that it is not worthwhile in the short space of three years [length of the seminary program] spending a lot of time trying to prove what isn't true. Though, as I say, there are fine Christian scholars who differ with me in that approach. But at least in an undergraduate course [this program was a B.D. before being

renamed M.Div.], I don't think it should be a matter that takes a great deal of time. Now, I don't want to go into any other phase of this particular question.

Well, now, then, this general background of the deliverance from Egypt; we have the king who knew not Joseph. There's no difficulty with that. If it was one of the Hyksos, it is easily explained; but even if it weren't so easily explained—suppose they went out in the 18th dynasty; I don't think so, but suppose they had. The upheavals at the end of the 18th dynasty would make it perfectly plain about a king in the 19th dynasty who knew nothing about Joseph. So that is not an especially difficult thing or especially strong corroboration.

The one thing of background that is interesting is: the Bible describes the cruel oppression of the Egyptians; and the monuments of Egypt, while they don't mention the exodus and don't show definitely what had happened, they do give evidence of the cruel attitude of the Egyptians toward foreigners. I've already mentioned this under Abraham, that the Egyptians detested foreigners, and that even when the king of Egypt welcomed the king of the Hittites as a visitor and took him in state up the Nile to visit all sections of Egypt, and they put up a big monument in southern Egypt to tell of the visit of two great kings together. Even then, in the Egyptian inscription, when it mentioned the king of the Hittites, it prefaced his name with an idiograph which means a foreigner, and this idiograph, which you use in all inscriptions, even including that one, is a picture of a man standing with his hands behind his back, pictured with a wound in his head from which blood is flowing to the ground, and they put that before the picture of the great foreign ruler who is the friend and brother of the king of Egypt in the land.

That shows the general attitude toward the foreigner. After Rameses II conquered the Hittites, he had a monument made representing the king of the Hittites, lying on the ground, with a sword thrust through his back; and he put that at the entrance to his palace, so that everybody who walked in or out walked past the prostrate figure of the Hittite king that is the picture representing him. So the cruelty and oppression of the Egyptians described in the Bible is well illustrated and corroborated by what we find on Egyptian monuments. And Pharaoh stands out as a great dictatorial ruler in the early chapters of Exodus, who is oppressing the Israelites and doing whatever he takes a notion to, without having consulted anybody else; that's the picture the pharaohs try to give us in their monuments.

For instance, Rameses II shows a great battle—one great battle which we actually believe was a pretty close to a tie. We believe that it was a hardly-contested battle in which he met some peoples up in Syria and did conquer them; but just gradually and by a very narrow margin, won the victory. Of course, after he really won it, then he had a great monument made to celebrate his victory. In his monument he shows the Pharaoh with tremendous pride

holding a bow and arrow in his hand and shooting at dozens of enemies in front of him, whom this one pharaoh alone subdued on that day. Or you will see him standing, very large, holding a dozen men in his hands, and bringing his fist down upon them to crush them with his other hand.

Thus the power of the pharaoh, the cruelty of the pharaoh, is amply depicted in the monuments of Egypt; and it's generally a corroboration of this general background of the Biblical account of the Exodus which fits in perfectly to the Egyptian situation, as we know it.

Now there is one other archaeological matter which is of very considerable interest, the matter of the bricks and the straw; but that relates not to the whole general background, but to one specific instance described in the course of Moses' efforts to deliver the people from Egypt; and so instead of taking this under A as background, I will take it up as we look at the history of the deliverance a little bit later. And so we move on to

B. The Course of the Oppression.

We will not have to spend much time on this. I am calling your attention to it as an interesting thing to observe. In Exodus 1 we have Pharaoh beginning the oppression. He is afraid that if the Israelites gain strength they will be too strong; and they will join with some enemy and hurt the Egyptians; and therefore they put taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. Now we read in vs. 11 that they built treasure cities for pharaoh; and two cities are named Pithom and Raamses; and this name Raamses leads many of the people to feel that it must be one of the kings named Raamses who was the king when the Israelites were delivered.

Well, it might suggest that, but it certainly does not prove it. They say, "How could a city be called Raamses before Pharaoh was called Raamses? How would you have a city of that name before you have a king of that name? Well, it is not likely, but by no means impossible. You could have a city of that name before you have a pharaoh of that name. We know that Rameses II built great cities which he called Raamses. We know that, but that doesn't prove that there were not cities of that name before in different sections of Egypt.

Alexander the Great gave the name Alexandria to perhaps 50 different cities; and 50 others he named after his father Philip: Philippi, etc.; and that doesn't mean that there is no city named after Philip or Alexander before that time. We have dozens of places named Washington after George Washington; in most cases they were named after his time, but there is no reason why there mightn't be a place which was named Washington before the time of George Washington; so this is an evidence that looks toward the time of King Rameses II. Rameses I was a man who reigned a very brief time—the grandfather of Raamses II. But

Raamses is the name of this city and Pithom the name of the other city which they built for Pharaoh.

And then we find

But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigour; and made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.

It seemed to the Israelites that things couldn't be any worse; and then it got worse, and it kept getting worse and worse and carried on; and very often this is the case in life. Things seem like they cannot possibly go on, they cannot possibly get any worse; and then they may get twice as bad. And it is a strange thing; and very often it is easier for us to stand the terrific problems of life than the easier problems. The little things, the disagreeable things that come to us, they get us down terrifically. And then we get a real crisis, and we find that we stand up under it; and we step forward, and we seem to have reserve power that we never expected was there; and I think it is a mighty important thing to make your life worthwhile; to learn to call on the reserve for the little things and not let them get you down too much. Things can get worse and worse, and yet they can go an awful lot further; and here we find them going on; and the course of the oppression is worse, one of constant increasing in rigor. And you think that it is just about the very end of possibility; and yet it continues for another eighty years, because Moses was born and lived forty years in Egypt; and then went up into the wilderness, and was there forty years; and then he came back, and the Israelites were still under the oppression. So the course of the oppression was long and hard, with disagreeable treatment over a long period of years. And in Exodus chapter 5, we find the straw taken away from the people, in an effort to make it still harder for them. And so the course of the oppression is getting worse and worse, and yet it is carefully safeguarded so that it doesn't actually mean the destruction of the Israelites. Now

C. The Figure of Moses.

The oppression was very severe and very disagreeable; but in spite of it the people grew in number. It did not wipe them out or reduce them to weakness. Perhaps in the fifth chapter it reaches sort of a climax, in Pharaoh's taking the straw away from them to make their lot as difficult as possible.

We find the story of Moses' birth told in the second chapter of Exodus; and Pharaoh's daughter calls his name "Moses" and she says, "because I drew him out of the water." It is another of the various cases which we find in the Scripture in which a person is given a name; and the name is connected with a

statement of something relevant to him; and yet the name does not mean what the statement of the cause of the name says. That is to say: If you wanted to say, "Here is a certain reason; therefore I take this reason, and make a word of it, and make a name." It seems to be rather, that one takes a known name; and then one uses that name, because there is some reason why that name seems appropriate, either in the meaning of the name or in the sound of the name. The name seems generally to have been selected from a store of usable names, rather than that the name was invented for the purpose.

Now in this particular case, the name Moses is a good Egyptian name. We have many Egyptians named Moses and we have many Egyptians who have a name of which Moses is the last part of the name. We have the king Rameses which many archaeologists today pronounce "Ramoses". The last part is exactly the same as the name "Moses". Of course, in our English word "Moses," the ending "es" is a Greek ending. The Hebrew is simply "Mosheh"; and in the Egyptian kings, it is the same way. The end is just "mosh" plus the Greek ending. "Moses" means, "given birth". The sun god has given birth, has brought forth a child: *Ra* has brought forth, *mosh*, a child, *moses*, thus *Ramoses*.

There are these common names in Egypt; and the princess gave the boy a name which you strike every now and then in Egypt; but the name was particularly appropriate, because it was similar to the Hebrew word which would describe the contact which she had had with him. It may be the mother of the boy who suggested it—who was brought in to be his nurse—who suggested to Pharaoh's daughter that this name would be a good Egyptian name for him, a common Egyptian name, a good name to give the boy, and it would tie up with the Hebrew word *mashah*, "drew out," which described the way in which she had come in contact with the boy.

1. The Preparation of Moses. Now, this boy was brought up then in the land of Egypt; and we are not told anything about his education in Exodus. But over in Acts 7:20–22, Stephen tells us that Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; to a Bible believer, this is sufficient evidence that Moses was thoroughly trained; claiming to be a member of the royal family; trained for a high position in Egypt; trained in the knowledge of the Egyptians in how to do things. And so this man who was raised up to be the leader of the Israelites was not a man without education.

One sometimes finds a person of little education and no training who is a gifted leader; but that is extremely rare; and the people who have founded movements and established great organizations in the history of the church, the great majority of them have been men who have been thoroughly trained and prepared for the work which they have done. The Methodist church is known for the fact that a great number of its workers have been men who think they were called to the work with comparatively little training; but the men who

founded Methodism, the Wesleys—the organizers of it, the planners of it, the directors and leaders in it—were men with the highest training available in England at the time. The very name Methodist was given to these men at Oxford University where they were recognized for their careful, hard, methodical study; over against the many students who took things rather easy and were very light in their attitude toward the training they were getting. These men were methodical in their study; methodical in their devotions; methodical in their service to the Lord; and the other students in derision called them "Methodists"; and the word came to be applied to the organization for Christian work which the Wesleys founded, which later developed into the denomination.

God, in His providence, brought it about that Moses should be trained and fitted for his work. There is, I think, an interesting parallel between Moses and Wesley, in that both of them were thoroughly trained and prepared; and then when they had plenty of training, they went out and used their training and tried to do a great work for God; and they failed. And then each of them had to unite the great training which he had received with something which he learned under very humble circumstances. Somebody has said that Moses took forty years in Egypt to learn to be somebody and forty years in the wilderness to learn to be nobody. Well, that is only a half truth; and yet there is a very real truth in it, that the one whom God is going to use must be one who is well trained and qualified, but one who realizes his own limitations, who realizes that apart from God he can accomplish nothing.

Well, Moses, then, was thoroughly trained; and we have anticipated a bit his attempted individual deliverance of the people. He was brought up in Pharaoh's household, but feeling himself to be one of the Israelites, he looked at his brethren bearing their burdens and he wanted to help them; and when he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, he looked this way and that and didn't see anybody interfering so he slew the Egyptian. And then the next day he saw two Hebrews fighting together and he stepped up to them and he was going to solve it.

Here was this man connected with the royal family who was protecting the Hebrews; and now he was going to have them take a right attitude towards one another, and tell them what they should do and how they should do it; but they refused to accept him as a deliverer, and they said, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" And then Moses realized that he might be able to do what he wanted in relation to common people fairly securely, but he was apt to come into collision with the royal authority; if this thing went out that he was using his authority this way and interfering and even taking human life. And then Pharaoh heard of it and sought to punish Moses; and Moses fled and went to the land of Midian.

And so we have here the Hebrews refusing to accept deliverance; and it is a thing you will find as you go out and try to help people. Very often they won't want your help; and you need God's instruction and God's leadership; not only to tell you what to do to help people, but how to get the people to accept the help they need. Now if you are going to just wash your hands of them, because they don't just immediately welcome you with open arms, and thank you for what you are trying to do for them, you'd better not anticipate doing much in Christian work. Because as a matter of fact, the persons who have been most used of the Lord have very frequently had to make their way for a long time without very much recognition from those whom they were trying to help. But they were there to serve the Lord, not to serve the people, except as they served the Lord by serving the people.

I am very much interested in what I heard Mr. Leland Wang say the first time I heard him speak. He was speaking one night at Dr. [Harold S.] Laird's church; and he told about the number of times in his early ministry when he had become discouraged and disheartened and he wanted to quit his ministry. But he said he had taken over the ministry as a servant of the Lord; and he said there was nobody he could resign to except the Lord, because it was the Lord who put him into it; and so he said he couldn't resign. He was doing it for the Lord and not for the people.

I was very much impressed with the way that he expressed that; and I think that Moses at this particular point wasn't working for the Lord. He was working for the people, trying to help them; and he found it pretty discouraging work; and he quit and left. You have to know you are working for the Lord so definitely, that no matter what attitude people take, you are going to keep right on; making sure, however, that you are doing it the way the Lord wants you to.

Of course this flight was failure on his part. He tried to do a thing, and he failed and he fled; but it was also part of God's plan. A fellow asked me a question after class the other day which I think is worth spending a minute on at this time. He asked if there was such a thing as God's second best? Is there God's best plan and then God's second best plan?

Well it all depends on how you look at it. If you look at it from a viewpoint of God's plan for the world—of his plan for the universe—certainly everything is best. There is no second best for God. God does everything the very best. But if you look at it from the relation of God's dealings with us, then certainly the very best would be if we always obeyed his law; if Adam had not fallen, if we were all living lives that are in accordance with His will. That would be the best. And so anything that we experience after Adam's fall, is not best, but 10th best or 100th best. As far as we are concerned, that is not God's fault; that is our fault. God chose to give us the opportunity of following him because we love Him, rather than that He presses the button and makes us do it. He gave Adam a choice;

and he gives us a certain power of choice, that is tremendously injured by the fact that Adam sinned, and its affect upon us and our decisions.

And so from the viewpoint of ourselves, I think we can safely say that any one of us whenever we make a mistake; whenever we do something that is wrong; whenever we commit a sin; we can say that that certainly is not God's best. And we can say that our lives certainly—from our viewpoint—would be better if we had not made that mistake; if we didn't commit that sin. If we did not do that thing that was wrong, our lives would be better; and our lives are definitely inferior because we fail to follow God as we should. And there isn't a person here who could not improve his service to God and his life 20% today over what it was yesterday, by doing certain simple things. You could improve, and if you did, your life today would be far better than it would without them; but it wouldn't make yesterday better than it was. We certainly cannot say that our lives from our viewpoint are as they should be. They are very far below, but it is the result of our sin. But on the other hand, God in his plan for the universe utilizes our weakness and our sin. He utilizes our mistakes. He makes the wrath of wicked men to praise him and even the sin of righteous people to praise him. He utilizes it all as part of His great plan. It is possible, in the providence of God, that you may be able to look back and see how He used your mistakes for His glory; and how as a result of it, He fits you for something that you could not have done otherwise. The sin and the failure and the repentance may make you one whom God uses to a very great extent.

But we don't know how exactly our failures and our shortcomings, our sins, may enter into his particular pattern. And it may be that if you were not guilty of this sin, He might use you in a different way, that might appear to you inferior, but it might actually be superior in His sight. But He utilized your sin and your weaknesses as part of his great plan. But His will for you is that you avoid sin and that you do exactly what is His will.

Now those, I think, are a few words which fit, in view of this situation of Moses. Moses fled into Midian. Moses started to do the task in his own strength, in his own self-righteousness. He saw a tremendous need, and instead of falling on his knees and praying God to help him, to fit himself to perform the need, and to learn to perform it in the way in which it could be performed, he jumped right into the task immediately; when he was unfitted to perform it, he jumped into it in a way that he could not perform it. He jumped into it in a way that not only he could not perform it now, but that would tremendously handicap him for any performance of it in the near future. Because once he was tagged as having done this sort of thing, he no longer had the opportunity of developing himself to be the leader that will deliver the Israelites from bondage. It was a sin; it was a mistake; it was wickedness on his part; it was failure. He fled into Midian.

But in God's plan, his being in Midian for 40 years developed qualities in his character which were vital if he were going to be God's great leader. Now he might have gotten those qualities in Egypt. He might have learned to pray and to trust in God to get those qualities without having to be in the wilderness; but the way he did get them was through the desert experience. And in addition to that, he learned the desert. He learned the life in the desert; and he learned many, many things there which were invaluable in the leading of the Israelites in the 40 years of the desert.

And so it was part of God's plan as we look back on it; but for the one He used as his leader in bringing the Israelites out of the Egyptian experience and through the desert experience, that leader had the experience of a great mistake and a great failure, because he tried to do a good thing in the wrong way. He failed, but then he had that experience which helped to fit him for God's leading later. But as I say, he could have gotten that experience in a much different way.

I remember that when I was in my late teens, a number of friends had sudden attacks of appendicitis; and it impressed me very much; and I became very much afraid of the operation, and the misery that had come to my friends. And I began to pray that the Lord would keep me from having anything like that. And then I got to thinking it over, and I decided that that wasn't the right prayer. I decided that the way to pray was that God would enable me to be responsive to Him, and to learn the lessons that it may be necessary to teach through suffering. That he would enable me to learn the lessons in some other way, as one certainly can if He was subject to God and responsive to God.

But then I prayed that if I do not thus respond to God, that He then give me whatever suffering be necessary to give the lesson He wants. And I think it is true that whatever comes into the life of the Christian has a purpose in God's plan. I think that God can give us in a much less disagreeable way all of the blessings that he can give us through disagreeable ways; but we have to be more responsive than most of us are to get them in that way. And so I have tried ever since to pray in that way that God would enable me to learn the lesson without the disagreeable experience; to learn the lesson without it, but above all that he would give me the lesson; and that he would not fail to give me the lesson in case I did not get it without the disagreeableness.

And we know that what he sends, he will send despite the disagreeableness if we trust Him and look to him, whatever occurs. You know that if there is any sin in you, you are not doing God's best. You know that. You know that so long as you are following your own selfish ideas any of the time—as we all do a good bit of the time—you know that to that extent you have gone very, very far short of God's best.

It is one of the greatest hindrances to the Christian work, the way that people observe the lives of others whom they hear give wonderful presentations of Christian truth, and then they look to their lives for a representation of that. And perhaps they expect their lives to hold a standard that is humanly impossible; or perhaps they expect a standard that is way superior to what they ever think of having themselves. Perhaps they are unreasonable in this. Nevertheless it is true that if our lives at every step were responsive to God, in the little things of life as well as the big ones, we would be doing God's best.

No one of us here—I don't think anybody's doing it, that I know of—is doing God's 2nd best; a few are doing his 100th best while most of us 320th best. So if we have the consciousness of sin in our life, and of our failure moment by moment and day by day to do exactly that He wants, we certainly are not doing His first best. The vital question is—whether you are working in Nebraska or Indochina or in Tibet or in Kansas City—that is not the vital question. The vital question isn't even whether you are a minister or a preacher or a businessman. The vital question is that, step by step and minute by minute, you are living for God's glory, and speaking His messages as He wants them spoken. And if you are, He will lead on these other points in the way that is in accordance with His will.

Our response to God's grace varies with every individual. Salvation is entirely of grace. Justification is entirely of God's grace; but sanctification in the Christian life is something in which our wills are extremely important, whether we cooperate with God's grace or not in our lives. No one of us can cooperate 100%; but sanctification could happen four times as fast as it does if we were more submissive.

Well, Moses, here, was certainly not doing God's best. But what Moses did, God used for his glory; and it was part of God's plan. The brothers of Joseph were certainly not doing God's best in selling Joseph into Egypt, but God used it; and when they came down to Egypt, eventually Joseph said God sent me down here in order to prepare a place for you to be safe through the famine. It was part of God's plan. It was used for God's purposes, even though there was sin and wickedness, and there was failure that entered into different steps in it.

Well, now, Moses fled into Midian; and Moses had forty years there in Midian; and the statement that he had to learn to be nothing in forty years as he had learned to be something in forty years is only a half-truth, because it is true that in his attitude he had learned to be something in the wrong way in the first forty years. He had learned to feel himself superior to others; to think of himself as one connected with the royal family, who could simply go out and tell people what to do, and they would have to do it. And that was wrong; and he had to get over it; and he had to get that experience of forty years of humility and isolation in the desert, which brought him down to the point where

he really was skeptical of his ability to accomplish anything; where he developed a great humility, where he could say in all truthfulness that he was the meekest of all living men in his meekness; and it is the attitude of meekness which was characteristic of him.

He became meek and humble—as one needs this attitude of learning to be nothing, if one is to be successful in the Lord's service. If one can be satisfied with knowing that he really is nothing, then no matter what people say about him, it saves him an awful lot of worry; because as long as you think that if you put Moses up here, and somebody who is absolutely useless down here; as long as you think you are a very great man and belong up here; why if somebody puts you down here, you feel pretty terrible; and if somebody puts you up here, you feel pretty elated. And you are so much concerned, between the people who put you down here, and the people who put you up here, that it detracts from your effectiveness; and the attention you can give to your work. But once you realize you are really down here, and that you are nothing except as God uses you, then you don't care what people think; because you know whatever value they give you is more than you really deserve. It is only the grace of God that makes you anything; and so Moses had to learn this lesson, but it was a lesson of attitude.

As far as training and ability is concerned, it is not true that the first forty years were learning to be something, and the last forty years learning to be nothing. From that viewpoint, the whole eighty years was learning to be something, because God was training Moses during the entire eighty years for the work which He wanted him to do. In the first forty years Moses was learning the wisdom of the Egyptians: the principles of leadership, and the understanding of writing, of literature, all sorts of very vital matters which he learned from the Egyptians.

But it was a large part of the important work which Moses did; in fact, of the years of service which Moses gave, most of them were spent not in Egypt, but in the wilderness. And in the Exodus, Moses didn't go out into the wilderness as a city dweller, who knew how to turn on the electric lights, and ring for the elevator, but didn't have much idea how to get along out in the wilderness. He went out there as a man who had lived there for forty years; as man who knew a great deal about how to get on in the wilderness; where would be the decent places to camp; what would be the decent way to set up the camp; where you would look ordinarily for water; what you might expect there; there were a great many things about the wilderness that Moses learned during this forty years that were tremendously useful in his leadership of the people.

God had given him two extremely different and diverse types of training; and both of them were essential in the work that Moses had to do for God thereafter. So in his attitude he learned to be something wrongly—and had to

correct it in the latter forty years; but in his actual training he was all the time securing training that was worth something in the Lord's service.

Now we could easily think how Moses must have felt when he first got out there. At the end of the forty years in the wilderness there, we know he had given up all thought of accomplishing anything for the Lord. He had settled down into being satisfied simply to live there in the back of the desert the rest of his life; and God had to take him by the scruff of the neck, and bring him out, and force him into the work that God wanted him to do.

God doesn't ordinarily do that. Ordinarily if you are not ready to look for the job God wants you to have; ordinarily you are not worth enough to His Kingdom that He is going to go and take you like He did Moses. It is comparatively seldom that He does that; but in places of key men—absolutely necessary men—He does do that, as He did in the case of Moses. But I don't think Moses got to that attitude of mind immediately when he went out to the desert. He fled from Egypt, but possibly he thought, "Oh, my! I ought to be helping my people."

Probably his very feeling of the wrong in giving up the task that he had started, was one of the things that he was possibly stifling and forcing back in his mind; and that had put him in the position where, at the end of the time, he just didn't want to have anything to do with it; and he said to the Lord, "Send thou whom You will send, only let me stay here." Probably one of the things that contributed to letting him get that way, was his forcing down the impulse within him—his first few years there—to step out and to serve the Lord and to try to do something when he couldn't see how to do it. Under those circumstances, he knew that he couldn't accomplish anything to go back to Egypt. He figured that he would be killed immediately; there was nothing that he could accomplish; and here he was out in the desert, confined in this humble life away from Egypt. And how he must have felt! What a waste! All these years of training and preparation, and now he can't do anything with it! And yet all the time he was being prepared and fitted for one of the greatest works that any man ever did.

It isn't where you are, or what degree you have, that counts in the Lord's service; but it is, "What are you doing with the talents and abilities that the Lord has given you?" It doesn't do you any good to sit back and look at someone else and say, "If I had his ability, think what I could accomplish." Some people have far more ability than others have; but the thing that is most needed is a thing that, unfortunately, is very rare. Most of us are thinking, "Now, if I get this degree, I am ready to do that kind of work. If I get this recognition, I am ready to do that. If I go through this particular thing, people will recommend me to this particular kind of work." And actually the thing that counts is not so much the degree that you have, as the use you make of the opportunities for training.

And if a person will think of his own needs, and what he ought to have, and what he can do to remedy it, there is no limit to what can be accomplished by any one of us in life, no matter where we are.

I feel that probably every—well, perhaps we shouldn't say every, we'll say at least ninety five per cent—of the students in any school, including this one, could get twice as much value out of their work if, instead of their objective being simply to get a good mark in the course, or to get a degree, it was to fit themselves for the Lord's service effectively. I mean, not that you fit yourself by getting a degree, but that you fit yourself by what you are doing today. What do you need today? What way is there in which you can improve yourself? Not, "This other fellow has ability that I don't have," but "What can I do to develop that particular ability?" Not, "I'm pretty good in this line, and the other fellow isn't very good there, so I don't need to worry about improving in this." I may be pretty good in comparison to him, but am I much good in comparison to the needs of the work? You may be two steps ahead of him, but you need to go ahead more steps, if you are going to have something that is worthwhile.

Now, personally, I have always opposed as far as possible students taking on full time pastorates in seminary, because I have felt that it isn't enough to take the work and get it in your mind like a sponge, and then put it on exam papers. The most important thing isn't memorizing a few things. It is thinking them through; meditating on them; making them a part of yourself; seeing their relevance to your life and to your work; and as you think through these various courses in relation to one another; and in relation to your life plans; and study through the problems that are raised in connection with them; then there is no limit to the value which you can get from your seminary training. A person with a quick mind can absorb a great deal of the material—long enough to write it on an exam paper pretty well—and forget about it; and it is mighty hard for someone else to check on whether he has really thought it through and gotten much good out of it or not.

And as a matter of fact, I am not sure that there is so much value in someone else checking on it; because, after all, one trouble with our whole American educational system is that we have these temporary, immediate motives before us, so much that the bulk of people simply stop and don't go any further. The average minister thinks, "What shall I give for my sermon Sunday morning?" "What shall I give Sunday evening?" "What shall I give in the prayer meeting talk Wednesday?" "Now, that's finished; let's read the newspaper, or let's go out in the garden," instead of thinking that he is still in training, just as much as when he was in seminary, and the important thing isn't what you are going to give in your sermon this week, but what are you doing to improve yourself, so that all your sermons five years from now will be many times better than your sermons now, and you will be far more effective. Moses, out in the wilderness there, was

forced under the pressure of the circumstances to take ahold of the situation and to learn how to handle it decently.

And we noticed that when Moses went out there, he was a man of initiative and energy and interest in trying to do something worthwhile; even though he was out there in the desert where there seemed to be no future for him. When he came to the land of Midian, and came to this well, he saw these women who were trying to water their father's flock, and having difficulty because the shepherds would drive them away and water their own sheep; and Moses was stirred with the injustice of the thing; and he stepped up, and fortunately he didn't kill the shepherd as he had killed the Egyptian, and start another feud; but he drove the shepherds away, and made it possible for the girls to have their fair turn at the use of the water. And this, of course, introduced him to the priest of Midian in a favorable way; and so he called him to his home; and Moses stayed there, and he gave Moses Zipporah, his daughter, in marriage, and so Moses stayed there and then forty years go by.

And then we have the call of Moses in Exodus chapter 3; and here we have that experience which God gives to a few key men at vital, crucial points in the progress of His Kingdom; but which He does not ordinarily give, because God expects most men, particularly in these days when we have His Word, to take the Word and study it; and see what the need is; and what there is that you can do to fulfill the need; and it is only in particular key instances that He grabs a man by the scruff of the neck as He did Moses, and puts him into the place of necessity.

(Student: What do we know about Jethro?) I do not see that in the particular context here we are given anything more about him; he is just called the priest of Midian, which would evidently mean a priest in the land of Midian; later on, of course, we have Jethro coming to the people of Israel, and being received by them in a way that suggests that he was considered pretty much as one with them. And so at that time they certainly considered him as a true believer; and it would certainly seem as if you could say that at this time also he was a true believer in God. I think that that is something of inference, but think a justifiable inference.

Of course you know the critical view: that these Midianites here believed in a queer sort of a desert god they called upon; who would just go on a tear through the wilderness; a great volcanic god; and Moses got his god from Jethro; and that is the way the whole worship of Jehovah began. But it does seem likely that he was a worshiper of the same God whom Moses served, even though we believe that he believed in God before Moses went there.

2. The Call of Moses.

I think the Lord is more interested in developing us into an obedient servant of His than He is in fitting us into the one particular niche. Now, we don't have Scripture saying that everyone can expect any such call. This call that God gave to Moses here—the Lord spent a lot of time arguing with Moses and Moses was worth arguing with. Most of us aren't, and we need not expect the Lord to take that much time. I don't think that He does it ordinarily.

A few years ago I knew of a man and a woman, who went as missionaries to a section which had a rather bad climate; and then a second couple went to that area; and then the second couple—the woman—had trouble with her health, and so they came back and left the work. And then the first couple came back on furlough; and I talked to the wife in the first couple, and referred to the second couple; and she said, "Oh, they didn't have a call to that particular country. That's the trouble. They went there without having been called to that particular country. If they had been called there they would have gotten along all right." I had the idea that before people went to that particular country, in which it was so difficult for white people to survive, they ought to try to have certain tests made to see whether their health condition would fit in with that particular place, rather than spend a few thousand dollars going and then find they weren't fitted for it and come back. But she said, "No," she said, "the thing is, if they really have a call for that, they will be all right; and if they haven't they shouldn't go."

Well, that was her attitude; and I was interested in the fact that she herself, the next time she went, her health failed and she came back; and her husband, who was exceptionally well trained for the work in that particular place and anxious to continue there, he had to give it up altogether to stay in this country; because her health absolutely shattered under the strain of a place to which she was not at all physically fitted.

Now, I do not think that in our day, God ordinarily leads a certain person to say, "This is the place." You hear a missionary speak about a certain place, "This is the place I should serve." If you are going to decide on that sort of a basis, you should be sure you hear people from every place before you make your decision; and then you should be mighty sure that you don't make it where the best speaker speaks, because that is not a fair method of making a decision, certainly.

But I think that in our day, that sort of a call is very unusual. The Lord has given us His Word; and He has given us a world that needs the gospel; and He wants us to see where we can serve Him, and how we can serve Him most effectively. I heard someone say—of business—that if anybody will do every day the things he knows he ought to do; and do it just a little bit better than it was being

done; and by doing the things he knows perfectly well he ought to do but isn't doing; he will soon be head and shoulders above everybody around him. And I think the same thing is certainly true in Christian work. And there is many a person wishing the Lord would reach and pick him up and lead him out into some great thing, when just by taking ahold of the situations and opportunities they have, they would very soon get into some great thing for the Lord.

Now, in this case, Moses has shut up the call within him—the feeling of the need to serve his people and to serve the Lord—he's settled down into a satisfied life there, living off there quietly in the desert, taking care of the sheep. And the Lord reaches out and takes him by the scruff of the neck; and He does it by first appealing to his curiosity. He gives him a wonderful thing to see, that Moses can't understand. The angel of the Lord appears to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. Moses sees the bush burning with fire, but the bush isn't consumed; and he says, "I'm going to turn aside and see what on earth is happening here," and God called to him out of the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses," and he said, "Here am I."

I don't think we can expect that God is going to call to us in a means like this; but I do think that it is altogether right for us to see the means which God used to take a reluctant man to turn him around until he would become a servant of the Lord; and perhaps we can learn something from it that will be helpful to us in arguing with people. God didn't simply meet Moses and say, "What is the matter with you? You wicked man, you've turned your back on the Lord's service; you are way out here away from the people of God. You ought to be back there in Egypt, doing something."

He did come pretty near to talking that way in the end of the conversation; but in the beginning of the conversation, He gave Moses something to interest him. He roused his curiosity. He roused his interest. He put him in a position where Moses, of his own volition, stepped out in that direction where he would be ready for witnessing; and certainly the man who uses sound commonsense salesmanship principles, in reaching people, and getting their interest and attention, will succeed far better in any type of Christian work than the one who comes into a head-on collision with everyone that he tries to reach for the Lord. And certainly that is what the Lord did here; He attracted Moses' curiosity, attracted his interest.

And then He said, "Do not come here. Put off your shoes from your feet for the place whereon you are standing is holy ground." And so he impressed on Moses the importance of the situation. He gave Moses an idea with whom He had to deal here; that he was in this situation face to face with the Lord; and Moses was now ready to hear the message. And then the Lord told him that he was going to bring the people out of Egypt; and to give them blessings; and before He told Moses the part he was to have in the work, He told him of the great

work that was going to be done, and He impresses him with it. And Moses doubtless was thinking, "My, isn't that wonderful! And won't that be grand for the Lord to go in there to Egypt and bless the people, and bring them out." And then He ended up, "Come, now, for I will send thee to Pharaoh," and the part that shocked Moses was at the end of the first part of the message; and Moses said, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh? I couldn't do this thing. It is just impossible. Just forget it. Get somebody else because I couldn't possibly do it."

Dr. Douglas Johnson, who is the General Secretary of the British Inter-Varsity, was telling about the work that he did in introducing it to many different British schools of all classes and types; and I was greatly interested in his account of how just one or two individuals in a school—those people would become interested—and some times it would take a long time before anything was developed; but in case after case, really vital work for the Lord was built up with one or two people. And sometimes they were seemingly very ineffective people; sometimes seemingly people who you would think would never accomplish anything for the Lord; but he saw that these people who did something for the Lord took his statement, "It all depends on me," and realized that meek and worthless and futile as they might seem, yet they were the only apparent means there of doing something for the Lord in that godless place.

And then, though, there is the second part of the sentence that made it worthwhile: "It all depends on me, and I depend on God." And here is Moses. He says "It depends on me. What can I do? Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out?" and the Lord said, "Certainly I shall be with you." And so it would depend on Moses; but Moses could depend on God. And God can use the poorest servant if he is really surrendered to the Lord, fully consecrated to the Lord.

And so here Moses began raising all kinds of questions. First he said, "Who am I? What could I do?" And the Lord said, "I will be with you. And here is a sign; here is a token to you. When you have brought forth the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain." What kind of a sign was that to Moses? How would that encourage him to go down there? That was the sort of sign that would be useful later. It wasn't much help right now; it just put the idea in his head. "Now you see; here's a prediction. When it is fulfilled you can be encouraged. You will come out with the people and you will serve God right here where you are now. Right here, you will be able to say, 'This is the place the Lord called me and here He has brought me out here with these people.' "

But then Moses said, "I'll come to the people and say, 'the God of your fathers,' and they'll say, What is his name? What shall I say unto them?" And God said unto Moses, "I AM THAT I AM."

I heard a modernist give a great sermon once at a YMCA camp; and he said that this would be more correctly translated in the Hebrew, I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE; and it showed the unfolding and developing of the evolutionary character of the God of the Bible. I will be what I will be. And it shows the constant change: there is nothing fixed or static in the Christian religion, everything is moving and changing and consequently you don't need to stand by old forms and traditions but go forward and adventurously into the future."

Well, that is a misinterpretation of the Hebrew tense. It is the imperfect of the Hebrew tense and if you always interpret an imperfect as the future, why you may be led into that conclusion. It is not of course the correct interpretation here. God said to Moses, *Ehyeh asher ehyeh*. And he said, "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, *Ehyeh* hath sent me unto you." And then we find them calling the Lord by the name that is spelled with the letters *YHWH*, which is a perfect of *hayah*; only it is in the third person instead of in the first person; and so the name is given, the name of God to the people. I, imperfect *hayah*, the continuous, *YHWH*; the name, I AM, I continue to be. I continue to be what I continue to be. That is, He is the self-existing one. The idea of being is secondary.

Someone I heard once interpret it "God is the One who causeth everything to happen." He is the one who is himself self-existent; but he is the one who causes events. He is the one from whom everything comes. He is the one who controls all things; and here particularly the name is given, as a name to be given to the children of Israel, who He is going to redeem, to deliver out of Egypt. It is a prominent name of God in his close relationship with his people.

In the NT, they quote this name, simply using the word that the Septuagint uses to refer to it, the word *kurios*, which of course, to every Jew who knew it in the Hebrew, or at least in the Aramaic, the Greek was simply a reminder of what was in the original. And so it reminded them of this name which has this particular meaning. It does mean the dominating one: "God is the Dominating One"; "God is the Lord"; "He is the Master"; but that is not what this particular name means. And so the NT reproduces it simply with an indication of it, and the King James similarly indicates it with the word LORD, sometimes with GOD in capital letters; and instead of trying to pronounce the sacred name of God, it gives GOD or LORD in capital letters; and I think it is good when you read it, to be sure you read it in a tone that indicates clearly that it is capital letters and not our English word Lord, which is an entirely different word, which has an entirely different idea.

This is the personal name of God. "God" is a name of a type of being, a God; but this word is the personal name of God. It is like you might say Abraham, the man; we give this name to God.

Well, he reveals this name here to Moses; and he tells him to give this name to the Israelites. Now the name is used in Genesis. I don't think that there is any reason to think that the patriarchs didn't know this name; but ordinarily, God revealed himself under the other name of El-Shaddai, the nourishing one, the one that cares for them; but this is the name of God as redeemer. They probably knew it already, for it is used a good many times in Genesis; but now it is to appear in its full significance: the significance of God, the great controlling one, the one who begins all things; that he is going to be the redeeming God of his people, to bring them out of Egypt.

And so He reveals the name here in verse 3:14; and we doubtless have a reference to this passage in John 8:58, where we have our Lord Jesus Christ, when the Jews said to him "Thou art not yet 50 years old and hast thou seen Abraham?" Jesus said unto them, "Verily, verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, I AM." The very same word we find back here, I AM THAT I AM. "Before Abraham was, I am." And when he gave this claim that he was the very God of Israel, then they took up stones to cast at him, and so you have this reference to himself, the sacred Name of God.

And then God said to Moses, "You shall say that the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob hath sent me to you." He names them—the fathers—to show the continuity with the Israelites in despair in Egypt; but the God Who brought them down there is going to bring them back; the God Who was with their fathers in Canaan is going to bring them back to Him; the God Who called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees is going to come to them, and is going to bring them out into a land flowing with milk and honey. And so He gives Moses this command and this promise of empowering.

But after Moses' previous failure, he is now pretty much afraid to go; and so he starts in making more and more excuses. And how ready we are to make excuses! We fail once, and then we won't step any more in that direction. We say, "Let someone else do it. I just don't have that knack. I'm just not good for this." And the question is not, "Do you have the knack?" The question is, "Can God give you the ability to do the thing that needs to be done?" And He can, if you put yourself in His hands, and then do your best to train yourself along the line that is needed.

God called Moses to the work which Moses had previously tried to take up in his own strength and made an utter failure. Now Moses was ready. The time was come. He was to be a great key figure in God's Kingdom, and God was calling him for the specific work; but we find that now that Moses is ready and prepared, he is now not anxious to do it. Previously when he wasn't ready, he was anxious to do it. Now that he is prepared, he is not anxious to do it. I think that corresponds to something in the experience of many of us. With no

training and no special aptitude for a work, how many of us are ready to jump into it and think that we can do it better than the veterans who have been working in it for years, and who know more about it than we could learn without taking many years of learning? But we are just ready to jump in and feel convinced that we could do it far better than they can.

However, the same people who take this attitude of feeling they can do anything when they are not even prepared for it at all; then after they have had some preparation, and they are fifty times better equipped to do it than they were before, they begin to realize what it calls for; what is needed for it; how many different things it requires to do it perfectly; and then they are reluctant to go ahead.

And you have two problems in any kind of work. One is to keep the people that don't know anything about it, from jumping in and wrecking everything with their hasty, ill-considered measures; and the other is to persuade the people who have the training to do it fairly decently, to go ahead and do the thing they are capable of doing, that they are trained to do. You have those two problems; and of course the difficulty is that in speaking to people, if you give a message adapted for one of these two groups, the other one takes it as an excuse for them, and goes further in the direction in which they are going. The person who is not ready needs to be told to prepare and get ready. The person who is fairly well ready needs to be told to get busy and use what he's got.

You'll find so many people that don't want to go to school; they want to get right into their work. After all, why is the training needed? And many of them jump into the work, and do good work for a little while, and then soon just peter out, and fizzle out, and accomplish little with their life. While the ones who can finally be persuaded to get busy and study and prepare themselves, when they have enough preparation to do the work as well as most are doing it—or better than most—are apt to feel their inadequacy so much that they want to go on and on and on, learning more and more and more, instead of getting busy and using the thing they've got. It is one of the weaknesses of human nature.

And here we find Moses holding back, and declining; and God gives him one argument after another. God, in His great mercy, doesn't turn Moses over to do what he wants, and give him leanness of soul with it, as happens to so many. He insists, and He keeps after him, because here is a key point in God's work, which God is determined to carry through. God, of course, could carry through all His work. He could make it all automatic. He could press a button and make the whole world Christian. He could do it that way if He chose; but that is not the way He chooses. And the way He has chosen to do it, the work suffers tremendously through the weakness and inefficiency and unwillingness of mankind. And yet if it was left to us, it would just go all to pieces; and God

would not allow that. At key points He intervenes with power, as He did with Moses here; and He picked Moses up, and against his will He made him become a great key worker in God's Kingdom.

And so God has spoken to Moses; and Moses has declined on one argument after another; and God has insisted; and God has told him what He is going to do. He is going to free the people from Egypt, and enable Moses to lead them out against Pharaoh's will; and then in chapter 4, Moses says, "But they won't listen to me. They won't hearken to my voice. They'll say, 'The Lord hasn't appeared to you.' In order to do this great work, I have to have some credentials. How could I do it? I have no credentials. Nobody will recognize me."

Well, the Lord, says, "I'll give you some credentials;" and the first credential that He gave Moses is the power to perform a striking act; the power to do something that will make the people see that here is one who has a power beyond any power that they have; will make them see that surely this power proves that God is behind this man; and so He says to Moses, "What's in your hand?" and Moses says, "A rod"; and he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. He fled from his own rod when his rod became a live serpent. And then the Lord said to him, "Put forth thy hand and take it by the tail;" and he put forth his hand, and he caught it in the way that God showed him to do; and immediately it became a rod in his hand. I think it is very interesting, the way verse 5 connects with verse 11. The Lord said,

Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand: That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

Now that doesn't—as we read it in English—make good sense, does it? He put forth his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand, that they may believe that the Lord hath appeared unto thee. It just doesn't make sense as it stands; and so it is another of those many cases where we have to interpret the scene from the words that are here, and understand. The Lord says, "Put forth thine hand and take it by the tail," and Moses does what He says; and the Lord continues speaking, "that they may believe that the Lord has appeared unto thee." If you interpret it that way—that the Lord was going right on and talking, and in between it tells you what Moses has done—it makes good sense. It is just another instance of the fact that the Bible is not simply a combination of sounds out of which we can pick any few words, and here's something that makes perfect sense and is the Word of God to us. It is not that at all.

The Bible is a Book of Ideas. It is not the ideas that are inspired, it is the words that are inspired; but by that we mean that the words are adapted to convey the ideas; but it takes interpretation and study to learn what the ideas are which are

conveyed by the words. And we do not always get it at the first glance. In fact, often a brief summary glance may give you the wrong idea altogether of what it means; and in this case, simply to examine it closely and see what actually happened makes it perfectly clear. It is just at first sight that it isn't clear.

And then the Lord gave him another sign. He put his hand in his bosom and when he took it out it was leprous; and he put it in again, and he took it out, and it was like the other; and the Lord said, "Now why should you worry?" He said, "If they don't listen to the one sign, they will believe the other sign; and if they won't listen to these two signs, I am going to give you a third sign, so now surely you have sufficient evidence. They will accept you as the Lord's representative."

So here in Chapter 4 we enter a very difficult subject, one on which I think we ought to do a little clear thinking. Well, now these are what we call "miracles." We find over in vs. 17 he says, "Thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs." Vs. 9 is the same, "And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land; and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land."

Now here they are called "signs". And this Hebrew word *owth* is often translated sign in the English, but sometimes translated miracle (Numbers 14:22, "my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness"). In fact the word "miracle" represents this word more than it represents any other word in the Hebrew. There is another word *mopeth*, which occurs only nine times—if I remember correctly—in the OT, which is also occasionally translated "miracle". But sign is translated here far more often than miracle so that the translating of it is introducing a theological concept here; and the question is, "Do we have this particular theological concept taught in any verse in the Scripture?" Well, what is the purpose of these signs? They were indications that God had spoken to him. They were indications to the people that he was indeed God's messenger. Now what kind of a sign, what kind of an indication is this, in order to prove to the people that you are God's messenger? Well, there is no sign that will completely prove it. There is no doubt of that. There is absolutely nothing that you can do that will be a sign to enable a finite mind to be sure, absolutely sure, that you have received this from God. If you had an infinite mind, it would be very easy to give such a sign. But to a finite mind, there is no particular sign which in itself is absolute proof; and therefore God gave him one sign; and He said, here is another sign; and if they won't believe these two signs, then here is a third sign. Why isn't one sufficient?

Well, here comes Moses, a man who has been in the wilderness. He has just done something that they do not understand. They have no way of knowing just how he would be able to learn how to do these things; and they would say,

"Well, it looks as if he is telling the truth. He said God gave him this. We do not know how else he could have gotten it; it looks as if he is telling the truth." Well, here is another sign. This other sign is an accumulated evidence; but the Christian minds in the medieval period looked at this, and thought about it, and said, "This was not the complete truth, except it were by the immediate power of God; otherwise it doesn't prove it." And therefore they said a miracle must be defined as "An event in the external world wrought by the immediate power of God and intended as a sign or attestation."

Now if you leave out the part about "the immediate power of God," I think you have a good indication of what it really is. It is an event in the external world which is intended as a sign or attestation. Well, the very word *owth* means a sign. It is an event intended as a sign or attestation; but what makes it to be a sign or attestation? Well, if you cannot conceive how it could have been done except by the immediate power of God, then it becomes a sign to that extent to you. But to say that it must *necessarily* be wrought by the immediate power of God; otherwise it is not a miracle, is introducing a concept for which there is no scriptural basis. And there is no particular scriptural teaching anywhere about such a concept.

After all, God holds all things in the power of his hand. God controls everything; and everything that happens, God has planned long ago. Well now, isn't it just as much an evidence that God is in something, if he causes many forces to come together to produce something so that a certain thing happens right at the time he says it is going to happen? Isn't that just as good an evidence as it would be if he simply all of a sudden reaches out his hand and changes the universe around and does something different? For an infinite mind, we might say that it is absolutely definitely necessary to have something that nothing but the immediate power of God impending can explain and nothing else; but for the infinite mind you don't need anything. You know it all already. These signs are intended for the finite mind.

Moses was going to those people there and doing something that was supposed to be an evidence to them. The Hebrew word "sign" is used as the token on the door, when they put blood on the door—a sign. It is used here, where God said to Moses, "This shall be a sign to you, you shall worship in this mount." In other words, you look forward; when the time comes, you come right to this place with the Israelites; and you say, "My, that is exactly what God said." That is a sign. And here is a sign for you to give: you cast your rod on the ground, and it becomes a serpent.

There is the concept that God has made a certain definite natural world; and having made this world, that is that. That is one separate thing; and then that is distinct altogether from this thing which he has made. And then if God reaches his finger into this world, that is a miracle. Well, it is not quite as simple as that

at all. We don't know where the natural world ends—what is the boundary of the natural world. We don't know what God has made to work in a certain way; and God never made anything and just left it. God controls and directs it all the time. And so this statement, "by the immediate power of God," gives something of an idea, but we must be careful. A miracle may be something—a sign may be something—which is just as much a creative act of God as the original creation; or it may be something which simply is the working together of the forces he has put here on the earth, in order to bring a certain result at a certain time. It is the means which God is using to bring a conviction—an intellectual conviction—to the mind of a certain person; and it may be anywhere along this line [from creation ex nihilo to providence].

And if He wanted to give us this particular concept, He would have given us a special word for it; but he does not, in the Scripture. There is this word *owth* mostly, *mopeth* a few times; but *owth* in itself doesn't always mean something that is supernatural. Now that is perhaps a general introduction into the subject which is purely in a theoretical way, but we will notice as we go along various instances where it applies actually; and there will be some who will feel rather aggrieved as we apply this to certain instances. People like to be prejudiced, and like to see something actually black and white—separate and different—but I think that if we are going to interpret the Scripture as it stands, we must recognize that this is the fundamental fact: that the sign is *not* something that is *necessarily* by the immediate power of God. We don't know. It may be. But a sign is something that is beyond our understanding, and therefore it is an evidence that God is working.

Now these two signs then would seem to be something that is strictly outside of human ability—these two signs that were given to Moses here. And they certainly were something that there is no way to know how we could figure them out apart from the divine revelation; and they were intended to convince the people; but if they didn't convince them sufficiently, then there was another sign given; and even after those, he had his difficulties with the people.

Well now, perhaps I should have left this material about "miracle" until a little later, when we get into some of these particular miracles; but please keep it in mind.

Well now, Moses still has another objection. Moses says, "Oh but God," he says, "I can't speak. I'm no speaker." I was talking to a man out in the Grand Canyon who is a naturalist there; and every day he'd have to speak to the people, telling them the story of the canyon and showing how all the evolutionary history of the earth is demonstrated in this great canyon in front of them; and giving them little tidbits about the natural history of the canyon. He was a very interesting speaker and a very excellent speaker; and he would speak once or twice a day, for half an hour to an hour, in front of a different audience every

day; and it is quite strenuous work, and of course he varied his message a good bit.

And then I was talking to him; and he said to me, "These other men here, who are busy for the government, fixing up trails, or supervising traffic, or giving information, or generally seeing that law and orderliness are observed," he said, "They are always saying to me, 'Oh, you don't have anything to do. All you have to do is get up and talk. You have nothing at all to do. Your life is easy.' " He said, "I get so tired of them sometimes; I think if one of them would just take it over for a day, and give me a little bit of a rest, it would do me so much good, and I'd be so much better the next day. But," he said, "They say, 'Oh, you just have an easy life. You just get up and talk.' But," he says, "Once in a while I am laid up, so I just can't do it; and then I ask one of them, 'Will you speak for me?' And they say, 'Oh. I can't speak. I can't talk. I don't have the gift of speaking.'" And it just struck me that people that do not speak have no realization of what it takes out of one. There are people who can get up, and talk all day, and it takes nothing out of them; but as a rule, I don't think it does anything for any one else, either. But to speak effectively requires a concentration of all your being upon the job you are doing; and I think in most cases, it takes a tremendous lot out of the person who is doing it. But those who do not do it have no realization that it takes anything from one, on the one hand; and on the other hand the attitude of Moses, "Oh, I'm just not a speaker, that's all there is to it." But actually, speaking, of course is something which some have a greater ability than others have for it; but everyone can triple or quadruple his effectiveness by proper training and proper effort.

And so Moses here is simply giving the answer which so many a person gives. You ask somebody in your church. You say, "I wish you would get up and give your testimony. I wish you would come with me to this meeting and say a few words." "Oh, I can't speak." Most of them will just simply refuse absolutely to speak; but if you keep after them, and you urge them, and finally you cajole them into doing it; and they come and do it once or twice, and find it isn't so bad; then after that, they'll want to take the whole time. People get bored to death listening to them, because they can't speak decently, and they won't take the time to learn to try. They've gotten over their first fright. Now they feel that they can do it all right.

Here, Moses said unto the Lord, "I am not eloquent," and in 4:10 the Lord said, "Who made man's mouth?" If I have told you to do this, you will be able to do it if you really try. If you will really do your best, and do the Lord's will when I command you to do this, then you will be able to. But Moses said, "My Lord, I pray thee send by the hand of him whom you will"—but don't send me. The anger of the Lord was kindled, and he said that we will give you Aaron to speak for you. And so Aaron was Moses spokesman for quite a while; and finally Moses got up his courage. And later on, you find him doing most of the

speaking for himself. But for quite a while, Aaron is his spokesman; which is certainly—we won't say God's second best here—but it was one step lower than what would have been before. It was one step down. Moses was to go and speak himself; he actually refuses. And God, instead of doing that with one of us when we make all kinds of excuses, and just saying, "All right, you go and do what you want to; and I will use somebody else," in this case God stoops to Moses' weakness and provides Aaron to be his mouth.

I don't think that we are justified in taking this as an example of evidence that God will necessarily stoop to our weakness also. Here was a situation for which Moses had been prepared all this time; and Moses showed this great weakness, and God stoops to his weakness. Most of us are not that important; and most of us, if we don't bother and get busy and learn to speak for ourselves, we needn't expect God to send along some unusual way in making up for the deficiency. God has given us the material equipment to learn to speak. He has given us the tongue; he has given us the brain; but most of us don't bother; and that is one of the reasons why the work of God goes so slowly these days. So many people get up with a very, very fine message, carefully worked out, and they give it in a tone of voice that puts people right to sleep; and naturally nothing is accomplished. God told Moses that He had made his mouth, and it was up to him to use it; but God stooped to Moses' weakness; and God sent Aaron in his place, and Aaron was Moses' mouthpiece.

So I think Moses got over his first fright because God stooped to his weakness here, and provided him a spokesman; but in later times, the evidence seems to be that Moses spoke right out himself, and didn't wait very often for Aaron to come and be his spokesman. But in this particular situation now, it is an objection which is raised; and the Lord's first answer to it is, "You learn how to do it." Moses says, "I can't speak. I'm slow of speech and have a slow tongue." "Well," the Lord says, "Who made man's mouth?" He says, "Haven't I made the mouth?" He says, "If I ask you to speak then can't I give you the power to speak? Can't I teach you how to speak? You go and train and learn and do what I want you to. "Now, therefore, go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." and Moses says, "Oh, Lord, send by the hand of him whom thou wilt send."

That's what most of us would say. Most of us do say it repeatedly in our lives. But God, having a key situation here and a key man for it, didn't take that attitude. He kept on, and that is what we should do when we have a key situation; even if people don't want to do what we know they ought to do; and if they won't give us the help and cooperation they should; we shouldn't simply fold our hands and close up our mouth and turn away and say, "All right, you go your own way." We should say, "We are not serving them or trying to please them, we are serving the Lord and trying to please Him." And if He wants the work done then we should go ahead and get the help we need, even if people

give all kinds of silly objections to it, and even if we see if their sinful heart is opposed to doing that which they ought to do.

So the Lord, instead of sullenly turning away, as I fear most of us would do; or angrily making an outburst against him, which would make him angry and close the door on further cooperation, when His anger was kindled, He did something practical. He said, "Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well." And also he is coming to meet you and you speak to him and tell him what to say. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I'll cut the work in half. You have the leading position. You have the responsibility. You have the leadership and the wisdom to use, but you have an instrument to help you do this thing you don't think you can do yourself. Aaron can come and be your spokesman; and he is your own brother, and you have confidence in him and know he is a good speaker. So this thing is completely answered

And right here, perhaps, God didn't give this answer first, God gave this at the end, and that's often a very good thing to do with people. If you know somebody has a strong objection, and if you know you have the perfect answer to your objection, it is often a very good thing to present things in such a way that they will bring up the objection; and let them present it in the strongest possible way; let everything be based upon this, and then you give your answer. If you give the answer right away, then they'll immediately say, "Well, that's answered. Here is another argument, and here's another." But if you can bring into the position of real importance the thing that you know you have the answer to, then there is actually no way in which they can decently decline to go ahead and do the thing they should. And so God brought Moses to the position where Moses' final objection had been answered in an absolutely conclusive way; and Moses returned to Jethro, his father-in-law and said, "Let me go and return to my brothers in Egypt, and see if they are alive." And Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace."

And so now he starts out; and the Lord has given Moses this definite message: "Go and return, for all the men are dead which sought thy life." And so Moses takes his wife and his sons, and puts them on an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And here is another instance where we see that the chronology of the Scripture doesn't usually go right straight forward to say all of one thing, and all of another, and all together. He returns to Egypt; and then the next thing we know, we find him on the way to Egypt, which, of course, is evidence that his return to Egypt is a general statement of what he did; and then he goes ahead and tells details on the way.

He returned to the land of Egypt, and he took the rod of God in his hand. That of course is before he returned. He took it with him as he returned; and the Lord told him what to do and what to say to Pharaoh; and the Lord said, "You show all your wonders to Pharaoh, but I will harden his heart that he shall not

let the people go." He said, "Don't you be worried if when you show these things to Pharaoh, Pharaoh turns you down, because," he says, "that is part the plan." You are not going to go down to Egypt and say, "Pharaoh, let the people go," and Pharaoh says, "All right, go ahead." That is not the plan. God is going to bring the people out of Egypt with a stretched out arm; and He can't do this if Pharaoh just lets them go. So He says, "I will harden his heart that he shall not let the people go." And so then, he gives him the message that he shall let them go and serve Him and if Pharaoh refuses, verses 22–23:

Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn.

And so he starts back towards Egypt, and then we have a very interesting incident, verses 24–26.

And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So He let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.

Is this one of those precious little bits of primitive tradition? One that records for us early material that otherwise might have been lost? That has been incorporated by the redactors into the story without their altogether realizing its significance? So that consequently, it preserves for us something of an understanding of the situation in those times, such as the compiler of the narrative didn't realize at all?

The liberal critical scholar William Addis wrote *The Documents of the Hexateuch*.⁷¹ Part I, "The Oldest Book of Hebrew History" takes the J and E documents and separates them from the P document, and puts them to run right along smoothly here, and here we have this passage in the J document and, here is a footnote.

Here we have one of the oldest paragraphs in the Hexateuch. Yahweh tries to kill Moses. The reason for this does not lie in the fact that Moses had neglected to circumcise his son. Circumcision had not even been mentioned hitherto.

Ibid., p.114 n.2

Is that true? It has not even been mentioned hitherto? Well... not in the J document: Not even mentioned hitherto. He doesn't say the J document, but of

⁷¹ William E. Addis, *The Documents of the Hexateuch* (1892)

course that is what he means. It *has* been mentioned in the P document. But because we know, if it is dealing with ceremony, it must belong to the P document, and therefore it couldn't be part of the J, so now you have found that it has never been mentioned before, in the J document. But Addis goes on,

Circumcision has not even been mentioned hitherto, much less has a law of circumcision been imposed. The explanation seems to be that the Yahweh of the early Hebrews devours like the element of fire, not for moral reasons but by a necessity of nature.

Ibid.

Now to say that in simple language you would say that this god Yahweh just goes on a tear and kills anybody that gets in his way.

He is appeased by the blood of circumcision and Zipporah calls Moses 'a bridegroom of blood,' i.e. a husband whose life she has saved by sacrificing the blood of her son. Thus circumcision is regarded here as 'an offering of blood for the propitiation of Yahweh.'

And so Moses runs into this situation and from it we learn something of what sort of a God Yahweh was actually, in the beginning. And so Moses took this primitive deity and transformed him into an exalted being, that could form a foundation for the lofty religion that is found in the Old Testament. Of course no such passages were found by the redactors, and so were not included in the compilation; but here is one that got into it, and it just gives us an idea as to what they really thought, before the Hebrew prophets with their marvelous spiritual creativeness developed the idea of one God who controlled the universe and who had high ethical ideals.

We find, of course, no ethical ideals in this narrative here at all. Yahweh just meets a man on the way and tries to kill him; and then Zipporah, his wife, takes a sharp stone and cuts off the foreskin of their son and casts it at his feet and says, "Surely a bloody husband art thou to me." So she—here is her husband and Yahweh is about to kill him—and she has to do something to save her husband's life; and so she makes a sacrifice of the first thing she can lay her hands on; and when Yahweh sees the sacrifice he is appeased; so we read in verse 26, "So he let him go."

This doesn't shed much light on the origin of "Yahweh," or the origin of the idea of the early teaching about Yahweh, before the idea was changed, and transmuted, and developed by those prophetic writers, who invented a god who would be creator of all the universe; and who would have high ethical principles, instead of just trying to kill anybody he met by the way.

Now that is an interpretation which Addis gives, in his book here on the documents of the Hexateuch. But I imagine there may be some of you who do

not like this particular interpretation; and if you don't, there are two things you can do. One is, you can put it up on a shelf saying, "I don't know what the passage means; I am quite sure it doesn't mean that. I don't know what it means, but I'm going to keep watching for light to explain what the passage means."

Now that is a possible thing to do; but you shouldn't just leave it on the shelf indefinitely. You should keep watching for it, and trying to find an explanation; and don't keep too many passages on the shelf—but it is far better to do that than to jump to some interpretation and say, "This must be what it means. I am going to grab this and stand on that and interpret other things on it."

But now we want to know: what does this passage mean, if it doesn't mean that?

"It came to pass by the way in the inn that Yahweh met him and sought to kill him." Now the word Yahweh, of course, is the critics' representation of this. If you say "Jehovah met him," you have the way the Revised Version has it; the important thing is that we realize it is the *name* of God which is used here; that this being, this God—call him Jehovah or Yahweh—that this God met him by the way, and met him in the inn, and sought to kill him. Well, what kind of a god is that? What does it mean, he seeks to kill him? Well, of course, in the most obvious sense of it, it does sound like the one who just kills anybody in his way.

But I think we certainly are justified in saying that, when it says he sought to kill him, it means that the Lord caused something to happen, which was clear to Moses and to Zipporah that it was a threat to Moses' life, and that it came from God. Now was that some unusual, miraculous intervention? Was it some illness that came to Moses suddenly, which seemed to be the end of Moses? Exactly what form it took we don't know; but I don't think we have any difficulty in reaching the conclusion that this first verse must be interpreted in that way—that the Lord caused something to happen which was immediately and correctly interpreted by Moses and Zipporah, as an indication that Moses' life was in serious danger. Well, if we take that then, in verse 24, we get away then from the idea of the thunder god going on a tear and killing everybody in the way. We have a great and marvelous good god of the universe who, for a great purpose of His own, causes Moses and Zipporah to feel that Moses' life is in tremendous danger at the hand of the Lord; and naturally you would say right away, "If that is the case, there must be a reason."

Well, maybe Moses' life is simply over. Moses had lived long enough. Everyone must go some time. It was time for Moses to go. The difficulty with that is, God has given Moses a work to do. God has told Moses specifically this work is ahead, this work is for him to do. Therefore, we know that God is not simply taking his life because he now has ended his days. It is not Satan here who is

causing trouble, because the Scripture definitely tells us the Lord sought to kill him. It is God's divine act for God's purpose.

Well, now there is no explanation given to us as to why it happened; but we find two things. We find that Zipporah seems to know why it happened, because immediately she did something. Well, that doesn't say she knew why it happened, but she knew this: she either knew why it happened, or she knew what the remedy was.

If you see a person who has just been eating some stuff and the person gets all white and upset and you decide he has food poisoning, you may immediately take soapy water and make him swallow it as quick as you can. You do that because you know that is the remedy for it. You cause them to get rid of the stuff that they have taken into their system before it poisons them. You know the remedy by the signs; but you are pretty apt to know the cause of it: that the cause of it is they have taken something in that needs to be put out.

Now in this case, Zipporah knew what would cure this, because she immediately proceeded to do something; and it is a pretty good indication that Zipporah also knew why it had come. She knew what was wrong; she knew what to do to cure it. And furthermore, we find in verse 26 "so He let him go." God brought an end to this, which appears to mean that Moses' life was in danger of immediate extinction. God brought an end to it as soon as Zipporah did this; and so either, as the critics say, this appeased God and satisfied Him, or else this fulfilled the thing that God wanted.

And so we have there the definite evidence, I think, that the reason for Moses' life being in danger is connected with circumcision and that the circumcising of the child was a thing that was desired and brought an end to it. And the woman immediately performs that which is needed and she casts it at her husband's feet and says, "Surely a bloody husband art thou to me," and so God lets him go. And now the difficulty is over—perhaps the next minute, perhaps an hour later—but when it is over, then she says, "A bloody husband thou art," because of circumcision. She repeats it, what she has said right at the moment's time. She is repeatedly blaming Moses for the situation. She objects to the circumcision. Else why did she say it?

I think very evidently she objects to the circumcision. She didn't want it. She said, "No, we'll wait until the child is grown up, and he can decide for himself. We're not going to do this now," And Moses gave in to her and they didn't do it; and now the Lord seeks to kill him, and Zipporah is in the situation she's got to choose. Is she is going to let Moses die and keep her previous ideas? Or is she going to give in to what Moses has been saying all along—but not insisting on—and save Moses?

And immediately—she doesn't wait for Moses to do it now—that is, the Jewish interpretation says that circumcision must be performed by a man. Now this says that she took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son. Now that wouldn't do because that was against the law of circumcision; it must be done by a man. Therefore, the Jewish interpretation says, when it says that she did it, it means that she had Moses do it. "You do it. I give up my objection." But I don't think that was necessary. I don't think that there was question here of observing an exact, precise law there. She knows what the situation is. Is she going to lose Moses because of her insistence upon her own ideas on this thing, or is she going to give in? And she takes the foreskin and she does this thing immediately; but she is not very happy about it. She says, "You are a bloody husband, and we have to perform this bloody rite. We have to go into this 'gospel of the shambles' [a modern liberal term for blood sacrifice] in order to keep you alive," she says. She says, "All right, we'll do it; I'd rather do that than lose you."

Well, the Lord is dealing here with Moses. Zipporah is involved, but she is not the primary individual. It doesn't say the Lord was pleased with Zipporah's attitude; but it does say that thing that the Lord was displeased with was now removed. The child has been circumcised.

Well, we have these facts; and we want to try to construct an interpretation out of it that will give us a satisfactory interpretation. I think we agree that Addis' critical interpretation is not satisfactory; but here it is not the question of what is satisfactory. I don't think we can question this, that the reason He sought to kill him was connected with circumcision; and that Zipporah knew what was needed; and that when Zipporah circumcised the child, then the Lord removed this imminent danger of the moment. That much is certain; and the fact that when Zipporah circumcised the child, that put an end to this present difficulty which Moses was in; and also I think we can definitely say—not that Zipporah was a godless woman, I don't think we can say that at all—but I think we can say that Zipporah didn't approve of having the child circumcised. She said, "This is a bloody rite. I don't like it, and especially on a poor little child like this"; and she objected to it and she refused to do it; and now Moses is in this situation; and Zipporah removed the thing that had been hazarding the success of Moses' work, and even threatening Moses' life, by herself plunging into the situation and cutting off the foreskin of her son; but when she does it, she gives in, but not with very good grace. She throws it at Moses' feet and says, "You're a bloody husband."

I suppose everybody here is familiar with the fact that in the Bible we have the word *eloi*, which simply means "God"; and then we have the word *elohim* which means "Gods," that is, it is in the plural; "Gods," literally, but it uses a plural ending, and is used for the one great God, and we simply translate it "God." It is, then, the name of God used most commonly.

Those are both titles. That is a very deceptive thing about our English version, that it uses "God" in such a way that most people think of "God" as a name when it is a title; and it uses "The Lord" in a way that makes most people think it is a title, when it is really the name.

The name *YHWH* is those four letters, called the "Tetragrammaton." And when the Jews came to those four letters in their reading, they did not pronounce the sacred name of God, lest they should take the name upon unclean lips. They did not pronounce the sacred name of God, but they simply said "the Lord." and in our authorized version when they put Lord in capitals, "LORD," that is *YHWH*. When it is the word *adonai*, they put it "Lord" in lower-case in our English version; unless it says The Lord *YHWH*, and if it is that way, the Jews didn't say "the Lord LORD," they would say the Lord GOD"; and in that case, our English version has GOD in capitals. So whenever in the Authorized Version you see either GOD or LORD in capitals you know that that means *Yahweh*, the name of God which is not pronounced by the Hebrews at all.

The Septuagint, when it quotes these verses, uses the Greek word *kurios*, which means Lord, if it is translating this word; and so the New Testament simply quotes it the way the Jews pronounced it there.

The Revised Version [ERV, 1881] translates the "tetragrammaton" *YHWH* as "Jehovah" which is taking the consonants of *YHWH* and the vowels of *Adonai* and putting it together—a very queer combination, taking the vowels of one word, and the consonants of another. And some have said, "We don't know how was pronounced; all we know is that it wasn't pronounced Jehovah"; and yet, after all, what's the difference? Jehovah is a combination of sounds representing this specifically and indicating a name. We don't know how they pronounced it. If we did, we wouldn't pronounce it the way the ancient Hebrews did. Our mouths aren't formed the way theirs were. We couldn't possibly pronounce it exactly like they pronounced it.

In fact, it is very difficult to pronounce the words from any other language exactly as the people of that language would pronounce them. And so if you use Jehovah and indicate this, you know what you are indicating; it is a name for God. It's purely a representation of it. It is not the real name, but it represents it and you know what it is, so I think there is much to be said for using Jehovah. However, it is customary to call it LORD, in capital letters, and as long as you can see it capped you know where you are.

Now, of course, as it stands here you've carried Moses right up to the end of his trip. He's on the way, approaching the end; and then you take Aaron, and you go back to where Aaron started and have him come out to meet them.

Now, of course, Addis simply says that the E story has Aaron in it, and Aaron isn't mentioned in the J story or in the P story. In fact, he takes the name of Aaron out of the E story, but he combines that up with the section before it. These are our first references to Aaron. God says in verse 14, "Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well." And then over here it mentions that the Lord said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses," but we are not told anything about Aaron before this time. Of course, we know this. When Moses was saved through the bulrushes, all the other Hebrew children were not killed. If all the Hebrew children at that time were killed except Moses, and that kept on the next forty years, when Moses got to Egypt, there would have been nobody under forty years of age; so very evidently the plan didn't work out to kill all of them; but he killed a good many of them.

(Student) Oh, verse 27, yes. The mount of God seems to refer to the whole mountain area in Sinai.

(Student) Probably five or six days; and Moses, of course, would go more slowly, with his wife and family. He may have been gone about the same length of time.

Well just to complete an important thought here. In Exodus 18, we read that as the Israelites were going through the wilderness some time after they had left Egypt,

When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father in law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people, and that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt; then Jethro, Moses' father in law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, and her two sons, of which the name of the one was Gershom; for he said, "I have been an alien in a strange land," and the name of the other was Eliezer; for the God of my father, said he, was mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh. And Jethro, Moses' father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the mount of God.

Now, this says that Jethro came and brought with him Zipporah and Moses' sons after Moses had sent them back, and it mentions the two sons, Gershom and Eliezer. Which was the older of these two sons, Gershom or Eliezer? There is a certain presumption, that since Gershom is mentioned first, he may be the oldest, but there is actually no proof of it. It might be the other way around. There is no proof. But there is a suggestion that maybe he is the oldest. Now let us assume, then, that Gershom is the oldest one. How many years older was Gershom than Eliezer? They may have been twins for all we know, for we do not know whether they were twins or whether Gershom was twenty years older than Eliezer or whether he was one year older. We don't know anything about them. We just don't know. But we have the proof here that there were two sons, and

these two sons and Zipporah had been sent back by Moses. Now, when had Moses set them back? We don't know anything about it. Therefore the Lord has not told us whether Moses sent them back immediately after the circumcision; or whether it was later on in Egypt when things began to get rather hot, and he thought it was better for them to get out of the country as things developed; or when it was. We do not know. There are many conjectures, since this is the first mention of them. There is no mention in between; and it refers here to his having sent them back, so after the time when Zipporah had saved Moses' life. In this connection, perhaps he immediately had sent her and the children back, but that is only a conjecture. It is probably a very reasonable conjecture, but we're certainly not at all sure that it is right. Now in the passages we've been looking at, before they went back, we find that there in the inn the Lord met him and sought to kill him and Zipporah quickly took the needed action.

In the case of Isaac, if the animal hadn't happened to get caught in the thicket, why poor Isaac would have been killed; but God knew, of course, before He told Abraham to go there that he would provide the animal. There is a close similarity between them. Everything that happens is part of God's will, part of God's plan.

So I see no way to escape from the conclusion that if Moses is going to fulfill God's work for which God has called him, it is necessary that Moses fulfill God's commands; and not even his love to his wife must be sufficient to allow him to step aside from carrying out the commands that God has given, and from showing in his life that righteousness which God desires by bestowing upon his child the sign of the covenant.

Moses could be a true child of God without having done this; he could be truly saved; but if he is going to be a real leader in God's Kingdom; if he is going to accomplish God's work; God wants him to carry out the commands which have been given to Abraham: that not only shall he himself receive the seal of the imputation of righteousness to him by faith but he shall also give it to his infant as a sign of his belief in God's promise that he shows His mercy unto thousands of generations of those that love him.

And so here Moses evidently had given in to Zipporah's urging and had allowed her to bring up the children in accordance with her idea; but if Moses is going to be a real leader for God, he must carry out God's commands, and he must circumcise the child as God has commanded. I do not see any other possible interpretation of this incident here, unless you take the critics' interpretation.

(Student: Did Moses have a second wife?) We are not told he didn't take a second wife, but there is no reason why Zipporah could not be one who could be spoken of that way, as an Ethiopian. We, of course, are again in a case where

our information is not altogether full; but I don't see any reason why we have to assume anything else.

It is not stated that Moses then sent Zipporah away. There are many who think that after this experience, in which Moses' ministry was hazarded by the attitude which Zipporah took in this case; and the fact that, even after she gave in, she did it so reluctantly and so sullenly, and said the statement that showed that she was giving in, she'd rather have Moses and give in on this thing, than lose Moses and stand by her belief on this matter, but she didn't like to do it. There are many who think that afterwards Moses sent her away, but there is no proof of it. It is entirely possible that she went on to Egypt with him, and that in Egypt he decided to send her back. That is possible; I think it less likely, but possible, but if the vital thing here was that Moses sent her away, we would have been told about it and we are not told about it, so that is not the vital thing. The vital thing is the circumcision. The important thing is that she was resisting on this matter of circumcision and until she gave in Moses couldn't be fully used of God. In fact, he must be thrown on the scrap heap if the victory wasn't won on this point.

Now, as to whether the fact was that one child had already been circumcised and she had said, "Well, you can have your way with one child but I am going to have mine with the other," and now she had to give in on the other child, or whether she circumcised both at this time, or whether she circumcised one and, that the other would be circumcised later, I don't see that the Scripture has to go into all those little details. The vital thing we are told is that on account of her refusal to carry out the rite of circumcision upon the child as God had commanded to Abraham, she was in danger of losing Moses and she gives in on the matter, and she circumcises the child and she throws the foreskin at her husband's feet and she says, "A bloody husband art thou," but even though she does it unwillingly and with this attitude, nevertheless the thing has been done and God has accepted it as sufficient and then he lets him go.

Now whether there were two children or one child involved in it doesn't affect the principle. It is just like the question regarding the New Testament where people try to find an error in the New Testament as to how many times did the cock crow before Peter had denied the Lord. He said, "Before the cock crows, thou shalt deny me," and in another one, "Before the cock crows twice thou shalt deny me thrice." Well now, the question is, did the cock crow once, twice or three times? One gospel mentions one cock crowing, another mentions two cocks crowing, and as a matter of fact if somebody had been there in Jerusalem with a microphone he probably would have found hundreds of cocks crowing all over Jerusalem, and it didn't matter whether there was one cock crowing, or two cocks crew or ten cocks crew. The vital thing is that it isn't an individual cock crowing some time in the night from some disturbance that is important. What the Lord is saying is, "Before the time in the morning at which the cock crowing

occurs, before that time, right tomorrow morning, the very earliest start of morning, when most people are still sleeping, before that time, Peter will have denied him."

And there would be hundreds of cocks crowing in different parts of Jerusalem and whether they would happen to hear one or two or three or, which would penetrate to that distance, it all depended how sharp the ears were of the people who were listening; and many people tried to prove that the Scripture is not verbally inspired because they find a contradiction between the gospels as to how many cocks crew. It is not the important thing how many cocks crew; it is a general method of stating an approximate period in the morning before which Peter will have done this. And in this connection the important thing is the matter of circumcision to be carried out as far as the children are concerned. Now whether it had been carried out on one boy before and now is completed, or whether it is carried out on both; whether it had been carried out on one before and the carrying out of it on one immediately was a giving in on the principle and then there would be no difficulty as far as going farther is concerned, this is a thing that the Scripture doesn't bother to go into.

It reminds me of the time I was up in the Canadian Rockies and I was traveling some where with a man I got acquainted with there who was a banker from Minneapolis; and I happened to meet him in the hotel there one morning and he told me that he was trying to get them in the hotel up there, in the Canadian Rockies, to cash a check for him and he was having some difficulty that they didn't think there was any proof he was a banker and they didn't know how they could trust his check and he wanted quite a sizable check cashed and they didn't know whether they would or not. It looked as if they wouldn't, and then I happened to meet him a little later in the morning and he says. "My, I feel much better now. The lady agreed to cash my check." I said, "Well, you know, I am getting a little short of cash. I've got a notion to ask her to cash one for me," and he said, "Well," he said, "if it will do you any good you can tell them you know me but I don't think that would make any difference." Well the check I wanted cashed was probably about a twentieth the size of the one he got cashed, but I went down and I saw them and I asked them if they would cash it and, no, no, they didn't know me. There was no reason for cashing a check for me, and so on, and you could see they were very unwilling to do it, and then I did mention, I said, "I know a banker here from Minneapolis," I said, "Mr. So and so," "Oh," they said, "if he will sign your check we will cash it," right like that, so I went to see him and he was amazed, so he signed the check and then he said to me, I guess he went with me, and he said, "Well, I guess you figured you had taken a chance on me for this much, one little more wouldn't matter," and they nodded but they had ignored the principle. Once they had ignored the principle, what fell under the principle, it doesn't matter the precise amount, whether they trusted him for eleven hundred dollars or eleven hundred and fifty dollars wouldn't make much difference to them,

And I think in the Scripture, if we had all the details told in all these matters, we'd have two or three big encyclopedias; but the Lord is giving us the vital principles, and often we have to decide what the principles are; and we have to decide it, not only by what are all the facts, but what are the facts stressed, what are the facts given? What are the facts the Lord thinks are important enough to mention? Now the fact that Zipporah was sent away at some time or other; whether, as seems likely, right at this time; or whether later on, is not particularly important; and it isn't even mentioned here in the story, just incidentally mentioned when she is brought back that she had been sent away; but the vital thing here is that she has given in on this matter of circumcision.

And there may have been dozens of episodes that happened on the way to Egypt, but the Holy Spirit thought this one was worth putting in the Book for the knowledge of all future ages. And why did He think this was important enough to put in for future knowledge, unless it was that He wished people of all ages and all generations to realize that the man who is going to be greatly used of the Lord; and to enter upon a big work for the Lord in any way comparable to the work which Moses entered upon; should be one who carries out all the commands of the Lord; and who does not let his own interpretation, or his willingness to please his wife, allow him to step aside from the carrying out of the full commands of God. If that isn't a reason for putting it in, I can't think of any other possible reason for putting the story in here on the part of the Holy Spirit.

The only other reason I can think of why it should be here, would be the reason that the critics say: that it just crept in and gives us an idea of what they really thought about Yahweh in these early days.

Who was it I heard telling that a man came to Mr. Springer—Mr. Springer of Colorado who was here not so long ago—and this man said, "Mr. Springer," he said, "I'm a Fundamentalist. If you question it, ask me what I think on some doctrines. Ask me a few questions." Well, Mr. Springer said, "Nobody has to ask me questions to find out whether I am a fundamentalist." That is to say, "It isn't what creed you are willing to sign, but it is what you proclaim and what you are; for that determines whether you really believe in the gospel." A man may be a quiet believer out somewhere in the corner, rarely witnessing for Christ; and such a person may be saved and may be going to Heaven; but a person that you should trust as a Christian leader isn't one who silently signs some creeds, and then goes off and preaches on the brotherhood of man and ways of bringing universal peace; but he is a man who believes in this enough to get up and stand for it, and fight for it, and try to win people. And even if Moses in his heart wanted to carry out the command of God, if he was going to be used of God as a great leader he must give his children the sign and seal of the

covenant which he has himself, as showing the imputation of the righteousness of God to him.

Well, now Exodus goes on after this, and tells about the experiences down there in Egypt; but we'll say a few more

3. Words about Moses' Character, and Life in General.

a. Steadfastness. We note the great steadfastness of Moses before Pharaoh. This man who hesitated about going into the work; he was so backward about allowing himself to become a leader for God; once he went into the work, was absolutely steadfast and solid and stood without fear before the greatest monarch in the world at the time. He met with the people, with all kinds of difficulties and troubles and questionings and complainings against him, but he showed

b. Firmness; and, at the same time,

c. Tactfulness. He shows clear thinking; he shows loyalty to God; he was used of the Lord to lead Israel, as one of the greatest leaders in all the history of the world. Now of course that was true in instance after instance. Then there is the

d. Meekness of Moses. And we read in one place in the Scripture that Moses was the most meek of all men living; and this is just a simple direct statement as to the character of Moses, the great humility which he had, the humility which he had learned during this period in the wilderness.

A professor in McCormick Seminary—I believe it was—gave a paper at a meeting of the American Oriental Society in Chicago not so long ago, which was written up in *Time* magazine, in which he said that, with a slight change in the Hebrew text, you could change the word "meek" to—I forget how he translated the German "geplagten"—as one of the ancient versions has it. He was the most "pestered" is a way to get the idea of it: he was the most pestered of all human beings. Now, Moses certainly had his difficulties and his troubles; and this professor said that was what it meant, not he was the most meek. He was the one who had the most difficulties and troubles.

Well, you have to change the Hebrew text for it; and it doesn't fit the context, which is telling how God intervened to deliver Moses from the attacks of Miriam and of Aaron, and their criticism of him; but he was not standing up for himself. He would stand up for God, but ordinarily he did not stand up for himself in these matters; and so I believe that it was pretty well established at that meeting, that the new view which Professor advanced was purely conjecture.

Meekness is very difficult to measure; and I would certainly think that to say that he was an exceedingly meek man would be a very reasonable way to take it. I don't think it means that you can't measure meekness, except as you measure it against the circumstances in which people find themselves; and it would be very difficult to make a fair measurement. To say, "God made such a measurement and came out with Moses at the top of the list," I think is hardly necessary. I think what we can say from it is that Moses was a very extremely meek man, so meek that it is very likely if the Lord set aside a few angels to take all the different people, and make all definite calculations, we wouldn't find anybody coming anywhere near Moses in the calculations.

We have Moses' great meekness, and yet it was at this point—at the strongest point—that he failed. Strong men are apt to fail at their strongest point, weak men at their weakest point. The strong man is the man who towers so high above others and is so outstanding that he, if he fails, is apt to fail at the point where you would never suspect it; the one that he doesn't think worth watching; the one where he is absolutely sure of himself; there of all things he doesn't need to worry, and that is the point where Satan gets ahold of him and where he fails, if he fails.

And Moses made his great failure at this very point, when he equaled himself with God and said, "Shall we give you water out of the rock?" That was the failure in his life which God used to show that even this perfect man Moses—this outstanding man—had a great weakness, and could not be the permanent leader of the people. He was not the Lord Jesus Christ. He did his work, his great work, in bringing them out and in carrying them through the wilderness. Moses could not be granted his desire to also lead them into the promised land; he could not be granted that desire—to do that would be to put Moses into a category in which no mortal man could belong; one who would be a permanent leader; going on far beyond what any human being could accomplish; and the fact that Moses came to death as all human beings do; and his work came to an end, is tied up with this one instance in Numbers 20, in which he showed the fact that he was still a sinner like other people, in which he failed at his strongest point.

Moses here put himself in the place of God and acted as a human being would in that place. He says, "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of the rock?" and in irritation he struck the rock a couple of times, and the water came out and the people drank; but the Lord said, "You have not believed me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel; therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." Moses here showed that he was a human being—a fallible human being—that he was not God and could not be the permanent leader of the people. God punished him for his sin; but he certainly gave him a name and a place above almost any character the whole Bible—or in the whole history of the world. It just was an evidence of his

irritation; instead of acting with the majestic movement typical of the full strength of the almighty God, he was giving way to his irritation and striking the rock vigorously. "Hear, now, you rebels." That was all.

And then there is Moses' intercession before God in Exodus 32, where the Lord said to Moses, "I'm going to wipe this people off from the face of the earth and I am going to make a great nation out of you." And Moses said, "This people have sinned a great sin; yet, now, if thou wilt forgive their sin ... and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." So Moses was the great intercessor before God for the people in their sin. Moses was God's instrument in punishing the people. He upheld the majesty of God, before the people, but he pled with God for the people and made intercession for them.

And now, of course, we come to Moses' death at the end of his time in the wilderness. As in the case of John Calvin, no one knows where he was buried. He was buried, and where his body is, no one knows; and of course, the reason is the same in both cases. Moses was such a great leader—was such a great Christian—that if he had died and been buried by the people, they would have put up a great monument; they would have had pilgrimages to the place. He was the founder of their national life, and they would have been tempted to worship the memory of Moses instead of worshiping God; and God prevented that by having him go out and be buried so that no one knew the place where he was buried.

Now a professor of the University of Berlin twenty years ago wrote a book to prove that what really happened was that the Israelites turned against Moses and killed him; and that was the way he really died; but that is pure conjecture, pure theorizing—absolutely no foundation for it—even though Freud wrote a book on this conjecture, and went ahead to show the psychological results of it upon the Hebrew race; but what the Scripture tells us is that God caused that Moses should go out and lead the people, and he should die apart from them, so that no one would know where he died; and, of course, Calvin provided the same thing for himself, because he knew the leadership he had had, all through the Christian world, was such that there would be a tremendous danger of people taking a wrong attitude toward his grave after his death. And so he commanded that only a few friends would bury him quietly in the middle of the night, and not let people know where he was buried, in order that there should be no veneration of his tombstone, or the place where he was buried.

Well, then, we have Moses, not entering the Promised Land. He is leading the people toward it; he is looking toward it; but he does not enter it himself. He goes up on Mount Pisgah; and the Lord lets him look it all over and see it there before him; but he does not enter it for over a thousand years; and then we find him in Matthew 17:3–4 standing in the promised land, and there he stands, Moses and Elijah, with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Well, now

D. The Struggle with Pharaoh.

1. The Attitude of the Israelites.

As we know, Moses had considerable difficulty with the Israelites. And I think this is a wonderful example for our guidance and for our blessing. To know of the fact that people do not want to be delivered in such a way as God intended; and they do not automatically believe that we are God's appointed leaders. Perhaps they don't think we are competent leaders. But Moses had the task, in dealing with the people, of convincing the people that he was God's representative; and he immediately came to a very particular difficulty in Exodus 5, where Pharaoh, seeing that Moses asked that the people be released, immediately made their tasks harder.

And you will find that, when you start out to do a work for the Lord, very often when you try to tackle a problem, things immediately get worse instead of getting better. You try to get rid of an evil habit of yours, something that perhaps is not such a sin. You feel you're improving; you must get rid of it, something you feel definitely you'd be better off without. And you take a first step, and you immediately find yourself in misery and difficulty and find yourself saying, "Is it worthwhile trying to get rid of it?" Usually it is.

And that's what the Israelites do here. Pharaoh said, "You're lazy, Moses and Aaron are hindering the people from their burdens. Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? Get you unto your burdens." (v. 4)

What average person today would use "let" in that sense, "let them?" Of course, it is Old English. It means "prevent them." "Why do you keep them from their work?" And so we read that Pharaoh said to the taskmasters in verse 7, "Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore; let them go and gather straw for themselves. And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore"—that word "tale" is another Old English word, the Hebrew says "number," the number of the bricks which you made before—"ye shall not diminish ought thereof; for they be idle." They've got to go and get their own straw, but they have to make just as many bricks as before. "Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labor therein; and let them not regard vain words. And the taskmasters of the people went ... and they spake to the people saying, thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw. Go ye, get you straw where you can find it; yet not ought of your work shall be diminished. So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble in stead of straw."

What is stubble? How many of you know? Not many. When I was a boy it was a very common word, and the word doesn't make much sense if you don't realize

what it is. You cut straw into long pieces; but stubble is just little tiny short pieces, just the little bit that's actually left behind after the straw has been cut; that's the stubble.

And so they went gathering these little tiny pieces of straw, because the big straw had been gathered up and taken away for other purposes. To gather stubble instead of straw.

And the taskmasters hasted them saying, Fulfil your works, your daily tasks, as when there was straw. And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, and demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and to day, as heretofore? Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? There is no straw given to thy servants and they say to us, make brick.

And it's a common phrase today in our language to "make bricks without straw." It's a common expression for trying to do something without the necessary materials. Make bricks without straw.

There is no straw given unto thy servants and they say to us, Make brick: and behold thy servants are beaten, but the fault is in thine own people. But he said, Ye are idle, ye are idle: therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord. Go therefore and work, for there shall be no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks. And the officers of the children of Israel did see that they were in evil case, after it was said, Ye shall not minish ought from your bricks of your daily task. And they met Moses and Aaron who stood in the way as they came forth from Pharaoh: And they said unto them, The Lord look upon you and judge; because you've made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us. And Moses returned to the Lord and said Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? Why is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.

Exactly the kind of response you may hear: "Why do you treat us evil? You don't give us any progress; things are getting worse instead of better. I think I better look for another pastor. Maybe I'd better look somewhere else."

Well, maybe there is something there; maybe you don't have what it takes to do the Lord's work. But right within this last year, I've had too many people coming and telling me, "The Lord's been doing wonderfully in my church, we are just going forward; and then I found complaints and resistance, and the people just didn't stand up with me. They made objections and difficulties and things have slowed down; and I'm getting disgusted; and do you know of another place

where I could candidate?" And I just had the feeling that if they knew the problem; if they knew the difficulties, and your prayers, your work, and your consecration; they would make a real step forward, instead of leaving it to somebody else to come in and start to candidate.

We're going to have difficulties and certainly Moses had them, terrible difficulties, but God saw him through them. The spiritual lessons in this—Moses' struggle with Pharaoh, this part of the attitude of the Israelites—are very, very important and vital for us. But there are other difficulties involved in this too.

Now before we speak of the difficulties, next we speak of a corroboration. When excavation began in Egypt, it was immediately felt by some that there had been wonderful corroboration found of this episode in Genesis 5. I read an article just yesterday—written a good many years ago though—in which the statement was made that there were treasure houses in Pithom in which they found lower layers made with good straw, and next ones with just little stubble in, and the top ones with no straw at all. You look at the Biblical account here, and you could interpret it as three stages; but it's not necessary, it may just as well be two. They made the first bricks with straw; then they were told, we won't give you any more straw, you have to get stubble; so they went and got stubble; and then they asked for help, and Pharaoh said, "There shall no straw be given, yet you shall deliver the number of bricks." Whether it's two stages or three, it is a little hard to be sure.

Here is a statement which I found in a book published by Prof. Edouard Naville, a Swiss archaeologist, who conducted excavations in 1883, in northeastern Egypt at a place called Tell el Maskhutih, "the mound of the statue". He wrote a book, *The Store-City of Pithom and the Route of the Exodus*.⁷²

He concluded that this tell was the ancient Pithom of Exodus 1:11, because several monuments there were dedicated to the god Tum. The name Pithom means "This is the house of Tum." The hieroglyphic name is *Pi Tum* or in Hebrew, *pitom*, "Pithom." This Tum was an Egyptian god, the god of that city, a god also worshipped at Heliopolis. If they had the house of Tum there, he thought this city would be Pithom. It didn't prove it was Pithom, but Pithom and Raamses are mentioned in Exodus 1 as the treasure cities that the Israelites built for Pharaoh.

Before excavation, the tell was a ruin with a monument "cut in the form of an armchair, on which are seated three Egyptian figures ...turned towards the east... buried up to the waist."

⁷² Henri Édouard Naville, *The Store-City of Pithom and the Route of the Exodus*, 3rd. Ed. London, (1888).

After excavation the ruins showed a surprising lack of buildings. The tell was a

square area enclosed by enormous brick walls,...about 55,000 square yards... Except the walls and the monolith, no ruins appeared anywhere; not even such heaps of bricks and tumbled-down houses as usually mark the sites of ancient Egyptian cities. [*Ibid.* p.10]

Naville continued:

As for the nature of the bricks, I cannot do better than quote the words of a distinguished visitor, Mr. Villiers Stuart, who came to see the excavations: "I carefully examined the chamber walls, and I noticed that some of the corners of the brickwork throughout were built of bricks without straw. I do not remember to have met anywhere in Egypt bricks so made." [*ibid.* p.11]

So Stuart felt—and Naville evidently thought well of it, because he printed it in his book there, with not a word of criticism of it—that here was proof; this was the Pithom that the Israelites built. Because here were the corners of the walls, made of brick without straw.

Now I think that's going too far. Because if Exodus 1:11 says they built Pithom; and the story of bricks without straw is in chapter 5; and between that Moses has been born, had grown and lived his life in Egypt, and went into the wilderness, and lived there, and came back before the end of chapter 5. So that the Pithom built in chapter 1 wouldn't seem likely to be the place where the incident of bricks and straw occurred at all. Then, of course, we're not sure it's Pithom; and most archaeologists today tend to think that this is probably Raamses rather than Pithom, and that Pithom was about 8 ½ miles further away in another place.

So, whether it is the exact place, we have no proof of; but the general corroboration would seem to be very interesting. Here we are told they make bricks without straw; they're forced to do it. Here we find a city where something like that happened. Maybe similar occurrences happened in other places. Who knows?

But right here we strike another difficulty. Here is Prof. Peet. Peet, who was professor in Liverpool and wrote this book I told you of, *Egypt and the Old Testament*⁷³ in 1922, in which he tried to show how unreliable in his opinion the Bible was; and in this statement he quotes Stuart's statement and then he says as follows,

It is almost inconceivable that any traveler in Egypt should make this statement with regard to the use of straw in bricks, for though straw has

⁷³ T. Eric Peet, *Egypt and the Old Testament* (1922).

been used both in ancient and modern times, its use is somewhat rare, more particularly in ancient times. What is more, the writer of this passage in the narrative is certainly under some strange delusion as to the function of the straw when used. Its purpose is to bind the mud more tightly together, though as a matter of fact the Nile mud coheres so well of itself that no binding material is really necessary. Consequently the refusal of the task-masters to provide the Israelites with straw would not in the slightest degree increase the difficulty of their labours. As a piece of local colour the whole incident is unsatisfactory, and goes to prove the writer's ignorance of Egyptian customs rather than his close acquaintance with them, as is so often averred.⁷⁴

That's what Peet wrote. You notice what Peet says: the Bible said that Pharaoh said, you won't be given any straw and yet you've got to make just as many bricks as before, and they said how we going to make the bricks without straw, how can we make just as many; but Peet says straw was rarely used in Egypt anyway. You'll find it, he says, in ancient and modern times, but he says it was rarely used. And he says the purpose of straw is to bind it together and he says the Nile mud coheres so well anyway, you don't need anything to bind it together; and if you needed it for that, it might make a difference to the quality of the bricks but hardly to the ease in making them. You might make lasting bricks with straw; you might make bricks that would not last so long without a good binding material; but how could it make it any harder? And so Peet goes on to say that some have said the purpose of the straw wasn't to bind at all, but it was on their hands to keep it from sticking to their hands. It was an entirely different purpose for the straw. He laughed at that interpretation; he says it is quite absurd; he says it is an attempt to evade the situation; he says as a piece of local color it proves the writer's ignorance of Egyptian customs.

Well, this presents a rather interesting problem. And when I read Peet's statement, it stimulated me to look for further evidence on it; and I did not look a great deal, I had many other things to work on; but I did have my mind open to the problem to see if I could come across something on it; and I didn't come across anything; and I did not take a month off to investigate it thoroughly sometime.

But with my mind aware of the problem, in 1946, when I was elected Vice-President of the American Scientific Affiliation, I was asked to preside at the annual meeting; the President had gotten a case of mumps and couldn't leave California to come east. I felt a thrill which I'm sure nobody else present felt, because they weren't aware of the problem. A chemist, Dr. Irving A. Cowperthwaite, who was then Secretary and a founding member of the American Scientific Affiliation, read a paper. He had been in the Department of Chemistry teaching chemistry at Columbia University, but was then Chief

⁷⁴ [dcb] *Ibid.* p. 99. It is shown below that Peet's assertion is in error.

Engineer of a wire company in Massachusetts where he still lives today. The paper which he had written was on this subject of the bricks and the straw.

I was greatly interested in the material he presented; and I took the material and made further investigation of it; and read rather extensively in the matter to which he called my attention; and I found what seemed to me to be a complete answer to Peet's statement, and a very interesting sidelight on a rather small feature, and yet of interest to quite a few persons in the Old Testament.

Now what Dr. Cowperthwaite called our attention to was the researches of a prominent American chemist and inventor early in this century, named Edward G. Acheson. I just looked him up yesterday again in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the edition of 2 or 3 years ago, which I have, in order to see how much prominence he would get in that; and found that he was given a very considerable write up for discoveries that he made. He worked in electricity with Edison for a time, but his own work was done in various other fields. He invented carborundum; his company, the Carborundum Company in Buffalo, is quite an active and successful company today. He discovered that graphite can be produced artificially; and he made various inventions that were very prominent fifty years ago, and many of which are used today.

Well, he became interested in the fact that American clays were considered far inferior to those imported from Germany. And he investigated and found that often a German clay which was considered very excellent because of its far higher degree of plasticity and its greater tensile strength, chemically, seemed to be identical with the greatly inferior American clay.⁷⁵

And so he asked the question, why are the clays which are chemically identical, superior, much more plastic, more easily worked and molded; why are they so much stronger; why are they so much better, though chemically, on ordinary examination, they seemed identical?

And so he looked into the best foreign clays, to find out where they got them; and he found that they generally came from some secondary source, to which they had been carried by a stream of water. And Acheson asked the question, why would the carrying them to a secondary place by a stream make them so much better? And then he thought of the possibility that there must be small amounts of organic matter suspended in the water, which would in some way

⁷⁵ Edward G. Acheson "Experiments in Defloccuation" *The Engineering and Mining Journal*, December 30, 1911, "The manufacturers of graphite crucibles in the United States invariably used clays imported from Europe as a binding agent. Samples of these imported clays were found to be far superior to American clays in plasticity and tensile strength, but chemical analysis failed to disclose the cause of the existing physical difference."

have profoundly altered the workability of the clay, even though so slight as to be extremely difficult to detect by chemical analysis.

So he took types of clay that were difficult to work and added to them small amounts of various types of organic matter; and finally, he discovered a tremendous improvement when gallotannic acid was used.

And then he said he had long been interested in the story in Exodus. In the *Transactions of the American Ceramic Society*, 1904, he described his experiments, and then he went on to say,

I made an effort to find in the history of clay-working some record of the addition of vegetable or organic matter to clay. Only one instance could I find, that of the Egyptians as recorded in Exodus. The accepted theory of using the straw fibre as a binding agent for the clay never had appealed to me, and it now seemed likely that those ancient people were familiar with the effect I had discovered. I procured some oat straw, boiled it in water, decanted the resulting reddish-brown liquid and mixed it with the clay. The result was like that produced with gallo-tannic acid and equal to the best I had obtained. This explains why the straw was used and why the children of Israel were successful in substituting stubble for straw, a course that would hardly be possible, were the fibre of the straw depended upon as a bond for the clay, but quite feasible where the extract of the plant was used.⁷⁶

Now you see what a different slant it gives to the narrative; the children of Israel objecting, "It makes our work so much more difficult." Now if the clay that they had was harder to work, to mold, to form, it is easy to see the reason for the objection. If it was just a matter of putting straw in, in order to bind it, to make bricks that weren't as good, but wouldn't be any harder to make... But the plasticity, that's what is the issue; and it exactly fits with the narrative.

Also to go and gather stubble: what good would the stubble do to bind it together—might do a little bit of good, but mighty little. But for a chemical effect like this, the stubble would be every bit as good as straw. And then Peet says that bricks made with straw were very uncommon in Egypt. Well, if you put the straw in, you would see the straw; but if you used the straw, mixing it for the effect on it, you wouldn't necessarily leave any trace that you could see at all, and yet it might've been used in making the bricks.

And so it fits the situation very well and suggests that the Egyptians were aware of something that was forgotten until modern times. And we don't have the scientific matters explained here, but we have an evidence of the existence of

⁷⁶ Edward G. Acheson, "Egyptianized Clay." *Transactions of the American Ceramic Society* (1904) p. 34

the knowledge here in this story; and it makes the story clear and explains the imagined difficulty.

Now Dr. Cowperthwaite says that Acheson went on using this, and that it made a great impression upon the American Ceramic Industry; that by adding this straw or gallotannic acid, they were able to take the clay that they used to have to work for months—to mold and mix for months in order to get it suitable for the dishes they made from it, and other things—that now they could make it in just a period of a few days, because of the great improvement by the acid.

In fact, Dr. Cowperthwaite gave cases—I didn't come across them in the amount of investigation that I did—gave cases in some Asiatic countries where he said that they used to make ceramic ware, that they used to mix and mold for years. One generation they used to prepare the clay, and the next generation they made these very fine expensive dishes from it; and that by adding this straw to it they were able to do it in the matter of a few months, instead of a generation! In the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, it ends the article on Acheson simply by saying that he was the inventor of Egyptianized clay. He called it Egyptianized after this story in Exodus. Now in my investigation of it, I looked up the articles I could find by Acheson in various scientific periodicals; and I found one that interested me greatly, to show that the brick and the clay of ancient Egypt might be said to have given us our electric light today. Or at least to have contributed greatly to it.⁷⁷

There is an article in there, at the time of Acheson's death, telling about his discoveries; and telling about his great interest in this matter of the bricks and straw; and his relations to it, which told how the principle he learned there of this organic matter; which reduced the size of the particles of the clay, made them much smaller, and thus made them more workable, and so on; and he used it in making three lubricants which are mentioned in this *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article. And though I'm quite out of my own field as far as automobile lubricants are concerned of that type, the issue is "deflocculation" and Acheson graphite; and he named it after himself, the Acheson deflocculation, which is the term he used for what I believe is called colloidal suspension now; the putting of it into smaller particles produced by the gallotannic acid or the straw; and he made these three lubricants, which at least ten years ago were very widely used; and I have no more recent information on it.

Now I thought that was an extremely interesting incident; where we have a scientific matter which was known to the ancient Egyptians, and which is the background of the account here; but it is not explained; and people like Peet will look at it, and take it to try to show the Bible is inaccurate. And yet when

⁷⁷ [dcb] I believe the reference is to the use of tungsten in light bulbs. A lubricant invented by Acheson lubricates the diamond dies used to extrude tungsten fibers. Previous to the use of tungsten, light bulbs used carbon fibers which tended to be quite fragile – dcb.

you get the whole background of the matter, you find that it is accurate just as it is; and that actually it did affect—not merely the quality of the bricks but the ease or difficulty of making them—and the stubble that they got would serve the purpose just as well as the straw. That is an archaeological instance of this matter of the struggle with Pharaoh which I think is very interesting, showing the dependability of the Word of God. Well, the attitude of the Israelites of course, comes later on in the whole wilderness journey. We won't go into further details of it now,

2. The Character of Pharaoh.

a. His Power and Authority. Pharaoh was the greatest monarch of the ancient world. It's interesting to contrast the pharaohs of Egypt with the kings of Mesopotamia. The pharaoh of Egypt calls himself a god. He is the great god, is the Pharaoh; he is the great god of Egypt; and when he dies he is enthroned with the gods in heaven; divine authority is paid to him; he is the almighty ruler; the supreme dictator of Egypt; that is the theory of pharaoh. Now the theory is different in Mesopotamia.

In Mesopotamia, the king is never considered a god, either during his life or afterward. The king may be the son of the god; he may be the favorite of the gods; he may be like one the gods; but he is not a god. In Mesopotamia, there are the laws which are important for the carrying on of life; and the king has a certain duty to the law, just as the people; even though many of them transgress far beyond that, and gave themselves authority which the law does not permit them. But in Egypt, the Pharaoh was considered to be the law himself. He was the dictator, the authority. Egypt is the great land of centralized authority.

Well, now, Exodus is a contest with Pharaoh—who is the great god of Egypt? It is a contest with the greatest potentate of the day, as to whether the Lord can deliver his people or not. And so the attitude of Pharaoh with his great empire, his absolute power, the worshipful attitude of his subordinates; he is faced with another power, the power of the Creator of the universe, and the outcome of this contest is the background of the whole Israelite history thereafter.

One great purpose of it is to fasten upon the minds of the Israelites a concept of God's almighty power and authority, and of his loving care. God could've simply given orders, "Let the Israelites all of a sudden be picked up into the air and transported to Palestine," and the next morning Pharaoh would've waked up and no more Israelites. He could've done it that way. God wanted to deliver the Israelites from Egypt; but even more important than that, he wanted the Israelites to realize his power in delivering them. And to have them realize his abiding presence, in order to keep alive the knowledge of God's power, God's supremacy, God's greatness, man's sin, and need of a Saviour, in preparing the

way for the coming of Christ. And so these contests with Pharaoh here occupy a very important place in the Old Testament story; a very important place in laying a foundation for the New Testament teachings of God's deliverance of us from a far greater Pharaoh, from Satan himself.

b. His Personal Attitude. And here we come to a very interesting thing. It is something which is stressed in the book of Romans, but which is also brought out very clearly in many references here in Exodus. Exodus 4:21 lays the foundation of it. In Exodus 4:21, the first such reference, we read this statement, "The Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in thine hand; but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go." God predicts that he will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he will not let the people go.

Does this mean God is going to make Pharaoh wicked? I don't think so at all. I think to harden his heart does not mean to make him wicked. It means to make him obstinate. It means to make Pharaoh who is wicked; Pharaoh who is a fit representative of the Prince of Wickedness; to make Pharaoh show his true character in such a way that the superiority of God to all forms of wickedness is made evident. That Pharaoh won't just say, "Oh, well, it's a lot of nuisance bothering with these people; let's get rid of them; maybe we're better off without them;" that Pharaoh won't just give in to a whim or a fancy; that Pharaoh won't, for some inferior motive or inferior reason, release the Israelites without the contest making it absolutely clear that Pharaoh is compelled to take his course because of the superiority and supremacy of God over the power of Pharaoh.

And so this phrase is used very frequently in the account here: that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. Both phrases are used; they are used, but in equal amounts. There are three different Hebrew words used for it; they are similar though; the general idea of hardening in English is quite satisfactory for them; it means to make hard. That Pharaoh determines that he won't give in to these things; he hardens his heart; he determines to stick by his guns; and God, when Pharaoh might tend to say, "Oh, it's not worth the bother, let's let them go," God hardens his heart; God carries him on in that direction to show human nature. We find in Romans 9:17, the apostle Paul used this as an example of God's supreme power: "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

It doesn't mean God takes a person and makes him wicked. We are all wicked, we are all sinners. But it means that God, in his wonderful mercy, chooses to give his mercy to some and to lead them to salvation through Christ; and then

others, who are themselves wicked, who have turned away from God, He uses their wickedness for his purposes; in order to accomplish his work, that he intends to do. And he raised Pharaoh up into this position of power; he raised up this wicked man into it, in order that through him it might be clear—God's power, as against one who is far greater than Pharaoh in power and in wickedness.

Now I have a list here of all the uses of "harden"—there are about 20 or 25 uses of the Hebrew word *chazak*—and who it relates to, but I don't think we need to take time for that here.⁷⁸ The important fact is what the meaning really is—stiffening against influence—to make a test case here; to impress on the Israelites' minds God's supremacy over the greatest potentate of the day; in order to strengthen their faith; and encourage them to stand fast; and to keep the knowledge of God alive in a wicked world. Now, this contest with Pharaoh consisted principally of the series of plagues. And so we look at

3. The Plagues of Egypt.

There are ten plagues which are described in these succeeding chapters. And I might add here: "What are the plagues?" Did God cause that there should be a tremendous blizzard; that all the land of Egypt would be frozen; and people would have such terrible cold as never experienced in that equatorial area; and did he cause polar bears to come down there, and walk about through the land to damage it? Did he do away with the law of gravitation there, so that the waters, instead of staying in their basins and their bowls, would drop up toward the ceiling and be unreachable to them? Did he cause utterly irrational occurrences in the land of Egypt in order to show his power, and to enforce his will against Pharaoh? Certainly God could have done these things if he chose to do so. But actually every one of the plagues of Egypt is something of a type—that is, except for the last of course—everyone of them is something of a type which is found in that climatic area, which is found in that geographical region at some time or other.

T. H. Robinson in his *History of Israel*⁷⁹, he makes this statement:

None of these plagues, except the last, contains anything strange or abnormal; all are events which may naturally take place at the end of the inundation of the Nile. The stagnant water left as the river goes down often reddens with infusoria, and becomes undrinkable, while fish that have been

⁷⁸ Young's Concordance: "Index-Lexicon to the Old Testament", p.11 (back of concordance). lists 13 translations of the Piel form (used in Ex. 9:12)—amend, encourage, fasten, fortify, give strength, harden, help, maintain, make hard, make strong, mend, repair, strengthen. Other verb and adjective forms give various additional meanings.

⁷⁹ Theodore H. Robinson, *The History of Israel Vol. I: From the Exodus to the Fall of Jerusalem 586 BC*, Oxford (1932).

caught in the pools will, of course, die as the ground dries. Frogs naturally find their way from the water on to dry land, and may easily be so numerous as to be a nuisance. The pools breed quantities of mosquitoes, and these, in turn, produce distressing forms of skin diseases. Thunderstorms, accompanied by heavy hail, are rare in Egypt, but they do occur and are naturally alarming. Sand and dust storms which produce deep gloom may quite well take place to the east of the Delta, while locusts are only too frequent a scourge. In all this there is nothing to awaken incredulity; the 'miracle' will consist in nothing more than the coincidence of all these events, and their exceptional severity.⁸⁰

The miracles which the author quotes consist of nothing more than the coincidence of all of these events and their exceptional severity.

Now that last sentence, as I say, has a tone to it which I do not think is correct or right; although it has certain facts in it which are valuable—even the last—but the previous sentences point out that every one of these plagues, except the last one, is something that is associated with that land; and which occasionally occurs there, to at least some extent, and sometimes very severely. The plagues then are, all of them, things that do occur to some extent in Egypt.

God's Methods.

(1). Intensification. The general principle which Robinson brings out is one which is worth noting: that God used the forces which he had already put in Egypt. He used a situation which was already present in Egypt in order to accomplish his will. He caused certain things to happen. But they were not what we would call bizarre fantastic events. But they are intensified. They are, most of them, scourges that do occur at times in Egypt, but they are greatly intensified. They occur to a severity which would rarely if ever occur otherwise. The first feature is intensification. Now the second is what is perhaps the most important of all.

(2). Prediction. The fact that Moses was able to say this is going to happen was the evidence that God had done this. Something extreme happened; but what happened, Moses predicted. Moses could say this is going to happen; this is God's command. This prediction showed that God's hand was in this.

So the first is intensification; the second is prediction; and the third, which is also in Robinson's narrative of the plagues, is

(3). Discrimination. There was darkness in all the land of Egypt, but in the land of Goshen there was not. Where the Israelites were, there was the freedom from

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 85

many of these things. There was the discrimination involved: to have them fall heavily on the Egyptians, and lightly or not at all on the Israelites.

So these are the three great factors which are involved in these plagues of Egypt. Now, of course, under intensification, there might be put the fact that so many come together at once. You might have one—say two-thirds as bad as referred to here—say in one ten-year period. Another, two-thirds as bad, in another ten-year period. But here you have—in a period of a few months—you have all these; they were not very distant from one another, and occurred greatly intensified over the extent to which they are usually found in the land of Egypt.

Now there are two other qualities that might be mentioned in connection with these plagues.

(4). Orderliness. There is a plan they were arranged in; there is an orderly occurrence. And

(5). Moral Purpose. There is a moral purpose involved. Now the statement is sometimes made that these plagues were a judgment on the gods of Egypt. Of course, that is true; they were primarily a judgment on the greatest god of Egypt—Pharaoh, the visible god, the one who was called a god, and had a dictatorial power over the land. Now many of the gods of Egypt were animal creatures, or the sky. They worshipped Ra the sun-god, and so darkness of course would be a judgment on the sun-god; and they worshipped various cows—one of their gods has a body of a cow; and there are various animals which are involved with some of the gods of Egypt. But primarily it was not against these various gods, but against the one great god, against Pharaoh. And of course, the last one that came was particularly against him, because Pharaoh's first-born was killed, as were the first-born of all the Egyptians in the tenth of the plagues.

So we have then the judgment on the gods of Egypt in the plagues; and we have the evidences in these plagues of God's power, the exhibition of the majesty of God; and we have the revelation in them of God as Saviour, because God gave release from every one of the plagues in response to Moses' prayer. But Moses' prayer was given at Pharaoh's request in most cases, and with Pharaoh's promise of letting them go; and then as soon as it was over, Pharaoh hardened his heart—or in some instances God hardened Pharaoh's heart—and he would not give in. It's a very easy thing in such a situation to say, "Oh, I'll do anything to get rid of it!" But once you're rid of it, then you think of the other thing.

Like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, where the people wanted to get rid of these rats. They'd have given him anything in the world he wanted; and the comparatively mild things he asked for, "Oh, they'd be glad to give." But once he got rid of the

rats, then they could think of all kinds of excuses not to pay him. Then he took their children away; and now they were ready to pay ten times over what they had agreed; but of course it didn't do any good. Pharaoh, of course, did similarly in his character, as human nature so frequently does.

The concept then is one that involves a good many chapters; and there are many very interesting details in these chapters. But for our purposes, I think we will be content with the aspects of it which I've already mentioned.

There were supernatural elements in the plagues; and taken together, they were an evidence of the judgment of God upon the gods of Egypt; and of the supremacy of God over Pharaoh; and of God's ability to deliver his people from the greatest and strongest power in the world. The study of the plagues individually has been carried out by the critics in order to show that there are various documents. God tells Moses exactly what to do, and what will happen; then Moses does it exactly, and it happens; and they give one of those to one document, and one to the other, but of course it's a narrative.

While it is a little contrary to our usual custom to have a full account of a command and then a full account of the carrying out, it is not contrary to the customs of many different peoples in many different types of literature. And we have no need to divide them up and make them parallel narratives, as is done by the higher critics. The study of the details—of how that, little by little, Pharaoh kept offering compromises and how Moses rejected the compromises—until finally that happens which God promised in the first place: that the people would be entirely free, not partly free, is a very interesting devotional study, and one which has many messages to the Christian's life, and to the life of the church. But we will not be able to take time to go into those lessons in this course, but we go on to

E. The Passover.

The last of the plagues is the death of the first-born. Under that, of course, is part of the struggle with Pharaoh; but closely connected with it is that which we've just given.

We find this in Exodus 12; the story there tells how Pharaoh finally said, "Get out, and take everything with you." Don't leave the little ones here, as he said before; don't leave your cattle here, as he said before; take everything and go. And the Lord told Moses, "Now is the time to go; now Pharaoh has given the full permission; Pharaoh has completely capitulated." They did not wait for further discussion, but they proceeded to go; and yet before they went, the Lord ordered them to observe a special festival.

1. The Meaning of the Word.

The Hebrew word means "to leap," or "to jump over," or "to spare"; and the Passover celebrates God's sparing of the Israelites—God's leaping over, God's passing by the door. He passed them over.

Now that is a most remarkable thing: that a people being delivered from the land; from oppression in Egypt; and rescued and brought out into safety; should not have as a great commemorative occasion the feast of the deliverance; the feast of the rescue; the feast of the escape from Egypt; but should instead have the feast of the Passover; the feast of God's passing over the Israelites, and not including them in the punishment upon the sins of the Egyptians. It is a most remarkable thing. You'll find hardly anything like it in any other national celebration of deliverance.

Now it would be natural for the Israelites to have a festival to celebrate escape, deliverance, freedom, victory over the Egyptians. But the central idea of the Passover is not one of these, and the name itself signifies something entirely different. The word *pehsach*, from the verb *pahsach*, means to pass over or to spare—though some of the critics say that it starts from a dancing class, in which the word means to leap around in the dance.

And now in this we find something which, to my mind, is one of the great proofs of revelation. That is, the difference between this Passover festival, and the festival which you would find in just about, well, in any natural group. The idea of having a festival to celebrate a victory is nothing unique. That is of course very common. In every nation, when they have a great victory—after a situation in which the issue was long in doubt—it is natural, regardless of their religions situation and viewpoint, to hold a great celebration, or have a great festival of some sort. We have our national holidays, celebrating the victory in the wars in which we have participated. In the holidays we remember how brave our soldiers were, who won the battle; and how terrible was the enemy whom we met. Every nation has such festivals, and it is natural that the Israelites—after a tremendous victory like this—would have a big festival to celebrate.

Our great national day here is the 4th of July, on which we celebrate our declaration of independence from British tyranny; there's no mention of anything wrong with us—in any way, shape or form—in connection with that day, which celebrates the foundation of our nation. It is the deliverance of the gallant Americans from the oppressive tyrannical British; that is the whole thought of that day in its origin.

Now you take the French, their great national day is Bastille Day; and on Bastille Day, they celebrate the day when the people rose up and destroyed the great prison which was being used for the oppression of the people. It is natural to

the natural human being, that you will celebrate the time when you have done some great thing; when you've made some great accomplishment; or even when there has come upon you some great deliverance.

But that's not the thought of the Passover, although there's plenty of reason for such a thought at the time. It is the greatest thing in Israelite history: deliverance from Egypt; freedom from the oppression of Pharaoh; yet that isn't the title of the Passover, nor is it primarily represented by the symbolism of the Passover.

It is a most remarkable thing. It is utterly unparalleled in the great national celebrations of other countries. There are people, of course, that look upon the Old Testament as simply the book of the glorification of the Jews; it's a great Jewish national book; and while I was talking with a young Jew once from Philadelphia, and mentioned something about some great thing in connection with the Bible in the Old Testament; I mentioned another great thing about the Passover, "Oh Yes," he says, and he felt that this was the great book of the great Jewish literature.

Well we have great books of literature of many nations; but you will not find a nation in the world, I believe, that has a literature that speaks about the people—the nation that produced the literature—with one-tenth of the criticisms of them that you find so frequently in the Old Testament. It is a book that was given through the Jews; but it is not the Jews' book, it is God's book. And the condemnation of the Jews for their sin, over and over in the Old Testament, is something that is unparalleled in the national literature of any other nation; it is the sort of thing that may be written in other nations, but the people cast it aside and forget about it. We don't put it up on a pedestal and glorify it.

It is a great evidence of the fact that this is not Jewish national literature; it is God's literature. He gave through the Jews, showing His attitude toward all people; and showing the sin of all the nations; and showing equally much the sin of the Jewish people, the Israelites, the Hebrews.

And so we have this great festival—the greatest in all Israelite history—celebrating the great deliverance, which stands at the beginning of their national history. And the central theme in it is God's passing over them, rather than punishing them for their sins; it is the recognition of national sin, and the recognition of individual sin.

But there's another remarkable thing about it. Our national festivals in all our countries are times when we celebrate something which we as a nation have done; and we think of ourselves as one grand unit, standing together against all the wickedness of the other nation. But here in the Passover, you have the

individual note being right there in the beginning of Israelite history; each individual family must partake of the Passover, and must make the mark of the blood on the doors as a sign that they have made the sacrifice; that they had done that which God had commanded. They were giving the indication to the angel, that they were the ones who were doing as God commanded, as His means of provision, whereby he was passing over that family in his punishment for sin.

And so there is a recognition of the need of individual salvation, and a recognition of the readiness of God to provide that individual salvation in response to that which He orders; to the means of salvation which He provides; the acceptance of the indication in advance of the wonderful mercy, which He will show by the sacrifice which he will provide: the lamb without blemish, the lamb slain for the household.

2. The Historical Purpose of the Occasion.

God caused that, in this tremendously important and excited time of the leaving of the Israelites from Egypt, they would take time to stop and to view these things, in order to impress these things on their minds. God knew which families were Israelites; and God knew which families were true to Him. He knew which ones would do His will; He didn't need to have some blood to look at in order to know; the purpose of putting the blood on the door isn't in order to tell the angel, so the angel wouldn't make a mistake; the purpose of putting the blood on the door is to impress on the individual Israelite, and the individual Israelite family, the fact that only as we are under the blood that we can be saved; the fact that we need individual salvation; the fact that we are sinners just as much as the Egyptians; and except as we avail ourselves of the means of salvation which God provides, we must suffer the same fate as they did.

And so at this time, which made such an impression on the imagination of the people and affected their recollection for all future ages, they were given this ceremony to be carried on year after year, century after century as an object lesson, as a type of these great vital matters; so that is the historical purpose of the occasion.

But here we have the idea the people are all sinners; they deserve God's punishment; God is giving the punishment to all of them; he is not delivering these people because they have certain blood; because they are the descendants of Abraham; because they are a people who can be thought of as pets; but they are being delivered because they have made a sacrifice; because they are under the protection of the blood. There is an idea here which is very, very hard to imagine on the grounds simply of natural development, or natural reaction to the situation.

To me this is one of the great proofs of revelation; that the Bible is not some man's seeking for something good, but God's revealing himself to man; because we have something here which is so unnatural, and so contrary to all natural human attitudes and emotions.

I've never heard of any other people winning a deliverance, who have thought of themselves as sinners, and thought of their unworthiness of having a deliverer. Of course, the thought may come later; but right at that moment, the whole thought is how wicked the others are, and how good they are. This is very different. Surely only divine revelation would provide something like that.

Now the critics, of course, try to explain the Passover as the development of a harvest festival; or some of them say that though the verse puts it in the spring here, it is really a fall festival. They take it from this idea of a dancing festival, some fall celebration; and they have all elaborated at length on how to get it tied up with this idea of deliverance from Egypt; and how it was tied up—and if you assume that the history is correct—how they would have had a ritual of this particular type in connection with their leaving of Egypt.

However, this is rather a bringing in of judgment by the Lord, from which he has made a provision that his people might temporarily escape, that is with their earthly life. It doesn't seem to be salvation in the sense that they would all be saved through their life. No, the picture here is of an earthly deliverance from an earthly punishment; but it is a punishment which is due sinners; a punishment which is due to their wickedness; and which comes upon the Egyptians and equally upon them, if they do not have the deliverance.

As far as eternal things are concerned, it is a picture—rather than that, it is the great type—of our deliverance from the power of sin and the power of Satan. But in its specific application here, it is from an earthly thing that they are delivered.

Yes? (student: "Were the Egyptians offered this ritual of deliverance?") The idea of there having been a proclamation through the land of Egypt that anyone should know about this and could do it, if they wanted to—certainly not, unless they already identified themselves with the Israelites. There is no statement here that the Egyptians outside of the Israelite community were given any instruction. But the Israelites were given it as a sign, not that you belong to this earthly family, but as a sign that you were under the blood; so that it would certainly seem possible for those who had adopted their beliefs to participate in it.

As far as the type is concerned, the Egyptians are here thought of as the forces of evil. But the Israelites themselves are not thought of as the forces of

righteousness who are following God, but they are thought of as equally under condemnation. The whole picture is, of course, the deliverance of the Israelites. There is no missionary message in this picture, but there is a provision for escape; and a suggestion that anyone could be delivered. Therefore an eventual missionary idea can be derived from it, but it was not present in that immediate situation.

Well, the study of the details of the Passover, it's interesting. We will not take time for it in this course, except to point out its great interest and historical purpose. There are three purposes:

(1) To Look Back to the Historical Deliverance in Leaving Egypt. The details of the Passover remind them of their leaving Egypt. There are elements in it which suggest haste. Thus shall ye eat it, with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand, and ye shall eat it in haste, it is the Lord's Passover. This of course is the immediate situation.

(2) To Look to the Present Situation Regarding Sin. Their sins they want to get out of sight. But in the carrying on of this ritual, it is the reminder of their situation, that is tied to the specific definite historical situation, the deliverance of the people from Egypt.

But then the typology in it goes beyond—way beyond—the immediate historical situation, that of deliverance from Egypt. It suggests the necessity of deliverance from sin; that they also are implicated in sin; they have to individually be singled out; there must be a sacrifice for each one, a lamb without blemish, a male of the first year; a family is to eat this together, and the very details of it drive home to their minds the idea that they, like the Egyptians, are sinners. They must take all leaven out of their house, and eat unleavened bread for this period of seven days. They, like the Egyptians, are sinners; only God's mercy spares them.

Then, of course, there is the most important element of all in this: it is looking forward to the means by which they've been saved from something far greater than the deliverance from Egypt; the means by which they've been saved from eternal death. There is the recognition in it that it is God's provision.

(3) To Look Forward to God's Deliverance from Egypt. No lamb could save them eternally. No lamb, no mere animal could do it; but there is a provision, there is typology in it; there is a symbolism, a symbolism which might not be at first very fully understood; but which, the more you look into it, the more you realize that God is driving home to the minds of the Israelites that he is going to provide something which will be the parallel to the lamb; that he is going to provide that through which you can be saved; but it is provided for individuals, but not merely for individuals; it is provided for families, that the families can

participate in this; that there is going on from generation to generation, not merely an individual thing, though there is a very definite and positive individual reception of it as well; and, that there is the application of this, that God will provide for the individual as typified by the blood, of the blood on the side-posts and the upper beam of the door.

So we have these three symbolisms: (1) of the looking back to the historical event, (2) the looking to the situation of sin and of deserving of God's punishment, and then to them as well as the Egyptians, (3) the looking forward to the provision that God is going to make, that will give a deliverance not merely to those who escape from Egypt, but to those who in future days shall preserve this, and shall look back to the deliverance from Egypt, but shall look forward to the deliverance which God gives to each family and individual.

So the Passover becomes the outstanding festival of Israel. It became the great celebration, the great memorial, the great occasion in the lives of the Israelites from generation to generation, to remind them of the deliverance which happened to them as a group; but more important, to remind them of the One who had given it to them; more important than that, to remind them of the fact that God had given it to them—not as their right, which they had by virtue of heredity—but as a kind of provision for them, despite their sinfulness, and that he wanted to make a provision which would correspond to their obedience.

So it is a most wonderful thing that here, at the beginning of Israel's history, such a practical thing as that did not merely symbolize their delivery from Egypt—that would be wonderful—but also deliverance from sin and God's provision for escape from it.

3. The Sacrifice.

The center of the Passover, of course, is the sacrifice. And it is stressed and stressed very strongly—the nature of the sacrifice. Now the sacrifices of the Israelites as described in the Bible are fundamentally different from the sacrifices of Egypt, or the sacrifices of Mesopotamia. Those sacrifices are primarily the sacrifices of Cain not of Abel; that is to say, the idea of the sacrifices of Egypt, of which there was a tremendous number, was that a present was given; an offering was given; some vegetation was brought; something that had been saved up was presented to the country; or to the spirit of the dead; or to the god, the particular god. It is a making of a present that is the sacrifice primarily in Egypt or in Mesopotamia.

The idea of the shedding of blood, as the central feature of the sacrifice, is not present in the Egyptian sacrificial system. That is something which is different from Egypt—from what they came out from—but it is something that is in the Biblical presentation; because of God's intention to make clear to the people, that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. The sacrifice in

accordance with God's command is the very center of the Passover. We find it described fully in Exodus 12, where we have the account of the slaying of the lamb without blemish; and the eating of the sacrifice; and the putting of the blood on the door, one lamb per household. We have some important references to it in Exodus 34:24, Numbers 9:7; there are many, but these are the outstanding ones.

And then in I Corinthians 5 we have the New Testament explanation of the meaning of this Passover sacrifice.

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened.

The removal of all leaven from the houses is symbolic of the removal of all evidence of sin. It is not sufficient to say, "Christ died for me," and then go out and live as you did before. If you sincerely accept His sacrifice for you, you are anxious to have the sanctification which He is ready to provide. You are anxious to get rid of the leaven out of your heart, of all that stands for malice.

For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Now, I'll not take time at this point to discuss naturalistic explanations, which after all are based purely on theory—with no evidence for it—the theories as an attempt to explain on some natural basis how the people would have gotten started having such a ceremony as this; we have the explanation given from the Bible, and if you're not going to accept it you can make all kinds of theories; and you can try one, and try another; but after all, it's easy to let the imagination run. The question is, What is the evidence—and there is no evidence to prove any such theories to be true; but the Bible tells us how it started, and what it means; and it is pretty hard to think of people establishing such ceremony like this merely on a natural basis.

4. The Importance and Meaning of the Passover.

And of course that is quite obvious from I Cor. 5:7–8. There is much more meaning in the ceremony than would have been apparent to the Israelites that night, when they were making their rapid preparations for the Passover. There is much more than may have been realized by the Israelites at many times in their experiences—but it is packed in there, so that the picture of salvation, and what it means, and what is necessary for salvation is there; and it is there for the Israelites all through their history to see; to realize it, to study it, and eventually, if their eyes were open, to see Christ, the Lamb without blemish and

without spot. And of course, for us the meaning of these passages is of tremendous importance today, to drive home to our hearts and minds that which is the very center of our religious life: our redemption from sin; going forth unto freedom; even from the deliverance from Egypt, which was wrought by the power of God, and by that alone.

F. The Departure from Egypt.

Now the people left Egypt and they started away as Pharaoh told them, "Get out, Get out in a hurry, Go quickly."

When were the Israelites delivered from Egypt? Well, they were delivered from Egypt when God sent the deliverer, when Moses came to them. They were delivered from Egypt when Pharaoh agreed you can go; and they observed the Passover, and went. But the full deliverance from Egypt did not come until they had passed through the Red Sea, and had seen Pharaoh's hosts sinking beneath the water of the Red Sea. There are three stages to the deliverance.

It is a little absurd that people have the idea that great events must occur at one particular instant; like when John Adams was President of the United States, and he sat at his desk, signing orders to appoint a new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, to determine our future judicial policies for twenty years; and he laid the foundation of it; and John Adams signed papers appointing people to offices for life, one after the other. They say that just at the stroke of midnight, the door opened, and Thomas Jefferson was there and said, "Mr. Adams, you'd better quit signing those papers; it's now midnight, and I am President and not you. You cannot sign any more papers." There was an instant at which John Adams ceased to be President, and Thomas Jefferson became President. Well, we make instants like that in various things; but ordinarily there is a period during which various events take place.

When was the deliverance from Egypt? We noticed three points at which we might say it occurred. To me it's one of the most absurd things—Christ could come back in one instant and everything happen because there's only one return of Christ. Well, when did Christ come the first time? Was it at His conception? Was it at His birth? Was it at his dedication in the Temple? Was it thirty years later, when he began his ministry? Was it at his crucifixion? When was the first coming of Christ? They're all different stages of his coming.

And yet about everything that ever happened has stages in it, When Thomas Jefferson was elected President, John Adams was repudiated thereby; you might say that was at the instant of the defeat of John Adams. But then some months went by before the Electoral College met and formally voted. That might be the time. And then there is the midnight when Jefferson took office, and then there's the inauguration the next day. Which point was it? You can't say.

Now in connection with their departure from Egypt, there is a very, very unfortunate thing in our English translation, which I have strongly recommended be changed in the new edition of the Scofield Bible; and if I recall correctly, it is going to be done. This is the incorrect English translation of Exodus 12:35-36,

they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment. And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians.

I don't know why the King James translators, when the Hebrew says *sha'al*, translated it "borrowed"; and when they said *natz'al*, they translated it "spoiled". Now it may be that they were following a tradition from the Vulgate; I haven't looked it up. I'm not sure whether it's in the Vulgate or not. It may be that it was from some previous translation, and they simply took it over. Or it may be that it was their conclusion.

But whether they did it originally, or followed some others, I think they tried to be polite: instead of asking like children, asking for things, they have the Israelites borrowing. It sounds more polite, doesn't it? Instead of your asking me to give you ten dollars, you say lend me ten dollars, knowing that you have no thought of giving it back; but it's a way of asking for it. It's much more polite, and they wanted to make it much more polite. They lent it to them rather than gave it to them.

But it's not what the Hebrew says. And it seems very much more polite to do it that way; but on the other hand, it seems much less honorable to do it that way. It *is* less honorable. And it has been a great problem with interpreters in recent years. The ethics of the Old Testament: the Israelites leaving Egypt, and borrowing things from the Egyptians; and then walking out and taking it away and never returning. And the Egyptians lending them things, and never getting it back. Well, that would be dishonest; and it is not what is stated in the Bible. It is an incorrect English translation that they borrowed of the neighbors all those things, and their neighbors lent them these things. It's an utterly incorrect English translation, which may add courtesy, but which removed honesty, from what we read; and it's very unfortunate we have it.

Now, I was looking at an edition of the Bible last night; I forget which one it was, but I just happened to notice in the margin, that that one had in the margin "borrowed: literally asked." Well, if that's what the Hebrew said, it should be in the text; not just in the margin, in case somebody happens to look at the margin. What it says is ask, "they asked." I think it should be in the text.

Good to have it in the margin, that makes the answer clear to those who will look there. They did not borrow, they asked.

The situation is such that the Israelites had been held in bondage for some hundreds of years; they had been forced to do a great deal of hard work for which they were not given pay proportionate to their work at all; they were held in slavery, unrightfully. And under these circumstances, God compelled Pharaoh to let them go, and to let them leave the land; and he tells the people to ask those around for gifts; and the gifts are a very, very small portion of the compensation to which they were entitled for the work which had been unjustly robbed by the slavery into which they had been placed. And under those circumstances, the Egyptians—I have no doubt—understood perfectly well what they were doing. The Israelites were saying, "We are leaving the land; we are leaving this bondage; and it is only proper that you give us something, seeing that we don't own anything."

And when a person is released from the penitentiary in this country, I think they give them a suit of clothes and ten dollars; they give them something so that they don't go empty-handed. In this case, instead of its coming from the Egyptian government, as a government, it comes from the Egyptian people, as individuals. But they ask for, not a recompense to which they might be entitled, but for a small portion of the recompense and a help to them as they go.

And the Egyptian people—having gone through the plagues, and realizing the fact in which their nation is implicated—they give to them. Perhaps their feeling was a little bit like the feeling of the United States after the war with Mexico. The Mexican government was extremely weak; and the land was overrun with bandits; and under the circumstances, when the Mexican war came, the United States troops conquered the whole land; everything was in their hands; and then the government in Washington ordered them to set up a government to negotiate with.

Personally, I think that if all that territory had been held, and given the freedom which we have—not held as a country certainly, but given the freedoms that we have today—personally I think that every Mexican would be far better off as a free American citizen than they were at least till a few years ago, with what they went through then. But the idea which was felt in Washington was: they are one nation, we are another; it is not right for us to take anything from them. There were three ideas: there were a few who wanted to do what I think would've been right: given them freedom, justice, and placed them under the constitution we're under; there were a larger number who said "Let's take the whole northern half of Mexico;" there were a still larger number who said "Let's take the northern part of California and New Mexico and Arizona, this area;" well this area was taken, and the line made. But after that line was made, and these

large, empty territories which were largely subject to banditry and confusion were brought into the United States.

Right after that, a group of people who represented the United States Government went to the Mexican government, and said, "We would like to buy a little area from Mexico," and this little area—this small section, this little tiny bit of mostly desert land, some of it along the river there—was purchased with a very, very large price for that kind of land; but it was a sort of salving the conscience for those who felt that the Mexicans, a handful of Mexicans having been in that land first, it was wrong for us to take California, New Mexico and Arizona and so on, and they should pay this big price for this little bit of land down there.

Well, this is an entirely different situation. There had been no question, there—nothing of that type whatever—but in the Egyptians who gave to them, the feelings are somewhat the same; there is a parallel, an illustration. Of course New England, all the northern part of the United States, was against the Mexican War from the first; fought against it all the way through. But there was a feeling there on the part of the Egyptians of the wrong which had been done; and the children of Israel ask, and the Egyptian people see it as a means of giving to some extent a recompense for the many years of slavery, and of providing them with what they need for their journey.

But the idea of borrowing and lending here is absolutely introduced; it is not in the original. The idea of taking and giving is the idea—taking and asking and giving for these particular circumstances.

Pharaoh kept saying, "You can't go," and then a plague would come; and then Pharaoh would say "You can go, if you'll only get us over the plague. You pray for us." And then Moses would pray, the plague would be removed; and then Pharaoh would change his mind and say, "You can't!" And then he'd say, "You can go and sacrifice, but you mustn't take your animals, or your little children." And then he said, "You can take your children, but you mustn't take your animals." He was giving all kinds of concessions; he would say in the middle of each plague, "Yes, go ahead," and when the plague was over, he would take it all back.

They had gone through the plagues. The Egyptians knew how Pharaoh had given them promises. Most of these Egyptians who did this realized that now there is predicted one more plague, one more very great one, and so in verse 5, "and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sits on the throne, to the firstborn of the maidservant behind the mill, and all the firstborn of beasts."

So then they hold the Passover, celebrating the fact that they were now going to leave immediately; and the tenth plague takes place simultaneously with the Passover. But then in chapter 12, verse 30, "Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, 'Rise up and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel, and go, serve the Lord, as you have said; also take your flocks and your herds and be gone, and bless me also.' And the Egyptians were urgent on the people that they might send them out of the land in haste, for they said 'We are all dead men. After the firstborn, we'll lose everybody.'"

The departure is right after the Passover; and also right after the tenth plague which happened simultaneously with the Passover; and they leave Egypt, and this great host of people heads up into the wilderness.

And then, of course, we have the provision of the pillar of cloud, the pillar of fire and so on, the provision for the wilderness journey, which we'll look at a little later under consideration of the Wilderness Journey. But it comes right after their leaving Egypt.

G. Escape Through the Red Sea.

But then in chapter 14, the Lord says to Moses,

Speak to the children of Israel that they turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-zephon; before it shall ye encamp by the sea. For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, 'They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.' And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honored upon Pharaoh and on all his host, that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord.

And so God caused that the Israelites should depart in this particular way. Now I don't think it means that, because they simply go in a different way, it probably would've been a bit difficult to escape out of the land completely with this great line of Egyptian forts stretched out between their land and the land outside. With the various difficulties, this probably was as good a way to go as any, but it was a way which perhaps moved them a little slower than they would have otherwise.

The main point here is that God is going to harden Pharaoh's heart. Pharaoh is going to continue to be obstinate; he's going to make one more try to hold them, even though they've started. And so the king of Egypt takes his host and pursues the people; and the people are camping by the sea; and they look up

and see the Egyptians coming. They say to Moses, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us to die in the wilderness?"

And of course, there is that thing in connection with any revolt. If it is possible for a people to escape from oppression, it is always the thing to do, to escape from oppression. But a force's efforts to escape, before there is enough strength to accomplish it, often leads simply to greater oppression and greater misery, and greater difficulty than they had before; and people feel exactly as they did here. "Is it because there were no graves in Egypt?" In Egypt we were suffering; in Egypt we had this terrible oppression; but certainly it was better than just being killed out here in this wilderness.

And they started, and they went on; and we read that they found themselves closed in by the land; and they couldn't get any further by going back, and going around; and then they looked, and they saw Pharaoh and his forces coming after them. And so we have the account of that situation, where God let the people get entangled in the Red Sea, get thrown back to the point where it seemed as if they couldn't get out without coming back and going around, and Pharaoh was coming behind them.

And the people would have been entangled if God had not delivered them; but God knew what he was doing; He brought them to this place intending to bring them safely through. They could have gotten through safely if Pharaoh hadn't come; but it would take them longer. Now in the situation there, Pharaoh seems to have them hemmed in; and he did not intend to kill them all; he intended to kill some of them, and take the rest back as slaves; but they couldn't tell which ones would be killed; they were filled with terror. And Moses said, "Fear not; stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show you today." What a verse that is for our lives! Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show you today. They didn't just stand still down in Egypt and expect God to pick them up and put them in Palestine.

They started out to go; they did their part, but they reached the place where there was nothing they could do. They reached a situation which was hopeless, from a human viewpoint; and God said, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." And God does want us to do our part, but he doesn't want us to worry or be anxious; because he wants us to know that whenever the situation is crucial, that we can stand still and see Him work out what His will is in it; whether it be His will to honor him by faithful endurance of the situation that you have to go through; or that He will deliver us from it; we will see the salvation of the Lord, and He will do what his will is in it.

We read in Chapter 14:8, "The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he pursued after the children of Israel." The Lord made Pharaoh's heart stubborn. Pharaoh had said, "I'll let you go, get out as quickly as you can."

Now Pharaoh said, "The people are entangled in the land; the wilderness has shut them in. I will go and I will bring them back into slavery."

And so Pharaoh comes after them; and they are in this situation which God let them get into, in order that He might again impress upon their minds the great lesson of His power, and His leadership, and of their inability to go without Him.

And so in verse 13 we read that Moses says to the people:

And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

The Lord will fight for you and you will hold your peace.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

"Wherefore criest thou unto me?" Well, doesn't the Lord want us to pray in situations and difficulties? Yes, definitely. He wants us to pray, but he wants us also to be active; he wants us to act in faith. He wants us to act, knowing that he is going to give the deliverance. And so he says "Why do you cry unto me?" Well, he wants us to cry to him; but he didn't want him just to cry to him; he wanted him to go forward now, because the answer was here. Lift up thy rod and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it. What a wonderful power Moses had. God says lift up your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it.

Why didn't Moses do that in the first place? Why did he cry? If he had the power to lift up his hand and stretch it over the sea and divide it, why didn't he do that in the first place? It's perfectly evident here that the language the Lord uses—just like in most of the plagues, where he tells Moses to lift up his hand and wave it, and bring frogs in from the wilderness into the land. Moses had no power to bring frogs in, but Moses is told to make an indication of what God is going to do; and here Moses makes an indication that God is going to divide the sea, because God has promised and Moses can see the indications of God's promise; but the language, if you take it alone—verse 16—if you're going to literally and strictly insist on the verse taken by itself, without interpretation from context, it surely makes Moses a magician: "Lift up your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it." He couldn't do it; he indicates what God is to do.

And it does not tell us anything about how God is going to do it. If Moses lifts up his rod and says "Divide, you waters," and right away they began moving; and he says, "Stand up in heaps" and here these waters stand up in heaps; they just walk right through. Well, you couldn't get that from this verse. "Moses," God said, "Lift up your rod over the waters and divide them." But it does not necessarily have to be interpreted that way. We have to study context, to see what we have. And so as we look on into the context we find that the Lord said, "Lift up your hand and divide it," but then, in verse 21, Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to just lift up in two heaps, right that minute? No. "And the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night; and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided."

Somebody told me of a fine conservative Christian scholar who said it is ridiculous to say that the east wind divided the waters, because an east wind couldn't do that; it's impossible. Well, it's not a question of what we think is possible or not, but of what the scripture says. The scripture says that God caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land; and the waters were divided. It does not say that when Moses lifted his rod, instantly the waters were divided. It said that God caused something to happen all night, and thus to divide the waters.

It was known to the people what he did. It was known to the people; it was for an indication to the people; and therefore, it is possible that he stood up on a high place somewhere, where they all could see him; or it's possible that the words he said didn't have anything to do with it. And some of them see him, and they told others. But the point of it wasn't that there was a magical power in Moses' rod, or a magical power in Moses; but there it was an indication that God gave a command. And the indication was given by Moses; it really is a prediction; it's like with the plagues of Egypt.

Last year we had two bad, severe storms, one of which wrecked an awful lot of trees. Well, you get acts of nature in every country at some time; you get them, you sometimes become immune. But if it had been predicted through us—a month ahead—that for our sins and for our wickedness, we were going to lose a lot of trees in a storm which you could not resist, and then it happened; you would immediately ask, "Who is this that made this prediction? Has he made other similar predictions? Is there evidence to think that he is a spokesman for God?"

Now with Moses, there were these repeated predictions which were fulfilled; and that is the great part of the miracle, as evidence of God's will. The tremendous increase in the natural blessing, the intensification of it, was an indication of God's power. But the fact that they were predicted and the predictions were fulfilled, was proof that it was God's acting in a special way, rather than just the way the forces of nature occurred that particular year.

Now in this case it is the same thing. There are many people whose idea of the Bible is that to be truly Christian, we must think that the Bible is a miracle story from beginning to end; in which everything is contrary to nature as you see it; in which God is always doing the most grotesque and queer and unnatural things, as proof of what a great God he is; and the more you believe of that sort of thing, the more truly Christian you are.

Well, God can do anything that he chooses; but the Bible is not just a book telling of the type of world that none of us live in. It is the book to tell us how to live in the type of world we do live in; and the power of God is just as great today as it has ever been. And God occasionally has chosen in the past—and occasionally today—chooses to display this power in ways that are utterly contrary to things that you normally see at all. But, as a rule, what he wants us to do is to see that his hand is controlling and directing everything, and that he works all things in us in accordance with his power; and he is not bound by our rules, but he does not have to, every minute, be changing the rules that he has made for the processes of the forces of nature; but rather he is using the rules which he has made for the accomplishment of his purposes. And you take the Bible, and you can go through page after page, chapter after chapter, book after book, with no mention of anything that is contrary to the normal working of the world as God has made it. We have a few places in which the miraculous has piled up; a few great places at which God chose to exert great supernatural power; but we have a whole Bible in which, at every single point, he was exerting his control, and causing things to happen in accordance with his will.

And in this case, God could certainly, if he chose, have said to these waters of the Red Sea, "You stand up in two heaps there, right this instant, let that occur," and the Israelites walk right through. He could choose to do that, if he wanted to, but the Bible doesn't say that's what he chose to do. The Bible says that he told Moses to divide the water; but then it says that he said to Moses, "Lift your rod," and that God caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night; that's what it says happened, and it was the wind that did it. And someone says then, "Well, it's impossible for the wind to do it," therefore the wind couldn't do it? Well, the scripture says that that's what happened. And we should accept the scripture, and not try to make the scripture more wonderful by changing it to fit our ideas of what would be more wonderful.

They would go on dry ground through the midst of the sea, and so we read on in verse 21

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

God caused it to go back the whole night; he did not cause it to happen at the one instant. The instrument he used for it was the wind.

Now when Christ said of Herod, "Go tell that fox," He didn't mean that Herod was a four-footed beast, nor did He mean that Herod made the sort of sounds that a fox makes. He was using the word fox as a figure to show what Herod was—to show his character.

Well, now the next point that might disturb us is verse 22, the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. The waters were walls. Now what is a wall? Does that mean the waters turned into concrete? That there was a wall on each side, a concrete wall standing up there, you could reach out and touch that wall? You couldn't be sure if you could put your hand through it because it was solid and you could touch it.

Or does it mean that the water took on some of the qualities of wall? Does it mean that even as Herod had certain qualities typified by a fox, that the water had certain qualities which are characteristic of a wall, so that it is a figure of speech, that the waters fulfilled the functions of a wall? Is that what it means?

Which of the two does it mean? Well, it could be either one, certainly; it could mean either. We have to read the context and see which one it was. But we find that the way that it happened was that the Lord "caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided."

Now somebody has said, "This is perfectly silly. It is utterly impossible, because if you had such a terrifically strong wind blowing through there, that it held the waters up on both sides in a great wall because of this great force of air going through, nobody could walk through; it would just knock you over when you started and tried to walk through." Although that is evidently not what the wind did. But the wind caused the sea to go back all that night and made the sea dry land and the waters were divided.

Well, we have the words here; we have the account; we know that just as the Israelites were there, as they needed help, God gave them help; and He gave them help by means of a wind; and a result of giving of help was a division of water, so that the water was a wall to them on both sides; and they were able to cross through the sea on dry ground; not under the sea but it means where the sea was, it means with sea on both sides.

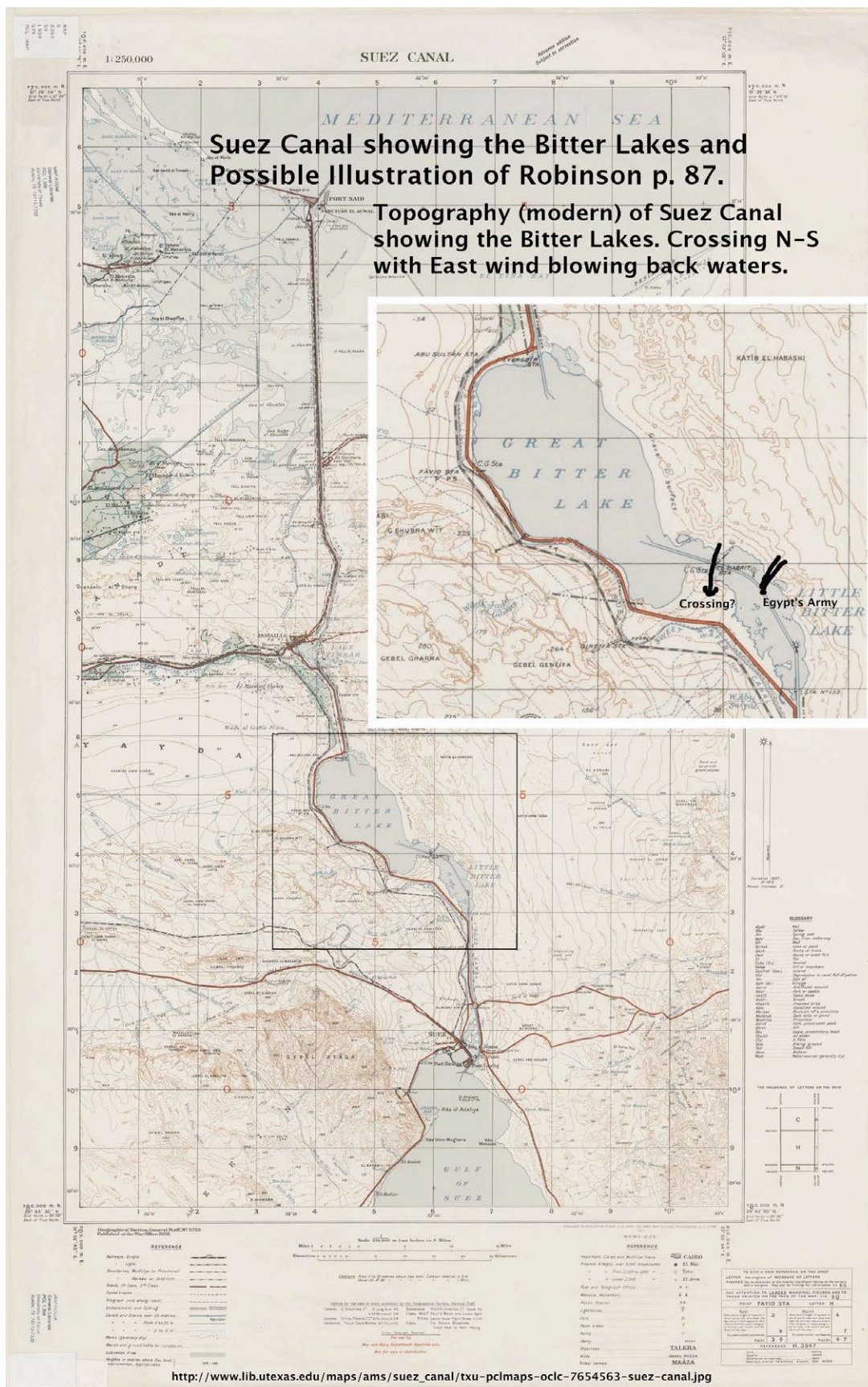
Now T. H. Robinson, in the book *History of Israel* that we quoted before, gives an interpretation of it; this, in his language, falls again, as in the last sentence of the previous quotation which I read to you from him, into a rather sneering attitude which is certainly utterly wrong; and yet I think he has some facts here which are important to consider; and I think the facts, not interpreted as he interpreted them, but correctly interpreted, are of importance as giving us what I think is the most probable explanation of what these words mean.

Of course it would be perfectly easy for God, if He chose, to simply reach down and pick up the people and put them over on the other side, He could have done that very easily; or He could have picked them up and put them down in Palestine someplace; or He could have done it any way that He chose to; but the way that He chose to do it, was to cause a wind to make the sea go back, and make the sea dry land; so it would sound as if the wind was the factor which God used for the purpose; so it was something that was a direct supernatural interposition of God. It would sound as if that was the creation of the wind, rather than the turning of the water into a wall, or making water in some supernatural way to stand upright instead of leveling out. It would sound as if the wind was the factor which God introduced—that God produced—for the purpose that God used it.

Well, now I'll read what Robinson has to say. He says:

We have no means of knowing for certain where the crossing took place. Those who would locate Sinai to the east of the Gulf of Akaba will naturally find the spot at the northern end of that gulf. On other grounds, the more natural place will be north of the modern Suez. The sandy stretch between Suez and the southern end of the Bitter lakes is raised only a few feet above sea level and was probably wholly or partially covered with water in ancient times. Shallow water of this kind may easily be driven back by a strong wind, leaving the sand bare. With the dropping of the wind the water returns, coming probably under the sand first, as it does in many such places with the tide, and forming a quicksand in which the wheels of the chariots would first sink. Finally, as the dried space filled with water the infantry and the others would be caught and drowned.⁸¹

⁸¹ Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 87. See adjacent figure for possible location.



Now so far it seems to me very reasonable. Now he begins to show his attitude. He says,

We must remember that for the most part, Israel was unfamiliar with the sea, and movements of this kind would almost inevitably appear miraculous. There can be little doubt that some unusual coincidence facilitated the escape of at least a portion of the tribes, and that this was ever afterwards remembered as the first great interference of Yahweh on behalf of the people. *ibid.*

Now you see his attitude toward the end is utterly un-Christian, utterly wrong, but that doesn't mean to say that the facts he alleges might not be what is meant by the account.

We're not told that God lifted the people up and put them over there; or he caused that they should suddenly disappear from this spot and be at another; there is nothing said about His causing the waters to freeze, so that there were two perpendicular walls on either side of them; it was not cold that was the agent which God used here; it was wind. And the statement that the Scripture makes is that the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night and made the sea dry land and the waters were divided.

This impressed me as the most colorful interpretation of it: you have an area there which is somewhat like this, so that the water comes here; and you have over on this side, eight feet of water; and you can't tell, as you look at that water, which sides are comparatively shallow and which sides may be six feet deep; you can tell, particularly when you come to it there, but you haven't been there very long; and you're looking around for the best way to go and you look around and you see the Egyptians.

Now under those circumstances, God sent them over, and told the people to stand still and see how the Lord will give them victory. The Lord will deliver them when they go through the sea on dry land. Then God caused a great east wind to blow all through the night; and so the wind blows and the water is blown in this direction; and the result is that the water heaps up over here somewhere, so that it is higher over here than over there; that would naturally occur from such a wind; and the level over here comes down to about here. And the result is that this sandbar, or protuberance under the water—this irregularity in the bottom—is now dry land; and there is water on both sides, so that Pharaoh's troops can't come in here and attack you; or in there and attack you; there is a 'wall' there preventing him from doing that; there is water there protecting from both sides; there is no way he can get at you except by coming directly this way from behind. And consequently the people are able to walk across on dry land; and then when Pharaoh's armies start to pursue them through here, the winds stop blowing; the waters come back; the chariot wheels

are caught in the sand mired there, and they are covered over. Now that seems to be to me that's what the verse here describes, rather than the water stood upright or anything like that.

(Question: What is a wall? Is a wall something that is upright? Or is a wall something that is a barrier?) I think that the wall here is not characterized by perpendicularity nor hardness, but it is impassibility—that on both sides there is water which makes a protection, a barrier, or a wall.

(Question) No, it is not flowing water, it is a lake.

(Question) No, they crossed in the middle of the lake. You see, it is not a river, it is a lake: the Red Sea; but it isn't Red Sea in the Hebrew, it is Sea of Reeds, the word is *Yom Suph*, Sea of Reeds. It is translated in the Greek as Red Sea, but the Hebrew is the Sea of Reeds. And it means simply a lake, a body of water; and any lake, if you have a strong wind blowing in one direction, you will find that the level of the water is higher at one end of the lake than at the other and if the water was blown by the east wind, you might have the water over there several feet higher, and then the water would level out again when the wind was not there driving it over.

(Question) That is the 15th chapter which you are reading, which is the Song of Moses, the poetic song of Moses in praising the whole situation. In vs. 8, "By the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together; the floods stood upright as an heap; and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea." You see that doesn't mean that God had a nose there; it is a poetic praise to God; and from that poetry, you may get further light on it definitely, but it is much more apt to contain figures of expression than the account of the event. It will contain more figures inevitably in a song such as this.

(Question) Well, the flood means a great body of water. The word "flood" simply means a great body of water, a lot of water. You see, this is a big lake. It could go several miles in this direction; and the water from this part goes over towards that side; and it would be that maybe a mile over here; but over on that side it could be quite a bit higher than here. The Scripture says that there was water on both sides. Yes, there was an obstruction. (laughter) And so if the water was on both sides...

(Question) Well, that is just like the question of the fox. When the Lord said, "Herod, thou fox," we know then, that he didn't mean, of course, the four-footed beast. Well, now you can use in Scripture anything as a figure. I mean that there is hardly a word in Scripture but that you will find some places used in a figurative way. You do not have a succession of words, all used as figurative. That wouldn't make sense. Passages are primarily literal, but in the course of it there may be individual words used in a figurative way; and when it

says the waters were a wall to them on this side and on that, they were a wall to them.

It is like where you read that God says to Moses, He says, "You go and you will be a god to pharaoh, and Aaron will be to you a prophet." Well, now Aaron wasn't a prophet and Moses wasn't a god; but he meant that to pharaoh, Moses would seem like a god because he would have the qualities of a god; he would be one that would be able to do things far beyond what a man could normally do, so it would look that way to pharaoh; and he meant that Aaron wouldn't be a prophet—Moses was the prophet—but Aaron would be Moses' spokesman, just as a prophet is God's spokesman. He uses the word God in the figurative sense, and he uses prophet in the figurative sense. He says you will be a god to pharaoh, and Aaron will be a prophet to you; and here he says the waters were a wall unto them. It doesn't say the waters were a wall. They didn't change into metal, or into wood or something. They didn't become a wall. It could be easy to get waters perpendicular, all you have to do is freeze them, but that is not what he says; they didn't become a wall, they became a wall *to them*; that is a protection for them on both sides.

Well, now if someone wants to think that what probably happened here—instead of this, the Lord made the east wind blow these waters up perpendicular and you have two perpendicular piles of water on both sides of you between which you walk—why I can't see any great harm in thinking that; but it doesn't seem to me that is what the Scripture says. It seems to me that what the Scripture says corresponds ordinarily to what I've mentioned.

(Question) I can't think of any other way. So that actually where you stood on the shore you were lower than the water, and the water was higher and you were lower because the wind was blowing. I know they could do that in Long Island; it could conceivably do it over in the Red Sea.

(Question: How deep would the water have to be on the deep side?) Now I would think that this might have been 20 or 30 feet here, but I would think that three or four would do just as well.

(Question: "But it drowned the Egyptians.") Yes, probably it was more than three or four because it drowned the Egyptians. Probably it was at least 8 or 10.

Well, now I am merely trying to take the verse in the Scripture and see how to interpret it. It says that the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind. The word "back" is not in the original. "The Lord caused the sea to go by strong east wind and made the sea dry land." Well, now that seems to me to require that they were going from North to South or South to North, because it is not merely that it would be difficult for them to walk with the wind hitting them from back to front, a wind that was strong enough to move water to make

two walls. I don't see how the wind would do it anyway. I can't imagine a wind going against the lake directly in such a way as to make two walls of it. God could certainly cause the waters to be frozen and you have walls but that is not what we are told happened.

(Question) This portion of the sea would be shallow; it is covered with water ordinarily.

(Question) At this particular spot I would think it likely they would, because the East Wind did it. But of course, that doesn't mean that when the Scripture says the east wind, it means that the wind would have to come from *due* east; it might be a southeast wind (that is, it might be traveling northwest). We are not told the exact direction of the wind, but I would think that most likely they were traveling more or less at right angles to the wind.

(Question) Robinson found a spot that he thought fit rather naturally with what it may have been. I think a good many places might have been.

(Question) But of course when it comes to making soundings, and seeing where, you have shallow places like that under water most anywhere you want to go.

(Question) Oh, the Red Sea is the Greek translation; the Hebrew is the "Sea of Reeds". We don't know just where it is, but there are the bigger lakes up just north of the Red Sea, which would seem most likely to be the place; and I would think it likely that here it wasn't more than a half a mile or a mile wide, in fact.

(Question) The Red Sea, as we know, is a very large body of water; not so terrifically wide, but long; and it has two long branches, like a Y. A very long thing, that reaches a very long distance; and in the portion of that that is near here—which most doubtless fits the description the most—it says the Sea of Reeds. But, of course, the matter of names for lakes is a matter which varies greatly from period to period anyway; and there are many different names given to natural places. We don't have any marker put there at the time to show just where it is.

It doesn't seem to me that to say "the waters were a wall to them" means that the waters stood up perpendicular. I think it would be very easy for God to make them stand up perpendicular, if He wanted. What pharaoh said in the beginning was "they are entangled in the wilderness." That is what he said, and I would think it was entirely possible that the Egyptians had planned out the whole thing—they would go clear around and head them off. But in the account we have, they suddenly decided to pursue directly. They hadn't dreamed of such a thing as this [the waters parting] happening, and it might not happen again for several hundred years; but at least, it doesn't happen often enough to

be something that a person could count on; and here it happened just at the time when it was needed.

V. Israel in the Wilderness.

Now Israel in the wilderness and the escape from Egypt overlap. That is true of the great majority of events in life. This idea that one ends at a certain instant, and the other begins at a certain instant, just does not work. Usually there is an overlapping, and usually one is in completion while the other is getting started. When you have a complete sudden sharp change between two things, you generally have some pretty bad loose ends. And certainly God is able, as any human planner or human worker; and usually while he is finishing up one era he is already starting the other, and the sharp precise divisions that we make are more for the purposes of convenience than that they actually correspond to any reality.

So, in going through the Red Sea, when God said, "You will see his face no more," they were past the Egyptian army. The great army that tried to stop them was destroyed. No more did they have to fight against Pharaoh in getting to the Promised Land. And this was the end of that; but in another sense, the end of it was when they left Egypt. Well, now this subject, "Israel in the Wilderness," I think should be considered as starting when they actually leave Egypt, even though they still are in danger from Egypt for a little distance. So while I ended that section at Exodus 15, I believe we should start this one at Exodus 12.

Now, I believe that it is a general impression of the Christian world that Pharaoh and his army perished in the Red Sea. I haven't made a careful survey to see whether this is taught in the scriptures. But I have in general had it in mind in reading and I do not recall any statement in Scripture which says that Pharaoh perished in the Red Sea.

It says that Pharaoh's hosts perished in the Red Sea. This certainly does not mean all of Pharaoh's army perished in the Red Sea. The number that he brought in order to stop them was a group hastily gathered; how large it was we don't know—doubtless plenty large. And he lost doubtless a considerable amount. But there have been those who have claimed that there was proof that a certain Pharaoh was the Pharaoh of the Exodus, because they claimed that his mummy showed evidence of having died by drowning.

But we're not sure which Pharaoh it was; and I believe it would be rather hard to establish that of a mummy. There are some things that could be easily established, but that question would not be easy to establish. Mr. Haffley has a verse in Exodus. That's good, what is it? Exodus 15:19. "For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea." Now this English translation "horse" is a translation of the Hebrew word which is probably a collective one, and it refers rather to horsemen. Pharaoh never rode a horse; nobody rode horses in those days. All of our evidence—until much

later in history—of the use of horses, was riding in little tubs, or wagons, or chariots, pulled by horses. And there is no evidence that anybody in this part of the world ever thought of riding a horse until much later. So there would be no one horse which was Pharaoh's horse. There might be two horses which he preferred to pull his chariot rather than any other two, but likely not; likely he had many changes of them, in order to have all his chariots ready whenever he wanted to go anywhere; frequently changing in order to go further than the ones he would ordinarily take.

But this in English now: "the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots, and with his horsemen into the sea." But it certainly is not a basis on which to build the idea. I don't think people a hundred years ago, or two hundred years ago, endeavored to prove that Pharaoh had died. I think they just took it for granted. Pharaoh and his hosts were overcome.

It's like the matter of Abraham's rescue of Lot. Abraham did not overcome the Babylonian Empire; he did not overthrow the Empire; he attacked the rear guard of the army. His purpose was not to destroy that; his purpose was to rescue Lot; and he not only fulfilled his purpose, but a great deal more; because he rescued in addition to Lot the people from that little area with their stuff.

It says he went with 318 of his trained servants. That would be nothing compared to the army. But it was sufficient to make an unexpected attack—a long distance from the place where they had taken them captive—to make a sudden unexpected attack; to rescue and get them back; and the Babylonian chief would have had sufficient power to have gone back to re-conquer Sodom; but the main purpose of their expedition had been accomplished; and to do so would have meant a very great additional expense, beyond what they felt was worth doing, and they did not go.

Now, Mr. Deshpande has a verse, let's see what it is. Psalm 136:15. God made Israel pass through the midst of the Red Sea, and overthrew Pharaoh's hosts in the Red Sea. Pharaoh suffered a great overthrow in the instance of the Red Sea. It was a calamity to them. There was a very considerable loss to his hosts. It is possible that Pharaoh may have been drowned. It is possible that Pharaoh may have been on the edge of it, and that his chariot overturned, and he had gotten out. It is possible that Pharaoh was on a hill watching the progress and giving orders to his lieutenants, and that he suffered this great overthrow without himself being directly involved in it. I believe we can take Psalm 136:15 quite literally without necessarily drawing the conclusion that Pharaoh personally suffered death. I don't think the Exodus account gives that conclusion.

Now of course we don't know who the Pharaoh was; and I don't think there's any evidence of the event. But Egyptian history is an involved history. It is the history of which we know more than the history of perhaps any other empire,

because we have more material; but all the material we have—well, let's not say all, say 99 percent—is the material either that was given to us in order to let us know what God wanted us to know, or that was given to the people of Egypt to let them know what Pharaoh wanted them to know. That is to say, most of our material is from monuments put up to celebrate great victories, and those usually just give the desirable things and say nothing about the things that don't reflect glory on the Pharaoh.

Practically, the only additional evidence we have—and evidence from which a great deal of excellent material is taken—is the evidence of papyri which were written by the Pharaoh in order to show why he deserves great credit from the gods, for having conquered many lands and brought great amounts of plunder to give to the gods. And in these long papyri—which a very few of the pharaohs wrote—they gave many details of their campaigns which we don't have on any of the monuments. But these are not in any sense of trying to give an accurate history but trying to show the gods how much the pharaoh has done and conquered.

And so in any kind of defeat, they would have no special purpose in giving that information in those papyri, unless the defeat was followed by a great victory, in which the pharaoh could describe his ability in snatching victory out of defeat. In such a case you learn of things you ordinarily wouldn't. Today we have great gaps. We have some great empires of ancient times of which we have all sorts of evidence of their great victories; and then the last hundred years or so before their defeat, and the actual details of the defeat, we perhaps don't know at all.

It happens that one of the citizens who survived the Assyrian conquest—most of the people were killed—was longing for deliverance and expecting that they would be able to get some resistance together. So he made out a list of the people who died, who were killed or taken captive, to remind them of this; and we have that list, and that gives a kind of evidence.

(Student: Can the Biblical passages be taken as literal?) Well, no, I don't go quite that far. I would say that a passage which is given, a straight narrative, may contain a figurative element; any narrative may contain a figurative element. And we must ask the question: is this figurative or literal? But because a thing is figurative doesn't mean that it's no value for history. A figurative element may be clearer even than a literal one would be; but it has to be interpreted in a slightly different way.

A straight narrative may contain some figurative element—we must recognize that possibility—but a straight narrative is pretty much literal; and you can assume pretty much a literal interpretation in most of these words, though occasionally you have to recognize figurative elements in it.

When you get a song, when you get a poem of victory—something like that—you still can expect that it will stick to factual history; and you still have a basis upon which you can gather a very considerable amount of information. It is true, if it's in the Bible. God retained it because it's true; and it is just as true as a narrative portion; but in interpreting we recognize the fact that in poetry like this, a much larger amount of figurative language may be used than in straight narrative. A much larger amount; but even so I would say the majority of statements in the poem are going to be literal. I would say that the majority of the words used are literal, but you have to recognize that there's sure to be a much larger figurative element than in a narrative, and you must take that into account when you examine the details.

So that in the victory song of Exodus 15, when it says in verse 19 that the horse of pharaoh went in with his chariots, if it meant the individual horse of Pharaoh, I would expect that fact to be stated in the song of victory. But I would think it more likely that Pharaoh was used as a symbol for his multitudes—or something like that—than as meaning Pharaoh himself.

Verse 14:27 says "Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it, and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea." Now this word "overthrow" does not necessarily mean take a man standing up and knock him over, so that he falls down. Nor does it necessarily mean to take a man living and kill him. But it means a defeat. He caused the Egyptians to be defeated in the midst of the sea. I would take that to mean that a lot of them were killed, but not necessarily all from that statement.

Then verse 28, "And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them." There wasn't one of them who went into the sea that succeeded in coming out on the other side to be a menace to the Israelites. I don't think we necessarily gather from this that there wasn't one of them who managed to get out on the side toward Egypt.

(Student: It says there remained none of them.) Yes, it says there remained none in the force that was menacing Israel. Of this which was attacking Israel—coming through the sea—there was not a single one got through; they all were overcome. I don't think it says all the hosts went into it; I think it's entirely possible that all that went into the sea were destroyed, but I don't think it's necessarily true. I think it's certain that not even one came out on the other side to be a menace to the Israelites. And I don't find anywhere in the verse a statement that Pharaoh himself was included. I think we are justified in looking to the other passages to see if anything more is added.

But now "Israel in the Wilderness" covers Exodus 12 to approximately the end of Deuteronomy. That is to say the beginning of Joshua you might consider they're still in the wilderness or you might consider that they have left the wilderness and are on the edge of the Promised Land; but I think it's a pretty safe to put it at the end of Deuteronomy.

There is much material in this section that deserves a great deal of attention. The tendency of the majority of people today is to run over this whole section very rapidly. We have many, many times the attention of our Christian world paid to Genesis than we have to the section from Exodus 12 to the end of Deuteronomy. This is unfortunate. Much material in this section deserves a great deal of attention.

This includes the latter part of Exodus, from chapter 12 on. The incidents in the early part are well-known to you, but after the giving of the law in Exodus 20, the remainder of that is comparatively little known.

Then the book of Leviticus is the law book for the priests, telling about the detailed material that they need for their sacrifices and it is not a book that is—most of it—very helpful for public discourse. But for personal lessons, there are many of far greater value in the details for the time of Moses than it is today.

The last book of the five, the book of Deuteronomy is the recapitulation of the law by Moses; and the word "Deuteronomy" is the Greek word meaning "the second law"; not a new law, but the second presentation of the law; and so while this contains some historical material in Moses delivering it, actually there's just about as much history by the end of Numbers as you have by the end of Deuteronomy.

So that leaves the book of Numbers. And the book of Numbers is a book which is very largely neglected by the Christian world. And I think one reason it is neglected is the very, very unfortunate name that is given to the book. The book of Genesis, the Hebrew calls it "In the Beginning", and the Greeks call it "In the Beginning"; the Greek word "beginning" is "genesis" and so we call it Genesis. Genesis describes it, but perhaps your average Christian if you translated it and said "Beginning", it would be more useful, because many of them may not think what Genesis means.

The book of Exodus, the Hebrew simply calls it, "These Are the Names", because it starts with the names of those who went down into Egypt. The Hebrew name tells us nothing; the Greeks gave it a title, "Deliverance", or "Going Out", Exodus. We take over the Greek word "Exodus", and it's a good description of the book. I think there again, if we translate it into English, and say "Going Out", the average person would get more meaning, because many of them do not immediately recognize that Exodus means "The Going Out".

The book of Leviticus, the Hebrew takes the first few words, which don't tell us about it; the Greek says "the book of the Levites", Leviticus, and that is a pretty good descriptive title, Leviticus.

The final book Deuteronomy, the Hebrew takes the first few words which don't tell us anything much about it, "And God Called". The Greek has given it a descriptive title, "The Second Law". And there again, the average Christian knows nothing of what Deuteronomy means; but it would be better if we called it "The Second Law", or "Repetition of the Law", for then we would know what it was about. The average Christian doesn't because he hasn't learned Greek.

But the fourth book, the Hebrew calls it "In the Wilderness"; these are not the first words of it, but words taken from the first sentence; and that is a wonderful descriptive title of the book, "In the Wilderness", because it covers a greater part of the story of the wilderness wanderings.

The Greeks, unfortunately, reversed the process here. In other cases, where the Hebrew has a very poor title, the Greek has a good title. In this case the Hebrew has an excellent title, but the Greeks glanced at the first chapter, saw it was full of numbers and called it "Numbers".

Now, if we in this case, as in the other four books of the Pentateuch, had taken over the word *B'midbar*, why it would mean no more to the average Christian than "Genesis" or "Deuteronomy", in looking through the book to see what it's all about. But, unfortunately, in the one case of the five where the Greeks have given a very, very poor title—which doesn't fit the book at all—we have translated the title into English so that everybody who reads can know what the Greek says, and their very inept and poor description of this wonderful book.

And so in the one case of the five where the Hebrew has a first class title, (no there are two, Genesis also)—but in this case, the one case where the Greeks have a very poor title—we not only kept the Greek title, but translated it to make it intelligible to every reader; and I am sure the average reader is scared away by the terrible title of "Numbers"—unless of course he's a mathematical expert.

Originally it wasn't a separate book. This is a section that got divided up in very recent times—quite a logical treatment—but it's unfortunate that the division happens to fall at a place where the first chapters, in this part of the section, do include lists of numbers. And toward the end, there is another chapter with many numbers; but most of the chapters have very, very few numbers in them. There is law—there's a considerable amount of law in it—but far less than Deuteronomy or Exodus or Leviticus. And the great bulk of material in the book of Numbers is the account of the wilderness journey. And so that description,

"In the Wilderness", to anybody who might read, and who loves the wilderness—there's nothing I'd rather do at any time than travel in the wilderness—to me it would be a far more attractive title than "Numbers". And I think that to the average person with a general leaning toward adventure—even though he doesn't share it, he likes to hear about it—the title "Wilderness" or "In the Wilderness" would be much more attractive than the title "Numbers".

And so our heading here, "Israel in the Wilderness", refers to the Book of Numbers.

A. The Importance of This Section.

1. Historical.

Historically, it is a section of a fair amount of importance. We have the Israelites in Egypt; then we have them in Canaan. How did they get from one place to the other? It tells the facts—the historical facts—and this has a certain amount of importance to us; perhaps not as much historically as the events before and after. Not quite as much because we have no other material with which to compare it, which can throw further light upon it.

We have studies made of places where they were, and so forth; but it's very, very hard to prove where certain places were. But the historical evidence is of some interest—this fact that they went through the wilderness. And of course the statements in it—the historical statements—are historical facts. It's of importance to us because it gives the law God gave them; and much of that law relates to sacrifice, looking forward to the death of Christ. And we have our own form of ceremony looking back to it, so they're not such a strange folk to us.

But other parts of it give the great principles of God's dealing with man, and the kind of life he wanted man to live; and they are of tremendous importance to us, and deserve far more attention than they get. But that's not a matter of Old Testament History particularly, just noting it. So historically, this section may be a section of somewhat less importance than some other portions.

When I was taking graduate work some years ago at the University of Pennsylvania, the head of the Semitic department there made a statement to me one day. He was very much irritated — disgusted — because the instructor in History in the same university had made the statement in his class, Hebrew History, that the Hebrew language is something that Christians had invented in order to throw mystery around the foundation of their religion. That was said in a University in which there was a department in Semitics; and there were advanced scholars teaching the details of these historical matters, this historical language.

He was tremendously disgusted about it. He himself stated to me that a great part of liberalism is superficially denying things that they know nothing about. Well now, there is no great advantage to the cause of Christ in our taking the opposite extreme either, and just as superficially affirming things without understanding them or knowing what they mean. It is vital to know that this Bible is not built on cunningly devised myths or fables. It is not something that is made up out of whole cloth; it is absolute fact, that God did work in these ways, that these things occurred, and that you can trace back the history of Israel and the separation of Israel as a peculiar nation in preparation for the coming of Christ.

2. Spiritual Lessons.

There is nothing in the scripture that does not have spiritual lessons. But from the viewpoint of spiritual lessons, this is one of the most important sections we find. We read in the New Testament that all these things in the Old Testament happened for our edification. They are historical facts which occurred, but they also are facts from which God gave us lessons and understanding; and they are facts that are illustrations of spiritual facts. From the viewpoint of spiritual lessons this is one of the very most important sections of the Old Testament.

Genesis tells of our beginnings; and it's very interesting to know how we began, and there is much of tremendous value in the book of Genesis. Exodus—the first part—tells of the deliverance from Egypt; and that is a most wonderful symbol and illustration of our deliverance from the power of sin, of our deliverance from the oppression of Satan—a wonderful illustration of it—and of great importance to us. But the Christian has gone through that; he wants to always look back and celebrate how God delivered him from sin, but he doesn't want to stop there.

There's many a Christian who is always worrying about his sin—wondering if he's truly saved—he's back in Exodus all the time; and he should get on past that and recognize that God has delivered him out of that; and that he has been saved; and that the Passover has been accomplished; that he has gone through the Red Sea; that he has been delivered. He looks back and praises God for it; and he looks back and tells others how to be saved; but God wants him to go forward to another stage of his Christian experience.

Now there are other Christians who think that they have already come into Canaan—they have already come into the Promised Land, into the symbol of perfection, into the illustration of the heavenly rest which we are to have—they think that they are there, and they are mistaken. Because our Canaan, our heavenly rest, is ahead of us; it is the Millennium. But every Christian has a wilderness journey through which he has to go. He looks back to the deliverance from Egypt; he looks back to the deliverance through the Red Sea;

he looks forward to the Promised Land, toward which he is on his pilgrimage journey. But he is now in between; and so for spiritual lessons, the wilderness journey from Exodus 12 to the end of Deuteronomy exactly corresponds to the position of the Christian in this life after he is saved.

And therefore, from the viewpoint of spiritual lessons, there is no section of the Bible more important than Exodus 12 to the end of Deuteronomy; and no book of the Bible is more important for the Christian than the book of Numbers. So I think it particularly unfortunate that the book of Numbers should have been robbed of a great part of its appeal to the average American Christian, by the very unfortunate name which we apply to the book. You will inevitably run across some very glaring instances of Christians who do not get the assurance of salvation they should have, but are always worrying about their sin and how they're going to be saved; and I say they are back in Exodus; and I say we should be through Exodus; we have it to look back to and praise God for; and to look back to and tell others of it; but we should be through it and I think most true Christians are; but there are some who are not, and quite a number.

Then I said that there are some—again it's not the majority by any means—who think they are already in the Promised Land; they've reached perfection; but most of us realize, and all of us should realize, we are on the pilgrimage journey; we are like Abram who seeks a heavenly city. Of course Abraham was comparatively smaller in illustration; the Israelites we have here are a better one, because they have the Egyptian experience to look back on.

The spiritual lessons of the Old Testament are primarily historical matters. Their symbolic meaning is only a secondary, and yet a very important part of their meaning. Egypt is the great symbol of oppression. It is the great symbol of the power of sin—of Satan—in the book of Exodus. But Egypt, in Genesis, is the means God provided to save the people through the famine, in order to give them a good place to enlarge in. Egypt is historically a certain land where certain things happened, and it has this great meaning to it as a symbol. But that doesn't by any means exhaust the meaning of Egypt.

Now Canaan—as they go through the wilderness—is the great thing they're looking forward to, the Promised Land, the rest toward which they are going. And to that extent it's the symbol of our eventual life of perfection, the land flowing with milk and honey, to which we are going. But it is more than that; it is a historical place into which a historical people came at a certain time; and when they came in, they were still unsanctified; they still had a long ways to go in their lives; and the historical place is very far from being perfection, but it is the Promised Land to which they look; and in comparison with the wilderness, it was the perfect land ahead. And the life in Canaan, while filled with many important spiritual lessons for us, does not have quite as close an analogy to our situation, in our spiritual life, as that in the wilderness.

So it is particularly useful to us, for use in our own lives; but I don't mean that everything about it, by any means, must be an actual comparison with something spiritual. And certainly not for either Egypt or Canaan. Egypt was a place where the Israelites were blessed and wonderfully treated down there for quite a while. They had to go through Egypt; they had to get out. The wilderness was there and had to be got through; and we go through it too; and victorious living is a great purpose of the scripture—that we don't need to be struggling and failing. We can have victory.

But complete, continuous, uninterrupted victory is something that we don't have in this life. The most victorious Christian has his faults. And I still believe the wilderness journey is the best symbol of the whole life. Well, these are the spiritual lessons, then; and we want to mention under that,

a. For the Church as a Whole. We will barely mention this now; but I do think that in all our problems of the Church as a whole, we should look at the story of the wilderness journey and see what illustrations God may have for us there.

In Acts 7:38, Stephen said, speaking of Moses, "This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness," and he refers to them there as a church; and what a wonderful symbol of a church. And much in this wilderness journey is replete with illustrations and lessons for the Christian Church either taken as a whole or taken as groups of Christians.

b. For the Individual Believer. Here is where we as individuals will profit greatly by the spiritual lessons of the wilderness journey for our own individual lives. There are few sections of the Old Testament which are more important for the individual believer than this section, which runs from Exodus 12 to the end of Deuteronomy. It is a very important section, because it is the section which deals with the wilderness journey of the Israelites, and this wilderness journey of the believer.

The believer, like the people of Israel, has been redeemed. The bulk of the people of the world are in Egypt. They are under the oppression of sin. They are in a situation from which they can't escape, and from which they do not want to escape, except occasionally when the oppression becomes so severe that most anything would be preferable.

They are in a disastrous terrible situation, the end whereof is death. They feel the terrible need of something better; but they are so tied to it that it requires a supernatural intervention to cause them to really be ready to step out and to leave, and to make it possible for them to leave. The Christian is not in Egypt. He has been delivered from bondage; he has been set free; he has come out of Egypt. There are many Christians who think of themselves as back in Egypt, and

have the feeling of peril; that they make some little infraction of the law, that will land them in misery and eternal suffering; they feel as if they're back there, and their behavior toward God and his law often is like that of the people under the oppression of Pharaoh.

We need to realize that, if we have believed in Christ, we have come out of Egypt; that with our deliverer, we are free; that we have a permanent salvation; we are entirely away from it—as Moses said of the hosts of pharaoh, "You shall see them no more." We will never again return to their jurisdiction. And that is very important; and a great deal of worry and suffering and misery comes in the life that many Christians—not so much in these days, when general indifference is so common in all types of human society—but in many ages of world history, and to some extent today, this is a danger and a trouble that bothers many Christians. They do not realize that they are out of Egypt; that they have been delivered; that Christ has redeemed them. They have passed through the Passover; they have passed through the Red Sea; they have come out of Egypt; and so there are many spiritual lessons in this section, which deals with those who have come out of Egypt.

Now, there is not only that aspect, there is the other aspect—that they are in the wilderness journey and they are on their way to the Promised Land. And I think you will find more trouble in our particular day with Christians—more individuals—who are making an error on the other extreme. They are not so apt to think they are still in Egypt as to think that they have already reached the Promised Land. They expect that they are going to be in the Promised Land; and they look around, and they find they aren't; and then, they become discouraged; and some of them begin to long for the leeks and the garlic of Egypt. And others blame it all on the people around them; they think they are living in the Promised Land, and it is only the other people who have fallen short. The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us very clearly that we are like Abraham—those that seek a country, that our citizenship is in Heaven—but we cannot expect in this wilderness journey to find things as they will be in the Promised Land. We have come out of Egypt. We are entirely free from the dominion of sin. We have been redeemed from the control of Satan. Our eternal salvation is assured, as we have believed in Christ and have come out from Egypt. We will never return, but we are not yet in the Promised Land. We are those that seek a country. We are heading towards the Promised Land; but as long as we are in this life, if the Lord tarries, we are in the wilderness journey. We have God leading us with the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire, rather than the close personal intimacy that we will have when we see Him face to face and know Him fully. We are in a transition state. The historical Israelites were also in a transition state at that time; and consequently there is hardly a thing in the history of the progress of the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land which is not filled with spiritual lessons for the Christian—showing him the dangers he will fall into; showing him the misconceptions that he can get;

showing him errors and mistakes that he must avoid, if his life is to be fully used as the Lord would have it to be used, and fully satisfactory to himself.

c. General Features. Under this,

(1) Foundation of Redemption. The Israelites, in the wilderness journey, are not just a group of people that God is leading; they are a group of people whom God has delivered from Egypt. They are a group of people whom God has rescued supernaturally with his wonderful signs and miracles of great power, and enabled them to escape from the power of Pharaoh; and this is always in the background of everything that happens in the wilderness.

When they become discouraged, they say, "Did you bring us out in the wilderness to die? Was it that there were no graves in Egypt?" Their thoughts go back to Egypt. And when he gave them his law, he says "I delivered you with a mighty hand from Egypt; now if you will honor me, here's the kind of people I want you to be." They are constantly referring back to Egypt; they are living in the shadow of the deliverance from it. The Christian has been redeemed; his salvation is an accomplished fact; his justification is complete.

Satan cannot enslave the Christian into such bondage that he would lose his salvation; yet the Christian should always live in the memory of that most important fact in his Christian experience, his beginning. He is one who has been redeemed by the power of God from the terrible oppression of Satan. And that should overshadow and illumine everything in our wilderness journey—the foundation of Redemption—as it did on those who had come through the Passover experience and through the Red Sea. And

(2). The Goal. The Israelites looked back to Egypt; they looked forward to a goal. God has promised them not to bring them out to the wilderness to die there, but to take them into the Promised Land. This goal was according to God's plan; God told them what way they should go in getting there; God had planned the details of it; they were in His mind. When the spies went up there, those with faith saw what a wonderful land it was; but those without faith tried to depreciate it to some extent, because they saw the dangers and the difficulties of getting there.

The goal is not something we would imagine, but something God has planned. And God has planned the direction in which we are to go; he has planned the preparation which we need for our journey through life. And I think we can say—if we trust him—that God keeps us here in this life, after we are redeemed, because he not only has work to do for us here, but he also has lessons for us to learn. The lessons and work and growth are an important part in our progress to arrive at this land. I think the advances we make, in growth and understanding, are as important as it is to worship.

The wilderness journey had a definite purpose in God's plan in bringing them to the Promised Land. This group of people that came out of Egypt—this big multitude, these people who had experienced trouble and oppression—they were not ready to enter the Promised Land. They came out, and it says that He did not lead them in the direct way, "lest the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt." He led them a different way. He led them the way that would prepare them for what he had in mind for them.

And so it is well for us to learn that lesson, from our study of this passage, about our sojourn here, as we go through the wilderness and the Red Sea. And you say, "Well, why didn't they go right up here through the land of the Philistines, it was a direct line right straight up? But God has led out through this way because God knows I'm not ready to go right up; he wants me to go here because he has experiences for me here. Then

(3). God's Care for His People. They had the Pillar of Cloud and the Pillar of Fire there all the time. They had Moses receiving His word; they had the tabernacle; they had the food that was given; they had water given on special occasions. God was caring for his people all the time. And the Christian, in his wilderness, has God's care with him and over him; and God's leadership; and access to the Lord constantly. And we must recognize that the Israelites failed time and time again to recognize this. And the Christian becomes despondent, discouraged, and sometimes even wants to go back to Egypt; but God's marvelous care is there, and He shows it in wonderful ways sometimes; but it's always there, and there's many a lesson in this wilderness journey that we can learn. The scripture in the 11th chapter of Hebrews declares that Abraham dwelt in the land—sojourned in the land—for he looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The goal to him was not an earthly goal. It may have begun there; rest may have begun there; but it was established and consummated in a heavenly city. And when the Israelites got to Canaan, they found that Canaan had been the wonderful symbol of their goal, the Promised Land; but when they got there, they found they were still on earth. The actual goal is in heaven. It's a symbol here for us, of our life in the wilderness. And then

(4). The Giving of the Law. God took the Israelites out of Egypt; he delivered them from Pharaoh; he didn't say, "Now you've got to prove to me you deserve to be delivered. You've got to show me what fine people you are before I rescue you from Pharaoh." They were pretty bad people. They were mixed up in all the wickedness of Egypt, and none were deserving; but God delivered them. They didn't have to show a perfect life; they didn't have to show an obedience to his law; but he delivered them.

He delivered them simply because they needed it and they wanted it; and his great power provided it. He delivered them from Satan, not because of their goodness, but because of his grace. But having delivered them, he brought them to Sinai. And there at Sinai he said, "If you will be a peculiar people unto me; if you will be an honor to me; I want you to obey my laws." And God does not deliver the Christian because he's a good person, because he keeps his law; because the Christian, before he was saved, was a sinner; and he fell very far short; and many of those who were saved are worse people, evidently, than a lot of people that God never saved. He delivered the Christian by his own great love and mercy and goodness to him. It's purely of his grace that we are saved; but after we are saved he wants us to be sanctified.

And if we're truly saved, we're going to be sanctified. The Israelites could have said, "Oh, no, you've brought us out of Egypt, that's fine; but we don't want to stay here long; no, don't give us your law. We don't want it." They might conceivably have said that. And if they had said it, it would have showed that they never actually had left Egypt at all; Egypt was still very thoroughly in their hearts. The one who is saved—who is justified—will inevitably go on to be sanctified; and he needs a pattern. He needs to learn what the sort of life it is that God wants him to live, because he doesn't naturally know. His conscience says, "Do good!" It doesn't tell him what the good is. And the image of God that is in him has been so obscured and hidden by sin, in himself and round about him, that he does not know how he should live. And God proceeded to give him his law. He gave him his law to show him the sort of life that he wants him to live. Not that he'll get God's favor by living it that way; not that he will be saved if he lives that way; but that if he is saved, he'll want to live that way; and if he's truly saved he'll go on to be sanctified.

And so a very large part of this is taken up with the giving of God's law; and a very large part of the Christian's life will inevitably be devoted to learning how God wants him to be sanctified; what sort of life God wants him to live; how God wants him to deal with the very problems that come before him, in such a way as to honor and glorify God. And then

(5). The Story of the Wilderness Journey. This is a story that has many accounts of discouragements and rebellions. And as we read how the Israelites, whom God had delivered from the terrible oppression of Egypt, and had brought out into the land from there, to bring them up into the Promised Land, we just can't help thinking how terrible the way those people acted. The way they said, "Oh, what did you do? Weren't there graves enough in Egypt?" The way they longed for the fleshpots of Egypt; the way that they turned against Moses and criticized him and rebelled against him; and worshipped the golden calf. And we read all this, and say, "Well! What a terrible people they were to be brought out of Egypt! Isn't it a wonder that he didn't destroy them instead of ever bringing them into the land?"

And then he wants us to look at ourselves. We're every bit as bad. And every one of us in our Christian life, and every goof-off in our Christian life have been terrible discouragements; and we have rebelled against God. But His power is great, is sufficient to see us through them, as he saw the Israelites through the wilderness, if we will turn and look at him.

Of course no figure of speech walks on all fours. A figure is a figure. The Israelites are not in every detail a figure of the life of the Christian. But a great bulk of what we find here is a wonderful symbol of the great features of the Christian life. Now it is true that many of them died in their rebellion; and many of them showed that though they had physically come out of Egypt, they never had been truly saved. But as a symbol of the Christian's life, we know that the one who has truly gone through the experience of deliverance is not going to die in this rebellion; he is not going to be killed, but he may have some pretty tough experiences in getting through some of the backslidings and some of the discouragements that he's apt to face. And these stories will help us from getting an over-conceit in thinking that we have arrived, and we cannot fall as the other person did. And it will help us in having sympathy for the Christian that falls into sin. And maybe that sin he falls into we'd never dream of falling into, can't understand how that Christian would do that terrible thing. We don't have that particular temptation; but we may fall into something else just as bad in God's sight, though perhaps not in man's. And we need to look with sympathy and compassion and help him in true Christian love; and look to God to give us the help in the things which we've been falling into. But to realize that even that thing he's falling into, impossible as it appears to us, we might ourselves fall into it if we don't stay close to the Lord.

(6). The Duration. According to God's plan, they would wander forty years in the wilderness. He did not tell them that when they came out of Egypt. I'm sure if he had, some would have felt pretty discouraged. But after they'd been out two years, He told them that they would wander forty years in the wilderness. He does not tell us how long our wilderness journey is going to last. Some of us are pilgrims on this earth for a very brief time after we are saved, and some of us for a long life; we do not know. But it is helpful to know that it is according to His plan, whatever it is. There are various factors that enter into it, but it is strictly according to His plan.

B. From Egypt to Sinai. This is the account that we have from chapters 12 to 19.

1. The Start. The start of the wilderness journey is described in Exodus 12. Before the last plague, they actually started their journey. In Exodus 12:37, this is right after the actual killing of the first-born; Pharaoh has called to Moses, told him to get out, and verse 37, the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth; "about six hundred thousand on foot that were men,

beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle."

A mixed multitude. There were many of them Egyptians who sympathized with the Israelites; who saw that the Israelites were right in this situation and joined with them; they went with them out of Egypt; and probably many also of conquered groups of other people who were not Egyptians. So there was a mixed multitude that went with them.

And, chapter 13:17–20 continues with the start. In between we have the account of the Passover. But in 17–20 we read that

It came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near, for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt. But God led the people about through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt. And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you. And they took their journey from Succoth and encamped in Etham in the edge of the wilderness.

Thus in chapter 12 and 13 we have these two passages describing the start of the journey. There are three points we ought to note about it.

a. The Mixed Multitude. The is mentioned. It continues with them. There were those who came from varied situations in background and in outlook. And some of them, doubtless, became very true Israelites and very godly people. But there were many of them who caused great difficulty to them in the course of their journey. And whatever you do, there is always a mixed multitude. That is a strange thing, but you can never get rid of the mixed multitude. You can cut down your group as much as you want and you'll still find there's a mixed multitude. You will find that your problems, whatever the size, whatever you do, there is always the mixed multitude, always your hangers-on, who may be attracted by your great basic central purpose, but who may be out of sympathy with some of the lesser purposes; and this may cause great trouble. Or those who may be attracted by the lesser purposes, and therefore give lip-service to your main purpose, and not really be at one with you.

In a world of sin—in which we all are sinners, and we all fall short—you cannot get people to be identical; it is absolutely impossible. And you have to decide, with any group, two things. You have to decide what is the range which will be permitted in the leadership. You have to decide what will be the range which will be permitted in the rank and file. You have to decide these. There is a range. There is not an exact line in any group, but there is a range. The range

of your rank and file can be and must be broader than that of your leaders, or else your leaders have nobody to follow them. It must be somewhat broader, and you're trying to train them into the range which your leadership has. You have to think these things through carefully. And if you don't think them through, you have misery. You have misery anyway because it's a world of sin, but you'll have more misery unless you think them through. But they have to be thought through rapidly and seriously; and that's very difficult to do, because circumstances vary and new ones come up that you never dreamed of when you started out. And so we find the Israelites facing this problem right from the very beginning of their wilderness journey. Then

b. The Route Taken. Chapter 13:17 is a very interesting verse. "God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines...." Now we're not reading here about Moses' ideas. Moses took a notion—maybe he was right and maybe he was wrong—but it was Moses' feeling. No, this does not say Moses; it says God. These people were afraid to go the right way—the direct way, straight up through the land of the Philistines—so they chickened out and went down through the wilderness. No, it doesn't say that. It says God led them. This is what God did. God led them, not through the way of the land of the Philistines, though that was near, for God said, "Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt."

And here you have the infinite God stooping to the weakness of man. You have the infinite powerful God who could have picked the people up and had them be in Canaan in the next minute, if he chose. You have the infinitely powerful God, who could've taken thirty people and given them power to overcome the great Egyptian forces in the region that later he called the way of the Philistines. The land of the Philistines, that region up and down which Egyptian couriers were constantly going, from the Pharaohs to their representatives in Palestine and elsewhere, and which was heavily fortified, and heavily garrisoned. Thirty men with the Lord's strength could've overcome that and destroyed it by pure force, because the Lord can do whatever he chooses.

But the Lord stooped to man's weakness; and it says "God led them, not through the way of the Philistines, though that was near." Sometimes God leads us right on the direct straight route, right to the nearest way to reach the goal; but there are many other times when, as in this case, he stoops to our weakness and leads us by a circuitous route, in order that we may take the difficulties more gradually and overcome them one by one, instead of facing them all at once. And so God said, "Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war and they return to Egypt." God knew the people were not yet ready for the difficulties to be faced in going through the land of the Philistines, even though God's power was fully adequate for this. And so he led them this other way. And it's mighty important, in all our Christian life, that we decide how God wants this done, instead of doing what may seem to be appropriate. It may

seem obvious to us to go by the direct route; it may seem obvious to us to go the circuitous route; but either one may be wrong, while the one God wants us to go on, is perfect. And then,

c. The Bones of Joseph. Here were these people wanting to escape from Egypt—wanting to get away from Pharaoh, in this struggle with Pharaoh—and they stop to take time to get Joseph's bones. What a queer thing. Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you. Well, was there any importance to this heap of Joseph's bones? Was there any importance to asking them to take up his bones? Was it just a matter of kindness to Joseph? Joseph had done a great deal for them; this was his dying wish; it's a foolish idea, but it's his dying wish. Let's do it, let's carry them up. They didn't take the bones of the other people; there must have been thousands who had died in Egypt and were buried in Egypt. They didn't take the bones of Joseph's children; they were buried in Egypt. They didn't take the bones of their own ancestors—thousands and thousands of them buried in Egypt. But Moses took Joseph's bones and they carried them up.

Why did they do it? Well, over in the book of Hebrews we have this referred to. In Hebrews 11 we have an account of the heroes of faith; and there in that wonderful chapter we have the great instances of the faith of various great men in the Old Testament.

By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures sin for a season.

How wonderful, what it says about Moses, what it says about Abraham, what it says about some of these. But what does it say about Joseph? Does it tell about Joseph's trust in God in Potiphar's house and standing true there? Does it tell about Joseph and the dreams? The only thing it says about Joseph himself is verse 22,

By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

This is the one thing about Joseph singled out in Hebrews 11 to show the great faith of Joseph, that he gave commandment concerning his bones. Well, it seems strange, as many things in this chapter do. But if we want to find what the truth is, it isn't what seems strange to us and what seems sensible to us, but what does the scripture say? And what does the scripture teach? And one thing the scripture teaches: that Joseph gave a wonderful exhibition of faith when he gave commandment concerning his bones.

And so this is a vital thing. Joseph led the people to Egypt; Joseph prepared the way for them; Joseph was the one whom God used to prepare the place for them of preservation from famine; the place where they could grow into a great nation with all the natural advantages of Egypt around them. But Joseph knew that in this, it was a temporary device for God's good purposes; from the great purpose for which God had called them; the purpose which requires their being isolated from the heathendom of the other nations. Separated, by themselves, in their own land; where they could keep alive the true religion; and prepare the way for the coming of the seed of Abraham that was promised, through whom all the nations would be blessed. And though Joseph saw the people prospering in Egypt, and getting more jobs, and increasing in numbers and influence, he knew this was not where they belonged; and on his death bed, his great wish was not that they put up a big monument to remember Joseph by; not that they tell people about what a fine man Joseph was; but that when they returned to the land they carry his bones up with them.

And so through the years, after Joseph's death, when people would tell the story of Joseph, this would be the thing they would remember—this queer thing—that on his deathbed this was his request, that they carry his bones up there. And I'm sure many of them said, "What a silly thing! A great man falls into his dotage; a great man who did wonderful things for our people; and God has established in the land a home; but yet he had this queer hankering for the land of his infancy. And when he died, he asked not that as the sons of Jacob they take him right up and bury him then, but that when we go up we carry his bones with us. How silly, we're going to stay here in Egypt. We have the fat of the land. We have fine provisions and God has made us leaders in this great nation, we can influence the country as great leaders. Why should we ever want to go off to Palestine?"

But God had to send a great oppression to break them loose from the bands of Egypt; and God had to bring a pharaoh that knew not Joseph; had to raise him up and have the consciousness of the conflict between God, his representative Moses, and Pharaoh; in order to break the people loose, and make them willing to leave Egypt; and when they left, Moses remembered the great faith of Joseph—that God would work a miracle and transport these many people from this land of Egypt, up past the wilderness to the land of Canaan, the land to which he had called their fathers.

And so it is the great evidence of the faith of Joseph, this command which he gave on his deathbed in Genesis 50:25. And we are here told in Exodus 13:19 they took the bones with them. In Joshua 24:32 we read how, after they conquered the land, they buried the bones of Joseph there in that parcel of ground; and then in Hebrews 11:22, reference is made to the great act of faith of Joseph.

And what a parallel it is to our present situation where we have thousands and thousands of evangelical people who believe the scripture and who want the gospel preached; who are belonging to churches where the ministers are trained in seminaries where their faith in the scripture is torn down; they're taught the scripture is just a combination of errors and flaws and that it's the newest philosophies that are the things the people need. And these people sit there in their congregations and feel uncomfortable; but this was their ancestors' church and they will continue attending; after all, the family gave so much money to build this beautiful building here; and they couldn't leave where they have all these signs of what their family has contributed; and their children sit there and do not get the truth.

And to move away from all this, can we have faith as Joseph had? That if it be God's will that our Lord tarry, He will provide a means to move many thousands of people out from the place where they do not get truth; into fellowship that will be true to His Word; and carrying on the tradition of Joseph's command about his bones; this is only mentioned briefly, but mentioned in these places so far apart in the scripture, it has a very real meaning and importance to us in our present situation today. It shows the faith of Joseph, the faith of Moses. Have we similar faith today? Well that's the start.

2. The Divine Guidance.

Immediately after reading about the start in Exodus 13, the next two verses tell us how God led the people. They started off into the wilderness. God led them, not through the land of the Philistines, but down through the way of the wilderness, to the Red. Sea; because it was God's purpose that they should meet their difficulties one by one, rather than too many at once, when they weren't ready for them. How does he lead them? Exodus 13: 21, 22 tell us, that

the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and by night. He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

Now we have books written today by men who wish to show that the Bible is good history; and therefore in order to make it believable as good history, they try to take all of the supernatural out of it. I had a professor in the University of Berlin, who was considered a hopeless conservative because he believed the Ten Commandments were actually written by Moses. He didn't think anything else was written by Moses, but the Ten Commandments were; so they thought he was a hopeless conservative. But in order to make the Ten Commandments such that Moses could have written them, he reinterpreted every one of them; until they were such primitive laws that a most primitive backward society

might originate them; and they had very little relevance for anybody in our present day.

And there are those such as Professor Garstang, of the University of Liverpool, who did some very fine excavation in Palestine; he wrote a book on Jericho, which has an Appendix written by his son, telling about the coming of the children of Israel from Egypt; and he makes the pillar of fire to be a volcano which they saw, they saw this flame going up from the volcano ahead of them and he takes all these things and tries to give a naturalistic explanation of them.

Now we don't want to make the Bible seem believable by misinterpreting. We must not do that. On the other hand, we must not say we want to make the Bible just as strange as possible in order to show our great faith. We want to see what it says, and when God says, for instance, that he moved the waters back by a great wind which blew all night, I don't think we're honoring the Lord by saying the wind had nothing to do with it; it was something entirely different that happened.

a. The Pillar. But when it says that he used the pillar of fire to lead them by night and a pillar of cloud by day, it seems to me that the logical, natural interpretation is that God gave a remarkable, unusual sign. It is a sign made up of material elements; it's the sort of thing that you might say, a cloud or pillar of fire could occur any time. There are various ways it could occur; but for it to occur regularly and constantly for this length of time—leading them in the way he wanted them to go—was certainly an event showing the direct intervention from God in human affairs.

And I think it's very important we find the correct place in between these two—of making the Bible as bizarre as possible, thinking to show our faith that way—and on the other hand, explaining away that which is clearly divine intervention in ways very contrary to that which God usually acts in the affairs of men.

Now we have this pillar of cloud and pillar of fire which is very briefly mentioned here; but when we get into the book of Numbers, we find it mentioned much more fully. We have two verses here in Exodus. Over in Numbers 9 we have a long section dealing with it, verses 15 to 23. And these nine verses don't give us much more than what we have here. They tell us what happened about this when the tabernacle was reared. Now it's not new, because it had happened before the tabernacle; but it continued afterward. The cloud covered the tabernacle by day and the appearance of fire by night, and when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed, and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents.

And so here is a thought the Lord wished to drive home to our hearts. That the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire led; and that it was His will that the people should follow as the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire led; and should stay as it stayed. There is a tremendous stress upon the divine leadership upon the people here, and the tremendous stress upon the divine leadership that He wants us to realize in our lives.

We had a speaker in our chapel once some years ago; he read this passage, and stressed it, and dwelt upon it; and he carried it to a very, very advanced point about being absolutely certain in getting a new pastorate or anything, to get the one the Lord directs you to, the Lord leads you to, that you're absolutely sure. The best human wisdom can err; but if God leads, then you have the right one. And it is a very, very important thought in the scripture, and worth stressing and repeating over and over again in the nine verses. And yet it is possible to take that thought, which is stressed here, and to carry it to such a length that you get something which is not the scriptural teaching at all; and that chapel speaker gave the impression that he did carry it to such a point.

I've heard chapel speakers talk in such a way that you would think that, if the Lord said step this way, they'd step this way; if he said that way, they'd step that way; and if he didn't say anything, they'd just stay still for the next few years until they were sure he did speak; and that they never used their brains in any way, shape, or form. They always waited for the Lord to direct and immediately to lead them. Now that, I think, is a carrying of a very great and vital truth to the point where it becomes simply a grotesque misunderstanding; and there is a danger of our doing that; because if Satan cannot get us to steer away from the truth and leave it, then he'll try to get us to carry it to extremes in the other direction. Without the Lord's leading, our work can amount to nothing. "Except the Lord build the city they labor in vain who build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman watcheth but in vain," as the Psalm says. It is very, very important—we need it in our own lives—to be constantly be watching for the Lord's leading, the Lord's direction. But does that mean that we just sit back and wait, and do not use our brains, nor do anything ourselves about it?

And we won't go into the aspects of it, which are represented in other ways through the scripture, where God definitely leads in many, many ways, but at all times he enables his people to have a certainty of following him if they truly desire to do so. But we have the divine guidance, the very next thing in the book of Numbers,

b. The Trumpets. Chapter 10:1–10. The Lord spoke to Moses saying, make two trumpets of silver, and when you blow with these the assembly assembles themselves, and when you blow in a certain way they start to march, and in a certain way they halt. They were to have these trumpets to signal to the people

when to go and when to stop. And if all they had to do was watch the cloud and follow, why did they need the trumpets?

Why did they need the trumpets if the leadership of the cloud was all that was necessary? The leadership of the cloud shows one very vital truth; but there were other aspects, and so we have the trumpets provided, in order that the leader who knows God's will hear better than the followers; shall be able to communicate his ideas to his followers; and show them how to go together for the glory of God. And then, in that same 10th chapter of Numbers we have

c. Hobab. Chapter 10:29–32.

And Moses said to Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. And, he said to him, I will not go; but will depart to my own land, and to my kindred. And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes. And it shall be if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do to thee.

It does not go on to say that Hobab did go with them, but neither does it say he left them. But when we get on to the later books, we find the descendants of Hobab living with them in the land of Palestine. So that seems to make it definite, even though not stated, that he did go with them as Moses asked him to. Moses said, "You know all about the wilderness, you've lived here all your life, you've traveled through the desert. You will be to us instead of eyes." Why do you need Hobab instead of eyes? You have the pillar of cloud; you can just follow the pillar of cloud. Well, you have the pillar of cloud and it is very, very vital; but God wants them to use Hobab's eyes, the information and the material that he can provide—at least Moses thought so because he asked Hobab to come, and the evidence is that he did come. Now under this, The Divine Guidance, is

d. Note Regarding the Ark. Numbers 10:33:

And they departed from the mount of the Lord three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them.

Note regarding the ark, this is not a matter of guidance. There's no contradiction. I think there are two facts there which can easily be thought of as a contradiction. I am sure the critics do think of them as a contradiction, with the previous statements about the pillars leading. And I think it's a warning to us that in life very often we will hear different stories of the same thing, which

contradict each other, simply because each has details not known to the other. And there may be no contradiction at all but I've heard people called liars on exactly that sort of thing.

[record missing: 4.]

5. Manna Given.

Exodus 16. It's a long chapter, so I've made a few subdivisions.

a. Murmuring. We've already had some murmuring about the water. Now we have the murmuring about the food. The people said, verse 3:

Would to God we'd died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full, for ye have brought us forth to this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

And you say, after all Moses did for these people—leading them out, rescuing them from Pharaoh, bringing them safely out. Of course he did it as God's representative, but he was a human instrument: and he did it; he brought them out; he risked his life; he went through tremendous endeavors and efforts and sacrifices, to bring them out; and now they turn on him and talk that way.

You say, what a terrible people those Israelites were, to act that way, toward him! Well, it's given for us as a history, of the fact those Israelites were human beings, who had human characteristics. But it's very important for us, in our pilgrimage journey; because everyone who ever accomplished much for God has exactly this experience that Moses had there. You will have people saying the silliest things to you—and forgetting all the good things you've ever done for them—because of some miserable, little situation that may not be your fault at all. And they forget everything that you've done; and many a Christian worker has become bitter and hardened by it, and quit the Lord's work, and gone off and lived as a recluse, thinking how miserably they have treated him. And it's mighty good to know in advance that that's what we can expect; that we're not serving human beings, we are serving the Lord. And the Lord has the work for us to do; and if the people we are doing it for say "That's wonderful! How we appreciate it!" praise the Lord. We enjoy appreciation. But if they don't ever say it, but on the contrary they talk like these people... well, let's just thank the Lord for letting us share a little bit of suffering for Christ; and go ahead. But Moses had it here and repeatedly through these chapters; and everyone who is truly serving the Lord will have it.

b. Quails. The people murmured; and Moses said in verse 8, "This shall be, when the Lord shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full;" and then in verse 12, he refers to it, "At even ye shall eat

flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread." And in verse 13 we have the only mention of quails in the chapter: "And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp."

It doesn't even say they went out and killed any of them or anything. It's very interesting how incomplete it is—like every other book ever written is. Here are two long statements: you're going to have flesh to eat in the evening, and bread in the morning. Two precise statements. Flesh at evening, bread in the morning. And then we have maybe twenty verses talking about the manna, and all we have about the quail is, "And It came to pass, that at even the quail came up, and covered the camp." Nothing more said about them. Absolutely not another word.

To the people there, the quail were just as important as the manna, perhaps more so. To them, the fulfillment of Moses' promise was a tremendous thing; the quail came up and covered the camp. We can infer, we can assume, they went out with their sticks; these quail that had been flying over the sea for a long distance had become almost hypnotized by the long effort; tired and there, just landing over the camp. They went out with their sticks, and they beat them down, and they got all the flesh they wanted. And it was a very, very enjoyable experience to them. The next morning they looked out and said "What's this? What's this on the ground" "What's this," in Hebrew becomes *manna*; and so the manna to them was far less important than the quail. But the quail are covered in one brief sentence and the manna has all the rest of the chapter, because the manna continues for forty years. But they didn't know then how much more important it was; but the writer realizes how tremendously important the manna was, so he goes on and tells us all about it. So all we'll do now is to mention the quail. But then

c. The First Manna. Verses 14 to 18.

And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, "It is manna," for they knew not what it was. And Moses said to them, "This is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat."

Here is the first appearance of the manna. Verses 14–18 tells how they went out and they gathered every one an omer—that is about 6 pints—gathered manna; and you go to the Arabian peninsula today, and you will find a little thing on the ground, a little small thing that somewhat corresponds to this description; and in the course of the winter, in the whole peninsula there may be about half a ton of it in all. It only comes for about two months of the year, and it's a tiny bit for a whole multitude like the Israelites; it certainly is not a continuing thing today, but there is something a little bit similar. It's probably

not the same manna they had, because this—what there is today that looks somewhat like it—it has quite a strong taste, it tastes rather nice but you can't eat much of it without upsetting your stomach. It certainly is not the manna God gave, but there is something a little similar to it there today.

And they went out and they said, "What's this?" So he called it manna; but it was their food for forty years. And they weren't extremely enthusiastic about it, but it was all right, and it kept them alive for these forty years. The first manna, verse 31 says,

The house of Israel called the name thereof Manna, and it was like coriander seed white, and the taste of it like wafers made with honey.

And then

d. A Day's Provision at a Time. The Lord gave them the manna; he said gather this much, don't gather any more. And don't leave any of it till the morning. And verse 20 showed some of them weren't paying any attention to Moses; after all who was Moses? Their own brains were better than what Moses said, even if he was God's spokesman. So they hearkened not to Moses, but some of them left some of it till the morning; and it bred worms and stank, and Moses was wroth with them.

e. The Sabbath Day. We have nine verses here about the Sabbath Day, verses 22 to 30. Some people say the Sabbath is simply part of the law given at Sinai. This is before Sinai. This is before the law was given at Sinai. The Sabbath was not given at Sinai; it was given at creation. And we're told about it at creation, but there's no further mention of it till now; but here before Sinai, we find that the Sabbath is very strictly observed here in connection with the manna.

In fact, the Lord worked a miracle there; the Lord caused that this manna, which he caused to come every morning, an abundance for the whole people, should not come on the Sabbath Day; and I would imagine some of these people got pretty angry about this, and said, "Look here, we haven't yet had the law given; haven't been told about the Sabbath; Sinai is not here yet. How can he enforce it then by not giving us any manna on the Sabbath Day?" But it's very clear from the incident that the Sabbath had been given; the fact that it's not mentioned between the creation and here does not mean that they didn't know. It was known to them; it doubtless had been largely neglected; but they knew of it; and now was the time when they were to be God's people; he had delivered them from Egypt, and he wanted them to show forth his righteousness in their lives. And so he wished them to devote one day in seven apart from secular activities entirely; and on this seventh day, there was no need of collecting manna; but they were able to collect on the sixth day enough for two days, and it lasted; other days it did not last, but this day he made it last.

Here was supernatural activity on the part of God. Not simply in order to accomplish an historical purpose in giving them something to eat and getting them to Palestine, but in order to give a spiritual lesson to them of the importance of his principle of recurrent rests. The principle of recurrent periods when they would turn aside from ordinary secular activities, and devote their thoughts entirely to him and his purposes for them.

And of course it is quite in line with this, that when the Ten Commandments were given, it does not say "The seventh day of the week is a Sabbath Day; it is to be a day of rest," it says "Remember the Sabbath Day." Remember it. You knew about it before; Adam knew about it; it was part of the teaching of creation; but now you are to be a holy people for God; be mighty sure that you remember it, keep it holy. Then,

f. A Pot of Manna to be Preserved. (Student: Was the manna spoiled supernaturally and preserved supernaturally?) Yes, that is a very interesting question. Does the sun go round the earth or does the earth go round the sun? A very interesting question; and of course actually, the sun and the earth go round each other; but when you draw a mathematical line to show the sun going round the earth, there's such an irregularity in it, such complexity in it that there's a much simpler way of looking of it and saying, the earth goes round the sun.

Now in this case, God caused that the manna would last on that one day a week; and then on other days it wouldn't last. Did he first make a rule that manna only last one day, and then did he make an exception to the rule that it would last two? Or did He decree that manna which would ordinarily last two days, and then make a rule that except on the Sabbath it would only be one? There may be a logical preference to one or the other, but I'm not at all sure myself that we have evidence enough. Certainly it was a decision, whichever way it was done. Interesting question, but with my present knowledge, I'm not capable of answering it. (Student. If we had to discuss it though, as a miracle it would be acceptable either way then?)

People a century ago had the feeling that we know all of God's laws; they're all perfectly obvious—these laws God has made—everything is interpreted by these laws; and whenever there is anything different, that must be a miracle. Today we know that the complexity of the universe God has created is so far beyond what anybody ever dreamed of a century ago, that we just can't tell what is God's habitual way of doing things, and what are the particular exceptions that he makes for his special purposes. Sometimes you can tell, but we know that in 99 cases you can't. But we know that it's all of God; and when something is so contrary to our normal experience today, as to find that one day of the week is

something actually different from the other days, one side or the other the Lord was working in a very special way. I think there's no doubt about that.

Well, the pot of Manna to be preserved. God orders that there be preserved something to remind them of it; and I think he wants to show us the importance of preserving evidence of his faithfulness. He wanted them to preserve this evidence for future generations, to show his faithfulness to them in the wilderness. He wants us to preserve mementos to show his faithfulness and to pass it on to the next generation.

Somebody said, "One picture is worth a thousand words"; and it is true that often a tangible thing gives you a reminder much more than a whole lot of discussion and description with it. And here, right at this point, this important pedagogical principle is illustrated. We go back, and I think fifty years—sixty years ago—every cigar store practically in the United States had a great big statue of a wooden Indian standing out front; and that was the emblem of the cigar store; there were thousands and thousands of them. The time came when the people got tired of them; and they cut the wooden Indians up, and used them for fuel, and they disappeared; and then someone decided that something that was so common in America we should have some memory of; and they hunted, and they had a terrible hunt to find even one. They had just about completely disappeared. And our lives are constantly changing in little ways, and we lose the evidence of it. Here was manna every day; who'd ever think of saving a pot of that for future generations? Why every day we get it; we've got plenty of it; we're sick of the stuff; we wish we'd never see it again; why do we want to keep it?

Well the time comes when you don't see any at all; and it's mighty fine to have preserved some. Some people go to the opposite extreme; and they're always saving everything, cluttering things up, I'm afraid that's my natural characteristic; but you notice it's only one pot of manna they save; they didn't tell all the people to save them for their families. There was one saved to recall to the whole nation—the future generations—God's providence and God's care at this time.

Now it's easy, you get a group of people together and you start a Christian organization; and you could just say, "Let's get together and let's pray. We'll do this in just a very informal fashion, why have forms about it?" Well, forms impress peoples' minds. You have a day when you organize; you have a day when you dedicate your building; you have a day when you lay your cornerstone; you could have a sign, "This was dedicated this day"; you have a picture of it; and it helps to impress people's minds, the sign of what's been done, and the sign of God's faithfulness.

And so this was given, like other matters, for an illustration for us, for our spiritual lives.

g. The duration of the Manna. Right here at this early point we are told how long they had the manna. Do you think that Moses wrote verse 35 here? Did Moses write Exodus 16:35 which says,

The children of Israel did eat manna forty years until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, till they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.

Well, he hardly wrote it when the manna was first given, because then I think he was expecting to get into Canaan within the next two years. He hardly wrote it then. But after God had said they're going to wander for forty years, Moses surely could have written this statement, as an account of that which God had predicted would happen. He could have done that. He could have done it at the end of his life. Or it is possible that he said to Joshua, "Now Joshua when you quit eating manna, put in a verse right here; say how long it's to be eaten." And Joshua after he wrote Joshua 5:12 which tells how the manna ceased to come when they entered the land, then inserted this verse here. I think that it's more likely Moses wrote it. But even if Joshua wrote it, it is part of God's word, inspired by him, written either by Moses or very soon after, and intended by God to be part of the book of Exodus, therefore true and dependable.

But there's just as much a problem here as there is in the account of Moses' death. You can make a great deal out of that. Deuteronomy ends saying how Moses died. They say, "How could Moses have written that? How could Moses have written the Pentateuch? How could he write the account of his death?" Well, God said, "Moses you go up in the mountains here; I'm going to gather you to myself; I'm going to give you a good look at the land, but you can't go into it; you're to go up here, and you're to die there, and nobody will know where you're buried."

Well, the last thing Moses did before he went up, he could have sat down and written the account of it, just as if it had already happened. Every newspaper does that constantly, so that when the newspaper comes out, it's up to date. Moses knew this; God told him what was going to happen; he could have done that, and maybe he did. On the other hand, it's entirely possible that the next day, Joshua did. I don't think it matters. What matters is that God led; and if it's God's Word, it was not inserted a century later, but was right at the time, whether by Moses or by Joshua.

6. Water Provided. Exodus 17:1-7.

There was no water for the people, and the people got pretty thirsty; and they said, "Give us water that we may drink," and there's nothing worse than to be without water. You can go without food for a good many days; but if you don't have water, you don't last very long. You last a few days. You've got to have water. The people felt pretty bad, but they didn't say, "Well now, Moses has got manna; Moses is leading us, we know that he's going to give us water before we're desperate, let's put our trust in him and not get excited." They got excited. They were quite stirred up. Moses said they tempted the Lord; and the people murmured against Moses; and Moses called to the Lord and said, "What will I do, these people are almost ready to stone me?"

And God said to take the people, and his rod, and to go and, "Behold, I will stand before thee, there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink."

Well how did this happen? Did God show Moses, "This is the rock I want you to smite. Now you smite this rock, this particular one"? All right, Moses went over and smote it. And the instant that Moses smote that rock, God created some new water, so that this water came into existence there on the edge of that rock; it pours down there onto that field—enough water for two million people to drink? And God was creating it, at that instant there, right on the edge of the rock?

Maybe that's what God did. It's entirely possible. He certainly could've done it that way. God could've had water in the air; he could've had water condensed in some form in the air, and caused the surface of that rock to change into some substance which would attract the moisture from the air, and would condense it, and cause it to flow down rapidly at once. That could be the way God did it.

Or God could have planned ten thousand years before, "I'm going to bring the children of Israel to the wilderness; I'm going to bring them to this place; I'm going to bring them here to show them that they need not be discouraged; they need not be disheartened when there's no water; that when God is leading them he will provide; and therefore when they get to this point, I'm going to have it all ready, so that when they look all around, the desert is dry and parched and barren and there's no sign of water anywhere; but I'm going to have water under the ground preparing all through these hundreds—maybe thousands—of years, in such a way that it is eating away under the surface of this rock and it's gradually being worn away so that there's a tiny bit more to be worn out; that if the people came back a year from now, the water would have forced its way through and there would be a fountain coming out; and now, when Moses strikes it with his rod at the precise point which I indicate, the water which has been preparing all this time, will come out."

Now the Bible doesn't tell us which of the two God did. We know that God did it; we know that God provided water when it appeared to the people that there was no possibility of water anywhere in the area. God provided it; and he provided it by showing Moses where to go and by telling Moses to smite on the rock. The fact that Moses didn't just lift his rod and say, "Let water come," but smote on the rock, suggests to me the possibility that the way God did it was to prepare the place for them, so that the water would be there and ready to come out, and the space between the rock holding it back small enough that Moses' rod could break it through. Now that is purely a conjecture; the other two are also conjectures, and anybody prefers one of the other two, I think they are just as good as this one. It's a matter on which you cannot be dogmatic between them.

But to be dogmatic, in saying, "No, God created new water the instant that Moses smote with the rod," is certainly going beyond the evidence. If you want to say, it seems to me likely that's way he did it, you have just as good a right to guess what you think is likely as I have to guess what I think happened. But the mention of smiting the rock suggests various ways that God may have used in providing the water. The important thing is that God showed where it would happen; caused it to happen just at the time he said it would; caused water to be given to the people at a time when all that their eyes could see; suggested that there was just no water available at that point.

7. Victory over Amalek. 17:8–16.

And here we have the Amalekites, those rather wild wandering people, who came and attacked. And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men to go out and fight with Amalek," and God could have said here to these people, "I don't want you to fight, because it's not nice to have to fight; much nicer to be peaceful; you just go straight ahead and forget Amalek. I can take care of Amalek." And God certainly could take care of Amalek; but he chose to take care of Amalek by using the Israelites as his instruments to do it. Some people say we should just let Stalin—or now Khrushchev—go ahead and attack us; destroy us if he wants; just go ahead and be peaceful, and ignore him and hope for the best. Well, that may be their opinion as the best thing to do, but they cannot use scriptural evidence that it's the right thing to do; because we have Amalek coming and attacking the Israelites. God could have said, "I'll take care of Amalek; you go ahead; and there are cases where he does exactly that—many of them—but in this particular case, what he did was to say "You go out and fight Amalek." And he used the Israelites as the means, the Israelites as the means of protecting their families from this terrible menace of the attack of the enemy.

And God used this to drive home to their hearts the fact that they are living in a wicked world—a world of sin—a world where evil is round about us; and pacifism is something that is beautiful and desirable and necessary in the world when God entirely controls, and sin has been eradicated from us; but as long as

God permits sin to continue, and permits Satan to continue, it is necessary that it be held in check.

And God showed the Israelites that pacifism was no part of his teaching. Certainly aggressive war is no part; but to say that preventive war is not a part, to me is utterly nonsensical. If war is ever justified, surely preventive war is justified. Well, in this case God said to the Israelites "Now you are to go out and you are to fight back to Amalek," and they did it. But God could've caused that Amalek would just simply die out without the Israelites going into it; he could've caused the Amalekites to have turned the other way and ignore them. He chose that they should do it with fighting. But then He could have chosen simply to give them power, and that's that; he added something else. He had Moses go up on a hill and hold his arms up.

And Moses' arms being uplifted didn't physically help the Israelites the slightest bit in fighting Amalek. It is a sign and a symbol. And like so much of this section, it is signs and symbols—not merely for the people then—but for us today, to give us the lesson that God wants us to fight against evil; and God wants us to use physical means to hold back and push back the forces of iniquity; but that even when we are doing so, he wants us to realize that the strength comes from him; and the victory comes from him; and it is only by his grace that we are able to accomplish anything in this war. And therefore He had Moses hold his arms up; and as long as Moses' arms were up, Israel beat Amalek; and once Moses' arms would get tired and go down Amalek beat Israel; and it is perfectly clear, as you can see, that there is no physical relationship; it was simply an indication of the fact that spiritual forces were at work; he wants us to fight our best, and think our best how we're to do it; and use the best ways and efforts we can; but if we ever get to thinking we're winning the victory by our strength and our effort, we can be pretty sure the victory won't last very long. He wants us to realize that, though we must fight our best against the forces of iniquity, it is He that gives the victory, and gives our prayers the mighty force.

And so he caused that Moses holding his arms up, Amalek is defeated; Moses' arms down, Amalek is victorious. And they took two other men out of the battle line; they took Aaron and Hur; and they stood on both sides—the one on the right and the other on the left—to help Moses to keep his arms up. And our nation has taken the attitude at certain times that the idea of the ministry—chaplaincy, and so on—is just a way of dodging the draft; and we have to put up with a certain amount of it, but we need all the men we can get; and in 1944 they told us, they said, "Anybody who isn't actually in Seminary by July 1, 1944, is going to be drafted," and we would have no students except those already in, because they needed every arm to fight; and that was the decision; but then on maturer thought and more careful consideration, it was decided that—and has become a definite policy—that the chaplaincy is a necessity; and the

investigation they have made has convinced them that the number of draft dodgers among seminary is very, very slight; and that actually it is a great service to the war, to the defense of the nation, to prepare to give spiritual help as it is to prepare to fight. And that is the attitude our government has taken simply on the basis of experience; but if that's the attitude that they have found necessary in the world, as it is constituted, how much more important it is that there be spiritual work done of a type that is real and not the way that so many of the chaplains do.

And here we have three men taken out of the battle: Moses to hold up his hands, Aaron and Hur to help him hold up his hands; and it is necessary, in carrying on our great conflict with evil, that we devote a great part of our efforts to the spiritual end of the battle: to be sure our hands are clean and being sure that our prayer efforts before God are maintained aright.

I used to find—when I was in seminary—that, as I am sure you find, there were times when it was easy to neglect the devotional life; and easy to slip into lax habits about the devotional life; and to not give as much time to it as one should. But I found this, that every time that the examination period came around, it was impressed upon my mind the absolute importance of maintaining the devotional life; and for the sake of passing an examination, to skip one's devotional life and one's time with the Lord, is something that the Lord could not possibly honor; and so the attitude that I should have kept up all the time, and wished I had, and would like to have all the time, it was impressed on my mind in these times of crisis that then above all things, it must be kept up; that we must keep up the spiritual end, and not think that we can allow the physical service or the intellectual service to brush it aside from its proper place.

That's not of course to say that a lot of prayer will take the place of proper study; not at all; we have to do the work; but our work is worthless if we do not have the proper relation with God. Except the Lord build the city they labor in vain that built it. Then,

8. Jethro's Advice.

Here in the book of Exodus we have a whole chapter telling how Jethro—the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law who was with them—how he saw Moses dealing with the individual problems of the people; he was sitting there from morning to night, helping the people in their big problems and their little problems—and you cannot divide between them, because sometimes what is a mighty petty problem has such a big place in a person's mind, that it's more important to solve it perhaps than the big problem. And Moses was sitting there from morning till night, settling the problems of the people. And many of them—the wisdom that he could give—any one of their friends could just as

well have given; but they couldn't see it themselves, and they needed help; and they took the time from Moses. And Moses was doing a great service in this, but it was just too much. And Jethro gave him the advice to get assistance; and to divide part of his authority up; and have the things done by others that they could just as well do, but under his authority and general supervision, in order that he would have time for the more important tasks.

Some people say this was all a mistake; Jethro was just a worldly man giving this advice; and it just has no place in the scripture. But this is a whole chapter. If it was God's will that we should realize Jethro was wrong, certainly he would have given us some indication. He takes a whole chapter to tell us how this advice was given, and how it was done; and how God introduces a slightly improved form of the same thing a little later. But the general principle here—God caused the leaders to become aware of this advice of Jethro—it is a very important thing.

If a person is any good, it is pretty easy to get the idea that nobody else can do a job as well as he can; and often it's true. A person of real ability will find that he can do a thing in half or a third of the time that somebody else can, and do it twice as well. But he can't do everything. He has to learn to have a lot of things done less well than he could do them in order to have time himself for the more important things. It's a lesson for us particularly in the spiritual field, a lesson that applies to activities and accomplishments in the church of God.

There have been churches, in the last century, to which thousands of people have come, and great progress has been made, and tremendous accomplishments; and then the minister has died, and things just dropped down to nothing. And when you see a case like that, it may be that the whole thing has been built upon the popularity of a man, and it wasn't a spiritual enterprise at all. It may be that, but it doesn't necessarily mean that. It may be that that man built everything upon himself, and did not follow Jethro's advice, and build an organization that could carry on the principles to which he was devoted without his having to do everything himself. So when God gives a whole chapter to this in the book of Exodus, God wants us to study it and to apply it, and to realize that it is important, or it would not have a chapter in His Holy Word.

C. At Sinai.

Now we have had three months which covered three months in their lives. What experiences they had in those three months!

Now they come to Sinai and they stay there two years. And their experiences at Sinai are described in Exodus 19 to Numbers 10:10. We are looking at the

historical elements of it, and so we will run through this noting its main features.

But before we look in detail at the features, I want to call your attention to a few crucial points.

1. The Covenant. Exodus 19:1–24:8.

A portion of this section is called by the critics, the Book of the Covenant. It has a very important place in higher criticism. We are not dealing with that in this class. But we are concerned about building the unity as it stands in Exodus 19:1–24:8. The next verse 24:9 begins an account of the giving of detailed instructions to Moses in the Mountain, and this runs to the end of chapter 31. And then the section which I will call The Golden Calf will run from Exodus 32 to 35:14. And then, from 35:15 to the end of 40 is The Tabernacle Built. Now those are the first sections, all that there are in Exodus, of this account of what happened at Sinai. The two pivotal points are chapters 24:9 where Moses goes up into the mountain, and chapter 32:1 where he comes down from the mountain. Those are the pivotal points, and I think you should have those in mind, because they give you a grasp of the main divisions of this section of Exodus.

Now the first section, The Covenant, is one of the most important sections of the Bible. You might say, God has brought the children of Israel out of Egypt; he has rescued them from Pharaoh; he has delivered them from their oppressors; he is feeding them, and caring for them, and leading them through the wilderness. Now why doesn't he take them to the Promised Land, and give them the things he's got for them, instead of stopping them for two years out in the wilderness there at Sinai? Why doesn't he do that? Well, the answer is that God did not simply bring the children of Israel out of Egypt just to show favoritism and to deliver them from the oppressor. God brought them out of Egypt in order that they should be a peculiar treasure to himself. He brought them out in order that they should show forth his righteousness; that they should keep alive in the world the knowledge of the true God; that they should prepare the way for the coming of His Son into the world. And so he redeemed them; he delivered them; he brought them out of Egypt; he promised to bring them to the end of the wilderness journey; to bring the nation into the Promised Land; and he carried out his promises, and he was determined he would carry out his promises; yet he stopped and took two years at Sinai in order to teach them what kind of lives they should live, and what sort of people they should be, in order that his redeemed should show forth his praise. And the spiritual example here for the church and for the individual Christian is very marked and very important.

There is nothing more important in our Christian witness than the fact that, by simple faith, we can believe in Christ and instantly be saved and delivered from darkness. There's nothing more important. But it is often presented in such a way as to give an utterly false impression; to give the idea: here are the people who are lost. All right, somebody comes up to the front and says, "Yes, I accept the Lord." "All right, now you're saved; now go on and get somebody else saved, because this is done; the task is finished." Well, the task isn't finished. The most important part of the task is finished, yes. The eternal decision is made; but it is not God's will simply to take wicked people and call them righteous and be done with it. God does justify us instantaneously, and give us complete freedom from the guilt of sin, instantaneously.

But for everyone for whom he does that, it is his will and his desire and his determination that that one shall go on to learn how to live as he wants them to; and to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. And so, after God delivers the people from Egypt, and brings them out through the wilderness to a place where they're a safe distance from Egypt, he then says, "Now you don't start in conquering Canaan now; you sit down here and learn my law. You sit down here for two years, and find out what kind of people God wants you to be." And it's a great injury done to Christian work—time and time and time again—because some wicked man has been converted to the Lord. And it has been a genuine conversion; and he has come to really know the Lord; and had a wonderful testimony; and then instead of saying to the man, "All right, now you sit down; you study the Bible; you learn to live the life the Lord wants you to, and to make progress in your sanctification." Instead of that, we take that man and say, "Look at this wonderful trophy of grace; let him go all around and everybody see him—this terrible criminal who now is a great fine Christian—and hear his testimony: how many banks he robbed, and how much wickedness he did then; and when you hear all this story, you will see how great God is and you will want to come to him."

Yes, God may use that testimony wonderfully; and it may be a tremendous thing that this man has been saved to witness to the Lord; but before he is ready to do much of that, he needs to learn God's law; to learn the kind of life God wants him to live; and to make substantial progress in his sanctification. And many a man who has been truly converted has had his head turned by the adulation of the people who are brought to hear him tell about the wicked life he lived before the Lord saved him; and he has drifted back into a life of wickedness, when humanly speaking, it was the fault of a poor adviser who took and used him in that way before he was ready to be used in that way.

God stopped for two years at Sinai to give the Israelites the knowledge of what sort of life they should live, if they would glorify him and be a peculiar people for his honor. And he wants us not to be content with justification, but to go on to sanctification; and in fact, if we really are justified, we will go on to

sanctification; and he wants us to learn what kind of men we should be, and what his righteous law for us is. And therefore, we find that this, which we might call The Covenant, is the very first thing that was done at Sinai; and the name covenant is a good name for it; and yet it is a name which can lead to misunderstanding; because it can give the impression that Israel there became God's people, which they did not. Israel became God's people when God called Abraham out of Mesopotamia. And Israel as a people itself was redeemed unto the Lord by their being brought out from the power of Egypt. He has brought them out; they were his people then; and this covenant is not a covenant by which they become God's people, but a covenant by which they can learn how to be sanctified; and how to go forward in the knowledge of the Lord.

And so under the Covenant here, we have 8 divisions, which I will call a,b,c,d, and so forth.

a. The Covenant Presented, 19:3–8.

And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Some Christians think that just because they have raised their hand in an evangelistic meeting, they are automatically a holy nation; and God has brought them blessing. If they truly have accepted the Lord, they will go on to be sanctified; and they will receive the blessing—but they have to go on.

And he said, "These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel." And what did the people do? The people said, "Oh no, we don't want that; we don't want that; we want God to do everything for us and not have to bother about keeping his law"? No, they didn't do anything of the kind.

And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.

And over in the book of Genesis, there is a footnote in the Scofield Bible which says that Israel rashly accepted the law.⁸² And I think when Dr. Scofield wrote

⁸² Scofield Reference Bible (1917 Ed.), Note on Genesis 12:1, "In Egypt they lost their blessings, but not their covenant. The Dispensation of Promise ended when Israel rashly accepted the law. Grace had prepared a deliverer (Moses), provided a sacrifice for the guilty, and by divine power brought them out of bondage, but at Sinai they exchanged grace for law."

that note, that he was overtired; he was overtired and a bit irritated. And he made a slip of his pen; because there's nothing like it in the Old Testament, in connection with Exodus. And there's nothing in the scripture here about it, whatever, or any such thing as that. There was no rash acceptance of anything; but there was an attitude of the people, which any people delivered by the Lord would have to have, if they really were delivered: to be what God wanted them to be, in order to be a holy nation and a peculiar people.

And so the people said all that the Lord has spoken we'll do; that is, we want to be a people; we want to be a holy nation; we want to be the Lord's. Now how can we do it? So the covenant was presented in Exodus 19:3–8, and then

b. Arrangements for the Declaration of the Moral Law, 19:9–25. In these verses you read how God wanted to impress on their minds the seriousness of his law; He wanted to impress on their minds the importance of his standards of holiness; and that is something that we want to do with Christians; we must impress on their minds not his law—that we will be lost if we break it and say that we keep it—nothing of the kind. Because we've all broken it; and we're all lost for breaking it; and it's only through the grace of Christ alone that we can be saved.

His law is the representation of the type of life we must live if we are to be glorifying to him, and honoring to him. And His law is to see what the standards of holiness of God are, and how far short we come of them; and how great is his power, and his majesty, and the importance of His will. And so He had the mountain shake and flames and smoke ascend; and He had a line put about the mountain that nobody must cross over; and nobody could touch the mount; and if so much as a beast touched it, it would be stoned and shot through, and so on; all this and the rest of chapter 19, in order to impress on their minds the tremendous importance of what we're talking about. And then,

c. The Moral Law Proclaimed, 20:1–17. God speaks here in such a way that all the people can hear his words. He speaks with all this background of this fire, smoke, this noise, this setting apart on the mount, in order to impress on their minds the tremendous importance of his moral law. He did not now promulgate the moral law; he declares to them the principles which are established in the nature of the universe that he has created. Those principles, which are true and binding upon all people, whether they know the Lord or not. Those principles for the breaking of which, all mankind is lost. He declares these moral principles to them in verses 1 to 17.

We call them The Ten Commandments, but different people disagree as to the division of the ten. There are three different places you can divide them. It isn't so important how you divide them, as that you take the whole thing that's there and realize its importance; the presentation of the moral law, which is

contained in it. And it is tremendously important to be familiar with the moral law; that we understand it; we attempt to follow it; we pray the Lord to help us in following it. If we take it and make it a means of salvation; if we make it a means of winning God's favor; if we take it as that by which we are saved, and forget the death of Christ; then of course we are using it utterly wrongly; and of course, that is what is said to be "being under law"—we are putting ourselves in a relation to the law which God never intended us to be under, and which Paul strongly attacked. But Paul is not attacking the Old Testament, or attacking anything God ever set up; he's attacking the misunderstanding of the Scribes and the Pharisees, and the false attitudes which they had; and which many, many, many a person has had and does have today. But that doesn't mean we should scrap it as the law, but that we should understand what it is, and use it rightly.

And so we have this wonderful moral law presented on which we could take about six months, looking into the details of each part of it; but we will have to leave that to other courses, or to your own study. And to go on to

d. The People's Fear, 20:18–21. These verses are a little separation between the giving of this great moral law and the going on to give application.

e. Regulations for Worship, 20:22–26. This is an arrangement for temporary situations there in the wilderness. How different in importance from what preceded! The principle of worship in it is tremendously important, but the particular rule here given in 22 to 26 is a temporary rule for the special situation of the 40 years in the wilderness. He is saying now you should keep my moral law, yes. It's wonderful, we're going to keep this great law, yes; but now you're in a particular situation; here's what you do now. Here's your immediate situation of worshipping God. Your immediate situation of the kind of altar you build here in the wilderness. It is a local, temporary enactment for the forty years immediately following. And God wants us not to get our heads up in the clouds so much in his great eternal values that we forget immediate, necessary matters that apply only to this immediate time.

And then

f. The Judgments, 21:1–23:19. These judgments are applications of the moral law to the immediate situation of the life of the people. They are far less vital, you might say, because they are immediate dealing with many temporary situations that no longer exist; in other cases repetition of great important principles, but applying these principles to their immediate situation; and the Sabbath is brought out again here; brought out a little more fully; applied here through the day and through the year; the principle of alternation, not only in our days but in our years, planning our lives to make them accomplish the utmost for God.

g. The Promised Conquest, 23:20–33. After these laws are given, then 14 verses that tell us how God is going to bring the people into the Promised Land; and he's going to drive out the enemy before them; he's going to establish their territories there. A wonderful promise here, one of the gems of the Old Testament; but buried away and lost to most critics, who never look at it because it comes right at the end of a long period of temporary judgments dealing with particular situations, which most people pass over. It's too bad the Archbishop didn't start a new chapter with verse 20. Verses 20–33 should be a chapter by itself. It is distinct, it is vital, it is important. If we had three years to give this course instead of one, I'd take a whole week to study those four verses. It would be well worthwhile; I hope you'll all do it sometime.

h. The Covenant Formally Ratified. 24:1–8. Moses writes the words of the Lord, he presents them to the people, the people say, "All the words the Lord has said we will do." He has a sacrifice, takes the blood and sprinkles it on the people; he reads the book of the covenant to the people; he presents it formally; and that again—it isn't to advance their salvation, the fact they did this—forms and ceremonies don't determine our life, but our relation to the Lord. But these forms and ceremonies help to drive home to our minds the things that God wants impressed upon them; and they have an important place there.

It gives an example of the orderliness which he wants us to observe in our churches, in our religious life, to have orderly forms and methods as a help to the carrying out of his will.

===**Semester Break**===

Weren't they rash, though, to say "All the Lord has said we will do?" Wouldn't they have been wiser to say "We won't do what the Lord has said?" It all depends on the tone of voice in which you say it. If you'd say, in self-confidence, "All the Lord has said we will do," it would be very rash and very wrong; but to say, showing the purity of your heart, and your desire to serve the Lord, "All that the Lord has said I want to do; I will do my best to follow him," that is the attitude which a true Christian not only can take, but must take.

If you say, "All that the Lord has said we won't do," in a tone of defiance of God, it's pretty good proof you've never really been saved. But if you say, "All that the Lord has said I know I won't be able to keep it now, but I know that he's going to change me from glory to glory until I reach that stage when I can do it," then you have a picture of your Christian life.

And so whether it is in determination or whether it's in self-confidence, makes all the difference in the world. They ratified the covenant here, they declared their desire to accept the Lord's provision, and (verse 8)

Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord has made with you concerning all these words.

These words are not the words they said, they're the words of God, the words of the Ten Commandments, the words of the judgments. And as a Christian, we are sprinkled with the blood of Christ; we are saved from our sins to Him—everyone who is a sinner—but we are tied to the word he has given us; we are tied to the picture of the great moral law, which he wants us to carry on as well as we can now; and eventually be carried on fully; and we are tied to the judgments of his law—these declarations that we find in the Bible—and for us particularly in the New Testament; giving us the detailed emphasis of our Christian lives, as it is necessary if we are to walk as he wants us to.

And so you have here the covenant ratified; and this concludes then the giving of the covenant.

2. Kinds of Law.

There are three different kinds of law and I will entitle them, a. Moral, b. Civil, c. Ceremonial. Now God doesn't say, "Now I want to give you a moral law. Now I am going to give you a civil law. Now I am going to give you a ceremonial law." He doesn't say that: it is not a scriptural terminology, but all three of these types of law are given. There is a different purpose and a different significance and a different duration to each of them from the other; and therefore it is helpful for us if we classify the law under these headings. And one of the laws may have two or three aspects; that is not common but it does occur.

Now let us think for a minute, what do they mean?

a. Moral Law. What do we mean by a moral law? Well, a moral law is something that is right because it is right. It is part of the constitution of the universe. Abraham said, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" That doesn't mean that there is someone or something superior to God. God is supreme. But that doesn't mean that God will change the moral law. The moral law is in the very essence of the being of God. It is the way that he does things. The moral law is what is right and God does everything right, and he represents what is right. And it is right because God does it; and God does it because it is right. But a moral law is that which is essential and lasting and permanent and fixed in the very nature of the universe.

Well now, there are certain principles then that are moral principles; and the moral law cannot be made by any man, nor can it be abrogated by any man. A man may observe it. He may discover what it is. He may try to follow what he has discovered. He may misinterpret it. He may express it wrongly, but that doesn't change the nature of the moral law. The moral law is fixed, although no man has ever altogether understood it. We understand certain portions of it, and we may learn to understand more about it; and it is vital that we understand as much of it as we can; and it is extremely vital that we can follow all of it that we can understand. But the moral law, then, deals with the great principles of right and of wrong.

b. Civil Law. Now the second type of law is civil law. Well, you might say, "It is morally wrong for one man to drive his car in such a way that he makes it difficult and dangerous for other people to drive." That is morally wrong. It is morally wrong for one person to take up all the road and make it impossible for others to get by. It is morally wrong for one to drive so fast that he is a danger to his life and the life of others. Those are morally right and wrong.

Well now, then you say, "A car shall drive always on the right hand side of the road." That is not a moral law, it is a civil law. You could just as well say, as they do in England, "A car shall always drive on the left hand side of the road," It is no more moral to drive on the right hand side of the road as we do, than it is to drive on the left hand side of the road as they do in England. One is just as moral as the other. It is not a moral principle, but it is a civil law.

Well, now some people get the impression that a civil law is anything the government decides. The government decides that it is nice to do this and that is a civil law and everybody has got to obey. Well, that isn't really the case. A civil law, in a way, may be anything that the government decides to make; but actually a civil law should be, and usually is, an attempt of the government to apply the principles of the moral law to a particular situation: to a particular locale, or a definite type of situation, which may change and does change, from time to time. It is no more moral for the Americans to drive on the right hand side of the road than it is for the English to drive on the left; but it is utterly immoral for the English to come to America and drive on the left hand side of the road all of the time, or for an American to go over to England and drive on the right hand side of the road all the time. Either one of those would be utterly immoral. It would be obstructing traffic; and it would be creating a danger to those around. It would be an obstinate selfish disregard for the welfare of the people of the community. It would be immoral; so an act could be immoral in England which would be moral in America or vice-versa. Because the act is not *per se* moral or immoral, it is its relationship to other acts and to other situations that make it moral or immoral, and civil law deals with the situation.

Civil law says under these circumstances: in America to drive on the right side of the road is the moral thing to do. It is the moral thing to do because it is vital that we all do one or the other. And we can arbitrarily select either one; but then we make a civil law to carry it out, and thus we are carrying out the moral principle; and so properly a legislature in a godly community would be concerned with two things. First, what is God's moral law? Second, what are the reasonable ways of making civil laws to carry out this moral law in our community? That is what a legislature should consider.

As a matter of fact, in this world, which is Satan's kingdom, our legislators concern themselves rather with what sort of thing would appeal to my constituency and get me re-elected rather than what is the way to carry out the moral law of God. I don't think it was that way in the early days of our republic. They were interested then in making civil laws which would carry out what the Bible told them to be the correct moral principles.

Well, now in the Scripture you will find that there are civil laws which are like this civil law of going on the right or left side of the road; laws which—it isn't morally important whether you do it this way, or that way—but it is necessary for the welfare of the community that a decision be made and one is selected, and that is carried out. You will find civil laws of that type. And you will find civil laws which are more closely bound to the moral law. That is to say, it is quite obvious in some cases that there is a certain principle of the moral law and that that principle of the moral law is represented, carried out in our situation best by certain requirements. In our situation, these are required.

So you see then, the moral law requires it to be just so, in a certain circumstance; and the civil law may be one way or the other, but to carry out the moral law properly you should select one of them. The civil law then is changeable. There may be a civil law for the wilderness that doesn't fit at all in the settled land. And there may be a civil law in the settled land that doesn't fit in the wilderness. The civil law may be changed from one century to another and even from one year to another. It varies with circumstances. It should be an attempt to carry out the moral law. It is not always that, but it is always variable depending on circumstances and situations.

There is no reason why a person today should take the civil law described in the Bible and try to follow it today. It is not applicable to our circumstances. There is no reason why anyone today should feel free from any portion of the moral law. It is applicable to all circumstances; it is part of the constitution of the universe. Now there is a third type of law,

c. Ceremonial Law. And ceremonial law is altogether different from these other two. Ceremonial law does not relate the way in which people shall treat one another, the way in which they shall live together in harmony, the way they shall

handle controversies or troubles that come up among them. It is not something that is describing the details as required by the moral law. It is a different sort of thing.

A ceremonial law is something which God institutes as a ceremony which he wishes his people to perform; and the purpose of the ceremony is to bring certain truths to their attention. It is to stress certain things to their minds. Now a ceremonial law may be very important at one time when God wants a certain idea stressed. It may be very important under a certain circumstance. It may later be His preference that this ceremony be abandoned altogether or be laid aside for a period. Ceremonial law may change from time to time as God's desire of impressing certain truths may or not change from time to time. It is not permanently fixed in the constitution of the universe like the moral law. In addition to that, the ceremonial law is not something that does something in itself. It is something that represents something, which conveys an idea, which impresses something upon the mind.

Now if a person is losing sight of the fundamental idea which the ceremonial law represents, it becomes very vital to stress that ceremony and to bring back again to that person the idea that God wishes to represent. But if a person puts his stress upon the ceremony and forgets the thing it represents or misinterprets it, it may be God's desire to do away with it altogether. In the wilderness the people were bitten at one time with poisonous snakes; and God decided that Moses should put up a brazen serpent, and that the people when they are bitten should look to the brazen serpent and recover. It was a way of showing them that the bite of sin—that the misery that is the result of sin—is something that can be cured only by the provision which God made.

And Jesus Christ shows us the full meaning of it when he said in John 3 that "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; and whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life." It was a presentation, in symbolic form, of a very vital lesson. It was to bring this thought to the people's mind and it was done in the wilderness. But later on, the people began to worship that serpent; and they forgot what the brazen serpent represents. They forgot the lesson, the idea that it contained; and they worshipped the thing itself. And Hezekiah showed his loyalty to God by taking that brazen serpent and destroying it utterly, in order to remove from the people something that had become to them a snare and a source of evil.

A ceremony then is good or bad according as it brings to the mind those matters that God wishes to show us; a ceremony in itself is absolutely nothing. A ceremony without thought of what it represents is absolutely worthless. But the ceremony as a means of representing something in a spiritual sphere may be extremely important. And of course the ceremonies before the coming of Christ were far more important at that time than any ceremony after the coming

of Christ; because we knew so much less of the details of God's plan, and of God's method of salvation; and therefore it was necessary that we use these ceremonies to present the ideas to our minds and to give us the impressions that God wishes us to have.

The ceremonies of the law look forward to the death of Christ on the cross for our sins, without knowing many of the details about it. We look back on it; and we know a great deal of the details; and consequently the great amount of the ceremonial law looked forward to the death of Christ, and has since been done away with. And we have instead of it very, very little ceremony that is ever referred to in the NT Not one thirtieth as much ceremony is even suggested in the NT as it is in the OT That doesn't mean that ceremony may not be an excellent thing now, but it is something that we can be more free about. We can use it as a means of impressing on people's minds the great truth; for we have full authority to choose right there; we can go back to it, we can see it, we can study it; but in the case of OT ceremonial law, it was more to impress ideas on the minds. And consequently there are these great details of ceremony that are given in order to carry out God's purpose.

Three different kinds of law. You build a tabernacle, and you have various specifications in it, just how all this is to be done; these are meant to take the spiritual ideas or pre-figurations of what God was going to do in the future and to impress into people's minds the ceremonial law, the instructions how to build the tabernacle that will carry out these laws. You have all this vast amount of ceremony in the OT; and it was very important for them; and what it means is very important to us. But most of what it means we can find explained clearly enough in the NT and our impression can be focused on the explanation rather than upon the ceremony.

God has not fully prescribed any ritual today. And even those that He has suggested are comparatively few today. Well now, today you can make a High Episcopal ceremony which will take the great meanings of the Gospel truth, and of Gospel teachings, the important spiritual truths, and present them to the mind, and impress them and guide them home. That I would say was an excellent thing; but if a person sees a ceremony, and thinks of ceremony and not of these spiritual truths, it becomes like the brazen serpent that came to be worshipped.

I would imagine that many of those elements in the High Episcopal ceremony have been wonderfully used of God at times to convey great blessing to those who have thought out what those particular ceremonies mean. But I fear that, in a good many cases, it has become merely an end in itself, and has lost its significance; and then it becomes extremely harmful when that happens. The ceremony is not so necessary now. We can worship God satisfactorily today in the plainest of circumstances. We don't have to have all these things, because

we have the full presentation. We can also use ceremonies which help to impress on our minds and drive things home; and that would be a great help to us; but we must be careful, for there is a tremendous danger. If we get to thinking that the vital thing is that you do this ceremony—you do this in this particular way rather than that way—instead of saying the vital thing is that you know the truth that this ceremony represents, that you realize your relationship to Christ and what He means. Now you could have that danger before, of course; but there was more justification running the risk of the danger then, when you didn't have the full understanding and explanation of it, which we have today.

Now, of course, in the Roman Catholic Church, there is a great deal of ceremonial; and this ceremonial has this danger of people thinking of the ceremonial instead of the thing that is signified. But in addition to that, there is the fact that a great deal of it signifies something that is not scriptural and that is not true; and so a great problem of the Roman Catholic system is not that you have so much ceremonial, but that a great deal of the ceremony represents things that are un-Christian.

No act is *per se* moral law. The thing that makes the act belong to the moral law is its relation to other acts or other situations. The act by itself is not. For me to take a knife and stick it into the chest of one of you would be an immoral act, but for a surgeon to do it, might be a very moral act. (laughter) The act itself is neither moral nor immoral; it depends on who does it, and why it is done, and what are the circumstances. So much, then, for the general explanation of this matter. Now

3. Detailed instructions given in the Mount. 24:9–31:18.

a. Moses Goes up into the Mountain. 24:9–18. "Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel."

And can't you imagine Moses, 38 years later, at the approach of the end of his life, looking back to this occasion when the covenant was ratified? And as he reads some of these letters, or as he writes them down, or dictates them to his secretary, he says this. "Aaron has already died, but Aaron previously had rebelled against Moses; and God had strongly rebuked Aaron for this rebellion. And Nadab and Abihu had rebelled against Moses, and God had killed them; and yet here in the book of God's covenant he names all of these." It is a terrible warning to us; and it is a word of encouragement to us which we need to have, because it gives glory unto the Lord; and if he allows you to live many years in this life, you can look back on your life and say, "I remember that day that I went up before the Lord with Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and some sort of manifestation which God gave to these men which he did not give to the

ordinary people. They did not see God as you and I see each other, because God does not have a body in the physical sense the way we have."

And, for that matter, when we see each other, what we see is an external manifestation, it's not the real you. The clothes that you're wearing today, when I look at you, three-fourths of what I see are clothes. And the chances are that, ten years from now, you won't have one of those particular clothes that you have now. Three-fourths or five-sixths of what I see are clothes. And they say that, in the course of seven years, that our whole body—that every cell—is replaced and so it's different cells. What we see of each other is a temporary manifestation of us; we have a permanent manifestation that God has given, but it is not tied to a body. We can only reveal ourselves through the body he has given us, but he can reveal himself in whatever way he chooses, and it would be interesting if he had given more details.

That bald statement, "They saw the God of Israel" is difficult to understand. When I was a boy up in northern Michigan, they had a long series of letters in the newspaper. Somebody wrote and said, "How can you believe the Bible, such a book of contradiction? It says no man has seen God at any time in John, and here it says they saw the God of Israel." And they went ahead and quoted statements to show how many contradictions there were. But whether you see God or you don't see God, the fact is you don't really see God; you see such manifestations as God chooses to make known to you; and we must infer that God gave them some very wonderful, special manifestation beyond what we could ordinarily experience.

These contradictions—and the Bible's as full of them as any other book that ever was written—you have to interpret a book as a whole, to relate what is written here with what is written elsewhere; but that takes time, it takes thought, it takes consideration; and so when we come to a verse like this, please don't hesitate to raise a question, because it's hard for me to know just which particular thing is bothering you at a particular time. We can't take them all, it would take forever; but the outstanding ones that occur to you, please raise them. If I'm intending to deal with them in the next day or two, I may just go ahead with them then, and skip them later; or I may tell you we'll mention them later; or I may decide I will deal with them, when I wouldn't ordinarily take the time. But that is a point I think we need to be clear on. God reveals himself to us; we can see the God of Israel. We cannot see God as we see another human being. And yet there's a sense in which even that, he can be seen, because we don't really see each other, the real you is not this flesh or these clothes, it's something deeper and more elusive than that.

b. Directions for the Tabernacle. Exodus 25–27. Now here are directions given for the tabernacle; and then a few chapters later we have the account of how the tabernacle was made; and you find verse after verse repeated almost

word for word. It gives you in great detail God's commands how to build the tabernacle; and then in great detail how the tabernacle was built. Why all this about the tabernacle here? What difference does it make? Why is it important? Well, it was important for the wilderness journey, that the Israelites be taught certain lessons there. And the way to teach them—one way to teach them—those lessons was through visual objects; that's a thing we're just learning now, that you have to work out systems of visual objects to get thought across; but God knew it from the beginning and put it right there in the wilderness; He gave them these visual objects to teach them lessons.

Well, now the tabernacle was important; not simply for the objects, it was important for the activities which were in themselves objects; it was a place where the worship could be carried on; it was a place where the people could be gathered together in unified worship of God; where the great truths he wanted them to know could be driven home to their minds and their hearts. So the directions for the tabernacle are important simply from the viewpoint of having a place to worship God. They are important simply from the viewpoint of having a way of carrying out the service that God wants you to do. And if you're going out and organizing a group of people together and serving the Lord, you may have to find a place for them to meet; you may have to build one; but it's a real Christian service to do so.

God gives all these chapters telling how they did this. And it's very important. Some people scoff at building; they say the church isn't a building; the church is a lot of people, Well, the fact is, *our word* church means a building; the English word "church" is derived from the Greek word *kuriakos*⁸³ which means the building that belongs to the Lord. So it is a building. But of course the real church is the building made without hands, the building made up of believers; but as long as we're in this earthly journey, there is a real importance of having a decent place to meet, although very secondary to what you do when you get there. And it's necessary to have the material arrangements made; and a missionary—a minister—must give a reasonable amount of thought to it.

So we have these many chapters here about the tabernacle, to have a definite arrangement for carrying on the work. Then beyond that of course, the worship itself is to direct the people's hearts to the Lord; the important thing is that the lifting up of a sacrifice is the relation of the heart to the Lord; but the sacrifice conveys lessons and ideas to them now, and portrays in advance what God is going to do—in the real sacrifice—to open up the new and living way into the Lord's presence.

⁸³ [dcb note] This word appears only twice in the NT with the meaning "belonging to the Lord": I Cor. 11:20 and Rev. 1:10. The word normally translated "church" in the NT is *ecclesia* which means "called out" referring to the members of the church.

So it is primarily a matter of teaching, a matter of representing that; and so it is important that every detail of the tabernacle be just right, in order that it be substantial and strong and able to last; to give them a decent arrangement for worship; in order that it carry out the lessons he wanted given to all people in all lands; and in order that it carry out certain particular lessons that might apply only to them in the wilderness journey. And you can't always tell in which detail of it a particular matter lies.

Now there are people who study the tabernacle and who try to find a meaning for every little tiny detail of the tabernacle. They think every tiny detail has a meaning—which of course is absurd—but certainly the details are for the purpose of having a continuing place that would last, and they don't have any meaning. And certain of them may have had a meaning for the people at that time, and have no meaning for us today; and to try to find a meaning in every detail of the tabernacle is very absurd. And I have known graduates of the Seminary who've gone out and taken a little church somewhere; and they found that some of the people there were concerned with working out every little tiny detail of the meaning in the tabernacle; and I've known certain graduates who've been so disgusted that they seemed to think their greatest duty in this life was to get those people away from that habit of mind; and it grieves me when I see it. Because even though it is an error to try to find a meaning in every little detail of the tabernacle, it is a far greater error not to see the great meaning that is in the great essential features of the tabernacle. And far better to find too much meaning than too little.

I think you'd benefit people by getting them out of the frame of mind that looks for too much detail of meaning, but don't do it by attacking it. Do it by putting the stress on the big points which are so definitely in the tabernacle: representing the great brazen altar by which alone you can come before the presence of God; and showing the way into the Holy of Holies that can only be made through blood. And there, in the Holy of Holies, is no statue, no heathen representation of any kind; but there is the Ark of the Covenant containing the Word of God. There is the mercy seat where the blood is sprinkled; symbolizing that entrance to God's presence is only through the blood. And the Word of God enshrined there in the ark speaks of its central place in the life of the believer.

These are only a few of the great lessons that are in the tabernacle, and it's good to know the great lessons. And don't go overboard trying to get meaning out of every little detail; but when someone else does, don't take silly attitudes of thinking that you can give them a great blessing by attacking them. Take rather the attitude of praising God they're interested, but getting them to put their stress on the big things and not to read into little things meanings that aren't there at all.

So we're not going, in this class, into details of the tabernacle; but I want you to know, because this is history, I want you simply to know where the tabernacle is in the scripture. The directions run from Exodus 25:1 to the end of Chapter 27.

c. Directions for the People. You need the building, but you need people in the building. You need people doing a service for the Lord. You need people carrying on the work of the Lord. I was reading Marshal Montgomery's account of his victories in Africa [British, World War 2], and he said he put fully one-third of his time studying the character of the men who were in subordinate positions under him, in order to determine who was fit for one sort of position and who was fitted for another; and who would make a first-class captain but who would be very, very poor as a major; and who there was who was a fairly good captain, but who had the qualities that could make him also a good major. He spent one-third of his time studying those men in order to fit the right man to the right position.

If you're going to serve the Lord effectively, it's going to be a great part of your work in dealing with other people, and learning what are the gifts God has given them, and how can those gifts be used most effectively in his service. How can you lead them into the place where they can serve the Lord effectively; and how can you keep them from wrecking themselves, and the Lord's work, by trying to do that most particular aspect of the work which they may be tremendously anxious to do, but do not have that particular gift to carry it out.

Well, now the Lord specified the priests for service, including the arrangements about the incense, in chapter 28 to the end of chapter 30. And then

d. Workmen Provided by the Lord. 31:1–11. The Lord told Moses how to build this great tabernacle, gave him the directions for it all; but the Lord said, "See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass."

That Old English word "cunning" is sort of tricky: skilful, to devise skillfully. God has prepared the workman for this work. We want to learn what work there is to do, where each of us fits in. And we want to help others to get into the work, and to prepare for it, but we must remember that it is He who prepares us. And if God has called you to do a work for Him, it is important to know what the work is, and how to do it, but it is also important to find the work which you might do if He has really called you to that work. He has prepared you, but it is a mighty good thing for most of us to realize that God has prepared those to lead us who have been properly prepared.

If Moses took 40 years studying at gem cutting, he might have become very skilled. That's not what the Lord called him to do. The Lord had called him to other things. The Lord had prepared him to do his specific work. We have those people who are skilled as builders, who are agriculturalists, men who are doing all sorts of work.

I think I've mentioned it, but I think it is worth mentioning again. A man I knew who was such a wonderful young evangelist. I don't mean he went out and held campaigns and was noted for it; but he went out, and he spoke to the fellows; and whenever he gave an evangelistic message people listened. He was a wonderful evangelist. But he felt the Lord had called him to be a Semitic scholar. He has spent the last thirty years now studying Semitics, and made a contribution to the service. But he hadn't made a fifth of the contribution that someone else might to whom the Lord had given the gift for this work. And I've known other men who had the gift for the Semitic studies, who have definitely had it, but who have felt that nothing counted except direct evangelism. And who left a career as a gifted scholar, in order to make a third-rate evangelist.

What you and I feel like, doesn't tell us what God wants us to do. He wants us all to be his spokesmen, his representatives. But the particular part of the work, whether it is cutting gems, whether it is fixing up the tabernacle, whether it is giving the sermon, no matter what it is, God has a work for us. It isn't necessarily the thing that we feel like doing, but the thing that He fitted us for. And very often, others can tell better than we can what the specific gift is that we have.

Well, then

e. The Sabbath rest. 31:12-17. This is interesting here, that in the midst of these detailed instructions, after speaking about the priesthood, and the tabernacle, before mentioning the wording on the tables of stone, there are six verses in which the Sabbath is stressed.

We've already had the Sabbath given in the Ten Commandments. But before the Ten Commandments were ever given, God had told them in the wilderness, they must not break the Sabbath by gathering manna on that day. And when he gave the Sabbath commandment, He didn't say "I'm going to establish a Sabbath." He said, "Remember the Sabbath day" which God established at creation. And here, in connection with the preparation for the tabernacle, He puts this special stress on the Sabbath.

Now there is a very definite reason for that in connection with Israel; because Israel was going to be God's people to keep the memory of the true God alive through those years in which He was hardly known outside of Israel. And Israel was to have that great work to do for Him there; and they were to have the sign

as an evidence of God and of standing for Him. And of course the greatest sign is true Christian love, and of a life of purity, and of the carrying out of His law. That's the greatest sign to the unbeliever; but we all fall short of that at times.

But here was a sign, a visible sign, which set Israel apart in the heathen world—their setting aside of the Sabbath. And it made people all over the world think of them as a very peculiar people. A people who, one day in seven, stopped, and rested, and worshipped the Lord. And they were known in Rome, at a very early time, as the people who would not work one day in seven. It was a very special sign that God gave these people, to call other peoples' attention to their religion, and to the amount that they were willing to stand for that religion.

And then there is a great importance in the stressing of the Sabbath, here, and at the beginning of their wilderness journey, to stress the lesson that the Sabbath signifies. God wants our time arranged in orderly fashion. He wants it not to be hit and miss. He wants a regularity, things done in their proper time, and in their proper place; and He wants a certain time set apart, at regular intervals, for His service, for His worship. And a certain time set apart at regular intervals for rest.

Now the people at large might worship God on the Sabbath day, and might rest on the Sabbath day; but the priest that had to slay all those sacrifices didn't get any rest on the Sabbath day. They had their rest on some other day. But there are two principles. There is the principle—of course, we should always worship the Lord—but we should have recurring periods of special stress for worshipping the Lord; and the other principle is that God has so made us that we need recurring periods of rest. And if we are specifically in the Lord's work, and can't take the time of rest at the time when others do, we still should take the time of rest in order to keep the body that God has given us, and the abilities that He gives us, in such condition that we continue to be useful in His service.

God's teaching was never a matter of "Here are these precise regulations. You follow the exact thought of that and you are right; but if you depart a little bit from that, you are in danger." They always were great blessings, great principles that He wants us to learn, and to follow. And, the Sabbath principle is a principle that is mighty vital in the life of every believer.

(Student: Couldn't we interpret the Sabbath thinking that God was trying to prevent man from working the day—the seventh shall we say—because he could reason that they were working for the Lord and building up the temple? They could bring this as an excuse?) Yes, it is a thing that it is very easy for a seminary student to fall very short; and it is very easy to figure that all of the Lord's work is your work anyway, so you might as well make Sunday just like every other day.

Well, you are definitely not doing what the Lord does not want. He wants you to have particular times set apart for your worship, for your private devotions, and He wants you to have the regular period of rest. But for the people in general who are not in the specific direct service of the Lord, there is a much more obvious need for rest than for the Christian worker. You may be rushing from church to church on Sunday, and you get the rest some other day. But it is a mighty good practice as a general practice, to rest even on that day as much as possible aside from that which is specifically connected with your lessons on the Sabbath day.

(Student: Don't you think that this was not only for our spiritual rest, but also for our physical rest?) Very definitely it was; and for the average person, you can very easily get them both on the one day. But for the Christian work, it is necessary to get them on different days. If it is, you are carrying out the spirit and the purpose. Many a person says that is the letter kills and the spirit gives life as an excuse for ignoring the whole business, both letter and spirit. And God does not want us to ignore the principle. The principle is true, that it is not a specific minute carrying out of regulations, but it is the understanding of the principle and the applying of the principle in a way that is often neglected. Well, this is the Sabbath stressed. Now

f. The Tables of Stone. 31:18. That's only one verse, but that certainly is worth a special heading.

He gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

4. The Golden Calf. Exodus 32–35:3. And what a contrast! Moses on the mountain, worshipping God; receiving the tables of stone, written with the finger of God; and the people, down in the valley saying to Aaron,

"Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him."

And so he is going forward with the Lord's work; and they, instead of following him, are turning away and leaving. And how different the Bible is from what you would have written and I would look for. What a beautiful Utopia, men have written the picture of perfection that they imagined that it ought to be; but God gives us a picture of life as it is. And despite rebellion, despite turning aside, despite failings by the wayside, He pushes forward towards the goal.

And here is Moses, up on the mountain, receiving a message from God; and then coming down to see the people turning away; and we will have that experience. But don't let it make you bitter. If your eyes are on human beings, you are going to get bitter soon enough anyway; but if your eyes are on the Lord, there is no reason to ever get bitter. Because you will find that the person that you trust will prove to be made of flesh. And don't let it make you feel too bad, because he is probably feeling the same way about you. But God is the one you can trust. And you can learn that lesson from Exodus; and if you learn it there, you are going to be saving yourself a lot of heartaches from now on.

A woman said to me once a few years ago, "Oh," she said, "When we found that our idol had feet of clay," she said, "it just about ruined our lives. To see that one we trusted so much, fell in this error." And I felt like saying—I didn't, but I felt like saying—"Serves you right for having an idol." We should not have a human being as our model. Praise the Lord when someone is wonderfully used of Him; but we are still fallible weak human beings, and your idols may fall. You keep your eyes on Him and not on man.

a. The First Great Apostasy of Israel. Exodus 32:1–6. Who would ever have believed that a people so recently rescued from Egypt, with the recollection behind them of the plagues of Egypt, of their deliverance from the oppression, and of the rescue through the Red Sea, would fall into this worship of the golden calf so quickly and so easily? It is hard to believe—if one knows nothing about life. It does not fit with the simple scheme that any of us would make to explain how life ought to be; but as life is, you find it repeatedly; it is simply the fact that sin is in the human heart. And even when we are saved, there still remains plenty of Egypt in us. And you will find that, in any group that you work with, that repeatedly you will have experiences similar to this one. You may not have as bad as this—this was the worst that perhaps Moses had—but he had many others which were very bad.

And so we have the first great apostasy of Israel. And that describes of course the story that doubtless is well known to everyone here: how the Israelites got Aaron to make this calf and they said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt." And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it, and Aaron made proclamation, and said, "Tomorrow is a feast to Jehovah." And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings, and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

If he turned away from the worship of Jehovah in order to worship a golden calf, why, did he say, "Well now, this is the feast to Jehovah"? Why did he introduce it that way? There are scholars today who say that this was not a turning to another god, that they considered this to represent the god Jehovah, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt. They say that the invisible God of

Israel was imagined as standing over the golden calf; and we do have, of course, in Northern Mesopotamia, we have found remains from around this period, certain places where they had the gods represented as standing on the backs of animals.

And that's what gave the idea to certain modern scholars that this is an example of that. Some scholars thought of that until recent years. It was also, I imagine, thought by most, that this was simply another god, substituted by Jehovah. But you notice Aaron says, "Tomorrow is a feast to Jehovah." Prepare for it, and the next day they had this festival. If this idea of these scholars is true, then it was not a breaking of the first commandment; but in such a case, it was certainly a breaking of the second commandment. It was the making of a calf and bowing down before it, and a breaking of the second commandment, if not of the first. And actually it is pretty hard to break the second without breaking the first. Because you may think you are worshipping the same god, but when you worship Him in a method different from what He has prescribed, and when you depart from what He has designated, it is pretty hard to be sure you are still worshipping Him.

There are missionaries who go to Mohammedan lands, and say, well, the Mohammedans believe in one god, we believe in one God. We all worship the same God, it is just a matter of difference in how we worship. Well, Mohammed claims that it is the same God. He claims that Allah is the God who was active in the Old Testament days and leading the Israelites, and who was active in the time of Christ, and he represented Christ as the greatest of all the prophets next to himself. But he denied His deity; he denied His atonement, but he would claim that this is the same god.

Actually, the missionaries say that when they see how the worship of Allah is carried on, and when they see the teaching of Mohammed, it becomes very apparent that Allah is not the same god as Jehovah at all. He is a different god from Jehovah. It is actually a breaking of the first commandment.

And if the god of the Mohammedans and the gods of the Hindus are different gods from the God we worship, much more is it true of the modernists. They do not have the God that we worship. So whether this is a breaking of the first commandment, or of the second commandment, in the end it amounts to a breaking of the first; and it is a definite apostasy against the Lord.

b. Moses' First Intercession. It is very interesting that immediately we have this first great instance of Moses' Intercession. The Lord says to Moses,

"Get thee down; for thy people which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have

worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and have said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation."

Immediately Moses doesn't say, "Isn't that awful. Isn't that wicked? Those people ought to be destroyed. They ought to be wiped off the face of the earth, for what they have done."

Moses speaks mighty strictly to the people, when he comes down. He deals very fully with their sins. But before he deals with them in judgment, he deals with God in intercession; and He prays to God that He will spare the people, that He will deliver them, that He will rescue them, out of the wilderness.

Moses is the great instance of the great righteous man standing for God, surrounded by these wicked people; but Moses is also a great example of the intercessor; and it would be an excellent study, to study Moses, the intercessor; to see through these chapters what we learn about how he prayed for the people and he sought the Lord; and Moses thought up all the arguments and reasons he could, why the Lord should spare these people and should not entirely destroy them. And we read in verse 14, "And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people."

This word, "repent" here, is a word which, in the Old Testament, has a very different meaning than the word "repent" in the New Testament. Now this word repent in the New Testament is used of man. It couldn't be conceived to be used of God. God, could not have godly wrath and godly sorrow for sin and desire to turn away from it. That's what "repent" means: sorrow for sin and the desire to turn away from it.

God could not repent in that sense. God does not sin. God does not sorrow. He has sorrow for our sins, but He has no sin of His own for which to be sorry. But this English word, "repent", I think, is quite unfortunate for the translation of the Hebrew word *Nacham*. And *Nacham*—as I mentioned in connection with Genesis 6 in the light of the context there—seems definitely to be the turning away from an unhappy state to a less unhappy state in view of something that has happened or something that one has decided to do. It is an emotional word. The same word is translated, "be comforted" in Numbers. And the meaning is much nearer to "He was comforted" rather than "He repented". But it is not exactly like comforted either. And it is used here in the Piel. It is used in two cases: in the Niphal, and in the Piel. The Piel is the causative. That is what we have in Isaiah 40, where it says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people." Before I knew Hebrew, I thought it meant, when you say "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people," what is meant was, "Be comforted by comforting my people." That's

not what it means at all. That's with the niphal. This is with the Piel, which means "Comfort my people." "My people" is the object of "Comfort". It is the causative idea. To cause that they should be comforted. And so the same sense can be applied. If you take the people in exile and show that God is going to lead them to less unhappiness because they know what God is going to do.

God does not go back on His promises. God says to Abraham, I will make of thee a great nation. Now suppose that God should destroy all the descendents of Abraham, except Moses, and then made of Moses a great nation, Moses is still a descendent of Abraham, still a great nation shall be made of Abraham. Well, now

c. Moses' Return to the Camp. 32:15–24. And here there are two particular matters that I want you to notice.

(1). Destruction of the first tables of stone.

And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.

And then, in verse 19,

And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.

And so Moses destroyed the tablets of stone that God had prepared. Was it God's purpose that these tablets should be destroyed? That some good purpose would be gained by it? Was it an object lesson to the people of how terribly they had done by it, to break these tablets? We are not told. Was it simply a reaction of Moses, which anyone of us is apt to have in a situation like that? To be terribly disgusted and angry at something, to just destroy that like a little child? Well, we can't build anything upon this when we are not told. But this we know that God had given these sacred, precious tablets to Moses.

Doubtless many of the Israelites were irritated and disgusted about what was happening. We can get into all sorts of difficulty in the Scripture if we take the strong statements and take them as meaning something that is not clearly stated.

I got a letter once, which said, "How can you believe the Old Testament? It is full of contradictions. Rehoboam took the golden shields out of the temple, and they were attributed to Shishak, and he put bronze shields in their stead. And

then it tells about another king later on when someone came and attacked them, he fought him off, with taking all the precious vessels out of the temple, and selling them and giving them the money, and it tells that about six of them, and then it tells at the end that all the precious things in the temple were carried off to Babylon." And he says, "How could they carry off these to Babylon? They'd given all these things wholly to others."

He tried to make out that there was a string of contradictions. Actually the language is not meant to mean "every single one." And it is a very easy error to fall into. There are some who say that it says, "God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," so even the Devil will be saved; and there are those who make a strong application of that.

Here, Moses had been given these Commandments by the Lord; and Moses was serving the Lord, and leading these people here; and after this was all over, God takes Moses up into the mount again, and gives him two more tables of stone. But very seldom are you and I in a situation at all pertinent to that. And it is very easy for us to be angry and upset in the emotional excitement of a particular situation, and to destroy the work of a long period. It is very, very easy for us to do. I think that we should watch and guard against it.

Here were these precious tablets which God had written: the Ten Commandments, for us. What a memento; what a treasure in days to come; what a wonderful thing they were. And just to take them and throw them down and destroy them. Might it not be more important to preserve the tablets of stone—the moral law for all future ages—even if all of Israel were to go off to their sin? And how would it hinder their going off? How were they spared in this that Moses did? Eventually Moses gave way to this sudden rage that came up in him, a situation that would have tried the patience of anybody; and eventually in a very similar situation, where Moses gave way to wrath, God told him, "Moses as a result of this, you aren't to go into the Promised Land." In this case, it may have been just the same trait in Moses. Moses was one of the greatest men who ever lived. He was a man of flesh and blood just like ourselves. And God does not mean us to take any person except the Lord Jesus Christ as perfect; and everything that he does is worthy of imitation. He wants us to see what people do right, and imitate it; and see their mistakes, and notice the results.

And I think that it may have been God's will that Moses break those tablets. We don't know. But it certainly is His will that, in general, we take it as a horrible example to avoid; and not in an immediate situation to let ourselves forget things that can be very important, things of permanent lasting importance.

Well, the tablets of stone were now broken. They were replaced.

(2). Aaron's Lame Excuses. This is one of the most natural things, human things, in the Scripture; and when you read all the wonderful things about Aaron, and what a great man he was, it seems hard to believe that anyone who thought so highly of Aaron, as the writer of this book did, would have included these verses. But the Bible was not written by a man who admired somebody and therefore tells us everything good about him; or detests somebody, and therefore knocks him all the time; but it was written by God's representative who told us things exactly as they were.

And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them? And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.

Aaron is trying to make excuses; and they are just about as silly as most people's excuses are. Aaron had sinned; he had done wrong; and the more he tried to excuse it, the worse he was.

(Question: The people said, make us gods. Was this the first commandment or the second?) I think we can draw opposite conclusions from two statements Aaron made. I doubt if the evidence is sufficient for us to reach a conclusion. Aaron probably wasn't a hundred per cent clear in his own mind, in the whole situation. I certainly don't think Aaron was a ringleader who planned this thing and tried to lead the people into apostasy; but I think that Aaron went along with them into it; and in going along, he probably partly convinced himself, and partly didn't. The text could be, "Make us God," or "Make us gods." As far as the Hebrew is concerned, the form would be identical, whether it would be "make us gods," or "make us God," or "make us a god." But often, the word God, has a "the" before it. Not here. So you can't say it *isn't* "the God", but you can't quite say it is.

d. Vengeance on the People. 32:25–29. "Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come to me." And we read that all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together with him. And he commanded them to go through and to slay the others, and they did it according to the word of Moses and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

The vengeance on the people at that time was very, very small compared to what the Lord had suggested—wiping out the entire nation, and making a great nation of Moses—even though of the entire nation, there might still have been maybe a hundred thousand left that had not bowed the knee to the golden calf.

It was very small compared to them, and yet it was a terrible punishment; and it is easy to look at it from one of two views. Here we see Moses, persuading the Lord, interceding with the Lord not to destroy the nation, and only this small number being killed. And on the other hand, here we see Moses in his wrath and standing for the honor of God causing that this number should be killed.

The fact is this: we can't go to the Bible and judge whether the Bible is moral or not, to judge whether its principles are right. That's the habit the modernists have. So the modernists say, "Well now, I don't like the ethics of the Bible. The Old Testament has got a low stage of ethics. It hasn't reached our high exalted viewpoint." And so they start in trying to criticize the ethics of the Bible, criticizing this, that, and the other thing; and then they go on, and the next step is they lose their ethics altogether. In the early stage of modernism, their claim was to have a high ethics. That claim goes down in their writing. In the later stage, you will find that they explain away any sin whatsoever. There is no ethical standard left, as modernism goes on. But the question is, where do you get your ethical standard? You must get it from the Word of God. You must not try to make a standard; that is either the true standard, or it is not a workable standard. We don't get our standard out of our head; we get it out of the Bible.

There are those people who make up a standard of ethics: that it is sinful to have any use of alcohol. There is no such statement taught in the scripture anywhere at all. It is clearly taught in the Scripture that drunkenness is a sin. That is clearly taught. And of course, in a civilization like our present one, there is a very good argument that can be made, that it is a wise policy to abstain from alcoholic beverages altogether. But there are people who make very much of any touching of alcohol as being sinning; and they overlook the really great moral principle by insisting on certain a, b, c's that they say are very clear and simple to the Christian, but are not the Divine standard. We must get our standard from the Bible, not from other individuals.

Well, vengeance on the people then. The Levites stood true. The Levites had been cursed by Jacob. Certainly Levi had been cursed. Jacob prophesied of Simeon and Levi, "I will divide them in Jacob and disperse them in Israel." Simeon was scattered abroad and disappeared. Levi stood by the Lord, and was scattered abroad for blessing as God's representative. The curse was turned into a blessing. Levi stood true to the Lord. God will fulfill all of His promises. He will fulfill all of his blessings. What He declares will come to pass. They will come to pass, but no one can say, "I am under the curse. There is nothing I can do about it." He has mercy for anyone that looks to Him regardless of their background. No one is lost, except by his own fault. There is no one who can say "God would not redeem me." Jesus said, "I would gather you under my wing, and you would not." Every man is lost who would not have the blood atonement.

e. Further Intercession. 32:13–33:23.

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.

And Moses went, confessed their sin,

And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made.

...
I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way. And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned: and no man did put on him his ornaments. For the Lord had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee.

And we have Moses' intercession continuing, described to the end of chapter 33.

Now there are two matters; we won't take time to go into detail on this. I hope you will all spend some time on it, but I want to bring out two points.

We have already had a section in which God has described how the tabernacle shall be built. Now when was the tabernacle built? Read verse 7. "And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation."

Was the tabernacle made in between the directions that were given in the mount to Moses? Between that and the time when Moses came down and found the people worshipping the golden calf? Or was it between the time when they were worshipping the golden calf, and the time when this is described in this verse? When was it?

Here we find, it in Exodus 35:14, the making of the tabernacle. It is described in 35, and in 36, and in 37, and in 38; and 39. And the setting up of the tabernacle is described in chapter 40. And he made it all according to the

pattern shown to him in the mount. But he did that after he went up to the mountain again. It was after this time that he built the tabernacle.

Yet here it says in Exodus 33:7 that he took the tabernacle, and he pitched it outside the camp.

The English word "tabernacle" is—to my regret—used by the King James translators to translate six different Hebrew nouns. And the long description that we've already had, of the building of the tabernacle, includes perhaps 15 or 20 cases where he speaks of the tabernacle as the *mishkan*, the dwelling place. And later on where it tells how the tabernacle was built, it includes maybe 15 or more where it refers to the tabernacle as the *mishkan*, the dwelling place.

But there are in both of those passages a very few cases—I believe only two or three—where it is not called the *mishkan*, but the *ohel*, which means "tent." The English word "tabernacle" simply means "a tent."

But the tent that Moses put up, we call it a tent, because it had these coats, skins on the outside, so it looked like a tent. So we call it a tent. But it is ordinarily not called a tent. It is ordinarily called the dwelling place, God's dwelling place, the *mishkan*, the place of the Shekinah glory; and to my mind, the King James version would be far clearer if, when they had *mishkan*, they would say, Dwelling, with a capital D, and if when they said *ohel*, they would say tent, instead of saying tabernacle in both cases,

Now in this particular case it is the word *ohel*, the word which is not a common word, but is occasionally used for the tabernacle that Moses used. And it is rather peculiar, the way it simply says here, that Moses took the tabernacle and pitched it without the camp, and called it the tabernacle of the congregation. It doesn't tell us what tabernacle it is; but if you translate it as it literally is, took the *tent*, you can conclude it isn't the great tabernacle they built according to the directions on the mount, because that wasn't yet built. It must be some tent. Now was it Moses' tent, in which he ordinarily lived? Or was it a tent which he had ordinarily used as a center for worship? Which is it? How he took it, we don't know. Now I have a commentary here, the *New Bible Commentary*,⁸⁴ so called, published in England, by the Intersociety Fellowship; the commentary on the section of Exodus there, I looked up this verse, and what it says about this verse is,

Moses removed his tent outside the camp. His tent, which the Lord was going to use as the place for meeting the *mishkan*, and Moses would make his intercession to the Lord. But it was Moses' tent.

⁸⁴ D. Guthrie, ed., *The New Bible Commentary Revised*, (1970)

Now, that is that man's view. Maybe he is right. In fact, I think he is right. It is Moses' tent. But is it his ordinary tent—his dwelling tent—or is it his second tent that he had near, which he had used for this purpose all along. I don't know. But it says, he called it the tabernacle of the congregation; and I think that that is extremely unfortunate, that the King James writer translates it, "the tabernacle of the congregation." I think they were great scholars, and did a grand job with the King James Version, but I think they made a few rather serious mistakes. And I think this is quite unfortunate. The word that is here translated "congregation." Well the word "congregation" the King James translators used to translate six different Hebrew words. And this word is used very rarely, except in this connection; *mowèth*, it means a meeting place, or the meeting itself. Now there is an entirely different word, *qahal*, which is used for the assembly called together, which is more of what we think as the congregation.

But this is not a congregation in the modern sense. When we say a "congregation", we mean a group of people together; but the word "congregation" can just as well mean, "the coming together", as actually this is doubtless the coming together of God and Moses. Or Moses making intercession with God, and God revealing Himself to Moses. "The tent of meeting" would be a more literal rendering. "The tabernacle of the congregation" is all right if you understand congregation as being the sense of congregating, Moses and God congregating together, rather than in the sense of a lot of people coming together.

So it is an unfortunate term as far as modern usage is concerned. Now maybe in King James' day it would fit exactly the right idea. I can't say. But I think that it is too bad anyway, they used the word congregation, to give three or four different Hebrew words, and they used the same word "tabernacle", for the six different Hebrew words.

So in this case, it is a different tent; and it is quite important that you have it in mind, because all the critical books bring out that this is a contradiction. Here is the tabernacle already there, taken out of the camp; and yet you read later on that they built the tabernacle; so it shows that you have two different documents that they just combined together. Of course, the thing that always impresses me—when they give those arguments is—if they are from two different documents that had different stories, what kind of an idiot was it that put them together into one book, that he couldn't see that he made a contradiction when he put them together? In the eyes of the man who put together the book of Exodus, there is no contradiction. I mean if a man put it together. Or in the eyes of the man who wrote it; and I believe Moses wrote it. Certainly he wrote Exodus.

And it is up to us to figure out what he means; because anything that any of us writes, can seem to have contradictions in it; and it may have, because none of us express ourselves perfectly, and the English language is not susceptible to perfect expression anyway. Any book is pretty sure to have contradictions in it, if people want to find them. But if you read it to try to get the meaning, you assume the writer was an intelligent person who wasn't making a contradiction, then you can usually figure out what was meant. And that is true of the Bible.

To say there are no contradictions in the Bible is ridiculous, because there are contradictions in everything that has ever been written. But there is no case where it is necessary so to interpret the Bible so as to find contradictions. There is always a reasonable interpretation which does not involve a contradiction. And there is no book ever written which cannot be so interpreted so as to find it contradicting at different places. So I think that it is very important to have this in mind, because the English is very unfortunate in this misuse of the word "tabernacle". Or maybe it was all right in the King James' day. Maybe everybody used it. Maybe a little boy said, "I'm going out and spend the day in my tabernacle with my dog." Maybe they were accustomed to the word, so that it was just a common word to all, and it fit perfectly. But today, it has come to be a word with a very specialized meaning. It is used in the Old Testament to translate *mishkan* a great many times, to translate *ohel* a great many times, and then it is used a very few times to translate *sukka*, which really means a booth.

And over in Amos we read that God will raise up the tabernacle of David, which is false. And it is neither the word *mishkan* or *ohel*. It is an entirely different word, *sukka*. The critical argument today about eschatology is based upon that passage and its quotation in Acts 15, and usually failing to recognize the fact that it is taking our English word tabernacle which is not really the sense of the word at all. It simply means a booth. It has nothing to do with tabernacle in the modern sense.

Before going on, I should briefly mention the last 6 verses of Exodus 33, where there is a revelation of God's glory to Moses, a rather peculiar passage, showing that Moses could not see God actually face to face, although it does say later on, never again came a man who like Moses saw God face to face. They are allegorical. They are figurative. They have to be, because God doesn't have a face that we could see. But here we find that God reveals His glory to Moses in a very special way, but in a way in which surely only a portion of his glory is visible.

f. The Covenant reestablished. 34:1–35:3.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest... and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai.

And he did this, and he went up, and then the Lord proceeded to give him a series of statements, and according to the critics, this is the oldest part of Exodus. In chapter 20 is the E document, which is a little later. And according to some of them, this is the original of the Ten Commandments.

They figure ten statements out of these. I think it was Goethe, the German poet, who was one of the first to work out this theory.⁸⁵ It was not a theory accepted by all the critics by any means, but you will occasionally come across some. According to their theory, these are the Ten Commandments, in the most primitive, rudimentary form. Now to compare these with the moral law, really shows how ridiculous it is. These are particular things that God wanted stressed, and they were matters—according to their theory—like seething a goat in its mother's milk, as an imitation of a Canaanite custom, and a warning against falling into that particular type of heathenism. And there were particular things that were vital at that time. And then, he wrote the Ten Commandments, not the words that we have now, but he wrote the words which were originally here. According to their theory.

But this is the reestablishment of the covenant of Moses here, and it ends in chapter 35:1–3, with a renewed stress on the Sabbath day. The Sabbath day was originated at creation. It was part of God's plan. But Israel being the people chosen out of all the peoples, wanting to keep alive the knowledge of the true God, it was an important sign for them—something that set them apart from others, and therefore stressed as one specific thing that sets them apart and makes it easy for them to preserve their peculiarity and their distinctness. And so the stress in these three verses.

And then in verse 4, we start a new section.

5. The Tabernacle Built.

And that is five chapters, from Exodus 35:14 to the end of chapter 39. If this were a class in architecture, we would spend a few months on this. And it would be very interesting and, probably, very worthwhile. But actually this was the design of the form of worship, with the altar. But in Old Testament History, all we deal with is that he did all things according to the patterns that the Lord showed him in the mountain, and go on to

⁸⁵ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe called this the "Ritual Decalogue" in contrast to the earlier "Ethical Decalogue". See [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ritual_Decalogue).

6. The Tabernacle Set Up. Exodus 40.

They had made the tabernacle; now they put it up. And this describes how they put up the tabernacle, and put the different things in their right places in it, and established the worship. The chapter ends with a repetition of the statement about God's method of leading them.

The tent of meeting—which term now seems to be used from here on for the central portion of the tabernacle—is where God is thought of as actually meeting with the representative of the people. That is called the Tent of Meeting in the side of the tabernacle as a whole. And the cloud covers it; and the cloud leads them. That is as we see it here.

7. Laws Regarding Sacrifice. Leviticus 1–7.

These laws were not given up in the mountain. because in the first verse of Leviticus, it says "The Lord called to Moses, and spoke to him out of the tent of meeting saying." So was God there in the tabernacle, and he proceeded to give directions to Moses as to how the sacrifices were regularly to be done.

When I was 12 years old, I started to read the Bible. I read a chapter of Genesis in the morning and a chapter in the evening. A third chapter the next morning, and a fourth the next evening; and I went right through Genesis, and right through Exodus; and then I got to Leviticus 1–7. I think when I got to chapter 5, I got bogged down; and it was about 6 months later that I proceeded on.

Many people get bogged down in the beginning of Leviticus, because it is a section of detailed law; it was very important for their proper observance by the priests, but not intended to be for light reading by the people, or for exhortation. They are for study, not for easy reading. And so you have seven chapters of laws regarding sacrifices. Very interesting to see the typology in it, but that again is not the subject of this course.

8. The Consecration the Priests. Leviticus 8–9.

We had the directions, back in Exodus, how the priests should be consecrated. Now we have them consecrated here; and then Chapter 8 gets back into the history again. These are accounts of the beginnings of services, and accounts of laws, but now,

9. The Rebellion of Nadab and Abihu. Chapter 10.

This is almost the only narrative section of the book of Leviticus. Most of the book of Leviticus is made up of law, and of a special kind of law. They are laws

for the priests. There are laws for the carrying on of the service in the temple, Laws for the lives of the priests. Or laws for detailed observances, such as it would not be necessary for the average person to have thoroughly in mind. The critics make contradictions between the fact that you have such great complexity of law in Leviticus, and such comparative simplicity of law in Exodus. And make it out to be one, the more primitive law, and the other more of an advanced law.

The fact of the matter, if you take the Bible as it stands here, is that they are different kinds of law. But the difference is not in primitiveness. The difference is in the purpose of the law. The laws in Exodus are mostly laws for the people to have in mind, laws to be driven home to their minds and hearts, for remembrance by them and to be applied. The laws in Leviticus are laws which apply to particular situations or particular groups of people; they need not to be known by everybody, but should be available for application. And consequently, naturally, they are more complex, and more detailed, and less interesting. And you have all the material of this type together, because it is necessary to have the general law driven home to people's hearts; and you don't want to mix in it that law which is for reference only, rather than for constant memory.

Thus you have in Leviticus, you have a law that every fifty years is a Jubilee, and the land shall lie fallow. Well, if you took the people in the 53rd year, you taught everybody, "Now remember the fiftieth year, the land lies fallow," and from the 53rd, 54th, 55th, through the next ten years, you've drummed that into the people's minds, so nobody would ever forget it; after ten years of that, people would be so sick of hearing it, they'd quit saying anything about it. It would have no relevance to their lives. And 35 years later, when the Jubilee came, everyone would have forgotten them.

But if you have it in the law book—which the leaders are supposed to read, and refer to, frequently—then it is their responsibility as the time draws near again, that they make the people aware of it. So there is this vital difference in the type of law, and Leviticus is a very important book for its purpose. The purpose is brought out very clearly in the name which we give it, the name which comes from the Greek, Leviticus, the book that is the material for the Levites. That is not in the original Hebrew name.

The Hebrew simply calls it *Wayikra*, "And God Called", the first word. God called to Moses who said, "Take down this law." Well that word, "And God called," tells us nothing about the book, except that it is a book of God's revelation. And that of course, you can say of many books. But the Greeks gave it a title which is a very good title. It describes exactly what it is. It is the book of the detailed law, and most particularly of the law dealing with the temple.

Well, in this book we have this one chapter which is quite different from most of them, because it is a chapter which describes an event which occurred. And this event occurred fairly soon after the setting up of the tabernacle, after the setting apart of Aaron and his sons to be priests. That Aaron's two eldest sons took his censer and put fire in it, and put incense on it, "And offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord."

Now there is a fact which is not altogether clear to us: What does it mean by "strange fire"? Does Aaron tell you, "Now here is fire, and you are to put this in a censer and you are to wave it around, and do this every day; but you be careful how you do it, because the people who were there last week, made a mistake and they got burned up"? You'd want to know right away, "Now what kind of mistake did they make, and what does this strange fire consist of?"

Maybe that was clear to the people there, but it is not clear to us. We don't know just what it was. And I don't think it was the Lord's intention that we should know what it was, because the purpose of this is not to stress particular details of how to perform ceremonies; but it is to stress the fact that the sacrifice was to be offered exactly as God commanded. And what was wrong was certainly not that Nadab and Abihu made a mistake, and got some little detail wrong. There must have been thousands of cases where priests made some little mistake, and got some detail wrong, and nothing ever happened. But it is an attitude that they showed, of saying, "Well, this is what God commanded, but let's try a different way. Here is something that looks to us as if it would be more effective. Let's do it our way instead of doing it God's way."

And right at the very beginning of the sacrificial system, God gave an object lesson; not that Nadab and Abihu were worse sinners than perhaps 20% of the priests in subsequent years. But they were doubtless bad sinners. They showed an attitude—a wicked attitude—but not that they were the most wicked men by any means; but right at the beginning here, of the sacrificial service, it was vital that the first ones who would do it be men whose hearts were right before God. And it was vital that the thing be established on a proper foundation. And somebody may say it was God who punished Nadab and Abihu this way, two men who are sinners like many a man is, bad sinners, not the worst by any means; there were worse sinners than they, but that they in subsequent times should honor God, because everyone of them deserves death. Everyone of us deserves eternal punishment for our sins. It is only the grace of God that enables any of us to escape from death.

But sin in many cases brings inevitably certain consequences in this life of suffering; but in many cases it doesn't. Often the suffering comes in many cases to the innocent one, rather than to the one guilty of sin. But in this life, when you have punishment which is a specific intervention of God—which you

do not ordinarily have, but some times it is given, not that he is giving the sin the punishment it deserves, and showing a just attitude of punishing sin in this life, because all men are judged, when you look over eternity—that it is done for specific purpose here, for its affect upon others.

And so in this case, the punishment of Nadab and Abihu was right at the start, to show the extreme seriousness of carrying out law as He gave it. And it is not just a matter of, "You want to watch out. You get these details exactly right, because if you make a mistake you are going to be punished." It is nothing of the kind. But it is a matter of the heart before God, that desires to do God's will, instead of all this thinking that we've got to work out a better way on our own. That's exactly the sin that caused Satan to fall. It was Satan's desire to be God, and to put himself in the place of God. It was Adam's sin that he could see better what was right than what God gave, and it is a fault which people make beginning work over and over.

The account of what actually happened here is quite brief. It is quite brief, but it is very, very strong when we realize what happened. There went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them; and they died before the Lord. So here right at the beginning of the priesthood, the first and second son of Aaron were killed as soon as they started in their worship. So the rebellion of Nadab and Abihu here in Leviticus is a vital part of the history of the rebellions of the children of Israel in the wilderness against God. And a vital part of the narrative of God's dealings with His people, though it is rather buried in Leviticus.

I'm going to skip over most of the rest of the book of Leviticus.

10. Other Laws. Chapters 11–27.

Now that of course is a very summary title and it should be divided up, but this is a course in Old Testament History, rather than in law; and for our purpose, I want you to know the general nature of the book of Leviticus, and to know where the rebellion of Nadab and Abihu is described. These other laws are well worth study, but for this particular course, we have to skip over them.

I want however, to call your attention to one of the chapters which you should be familiar with. That is Leviticus 16. And Leviticus 16 is a very important chapter because it is the description of that great and important day, the Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement, when the high priest entered into the Holy Place, with the sin offering, for himself and for his people; when he killed the goat of the sin offering; and when he laid the sin of the people on another goat which was driven out into the wilderness to carry the sin away. And thus there is represented here the fact that even the high priest must have an atonement for his sin; and that all the people must have their sin borne by another, or they cannot possibly receive God's acceptance.

The great Day of Atonement is a wonderful pictorial representation of the work that Christ would do. Everyone who thought at all about it, must have realized that the killing of a goat; driving another goat out into the wilderness; to say a few words over it; that couldn't affect their sin. That couldn't affect their reception before God. A little mumble jumble, that's not going to affect your eternal destiny; but it represents something that will affect their eternal destiny. It is a picture of something which will have vital affects upon all the forces of the universe. Something that will be providing for the universe, whereby you can be saved from your sins, and can be received into the family of God. And so all of Leviticus speaks of atonement. It all speaks of Christ. But this chapter is one of the outstanding sections on the subject. Now we move on to

11. Preparation for Leaving Sinai. Numbers 1–10:10.

Our section on Sinai is covering the equivalent of two books of the Pentateuch, and in this section there is comparatively little narrative. It is specific preparation before starting on the main portion of the wilderness journey. And therefore it has a great importance historically as showing how God equipped the people and started them out. And it has a great importance spiritually for us, in showing us the sort of preparation that is vital in our wilderness journey. And these chapters are full of important lessons for today. But they are apt to be missed, if we don't realize the meaning of the section.

a. The men of war numbered and positions assigned. 1:1–2:34. It is from this section that the book receives its name. That is to say that, the Greek name *Arithmoi*, Numbers, a name which does not describe the book—a very poor name—but it tells us what we find in this first chapter.

Now it is interesting historically to note how large a tribe was. But what importance does it have to us? Why do we care about this section? Well, I think it is important to note that God, in preparing the children of Israel for their wilderness journey, caused that Moses should take stock of what they had. He had ordered him to take inventory of the number of men who were capable of taking part in the service of the army, in defending them against attack, and in carrying the equipment with them.

They had come, in a more or less helter-skelter fashion, out of Egypt. Each family was a group to itself. Each tribe simply came the best they could. They were a mixed multitude. And they got along that way, with God's help, as far as Sinai. But it was not His will that they should try to do that permanently. With the enthusiasm of youth, or at the beginning of a new task, you could often jump into it; and grab this or that; and take hold here and there; and you can make a mighty good job in a short time; but you can't keep that up permanently. You have to put things on a steady, well-organized basis. And the

Lord is showing us that, for our Christian work, He wants us to take inventory of our resources, and find out what we have, and note what is available for the various tasks before us.

And it is one of the tragedies of Christian work—both of the lives of individuals, and of the lives of groups of Christians—the amount of waste there is in ability and talents that are not used in the Lord's service; because we do not take inventory, and realize what we have, and then seek means to use it in order that His work may be forwarded. And so there is a vital lesson for us in the preparation for the wilderness journey, that God wants us to make similar preparation. When David made his census, God sent pestilence on the land and punished him severely. But here God ordered that a census be made. And so the critics try to make an explanation; they say the census here is simply David's census. They say this is David's census which we have in Numbers. Well, that's a pure conjecture, but most of the present-day critics hold that view. And they say that the census at the end of Numbers, chapter 26, is very similar to this. You change a few figures here and there and you can get it the same and they're simply two different editions of the same census.

Well, that's trying to find an explanation out of pure human imagination. Actually, we're told this is the census of the people at one period; David made his census centuries later. The difference between the two is, this is God ordering an inventory for the purpose of carrying out the task which he has assigned. David's is a census in order to prove his glory and his power; to increase his ego; and to gather in the forces that he might carry on offensive war against other nations.

Well, we go into the details of the census. Not only does it tell us here how many there are in each tribe, but the order in which they are to march. And then to find ten other important tasks that nobody is going to take. Now God does not want to have everything regimented. He does not want it. But he does want us to endeavor to know what our resources are, and so arrange them to cover the greatest possible ground, so we find here a very well worked-out system for the moving, in the march of the people in general. Then

b. The Levites numbered and duties described. 3:1–4:49. The men of war were numbered and the Levites were not included. Now the Levites are numbered. The age from which the men were numbered was an age selected with a view to the purposes of war. Now the Levites are numbered with a different age arrangement because they do not take part in the war. The Levites directed the service of the people; and the Levites carried the tabernacle; and each of them is given a section to do; each particular group of Levites, a section of the tabernacle to carry.

It is a great thing for a man to be a wonderful preacher, and able to give messages that will reach peoples' hearts; and I've known instances where men have preached with such power and such ability that the people have come from miles around to hear him. And it was, I think, two different times in United States history: up in Brooklyn there were men who preached and the people would come for many miles around—thousands of people would come every Sunday—to hear him preach; but when the man died, the work just disappeared to nothing, almost immediately. Because it was simply a preaching work; and the two instances I have in mind, I believe were real Christian preachers, who gave the Word of God and did a great deal of good. But it is simply a matter of preaching, and when the man was gone, the work disappeared.

I've known cases where ministers have left a church, and where the work has ended; and what was a big, fine work just dropped down to practically nothing, because it was all built around the preacher. I've known other cases where a man has not only been a preacher—maybe not nearly as great—but in addition to that, he has known how to organize his people in order that their talents would be utilized; that their ability would be harnessed to the task of Christian service; and where the minister has died or moved to another place, the church work has gone on even under great difficulty for a long time; or perhaps he was succeeded by another man very different from himself, but the work has continued as good as it was.

The work of the Lord requires excellent preaching, but it also requires organization; and here were the Levites willing and anxious to do the work; "Here's the tabernacle, let's move it," and they all jump in, and take ahold, and do the best they can; and they could get into quite a mixup, but each one has an assigned task; and the order in which they do it described here, the work can be done quickly; can be done expeditiously; it can be carried forward effectively. And it is a thing that is worth giving our thought to: how to organize our lives to make all our time count; and our effort count; and if you really get to work on this problem, and work on it, you'll find that when you get to the end of your life, you'll wish you could start over again at that point, because you could do it so much better, keeping on and continuing from there.

But we can all constantly improve in this regard, to organize ourselves; and it's also true of organizing that which we have to do. If God puts you into a subordinate position, learn the work that's your work to do, and learn to do it well. And have your eyes open to see how to do other parts well when they fall to your lot; but don't try to interfere with them now, and upset the forward going of the organization. If the time comes when God puts you in a position of leadership, then it is vital that you have some experience, and some observation particularly in knowing how to take ahold; and to avoid the friction and the unnecessary difficulties that always come when people try to work together.

And so this section here does not have a great deal that in specific detail is helpful or important to us today, but the general purport of it has a very real meaning and importance in all the activity of Christian work today, And then

c. Removal of uncleanness and defilement from the camp. 5:1–31. And after the organization is described, we immediately have this law regarding defilement and uncleanness. And at first sight you say, "Well, here's another part of the moral law given. Here is another part of God's law given for Israel." Well, it is part of that, but that does not give the answer. This is not a part of the Levitical law, and it is not a part of the book of the covenant. This is a part of the preparation for the wilderness journey; and so this section should be thought of in its relation to the section as a whole, that the Lord is making clear here; he is showing the vital fact that splendid organization, excellent planning, carefully worked out systems can be completely ineffective; in fact, they can be completely destroyed by failure to maintain purity and cleanliness within the organization.

Now it's very easy, when we disagree with someone else, for us to immediately decide that that other person is unclean or is wicked. But we are too; and whether there's enough greater wickedness in them than in us to be the cause of failure is a thing that has to be examined carefully. We should not jump to conclusions, as people are all too prone to do. But we must recognize the fact that either they or we can fall into spiritual uncleanness or defilement or sin, which can wreck the whole work; and it is important to be on the watch for that.

If you are called to a church, and everybody's happy, and you have a unanimous call, everybody's a hundred percent for you in it; and everything just looks as if you're going to have just a perfect time for the next twenty years, all working together and winning souls for the Lord; and there's no reason to ever think of any friction in the future—don't let that lead you to go to sleep and say, "Well, any arrangement is quite OK with me about the organization." Don't try to dictate everything, but get a clear idea immediately exactly what the organization is: where the control lies; what is the machinery for settling differences of opinion? What is the arrangement in that particular church for taking care of matters of immorality or of wickedness or of sin which may develop on the part of pastor or of the people?

Have this thing clearly in mind. Understand what it is; ask yourself this question: "Supposing that one of these people here falls into serious sin, even one of the leaders of the church, what should be done about it?" Ask yourself the question, "Suppose that some terrible difference comes within the church; what is the machinery for handling it?" And when everything is smooth and nice and there's no difficulty at all, think the thing through; and make a suggestion

here and a suggestion there, in order to have things prepared to take care of such developments if they should occur.

And we can hope that they never will occur; but when they do occur, it's too late then to do anything about it. You have to struggle with the resources that you have. And so God, at the preparation, the beginning of the organized portion of the wilderness journey, that is, just after this short beginning of it, at the beginning of the main portion of the wilderness journey, God here is giving laws for removal of defilement from the camp; not here punishment for specific defilement, as in the case of Nadab and Abihu being killed, but giving laws which are available for taking care of situations when they begin, and before they become serious.

I remember in the early days of the Seminary, when we had a comparatively small group of students and our faculty was a comparatively untrained group; and we were working together in directing it, a number of different sorts of matters would come up, and we would get very excited about different problems that arose; and I reached the conclusion then that one of the most important things in administration is distinguishing between those difficulties which arise which, if you just let them go on they will naturally settle themselves and everything will be all right, and there's nothing to worry about; and those things which begin to arise which you've got to nip in the bud and take hold of immediately—and it's very, very easy to do if you act soon—but if you let them go they develop into something that is very difficult to handle. And it isn't nearly so hard to handle things as it is to know what the things are that have to be handled soon, and what the matters are which it's much better to sit back and forget about, and let them take care of themselves; otherwise you make unnecessary trouble for yourself and for others.

To learn to make a distinction. And so here the Lord outlines certain types of uncleanness and of difficulty which are very apt to arise; and he gives the procedure for dealing with them at the very beginning of the wilderness journey. And so right after the organization and the evaluating of their resources, next comes the rules for getting rid of defilement and uncleanness when it occurs.

(Student: You said that this was not a part of the Levitical law. However, some of these laws would be carried through the whole time of Israel; so just what do you mean by the book of the covenant, and how does it differ from this?) The Book of the Covenant is chapter 20 to 24 of Exodus. The Book of the Covenant is the first presentation of the Covenant to the people, at which the moral law was given first; and then laws were given which were vital for them all to have in mind immediately as entering into the basis of their conduct. That's the Book of the Covenant. Then the Levitical law is the detailed law to be kept in the book for the leaders to refer to and apply as the case may arise. That's in

Leviticus. Now in the Levitical law there may be laws given which are meant to be of permanent validity. But that is the secondary portion of their purpose here. The purpose here is for their immediate application to the wilderness journey and we should not assume the permanent validity unless we have evidence that they are so.

Now this section, chapter 5, is not a section which is ordinarily studied. But it is a section which has a real meaning for us in its place here—that has a very great meaning and significance for us. But there is more to it than that; there is a very definite problem which comes up in connection with it. And this problem relates particularly to the section from verses 11 to 31. The chapter as a whole includes three parts: first is the removal of defiled persons, verses 1 to 4; then the removal of guilt of trespass, verses 5 to 10; but then verses 11 to 31 are the law of jealousy. The law of jealousy; this is a very interesting section. I hope most of you have your Bibles open in front of you. I won't take time to read this whole section but I will try to glance over it with you in such a way as to bring out the main thought.

If any man's wife go aside, and commit a trespass against him, and a man lie with her carnally, and it be hid from the eyes of her husband, and be kept close, and she be defiled, and there be no witness against her, neither she be taken with the manner; And the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be defiled: or if the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be not defiled (Numbers 5:12–14).

Now I don't know whether you caught from these three verses the divisions, because it's only the last verse which has a contrast to all that precedes. First we have a situation where a woman commits sin against her husband; and there's no witness, there's no proof, there's no evidence; but the spirit of jealousy comes on the man; he is suspicious. And if she be defiled, that is, his suspicion is justified, but he has no way of proving it; or the second part of it: if the spirit of jealousy came upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be not defiled. In other words, he is suspicious of her but he has no real reason to be; she is innocent. This is a case then in which there is no evidence available.

Well, why not say, "If a woman is guilty of this terrible sin, let her be taken out and stoned, and the defilement taken out of the camp?" But in order to protect the innocent, let us make it so that absolute proof is necessary, and no one shall be punished in this case unless there's absolute proof.

Well, in this case, there is not only not absolute proof, there is no proof. The man is suspicious, and that's all; there is no evidence on the matter.

Well, then, why not say, "Well, the woman is presumed innocent"? Because in this case, there is not just a matter of whether the woman is guilty or innocent. There is a matter of a spirit of suspicion on the part of someone. That spirit of suspicion is involved.

And you see, this is not a matter of ordinary life, though it has its lessons for ordinary life. It is a matter of a march. It is a matter of a progress through the wilderness; it is preparation for that. How is the army going to move forward there without difficulties arising which can be fatal to the progress of the whole group? And it is not merely that defilement, wickedness, on the part of this woman, can bring an uncleanness into the camp, which must be dealt with; it is that a spirit of jealousy on the part of the husband, which leads him to be sure in his heart the woman is guilty, even though there's nothing he can do about it; that can introduce into the army an attitude which can be fatal to the success of the work.

And so this is not so much the law of uncleanness here as it is the law of jealousy. It is a matter of handling that sort of a situation here, in order to stop it, and not allow it to go on, and fester, and cause great harm. And so in this situation, we are told what is to be done: Then the man shall bring his wife to the priest and he shall bring her offering for her, the tenth part of an ephah of barley meal, and it describes the offering.

And so there is an offering that has to be given. Everything that we do should be done in relation to the jealousy. It should be brought in relation to that. We should remember that we also are guilty. We should remember that it is only the grace of God that keeps us all from being destroyed; and we should take that into consideration when we proceed to bring charges against other people. We should make mighty sure that we ourselves are under the blood. But then it continues after this offering is made, and the priest shall bring her near and set her before the Lord,

And the priest shall set the woman before the Lord, and uncover the woman's head, and put the offering of memorial in her hands, which is the jealousy offering: and the priest shall have in his hand the bitter water that causeth the curse: And the priest shall charge her by an oath, and say unto the woman, If no man have lain with thee, and if thou hast not gone aside to uncleanness with another instead of thy husband, be thou free from this bitter water that causeth the curse: But if thou hast gone aside to another instead of thy husband, and if thou be defiled, and some man have lain with thee beside thine husband: Then the priest shall charge the woman with an oath of cursing, and the priest shall say unto the woman, The Lord make thee a curse and an oath among thy people, when the Lord doth make thy thigh to rot, and thy belly to swell; And this water that causeth the curse shall go into thy bowels, to make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot: And the woman

shall say, Amen, amen. And the priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall blot them out with the bitter water: And he shall cause the woman to drink the bitter water that causeth the curse: and the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter. Then the priest shall take the jealousy offering out of the woman's hand, and shall wave the offering before the Lord, and offer it upon the altar.... [verse 27] And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it shall come to pass, that, if she be defiled, and have done trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot: and the woman shall be a curse among her people. And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean; then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed. This is the law of jealousies, when a wife goeth aside to another instead of her husband, and is defiled; Or when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and shall set the woman before the Lord, and the priest shall execute upon her all this law. Then shall the man be guiltless from iniquity, and this woman shall bear her iniquity (Numbers 5:18-31).

Now here is a law then, which is not a part of the Levitical law, that is, it is not contained in the law book which set forth the law that was established for the conduct of Israel in the days to come. It is a part of the preparation for the wilderness journey. We go on into the history and we find no further reference to this law. There are many situations where it might have been invoked, but there is no reference to it in the long history through this time and the time of David, or between David and the going into captivity, or up to the time of the Maccabees or on. We find no reference to this anywhere.

Verse 31 is that, if the woman has iniquity in this regard, she's to bear it, and the man is guiltless from iniquity. The implication is that if the woman is innocent the man is not guilty. She bears her iniquity, but if she doesn't have iniquity to bear here, she drinks the water and she's perfectly all right, nothing happens; she goes ahead living a normal life after that. The man admits "I was wrong in my suspicions, there were things which looked to me, made me suspicious, I was entirely wrong in it, it was a wrong attitude on my part and I'm going to turn aside from it."

The thing is to get rid of the spirit of jealousy and dissension by suspicion, by making a means whereby it can be proved that it is a groundless suspicion and eradicate it, or by proving that it is a deserved suspicion and giving it the punishment which it deserves.

But the thing is that this was not given as a law which was enforced through the history of Israel. I believe there's no evidence that it was. And after the destruction of the Temple, a generation later, we have the rabbis writing the Talmud, going through the Old Testament and considering every little detail of

law very, very carefully, and trying to understand it. And when they come to this, they say, "Well now, we don't do this, why don't we do it?" And I forget the exact explanation someone gave, but he said that shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem that some theory had been advanced on which it had been discontinued. And they went ahead to say that there was a certain room in the Temple in which this was performed and certain things like that; but all evidence is after the destruction of Jerusalem; it is theorizing. We have no evidence that this was done afterward. It is my personal conviction that this was not intended as a law for Israel throughout history, but as an arrangement for the wilderness journey.

(Student: In verse 23, how do you blot out writing with water?) You have the writing which would be made with some sort of a pigment which was placed on the papyrus; and then you put water over it, which probably would remove the writing, and take the ink (or whatever it was) into the water. And then you would give this water to the woman to drink, the water that contains the ink which had expressed those words. Our present word "blot" means the exact opposite; it means to dry ink. Well, in this case it would remove the ink; blot it out, by washing it off. It's not perhaps altogether clear in modern English.

But there's a real problem involved in this, which Mr. Myers has pointed out. Supposing that one of us was in a situation like this. Could we go and sacrifice something on an altar and then take the dust from the floor by it; and take that dust that had some of the remains of the charcoal from the burnt offering, and put that in with some water; and then take some ink, and put it into the water; and write something with the ink and make the woman drink it; and not only would she get terribly sick and die if she were guilty, but if she were innocent it wouldn't hurt her at all? I've never heard of anybody trying to apply it in our age. There is no reason that I know of to think that the combination of charcoal with ink in water would produce this effect. And certainly there was nothing poisonous in the combination, because if the woman was innocent it wouldn't hurt her; so there was nothing poisonous in the combination. That which to one woman would mean death and misery, to another woman it wouldn't injure her at all. So it was not a physical effect which certain chemical elements would produce. It was an effect which varied according to her guilt or innocence. And that is contrary to our normal experience, because normally physical effects come from physical causes, rather than from the question of whether the person is innocent or is guilty that was involved in it.

I would say that it would have to be a direct miracle—a direct intervention of God. That God in the particular case—not that the water did it, but that God did it—but that in order to stress what he was doing, he had them drink the water and go through this form. And we are told here that during the wilderness journey, God is going to work a miracle; that he is going to do something which he does not need to do ordinarily. Ordinarily he expects us to use evidence, and

to consider a person innocent until proven guilty. But in the wilderness journey, in order to eradicate this cause which could produce such great difficulty—this spirit of jealousy—in order to eradicate it, he provides a means and he works a miracle during this journey in response to this particular situation. But it is not part of the law of Israel that during the long generations ahead God promises to work a miracle in every case where a man is jealous. This was one of the great periods of miracles that we note; there are only a few periods; ordinarily God does not work by miracles, but there are a few great periods of miracles. And one of them, one of the great ones was the coming out, going through the wilderness of Paran; and during that time God works in His providence; God used means which he had prepared long ago. But he also worked with specific supernatural power to bring Israel through the wilderness. And this little group was assembled and brought up through the wilderness in this crucial time, God worked his miracles when necessary in order to prevent the jealousy and the defilement from coming in and wiping out the work and destroying the testimony.

Now we can pray, at crucial periods in our Christian work, that God will work in remarkable providential ways in order to give us such a system that we cannot ordinarily expect, but at crucial times we can pray for very unusual assistance in order that a work that we're sure is his work will go forward without being wrecked, and every true work of God would be wrecked if the Devil had his way about it.

I have briefly discussed certain Hebrew words lately and I'm sure my pronunciation would be clear enough the advanced students would have no difficulty in getting them; but for first-year students, it might be a little better to write them out. And so I will write one or two on the board now. This word *nachám* was discussed, I believe, at our first meeting this week. It is the word which is translated "repent". It's not a very good translation but I know of no other word which exactly describes it. We notice that in Isaiah it appears a number of times (e.g. Isa. 40:1) and means "to be comforted" but it is not simply that: it is the change from an unhappy state to a less unhappy state, which is the result of something that has occurred or something which one is determined to do. That definition fits, I believe, all the occurrences. And *nachám* is used in Isa. 40, where he says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." It means cause the people to change from their unhappy state of their present misery to a less unhappy state in view of the fact that God is going to deliver them.

Yesterday we mentioned the word *mishkan* for the tabernacle. It is very common in Hebrew to form a noun by prefacing the letter *mem* to a verb—here *shakan* which means "to dwell". There are various methods of doing it, just like you say, eat, the verb, and you say meat is something that you eat. Well, that's about the only instance I know of in English. It's rather common in Hebrew—in

English we're more apt to add something on the end like "tion" (or something like that), to make a noun out of an adjective. But here, in Hebrew, you can take a verb very often and put a *mem* before it; and it very generally indicates the place where something occurs, though it has other meanings possible; but it is a noun derived from a verb. So that *mishkan* is the place where God dwells, and *shakan* means to dwell. The Shekinah glory is a term used, the glorious dwelling of God, although this term does not appear in the Bible. And so the *mishkan* is a term that is regularly used for the tabernacle in the directions to Moses to build the tabernacle and the account of its being built. Occasionally in those passages the tabernacle is called an *ohel*. This is a word which is used a good deal in Genesis. I don't recall ever striking *mishkan* in Genesis⁸⁶. But *ohel* is used in Genesis a good many times, because Abraham lived in a tent, and *ohel* simply means a tent.

But we read over in the New Testament—the book of Hebrews—Abraham was dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob; and that doesn't mean they were in religious services all the time. It simply means "tent" which would be a much better translation. But the word *ohel* is used occasionally for the tabernacle, in the instructions for its building, and in the account of its being built; but it's used right in between the two regularly for Moses' tent—the tent of meeting which he moves out from the center of the camp, out to a place outside the camp. And the King James Version unfortunately translates this "tent (*ohel*) of meeting" as the "tabernacle of the congregation." In Old English, perhaps "congregation" was a good rendering; but in today's English it is not.

If Mr. Steele wanted to discuss with me something that the student body was going to do, we'd get together for the purpose. We wouldn't say that he and I held a congregation. Not in modern English; but that is what this word means—a meeting, a designated meeting. This is the meeting of Moses and the Lord. The "tabernacle of the congregation" does not convey that meaning today. Tent of meeting is much better for it. Now, those I believe are the principal words of which we have spoken.

Incidentally, this is one way in which you can derive great profit from even a little knowledge of Hebrew—the ability to note the precise Hebrew word which is used and to see how that word is used elsewhere; and you will find as in this case, it may mean "tabernacle", and it may be "tent" or in a few cases it's "booth". Maybe I should write that. The word *sukkah* means booth or tabernacle. It's nearly always translated booth—a booth, a little temporary shelter, a *sukkah*. And it is used in Lev. 23:34 "the feast of tabernacles" (feast of booths) and in Amos 9:11, the "tabernacle (*sukkah*) of David" which is fallen; the ruin of the great empire of David as something which was temporary and which God is going to restore after the return of Christ.

⁸⁶ Ex. 25:9 is the first appearance of *mishkan* in the Bible. It refers to the tabernacle.

And people try to make out that it's a picture of the Christian church, rather than a picture of the millennial reign of Christ; and a good bit of their argument is based on the fact that it uses this word "tabernacle"; but in the Hebrew, it is not the word translated tabernacle for the place of worship at all; it is the word *sukkah*, which means a booth, and has quite a different meaning. It's unfortunate that the King James Version used the same word "tabernacle" for all three. But, as I say, you'll find an English word which translates two or three different Hebrew words; and when you know that they are, you have a distinction there which is very helpful in interpretation, even if your knowledge of Hebrew may be quite limited. And on the other hand, when you know what the Hebrew word is, you'll find that it has various possibilities of meaning which the particular English word may not. So that a person with just a little knowledge of Hebrew can use it extensively for word study and find it extremely helpful.

Unfortunately, I have known people who have known a great deal of Hebrew—much understanding of Hebrew forms and how to give them correctly and all that—who have not seemed to learn this simple thing about it, to use it for word study; this perhaps is one of the most useful ways in which it opens up the Bible and clarifies our understanding. The other ways are important too, but this is one of the simplest ways and one which has about as many applications as any point there is, of the use of the Hebrew language.

Well, I think it's a good idea when I use Hebrew words—since we have a portion of the class that only had a semester of it—to write them on the board. I hope you can read my writing; it's not particularly good in any language. Perhaps better in Hebrew than it is in English, that is, if I take pains with it.

(Student: "Why are the laws divided up as they are?") Oh well, we will take a moment on that, not because it's unimportant—because it is tremendously important—but because actually it should be covered in the course in Introduction to the Pentateuch. That should go into it—it's extremely important that connection—although unfortunately I have found, when I teach that course, that the very important matters of literary development, to get them clear, is apt to take so much of the semester that this part on the laws, they get rushed toward the end, and it is also very important. So in view of that danger of getting rushed there, I'll take a minute here; but I don't dare take much though, because it is a bit afield from our present subject, but it is very important.

The critical view of the law—of the Pentateuch—is a matter which developed separately, originally, from the literary division of documents. And then the two were combined together in this combination, what we call the higher critical view. But according to this matter of the law, the simple things were expected to be earlier, and the complex things were expected to be later. Well, as you read the law of Leviticus, it's very complex; many little details are given very

precisely. And you read the laws in the early part of Exodus, they are far simpler, great principles simply expressed. And of course, "thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk," nothing complex or involved about that. Therefore, the critics said that these in Exodus developed first, were written down first; and then that the laws in Deuteronomy are somewhat further along and were written down later; they represent a later stage. And then that these various complicated laws of Leviticus represent the latest developments. And so you have the three main stages of development of the law: the simple, early, primitive law, Exodus; the somewhat more advanced law, Deuteronomy; and the very involved, detailed law of Leviticus. That is the critical view.

Now there is a minor sub-section of that, that involves Exodus 32, right along in there somewhere. I mentioned the chapter number yesterday, but I don't remember what it was. That those laws there were given after the incident of the golden calf; they are still more primitive than the laws contained in Exodus 20 to 24. And therefore represent a still earlier stage. That would not be agreed to by all critics; but it is pretty well, because you get a more primitive impression from 34 than you do 20.

Now the way I interpret those laws is, that first you have the great general proclamation of the great principles of the law; given to the people as a whole, for all the people to understand, and therefore given in comparatively simple form and stressing those matters of permanent validity, together with some that are of special importance to the immediate situation. That's the Book of the Covenant. Then, after the incident of the Golden Calf, you have a great repetition of some of the laws, involving those which are particularly important to stress again. Therefore, it's not as complete; it sticks more to immediate physical matters; it doesn't touch on the general principles so much and can seem more primitive; but I take it as actually a repetition of those matters which need more immediate attention in that situation. And then you get the book of Leviticus, and that is the law book for priests with the details involved, for looking things up, rather than the simple law to impress on people's minds so that they will obey. So that is the natural reason why it is separate. And then, that the law of Deuteronomy—which we haven't come to yet but I'm going to mention at this point—that the law of Deuteronomy is Moses' repetition of the law to the people just before his death, with those great messages he gives them; but it is fairly simple, because it is a matter of a spoken message, given the people to drive it home to their minds, and to urge them to obey; and so we have the great stress on exhortation, much more than you find in Leviticus. To my mind that is the natural interpretation of the four sections as they stand independently; and it gives a very satisfactory reason for the difference in their manner of presentation—much more so, in my opinion, than the viewpoint which all of the critics have, that they represent stages of development from the simple to the complex.

Now that is not our primary purpose in this course, to deal with this critical problem; but since it deals so much with the very material we're dealing with; and is such an extremely important thing today if you deal with anyone who's had any work in religion in almost any college, other than very definitely Christian colleges; you will find that these principles are taken for granted, and taught as fact. And they may not understand what's involved, but it's what has been given them; and that way it's a fact. Here are the early laws; here are the later; and so on; and it is necessary, if you're going to deal with college students, that you have an understanding; so it's well worth not only covering and mentioning that point of view, but touching upon it when we deal with related points here. Thank you for the question.

Now Mr. Cohen has a further question dealing with this matter which I think it's worth our taking a little bit of time on right now. It leads us a little bit afield, but yet it is vital for our general understanding of the principles.

You notice in these four types of laws here, that no one of them has consisted of the Lord simply giving a perfect picture—a perfectly balanced picture of moral principles, you might say—apart from human action. The law is given in a situation, a situation that Man is fallible, man is weak. When Adam was created, God didn't immediately give him an understanding of the whole mind of God. God proceeded to lead Adam by gentle stages, by which Adam would have come in time to a full understanding of God's purpose, if Adam had not sinned. A development is necessary, that we be led forward step by step, so that fallible man may acquire the knowledge God desires men to have.

But now a new factor is introduced: man has sinned; and man's mind and man's attitude is corrupted by sin. And the result is that man's whole inner being is set to do evil. His natural bent is away from God, rather than toward God. The whole world put God out of its heart—only Noah did not; and then after the flood, among his descendants, God picked Abraham to form a people through whom he will keep alive the knowledge of God and bring his son into the world. Thus the Bible is not a book in which God has proceeded to simply paint a picture of perfect righteousness in order that a perfect man may survey it and fully understand it. He has proceeded to deal with man in a state of sin, and a state of weakness; and to lead a man forward, giving him information and understanding, little by little.

God never gives man that which is wrong; but he is often giving man that which is incomplete; in fact he always is, because if we had something that was complete, we would have the perfect mind, the mind of the infinite God already, which none of us could understand. We go forward from glory to glory; we go forward from the incomplete to the less incomplete. We go forward in the situation in which we are, to learn to handle the problems and situations that

are there before us. Now that is true of all of God's revelation; it is true of all of God's laws.

Now the natural attitude of modern man is to think that he understands ethics perfectly. He knows exactly what is right and what is wrong; and he looks at the Bible and he says, "How can this be God's word, this imperfect book?" In this book the best men commit sins that he might lead us to imagine he wouldn't commit. Perhaps some of them he wouldn't. This book contains ethical standards which he doesn't think are in line with his understanding of the proper ethical standards. Well, the question is, what is a proper ethical standard? A proper ethical standard is that which God reveals. God has implanted a feeling for ethics in our hearts, but it has been horribly corrupted by sin; and in order to get an understanding of what is right and what is wrong, you have to go to the source, to the author of right and wrong, the maker of the universe and see what he says.

And so we study His Word to know exactly what it means and what it says. And we are accustomed in our civilization to find things smoothed over and ignored, and thought terrible in another civilization. And the fine things that are thought to be so absolutely clear that no sensible man could ever doubt them—which in many other periods have been greatly doubted—and we go from our viewpoint of our civilization to judge. And that's wrong. We must go to the Bible to find what the standard is. So we needn't expect to find it fully given at any particular period because God is dealing with sinful man.

Now we find, as we go through this law, that God gives us the condensation of the moral in the Ten Commandments; and it's very condensed.

Thou shalt not steal. What does that mean? Well, the principle of private property is surely there. Thou shalt not steal. The principle of individual ownership, and that you have no right to take that which belongs to someone else; that is there. But how does something become one person's rather than another's? What is the basis of transfer? How great is the authority over it? That is not entered into. We have the general principle given, without the precise details.

Thou shalt not commit adultery. There is a principle, the principle of keeping family relationships clear and clean. There is a principle enunciated, the general moral principle, strongly let forth. But the detail of it is not gone into. And I've seen books and statements which will take those few words and will build you up a whole system of ethics on it. And it's good to build up your system; but don't say you get it all out of the one verse. You're using a lot of other sources from which to get it.

Well, the principles are in the moral law, in the Ten Commandments, but they're given in a very brief condensed form. We need much more for the full understanding of them; and we have to apply them to particular situations. Now in one period, or in one group of people, one of these principles may tend to be completely disregarded, and in another group another principle.

I remember being with Professor Albright, of Johns Hopkins University, Professor Lee of Peking University in China, and a Professor of Breslau University in Germany, and myself; we were going horseback through the back country of Palestine in 1929, examining archaeological sites; and in between, a place where we stopped to eat, and have our rest and so on. We would discuss all sorts of subjects under the sun; and I remember being much interested in hearing the Professor discuss the situation in Germany, as he told of the different professors, and how a person got promoted and so on; because the professors in their universities are paid by the state, not what we call well, but compared to what other people got there, they were paid very well; and there was a tremendous lot of honor connected with it.

And he made this statement, he said, "Now, you take some of these professors of archaeology, professors of Babylonian things and Egyptian things..." and he can give you the gossip, telling of the immorality in the lives of some of them, and the flagrant sin into which they fell, some of these individuals who had great names in these fields of archaeological study or other branches of science and history; and he was describing and pointing out what he knew about the lives of these men; and then he said when you get into the theological faculties of the different universities in Germany, those theological faculties were under the state too, and they were paid by the state and they carried a great deal of honor.

He said when you get into the theological faculties, you do not find there these immoral lives that you find among the professors in linguistics and oriental studies and these different scientific studies; you don't find that. He said if a professor of Old Testament or a professor of Church History were to have a marital situation like what I've described in connection with that other man, or something like that, he'd lose his position immediately. Nothing like that would be permitted in the theological faculty. But, he said, when you look at some of the underhanded schemes that some of those men do to advance themselves, and to get their positions as professors of theology; and look at the dirty ways in which they treat their competitors; and the pride and vanity and conceit that some of them show about the critical books they've written and different things; well, he said, to my mind, the character shown is not a bit higher than that of these other men—if anything lower.

And it seemed to me that it brought home very forcefully the fact, that there are certain types of sin which, in a particular civilization in which certain aspects of

Biblical truth have been expressed, comes to be the sort of thing that you immediately think someone is beyond the pale if he falls into it; and yet other types of sin which are every bit as bad in God's sight, if not perhaps worse, tend to be overlooked and ignored. Actually, in the Lord's sight, one type of sin is just as bad as another; and there's no type of sin that is worse than pride and self-regard; whether it be intellectual pride or spiritual pride, there's no sin that is worse in God's sight.

Well, now, it is then very difficult for us to estimate the ethical standard—I mean to say whether good or bad—that comes from God. We must go to get our standards there; and then judge our own lives and our own activities; and judge the standards of other books, according to what we find there. Now, as we find it, we find that Jesus Christ, when they came to him and said that Moses permitted a man to put away his wife in a certain condition, we find that Jesus said to them, this was not from the beginning. He said it was for the hardness of your heart that this was permitted. He said it was on account of that this was permitted, but he said in the very beginning, God said that a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh.

There, then, is the principle which God has laid down the beginning. It is a principle of monogamy. The principle of absolute devotion of one man to one woman, that is the principle laid down in the beginning; that was the ideal which God has always intended. But man has never, through the ages, attained the ideal in any field of knowledge. Since the coming of Christ, as a result of Christian influence, the ideal of monogamy has come more and more to be stressed and to be accepted as the proper and right thing; until today, bigamy here is just about the worst thing that could happen in this country. Actually, I think we have other sins, even in this sphere, that are perhaps worse than bigamy, and which are tolerated; but bigamy has come to be, our laws are very, very strict on it. I believe they ought to be; but for some reason, in the providence of God, God felt that there were certain other matters which were more important to be stressed in that time period than he did this one.

You will find in the Bible that a monogamous relationship, clean and guiltless, he stresses very strongly and stresses throughout the Old Testament; but a certain amount of polygamy seems to have been permitted through the Old Testament; and the New Testament writers did not go out with their great purpose of doing away with polygamy, or of doing away with slavery. Both were in the Roman world, widely distributed when the apostles began preaching; and we don't find much stress laid on that as a definite objective to get rid of these two evils; but we do find that as a result of the preaching of Christian principles, both of them very soon disappeared from the Christian world; and it was reckoned by the Christian world that both of them were utterly out of harmony with Christian principles. And not something that would be recognized in line with the Christian life. They are wrong, they are evil, but they

are not the point at which the primary attack was made; and the Lord does not say to Moses, "Now you go out and just attack all sin everywhere you find it; and don't work with anybody that isn't a perfect man; because if he did that, Moses would be all alone for about five minutes, until he looked at himself and found he couldn't work with himself either.

We have an imperfect situation, in which God is dealing in this imperfect world with greed in man, and bringing them, as he says, to Christ. We can receive justification; and we can begin the long road to sanctification, which most of us have a long, long ways to go on; and once in a while you'll find somebody who thinks he's already pretty near there; and often, if you look at him closely, you'll find he has further yet to go on the road. But it is a long course which he's leading us through, rather than how we can step from here right into perfection, in an instant. Nobody has ever done that.

Well, now that, I think, deals with the principles we have in mind at this point, and they're very vital principles for our understanding of the law, and, in fact, of the whole Bible. Let's remember that the Bible is not a complete presentation of ethics; or of the character of God; or of anything. That is impossible to a finite mind; but it is a perfect presentation, in that it is free from error; there is nothing in it that is untrue, but everything is incomplete; and the early is less complete than the later, because he teaches us more and more as we go through. But even at the very end, we find some expressions which are incomplete and have to be filled out.

Somebody has said, you take the great theme of God, the one great creative Power who controls the universe; the very center of our religion; and it's presupposed all through the New Testament, but not explained or gone into to any great extent. The New Testament rests back on the Old, on this whole tremendously important area of theology. And if you're going to understand it, you have to get it from the Old Testament. The New Testament believed in it exactly the same, but did not go into the explanation so much; that was already done; the New Testament explains other very vital truths, which were already present in the Old but not fully explained, the exemplification and enlargement, and fuller interpretation.

Some sins reveal the sinful character of a man more than others do. And that which is wrong but which is done all around a person, he may fall into doing without revealing as much of the sinful character of his own heart, as if the whole culture around him were against it; and consequently it does not, in a community in which it is customary to think very lightly of human life, and to kill on slight provocation, in a community like that, it does not reveal near as much the wicked nature of a man's character when he gets angry and kills another person, as it does when he's in a community like our own, where the general attitude is that human life is sacred and that murder is just about the

worst thing there is. I think that is erroneous: the Bible nowhere says murder is the worst thing there is; there are other sins every bit as bad, if not worse. But that is the habit of mind of our culture; and therefore the man who breaks that in our culture reveals more definitely the sinful nature of his heart than he might in another culture; while something else that in the other culture would immediately strike them as evil, would reveal there more clearly his sinful nature than it would here, though it would be wrong in both places. So there is an element of real truth to that statement; but as it is meant by most of those who use it, it reduces all sin to a relative matter of fitting into the culture, and that is of course utterly wrong.

Paul says "I did not know sin, till the law came." I did plenty of things, not realizing they were wrong; but once the law came, and I knew they were wrong, then I'm a real sinner if I keep on doing it. But the fact is that they're already sinning against the things that their culture recognizes. They're already clearly sinners, and we only make it the more clear by showing them how they're doing it in other ways, as well as in the ways of their own culture. And in a way, they see the disadvantage; but of course over against that, they receive the tremendous advantage of learning how to be saved from all sin, which they don't have in their culture at all. So that would far more than outweigh it.

That is the tendency of modernism—to take the relativistic attitude, where everything just depends on how people around see it. Black is black over here, but the same thing is white over there. It doesn't matter which you use, just a matter of custom. Carried out logically—nobody carries it out logically, because if they did they could not survive in any culture—but they carry it far enough to do a lot of harm.

The basic question here, why is it essentially that men are convinced that the laws regarded in scripture is right, as against the choice of any other viewpoints? Because essentially, God is right. We're convinced that God is right; otherwise we wouldn't serve him. I mean we might give lip service, but we would not serve him. We're convinced that he's right; we're convinced that morally he is right, and ethically he is right. Dr. R. A. Torrey says in one of his books, if you talk with someone, start with the fact of the existence of God; and he says, when you find somebody who does not admit the existence of God, then take up the question with them that there is a standard of right and wrong; there's an essential difference between right and wrong. He said, when you find somebody who says there is no difference, you don't need to waste time with them; they're just lying. In other words, Torrey's belief was that all people have within them somewhere a belief there is a fundamental difference between right and wrong.

Now this relativistic ethics—which is widely taught now—does a great deal towards concealing that belief, and hiding it from us; but I believe that it would be found to be true, on examination, that there is in the human heart a remnant

of the image of God put there, such that everyone has within them a real recognition that there is a difference between right and wrong. And I think when you take the meanest person; the most brutal person; the person that ordinarily pays no attention to anybody else's rights and rides over them roughshod. and does whatever he feels like; you might think there's a man who believes might makes right; and nothing matters but the power of the man; when you find somebody like that, you wouldn't be with him very long—if you'd stay with him all the time—before you'd find him complaining that somebody else hasn't treated him fair at some point; which of course is utterly inconsistent with his whole background; but it will reveal the fact that he has within him a belief in a fundamental difference between right and wrong. I think you'll find that is universal.

d. The Nazarite Vow. 6:1–8. Here is a matter we do not know a great deal about. We have some very detailed laws given here in chapter 6, but the general tone of the laws seems to imply that the idea of a Nazarite was already known. If somebody wants to become a Nazarite, this is what he is to do. Now that may mean simply God is introducing a sort of thing which we'll call Nazarite. And here's what it is. But the impression you get from it is that it is already present; that they are familiar with it.

Now the root of this word means separate, a person wants to be separate, separated from. An interesting thing about this is that the principles laid down here for the Nazarite vow explicitly limit the length of the vow. It is a setting oneself apart for a special consecration to God for a limited amount of time—it comes to an end after a certain amount of time. There are very few cases like Samson, who was a Nazarite from his mother's womb, and John the Baptist, of whom there were special promises made to Zachariah. But in general, it does not seem to be described as something which a man could pick for himself, to have his life as a whole be the life of a Nazarite. It is a limited thing, which has a specific length of time, during which a man agrees that he will live in this somewhat abnormal fashion. I don't believe that the scripture has any real foundation for the very common practice in Roman Catholicism of leading people to take vows upon themselves for their whole life—which they often do not realize the importance of at the time they undertake them—and which lead them to attempt to live in an unnatural way, and a way which often results in great error. Some have found these vows and life beneficial to them; but there are many individuals who have found it very contrary to them; and the scripture would seem to give room for a person to put himself into an abnormal situation for a limited period of time, thinking that thereby he would have a chance for greater development of his spiritual life. But not as a permanent vow, as the vows of the orders of the Roman Catholic Church are. I think much harm has been done, by forcing on people who desire to serve the Lord vows of abstention from normal life, often not realizing their implications.

Now an interesting thing about this Nazarite business is that the three main things which the Nazarites kept from—which were not wrong in themselves. The Nazarite had three obligations. The first obligation is that he separates himself from all use of everything that comes from the grapevine. He must not use wine or strong drink; but neither may he use vinegar, ordinary grape juice, fresh grapes, or raisins. Anything which comes from the grapevine he declares that he will not touch. Everything of that sort he abstains from for this limited period of time. No one can get from the Nazarite vow the idea that all use of alcohol is *per se* wrong. If it is, then so are raisins, as they are equally included in this. This was an abstention from a certain phase of life for a limited period of time.

The second requirement is to let the locks of his hair grow. Now certainly there is nothing wrong in cutting the hair. The Nazarite for a certain length of time let his hair grow, and that was a public indication of the fact that during this period of time he was set apart.

And the third requirement was to keep himself from any contact with a dead body. Ordinarily, members of a family of a dead person were expected to touch the body. There are cases in Jewish writings where a Jew was considered as having done a very noble thing by defiling himself in order to give someone decent burial [see, e.g., the Book of Tobit]. So he was set apart for a time as unclean for having done it; he had taken upon himself that uncleanness for the purpose to give the other person a decent burial. So that touching a dead body was not *per se* sinful, or *per se* wrong; but if the Nazarite, even by the most utter accident—if he's walking along where there's a group of people, and one of them suddenly falls over dead and touches him as he falls—the Nazarite is thereby no longer a Nazarite. If he made a vow for six months and five of them are gone and this happened, he touched a dead body, he has to start all over. His time is all lost that he has spent when it happened.

There are very strict rules laid upon the Nazarite, but they are not moral rules *per se*. It is a type of a separation unto the Lord, but it is for a limited period of time. We don't know a great deal about it; this chapter seems more to be regulating it to avoid the extremes to which it probably had gone in certain cases; making a definite basis of it; something which was established and which had certain good results if kept under control. Then

e. Arrangements for the Religious Life of the Camp. 6:22–9:14.

(1). The formula for blessing the congregation. 6:22–26. Here we have a chapter of 27 verses; and the first 21 deal with the Nazarite; and so when a person is thumbing through the Bible, he comes to the section about the Nazarite; and he's not at the moment interested in learning about the Nazarite, so he passes on to another chapter. But as our chapter headings have been put

in, the last six verses are left in that Nazarite chapter, which have nothing to do with it. They are part of the arrangements for the religious life of the camp. And God there gives that beautiful formula of blessing, the way in which they are to bless the congregation. It is a very beautiful thing.

And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.

We have two verses introducing the formula of blessing.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them,

Then we have this beautiful formula of blessing, which the critics declare represents one of the highest points of spirituality ever attained in the Pentateuch and consequently must be part of the P document, the document which contains Leviticus, the advanced, living, more spiritual, more complex section.

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

A very beautiful blessing, which God gave at this time for use in connection with the pilgrimage journey. And how interesting it is to note that this very advanced, highly spiritual formula of blessing, which the critics put in the later part of the Pentateuch, while they put the anthropomorphism—where God came down and talked to people, and God is dealt with under human form, anthropomorphic—they put them in the early simple document; and this which they put late for its highly spiritual form, is as anthropomorphic as anything in the Old Testament. The Lord make his face shine upon thee. The Lord lift up his face upon thee. How definitely anthropomorphic: God does not have a face—It is figurative language—but it is a beautiful figure to give a meaning which is very easily understood. And anthropomorphisms are not a sign that something is primitive at all; the most advanced and highly spiritual material is anthropomorphic.

Now it is interesting to note how in this wonderful blessing, there are three stages in it. The first, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee." This Hebrew word keep, you probably all know—at least it's one of the first ones I used to give when I taught Hebrew—*shamar*. It really means to guard, or to protect. And this, you might say, is the lowest stage of religious life. The Lord bless thee and guard thee. The Lord protects the believer, it is a vital thing in the Christian life.

I have found many people have Christian experiences without having this enter in very definitely to their thoughts—that God protects them from the evil of the

world; something we ought to have before us in this world we live in, a world now of airplanes, and rushing automobiles, and dangers of every sort. If it were not for the protection the Lord gives us, where would any of us be? It is a very important thought, but it is the lowest level of our Christian life, the protecting hand of the Lord, without which we would all perish.

But in the second stage, we move up to a higher step, "The Lord make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee." This can be thought of, very easily, as God's attitude toward the whole world. He makes his rains to fall upon the just and the unjust; he pours out blessings; and without them, where would any of us be? It is a step in advance of that in the first verse, but it is still God's dealing with all men. Of course, this verse surely contains within it the greatest way in which God has been gracious—the grace he showed in sending Jesus Christ to die for the sin of mankind, in sending him to die on the cross that, whosoever believeth on him might not perish but have eternal life. That's involved in this second stage, surely.

But then, the third stage reaches a still higher point, the definite, personal application to the individual of that which God has done, "The Lord lift up his face upon thee." The word *paním* here comes from the same root translated face in the verse before, "The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace." Now "peace", *shalom*, is in the Hebrew not simply cessation of war, but it means well-being; it means everything that is good, a whole; a life that is as it should be, is involved in this word "peace". "Give thee peace." The peace which the Christian has when the Lord nods toward him, lifts up his face upon him. This is the blessing of coming to know that Christ has not merely died for sinners, but that he died for you personally; and that through Christ you have been saved; and that through Christ you have peace within your heart; and that through Christ, you have the possibility of moving forward in sanctification, and developing your life as it ought to be.

And so there is a progression within the blessing; and it is a wonderful promise which God gave here at the beginning of the wilderness journey.

====Explanation of Reading Assignments====

Now the International Critical Commentary is a series which was begun, I don't know, maybe sixty or seventy years ago; and it is called international because it includes books by British scholars and books by American scholars; and it's called critical because it is definitely and outspokenly written from the liberal view.

Now the volume on Numbers is by George Buchanan Gray; and Gray was an Old Testament Professor in one of the great universities in England, who accepted the critical theories thoroughly; he was a man who did a great deal of work; and

there are certain points at which you'll find a very good presentation of the critical theory; and there are two sections of it in which I want you to get the evidence on which he claims that you have two distinct stories contradicting one another, which have been interwoven into Numbers as we have it today. I want you to get his theory, that's what I want. What are his evidences that there are two distinct contradictory stories interwoven?

And some of his evidence, at first sight, is quite difficult to answer. I won't want you to go through it with the viewpoint—well, here's a lot of foolishness, let's see what crazy stuff these people have. That's the attitude that many people take—many Christians take—toward these critical theories. And I believe it is true—there's an awful lot of foolishness in it—but I believe that in it there's some pretty clever thinking at certain places. And I believe that many a man has lost his faith in the Scripture, because instead of examining the principal critical theories carefully to see what the evidence is, and to see whether it will stand, he has rejected the whole thing as a lot of nonsense; he has taken an attitude of just laughing and ridiculing it; and then he has some day come face to face with a problem that he couldn't answer; and doing that, he decided he was wrong in his whole viewpoint, and crossed over and accepted the whole business. I believe that we must recognize that it has certain basic problems, which cannot be answered just offhand, but must be carefully examined.

Now I think it's a waste of time for Christians to spend months and years studying through the Old Testament, studying all the theories the critics present. I think that's an utter waste of time, I wouldn't recommend it to anyone; but I think it is very valuable to take a few key points, and see at each key point, what is the evidence, and what is the nature of their argument? And see whether their argument stands. And if you find at a few key points that it can be reasonably answered, then there's no need in the world of looking into all the rest. On the other hand, if you're not familiar with the key points, why you could spend your life arguing about the other points and get nowhere. To know a few key points is very vital.

Well, we won't look at liberal criticism in this course, but there are two points in Numbers that are very, very interesting from this viewpoint. One of them is the story of the sending of the spies and their impressions, their reports. Now on that, the critics have a very clever theory worked out. They have a number of evidences which they claim shows proof of two distinct stories. One of them has this viewpoint; the other has that viewpoint.

According to one story, there were two spies that slipped through, Caleb and Joshua. According to the other, there's only one. According to one of them, they went clear to the north of Palestine; according to the other, they only went halfway up. According to one, they said the land was no good and of no value and foolish to try to take it; according to the other, they said the land was very

valuable, but the people in it were too strong. Different stories, different viewpoints, different historical events with the same general background. That is the critical claim.

Well the assignment in the International Critical Commentary will be: find the evidences on which this claim is based, and list those evidences. That assignment is not a matter of answering them or of investigating them, but of simply knowing what they are; so it's not a long assignment. It is to do that with the story of the spies; and also do it with the story of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. This is not the rebellion of Nabab and Abihu; we've already looked at that, but of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. In connection with that rebellion, you have there a very involved situation. We haven't come to that yet in our account. You have a very involved situation in the account of Numbers, and the critics try to distinguish the two different strands and make two stories from it. I think we must recognize there are, in a way, two different rebellions there; but I think you must recognize that in just about every rebellion; there are two different, or five or ten, different movements. That is to say, there are people who are in it from this viewpoint; others from that viewpoint; people who have this objective, and people who have that objective; but they get together and they accomplish something. As a rule, you do not find a large enough group of unified viewpoints to accomplish the results. Possibly there are different groups, there are those different groups which cooperated together; or are they two different stories?

Well, Gray gives his evidence to show they are two entirely different stories. And that will be the assignment in the ICC commentary on Numbers.

Now there will be another assignment, distinct from this one, and this other assignment will deal with my personal examination of this evidence. This will be a little longer assignment, but the examination which I gave of this particular evidence is contained in a rather large book. This book is called *The New Bible Commentary*. It was published a few years ago in England by the British Intervarsity. It is a one-volume commentary on all the books of the Bible, and they asked me to take about 30,000 words on the book of Numbers, and so I have in it a discussion of Numbers.

====End Explanation of Reading Assignments====

(2). The Offering of the Princes. 7:1–89. The offerings of the princes, one of the most tiresome chapters in the Bible.

If you want to listen to a tiresome half hour, or fifteen minutes—whatever it is—on the radio, or on the television, you listen when some local program congratulates all the little children who have birthdays that day. And you hear how Kenneth Smith is four years old; congratulations Kenneth. You hear how

Henry Brown is six years old today; congratulations, Henry. And so on. And if you were to listen to half an hour or an hour of that, I am sure you would be absolutely bored to death; but I can assure you that in every one of those programs there is at least one listener who is tremendously interested, and gets a tremendous thrill out of hearing his name given there on the radio or on the television.

Now this chapter is like that. In this chapter we have the offerings of the princes, at the beginning of the tabernacle service; and the prince—the leader of each of the tribes—comes and brings a royal gift; he gives animals; he gives jewels; he gives precious things; he gives wagons; it's wonderful what he gives, and it's all listed in full detail. And you read the whole listing once, and it's quite—you might say—you could find it interesting; but then you read that so-and-so, the prince of the tribe of Issachar, and he gave... and then it lists what he gave, and it's identical with what the other one gave, it's absolutely identical. And you have twelve times repeated the same identical list of the offerings which each gave. And, as I say, it's therefore extremely boring for us; but it would not be the least boring to the man who gave the gifts. He would be tremendously interested in every little detail of his service. And I believe it is placed here in connection with the law of God; placed here just as they start on their wilderness journey, to show to us the Lord's great personal interest in each individual one of us. And how minutely he records our offerings; how minutely he records our services; our relations to him, he never forgets any of his children.

I had somebody come up to me the other day and say, "Dr. MacRae, don't you remember me?" Well, I couldn't remember the face, but I never remember faces anyway. But I hate to admit it to an outsider like that. And so I said, "Well, I'm afraid I don't." Now was this somebody who I was supposed to have known very well? I just don't place her. "Well," she said, "don't you remember that time down at Harvey Cedars [Bible Conference], when I asked you to explain a certain verse of the scripture?" And I'd given the message about ten years ago; and about ten people came up to ask about different verses, and she was one of them; and I never saw her before or since.

But I found out later she was terribly hurt that I didn't recognize her, and didn't remember her. Well, I would feel much worse if ten years from now, I would be speaking out in Nebraska somewhere, and someone would come up and say, "Dr. MacRae, don't you remember me?" And I would find that it was someone who for a whole year had sat in this group; and ten years later I didn't recognize him. I would feel very badly. But every one of you, if you have much contact with people, is going to have that experience. You're going to have people that you're interested in; you want to help; you're anxious to do what you can for them; but you just don't recall them. You just lose the recollection of them. Your mind is not able to keep the personal interest that you're anxious to have

in each one of those which the Lord enables you to bring something of blessing to.

But the Lord never fails that way; he remembers every single one of us individually, and is interested in every aspect of our lives and every detail of it; and I believe that this long, tiresome repetition here in this chapter, which I read through when I was writing this commentary on Numbers—verse by verse, word by word—trying to detect minute points of value, and I could find none. I believe that it is written for the purpose of driving home to us that important fact about the Lord's relation to his children; and his personal interest in us each one; and I think it's a lesson we should derive from it; but I don't think that you'll read it over for devotional reading every day, not for many days. So we will not go into the details of this particular chapter, but we note its place in the preparation.

(3). The Lamps Lit. 8:1–4. This is a very brief section in four verses; but the tabernacle has been put up; it is necessary to put things in operation; and the commands have been given before, they've been described in detail in Exodus 25. Now they are lit before the journey can properly be commenced. And I see quite frequently, out in the hall there, I see a great big box of stuff addressed to one of our students; and it says from the Mount Vernon Foundation; and I see that great big box of filing stuff, and I say, "Oh my, there's somebody that's going to do a lot of work filing!" And you can buy the most elaborate, expensive, and splendid filing outfits that there are; you can put them up on your shelf; and you can look at them every day, and think how much money you spent on them; and it won't do you a bit of good.

Personally, I never felt there was much need of spending all that money on filing. I'm inclined to think that a comparatively simple filing outfit might be just as good. But I would say I think perhaps it would be very wise for a person to get the most expensive one you can find; because if you put all that money into something, you'll feel that you've got now to use it. The important thing in a filing outfit is using it. It's working. And any filing outfit that is worked and used is of tremendous value; and any filing outfit that's out up on the shelf and forgotten about is of absolutely no value.

There are many people who have the most beautiful Bible, which stands on the shelf and is never looked at; and it'll never do them any spiritual good, so long as it's not used. And here we have all the instructions for the tabernacle given—all the details. It's to be made according to the pattern shown on the mount; it's to be made exactly that way; it stands up there; it's finished; but now they've got to light the lamp; you've got to use it. And the same is true of your spiritual life. You can't light your lamp and expect it go on burning; you accept the Lord; you are His; you are saved through him; you're redeemed forever. But you've got to keep lighting your lamps every day; you've got to keep your devotional

life bright and clean; you've got to keep your fellowship with him constantly. It's a thing that must be done day by day, and moment by moment, steadily and constantly.

And so here is all the activity of making the tabernacle; and now we pause to light the lamps. The operation is necessary, not merely the possession; and that is true of your Hebrew, too. You can put in two or three hours a day getting a good foundational knowledge of Hebrew; and you can graduate from the Seminary; and say "Look here, I've got a diploma; it shows I've learned some Hebrew. I got a mark of 95 (or 85 or 75 or whatever it was) in Hebrew. I've learned that Hebrew." You close the Hebrew book, and you put it on your shelf; and that Hebrew is not going to do you the least bit of good. It's just, maybe you got some training, I don't know. But I don't care what mark you got in Hebrew; I don't care whether you were a top student or a poor student in it; if you will light the lamp day by day; if you will take a few minutes every day, using that Hebrew; reviewing a little bit; reading a little bit; seeing what light it throws on the meaning of words, and on the syntactical construction; you will find you've got a tool there that will illumine your understanding; that will strengthen your spiritual life; that will be a blessing to you all through life. It's not a matter of what mark you get in it, but of whether you use it. And it's important that we keep our lamps lit.

I've seen a lot written about learning to read faster. Most people read too slowly; and it's very fine, you can say, there's a place where you can pay a hundred dollars and they'll teach you to read faster; and they claim they've doubled and tripled their reading speed. And I read some about this; there are bad habits some of us get into, and there are ways of remedying those bad habits. It's mighty good to find out if you've formed those bad habits and get them remedied. But I've found this: that seventy per cent of the accomplishments in teaching people to read faster amounts to this—of getting them to go to a book, to open a book or a magazine and say I'm going to read faster. It is doing it; it is opening it up, and saying, "Now I'm not going to dilly dally over this; I'm going to go through it fast and still get the point; I'm not going to go so fast I miss it, but I'm going to go so fast that I'll get all of it; and it is that going at it and determining to do it—that is seventy percent of even a comparatively technical matter, like learning to read faster.

And so to light the lamps, it's a simple thing, but it's important. Not just to light and they're lit forever; you have to keep furnishing oil; you have to re-light them every morning; you have to tend them. And the Christian life is a life of rest in Christ; it is a life of ceasing from our own works; but it is a life of constant going forward, and a constant renewing as we re-light our lamps. So this is a little bit in Numbers but it's very important.

(4). The Cleansing of the Levites for Service. 8:5–22. In these verses here we have the Levites cleansed, the ceremonies, and physical preparation for their work. Again an important part of the religious life of the Camp—the preparation of the men who were carrying on the direction of the religious work. And again a reminder, that we may preach to others and neglect ourselves. There is an importance here for God's servant—to keep his life clear—a special importance that we serve the Lord in such a way that we do not by our own mistakes and errors bring contempt on the cause we serve; and how many a person does that.

I will be tremendously surprised if, within the next ten or fifteen years, I do not receive from one member of this class a letter which says to me: there was one examination in Old Testament History in which I sat nearer to somebody else than I should; and at an important point in that examination, I just couldn't think of the answer; and I was trying to think of it, and my eyes strayed over; and I saw a word out of his paper which told me the answer to this; and I wrote it down and I passed and got a good mark on that exam. And for the last eight years it's been bothering me; and I don't feel I'm accomplishing what I should in Christian work. Shall I send back my diploma? What should I do about this?

And it would be—in a group of this size—surprising if there isn't one who might be like that. And what you get on an exam—whether you passed the course; whether you had to take it over again; whether you get a 99, or a 75—is not one-hundredth as important as whether you sullied your cleanness and your testimony before God; and put yourself in a situation where it is difficult for Him to use you as he should. And if there is one who—it preys upon his mind for a few years before it reaches the point where he writes to me about it—that is a hundred times better than for there to be one who covers it over; and is hardened to it; and refuses to pay attention to the fact that he has sinned. We all sin; we all are guilty of that. But, oh, let us keep cleansing ourselves for service; and let's pray the Lord to cleanse us; and let's see to it that we keep away from where it will be easy to look on somebody's paper; try to sit in a place where you'll not be led into temptation; try to avoid these things; and look at every moment to keeping yourself clean and pure, in order that God may use you. He couldn't use the Levites unless they were cleansed; and he can't use us unless we are cleansed. And then

(5). The Age of Levitical Service. 8:23–26. This is a rather important thing from the viewpoint of the Levites. It doesn't mean a great deal to us, except it shows God's interest that these things be done right. The Levites served until the age of 50, and after that they did lighter tasks; they did not do the heavy tasks. I've known of churches which have had a minister greatly beloved, a wonderful man; but he has kept on after his strength was not sufficient for the work; and he's kept on, and the church has gone down; gone down because he

was at the age when he should be using the wisdom accumulated to advise others, rather than trying to carry a heavy task.

It is hard for us to realize what God's will is in these days; but this chapter shows that it's a matter we should give consideration to; and we should think not only of ourselves; not only of how things look to us but how do they look to others and what is best for the work.

(Student: Was most of the Levitical service of a manual nature?) Yes, half or two-thirds of it; they had to lift those heavy animals; they had to kill them; they had quite a bit of ceremony; though they had a great deal that physically was much lighter. And then

(6).The First Passover after Leaving Egypt 9:1–14. Before Leaving Sinai, we have a long description here in chapter 9, verses 1 to 14, of the first Passover after leaving Egypt. They had been delivered from Egypt, but now they are remembering the deliverance. They are remembering how God has redeemed them from Egypt; and they are pre-figuring in their service the death of Christ; the Lamb of whom not a bone was broken; the lamb through whom we find atonement and entrance into the family of God. And they struck a problem. We read that they found certain men who had touched a dead body; and according to the law a person who had touched a dead body was defiled. These people committed no sin in their having touched a dead body; it was necessary; it couldn't be avoided; but it did create defilement. And according to the law, a man who was defiled could not take the Passover; and yet they were commanded to take the Passover; anyone could be cut off from his people who did not take the Passover; and yet one who was defiled could not take the Passover. So what would they do?

They brought the problem to Moses; and Moses put the problem before the Lord; and the Lord gave them an answer. They had a special Passover a month after the regular one, for the sake of those who'd been unable to participate for this reason; or they'd been off on a journey or something during the first one. It's an illustration of the principle stated by Christ—the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. The reason God brought us into existence, is not that we can carry out minute details of service; minute details of Sabbath keeping, or any such thing. All these things are for our development; for our spiritual development, for our edification; and the Lord wants us to follow the spirit of the matter.

Now ordinarily, if you follow the spirit, you will follow the letter; but there are many times when it's very easy to follow the letter and lose the spirit altogether. I was studying at the University of Pennsylvania one time with a group of very brilliant students, who were doing some excellent work in the Babylonian study we were doing together. And nearly all of them were Jews, and one of them

made a remark which I didn't understand; and one of them turned to me and explained, he said, "You know," he said, "there are certain feast days on which the first-born are supposed to fast; and we don't like to fast. And there are certain days on which we are not allowed to eat anything, because we're first-born." And he said, "There's another law that says that when you finish reading an important portion of the scriptures, you are called to have a day of celebration. And so," he said, "when it's just a few days before the day in which we would fast," he said, "we start that many chapters before the end of Isaiah, or some other portion of scripture; and we start reading." And then he says, "when the fast day comes, we've just finished this important part of the scripture, and we're entitled to a day of celebration. So," he said, "instead of having to fast that day we can eat an extra good meal instead."

Now there is an example of a conflict of laws; there are the two laws: one of them you have to fast, the other you're allowed to celebrate. And he said, "In such a case, we just take our pick; we can follow either one we want; so this is the one we follow, the one we like." And that is the situation these people were in with the Passover. They were required to take the Passover, but they were forbidden to take the Passover. What would they do about it? Well, in our lives, we will often find conflict of laws; but the answer is that it is to be solved according to the intent of the law, rather than according to the minute details.

I was out in Montana in a farming area, after I graduated from college; and a woman said to me—I understood they were good church-going people; but came Sunday, and their folks were out there harvesting their grain, working hard from early morning till late night. And I said, "Well I thought you were Christian people; and were much interested in the church; and worked in the church." And she said, "Yes we are," but she said, "the scripture says if your ox falls into a pit on the Sabbath day, pull it out." And she said, "If we don't harvest grain every Sunday during harvest season," she said, "we won't have enough to keep them through the winter." And she said, "If they die of starvation, that's as bad as falling into a pit." So she said, "We have to work on the Sabbath day."

Well, that is taking the letter of the law and ignoring the spirit. It's an emergency regulation. If your ox falls in a pit on the Sabbath day, of course you're not to let it die. You're to go and pull it out. The Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath. But you should plan ahead, so that you can get sufficient work done in the six days of the week without having to profane the Sabbath by doing it. You should plan ahead and you shouldn't—if you can't get enough grain by harvesting on the six days of the week to keep your oxen through the winter, you've got too many oxen, you'd better sell them. It is easy to follow the letter and ignore the spirit. It's easy to pretend you're following the Spirit and ignoring the letter; but you usually aren't, when you pretend to be doing it. So we have very important principles here, even if the immediate

situation doesn't directly apply to us. They were very important in the life of Israel; and they're very important for us too. And then

f. The Divine Provision for Direction and Guidance. 9:15–23; 10:1–11

(1). The Pillar of Cloud and Fire. 9:15–23. And

(2). The Silver Trumpet. 10:1–11. And you see, the two of them together are the divine provision for direction and guidance, just as they are about to start. It's not the first account of the pillar of cloud and fire; we've had that explained before. It's a thing they were well familiar with, but it is stressed again; and as we begin any journey, it's important for us to stop and seek divine guidance. Does the Lord really want me to make this journey? Am I doing it for my own pleasure or for His glory? Is a pillar of cloud really going before me on this journey? Am I going in the direction He wants me to go? God doesn't want you to fail in your work because you haven't worked out the details satisfactorily. So we have the Silver Trumpet, and the Pillar of Cloud and Fire—both together here. And I'm just sorry the Archbishop put a chapter division between them, because they certainly belong together—here at the beginning of this phase of the wilderness journey. It is an extremely important truth for us; it is a problem which any group of this size will be greatly bothered with. How does the Lord lead? What is his guidance for me? What is His plan? The principles are here.

And so we go on to

D. From Sinai to the Plains of Moab. Numbers 10:11–22:1.

This is a section which covers about 38 years, but it is not a dated section. That is to say, when we start it, we know where we are; we're at the beginning of the 38 years. And when we finish it, we know where we are; we're at the end of the 38 years. But exactly where the 38 years comes in the middle, we are not told; we're not given a precise chronology of it.

One of its outstanding events is the great rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Ahiram. That is chapter 16. It's an outstanding event, but did it come right near the beginning of the 38 years, or did it come near the end of it? We do not know.

Perhaps one of the most important incidents in this section is the sending of the spies and what happened at Kadesh-Barnea. That, we know, happened early in it; that was very soon, near the beginning of the 38 years—the sending of the spies, and God's telling the people you're not going to Palestine now; this whole generation is going to die in the wilderness. We know that happened near the beginning, a very interesting incident and a very important one.

But what happened between that and the final incidents of it—the last few chapters of it? We're told they would wander 38 years; we're told at the end they did wander. During this period, did the whole camp move around through the wilderness? It's entirely possible they did; using up the pasture land in a certain area, then moving on to another, making perhaps a regular route around each year. That's possible. On the other hand, it's possible that they kept the center somewhere near Kadesh-Barnea; and that they went off in groups together, to what pasture they could; to take care of their animals, but coming back to regular services. That is possible. We know they were together when the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram took place. But did it take place because they were together all the time, or was this one of the times when they came together after scattering? We just aren't told.

I've been asked the question, "Was the tabernacle moved constantly during these 38 years, or was it kept there at Kadesh-Barnea, with the people spreading out and returning to it?" The Bible does not tell us. It's one of the silences of the scripture. It is like the matter of the early years of Christ. We know a great deal about him between the ages of 30 and 33, far more than we do all the rest of his life. When he was a little boy, we know a very little about him; and between the age of 12 and 30 we know practically nothing. There have been books written, telling how he went to India during this period and learned the wisdom of the Indian sages; and came back and built his gospel upon it; purely imaginary. There have been stories written about miracles he did when he was young; purely imaginary. We just don't know the detailed life of Christ during this period. We're just not told. To my mind, one of the most important lessons we can possibly learn in connection with Bible interpretation is this: not to approach the Bible with this question, "Was it this way or that?" But rather with this question, "Does the Bible tell us whether it was this way or that?" In other words, "Does the Bible answer this question?" is the approach, rather than "What answer does the Bible give?" If you find that the Bible does answer a question, then it's very important to find out how it answers it. But, as John tells us, if the Bible told us everything that Jesus did, probably all the books in the world could not contain it. He did many, many, many things that are not mentioned. God did not intend to give a complete encyclopedia on it. So the Bible, is the Bible complete? It is complete because it is the entire revelation that God desires to give us. It is what He thought we need for this age; for this reason, we need nothing more; it is complete. Is it complete? Does it give us a full answer to any question? No, it does not. It is not complete in that sense. It gives us as much answer as we need in this present life; and we may have to dig, to dig out that.

But a great part of the unnecessary confusion in the Christian church comes from people going to their Bibles with a question the Bible doesn't answer; and somebody says, "Well, look at this; this looks as if this is the answer." Somebody else says, "Look at this; it looks as if this is the answer." And soon

you have two arrayed forces opposing each other, because one says, "This is it," and the other says, "No, this is it"; dealing with something that the Bible did not answer; something that God did not wish to have become a divisive point among his followers.

So that this section here, if you want a complete detailed history of these years, it is rather baffling; it does not give you that. But let me ask any one of you to give me a history of Philadelphia in the last ten years—you wouldn't be able to do it. You could go to newspapers, and study them out; and still you wouldn't be able to do it. And you will find, forty years from now, that some of the most important things in Philadelphia that happened in these ten years, were not even noticed by people. And people then will be wondering about them and trying to figure them out; and you won't have the evidence, because nobody bothered to keep it; they didn't realize its importance.

God has kept that which is important and necessary for us to have; and this account of Kadesh-Barnea is of tremendous importance in our Christian lives. There's very little in the Bible that's more important than the account of the events of Kadesh-Barnea, and what it can mean to us. And the account of the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, is of tremendous importance to us—in our Christian life—but there are questions about it that are not answered. And maybe we can find evidence on which to make a guess as to the answer, and maybe we can't. But let's not be dogmatic about them unless we have the evidence.

To my mind, it is very, very important that we stand on what the Bible says; that's one of the greatest things we can do; to learn to have absolute confidence in the Word of God. But for Christian leadership, there's another lesson that is second in importance—or maybe third, but it's very high—and that is, learn not to stand on what the Bible doesn't say; but to investigate, and to be tolerant of what it doesn't say; looking for more information, but recognizing the fact that it is one of the thousands of matters on which God has not chosen to give us precise information.

1. The First Stage of the Journey. 10:11–36.

a. The Departure from Sinai 10:11–28.

b. Moses' Request for Help from Hobab. 10:29–32.

c. The Ark and the Blessing. 10:33–36. The ark went before them, to seek out a resting place for them in their three days' journey. And this—the critics interpret—is a different plan and a different account; instead of being guided by a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire, this is a different version which says they're guided here by the ark flying on ahead of them, hunting for a place to

have their camp. But that's not what the Bible says; it says the ark went before them, to search out a resting place.

And you see, in interpreting anything there are various possibilities of interpretation. It is rare indeed that anything can be so expressed that it is absolutely certain, from a few words alone, exactly how they must be interpreted. Human language is susceptible to various interpretations and must be interpreted in relation to context. And it is only sensible to seek an interpretation which fits with context, rather than one which contradicts it; of one which is grotesque and contrary to the general teaching of the passage which we were taught elsewhere in scripture. That God so made the ark that it could fly; and could hunt things out, and so on; it would be reasonable. But it says here, the Ark went before them, to seek out a resting place for them, to interpret it that way, having the ark carried in front of them.

The other interpretation is not required by the words, but would be possible if you take the words alone. And if you take it that way, it introduces something that has no counterpart elsewhere in the scripture; but it fits with critics' idea of a grotesque, mythological account, made up of various contradictory stories.

But then you have that beautiful blessing there, which is given to bless the people with; and it is well worth your study, but we won't take time here but will go to number

2. Rebellion and Disaffection.

a. Disaffection in the Outskirts of the Camp. 11:1–3. Notice how it begins with this disaffection in the outskirts of the camp. That is the way such things do begin. And it is the great function of a leader to be aware of such things, and to decide whether they are matters that will blow over; because you cannot deal with everything; it's impossible. And if you try to deal with everything, you will simply cause confusion, and do more harm than good. You have to pick the things to deal with; and there's always a certain amount of disaffection in the outskirts of the camp.

Some of the most loyal and devoted people are very free with their comments and criticism; and it means nothing; but occasionally, a type of remark begins in the outskirts and which—if not stopped—will go right into the heart and be very, very dangerous. And a leader is qualified by his ability, among other things, to detect that which is vital as it starts, and deal with it before it becomes serious. Now in this case, we're told how dissension began in the outskirts of the camp in three verses. Then, we are told how it came right into the camp.

b. Trouble in the Midst of the Camp. 11:4–15. And here we have the people weeping—sad because of the misery they're in now—and wishing they were back in Egypt. And then we have

c. God's Twofold Answer to Moses' Prayer. 11:16–35. It is very interesting to note the two parts. How God gives Moses the help which he asked for; and he also provides the food that the people asked for.

d. Rebellion among the Leaders. Chapter 12. This is a very important chapter for a number of reasons. We find that the disaffection and difficulty which was among the people had come right into the very leadership of the group. And the leaders probably had stood with Moses against the difficulty among the people. At least they seemed to stand with him, as far as he had any reason to think.

But now he finds that there is great difficulty for Moses in the attitude of his brother and sister—two of the top leaders of the whole group. And the cause of this—which you doubtless have dealt with in your discussion of the various rebellions—the causes you noticed are a bit complex. They are like most things in life; there are various factors that enter in. And so it starts with verse 1, tells us what they said about Moses; it says they spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married, for he had married an Ethiopian woman. This is the only reference in the Bible to this marriage of Moses. It would seem that his first wife, who had been with him on the way to Egypt, in that important incident, had now died. And he had married again, but we are not given details about it. We're simply told that, on account of the Ethiopian woman whom he married, they were criticizing him.

Well, the second verse gives another reason for criticizing him. It says that they said, "Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Has he not also spoken by us?" And here you see the real reason. When you find that the leadership of a movement of the Lord is attacked by personal attack from individuals in it; by others who should be in positions of leadership; the reason—ostensible reasons—are like this in the first verse. They are standing off and objectively criticizing things about them; but the second verse shows the real thought, and what is wrong in the majority of cases—personal jealousy. Has the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Has he not spoken also by us? And so here we have two types of attack on Moses. And these two types of attack on Moses—as long as they were just the attitude of two members of his family—you might say it's nothing to get concerned about. There always are misunderstandings in families, and relatives are getting impressions.

If you find a really great person who is looked up to by the nation, then you're pretty apt to find that some of his relatives don't see why there's all this fuss about him. They think they're just as good as he ever was; it's pure accident

that he ever got in this position where he got all this prominence, instead of their getting it. It's a very common phenomenon. But here much more than that, it is an important matter; because there is a vital movement going forward in which these people are in the position of leaders. And if they want to criticize Moses; to feel in their hearts that Moses shouldn't have made the marriage he did; or to feel in their hearts that Moses isn't any better than they are, and yet he's in a better position; in a way that's something within themselves.

But when they begin talking about it, they are arousing dissatisfaction in others, and making it more difficult for Moses to have the authority he should have. Therefore it's an important matter. And so the verse ends, "And the Lord heard it." And then we have a verse which the critics say proves that Moses did not write the Pentateuch. "Now the man Moses was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." And they say that "Of course Moses couldn't have written a thing like that; it's perfectly obvious somebody else must've written it."

And there's a book written by a very, very fine orthodox Professor of Old Testament in Europe; a book written by him against the critical theory; taking up the division into documents, and trying to show that it rests on insufficient foundation. And after he does that, then he has a chapter he calls Post-Mosaica and A-Mosaica; in other words, passages that were written after Moses, and passages Moses didn't write anyway; and he mentions this verse and puts great stress on it. He says Moses couldn't possibly have written such a statement as this; and he also uses an earlier statement in Exodus, where it says that the man Moses was very great in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of Pharaoh's house. He says Moses would be one of the most conceited men on earth if he wrote those words.

I take sharp issue with him on that; I think his statement is absolutely false on the matter, because it seems to me that the earlier one—that Moses was great in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants—the statement is absolutely required in order to understand how Moses had such great access to Pharaoh's presence. The ordinary person would never get inside the outer gate, and Moses came right into Pharaoh; and talked to Pharaoh; and presented to Pharaoh the cause; and you just can't understand how it could happen, unless there's a reason; and the reason is that Moses—in the first place, his background, his connection with the royal family—which would make the servants very reluctant to do anything against him, unless they knew they had explicit orders from Pharaoh to do so. But secondly, the way he had come and had done the miracles before Pharaoh and shown supernatural power; that Pharaoh looked upon him—Pharaoh didn't believe in God, and did not look upon him as God's servant—but he was very great in his eyes; he was a factor to be reckoned with; and so that's merely a factual statement of his standing.

But this verse is a moral statement, "The man Moses was very meek above all the people on the face of the earth." If a man ever wrote that about himself, is he not one of the most conceited men that ever lived, if he wrote a thing like that? So of course, Moses, we know, wasn't conceited; so we know he couldn't have written it. Well, this isn't by Moses anyway.

Well, it seems to me that one thing we notice is that the Bible differs from all other books, in that it speaks frankly and objectively about the weaknesses and the sins of its characters. You'll find David sinned; David the man so close to God, his sin is told in clear terms without any glossing over of anything. And you find that the evil that Moses tells about his sin; about God's rebuke to him; about his weakness as he starts; about his murdering a man in Egypt; it tells the evil of the great characters, of their sins in their lives; and it is an objective book, the Bible, which gives us the facts as they were under the leading of God. And if it's going to tell the bad points, it's only reasonable it should also tell the good points. Not only tell the evil points about them, but tell the good points about them, so it's not at all out of place for it to state frankly what the situation was.

Well, now, in addition to that, there is this; that Moses is not a meek man—particularly—when it comes to standing up for God's cause and declaring God's will. Moses speaks the Word of God with power. And he attacks wickedness in strong language. Moses is meek when it comes to standing up for himself; and as Moses went over these words; or as he wrote them at the end of his life as he looks back; and he describes how these people were criticizing his marriage; saying that he should not have married this Ethiopian, and so on; he marvels at his meekness; he marvels that he could have, in that situation, stood still and done absolutely nothing about it. And in order take it intelligible to the reader, it is necessary to show the unusual situation.

But Moses here, who was standing with boldness, and with fear of nothing for the Lord, here when his own honor was so attacked that it was even entering into his own family relations, and criticizing his wife; he, in that situation, simply sat still and said nothing. The man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth. Moses said nothing about it, but it was the Lord who intervened, as verse 4 tells us: "The Lord spoke suddenly to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, and said, come out ye three to the tabernacle of the congregation. And the three came out." And so the statement there is not a parenthetical statement, inserted by someone at a later date, or anything like that; it is a necessary part of the narrative to show what happened in that situation; where practically anybody else, when someone started criticizing his marriage this way, would—sometimes a man may have misgivings and wish he hadn't married the one he married—but here in this situation where these people were interfering in a matter which was between him and the Ethiopian woman and the Lord; no one else had any right to interfere in any way; Moses

simply kept quiet and said nothing; but the Lord—Moses stood up for the honor of the Lord; and when it was Moses' honor at stake, Moses kept quiet; and the Lord intervened for Moses.

(Student: Do you think the objection was marrying a non-Israelite?) Scripture forbids the marriage of the Israelites with those who did not believe in God. It forbids the marriage of believers and non-believers very strictly; but in our Lord's ancestry [Matthew 1] we find Rahab the Canaanite woman; we find Ruth the Moabitess woman; we find many of other races who were involved in the ancestry of our Lord himself. The only restriction made on marriage in the Bible—and that is very strong—is that the believer has no right to marry with the unbeliever. That is very, very strong and plain in both Old and New Testament; and that distinction is a thousand times more important than any other distinction of language or background of any sort whatever.

(Student: What about Ezra and Nehemiah's objections?) When Nehemiah came back from captivity, there were people outside the covenant altogether, and Nehemiah made them put aside such relationships. In this case we can believe that Moses brought this woman to a knowledge of the Lord before he married her.

Well, Moses was very meek; instead of stepping out with anger as he might well have done—and practically everybody else would have—he was very meek; but he was not meek when the honor of the Lord was at stake. It was when his own honor was at stake that he was meek. When the honor of the Lord was at stake, Moses was bold and fearless. In this particular case, it shows Moses acting in a way which would impress the average person (who didn't look into it) as out of character, because they see him standing up boldly for the Lord's honor; and here he doesn't oppose anybody; he's just quiet; but the reason is that he was meek as regard to his own personal honor. And he gives the explanation here, so that we won't think it's out of character. It's an interesting matter, but I don't think there's a contradiction between it and Moses' usual boldness. I think there's an interesting relationship there.

Perhaps it's a question of how you interpret the verse. If you're saying, "Now look at this wonderful man, Moses. Here, I want this you to see this new wonderful quality about Moses, how meek he was." That is rather hard to think of Moses saying it. But if you're saying, "I want you to understand this unusual situation; that in this particular situation where Moses personally was assailed, Moses displayed a meekness which you wouldn't expect, hardly of any other man on earth." The man Moses, in this situation, was meek above all the people of the earth. He just sat down and let them, and took it. He just took the personal attack, and said nothing. It was the Lord that intervened, not Moses.

Well then, we have this verse, which I don't think is a valid argument against Mosaic authorship—either of the book or of the verse—but which is required in the situation, to understand that Moses did nothing in defense of his own honor, but let the Lord intervene in this situation.

And so the Lord called these people out, the three of them; the Lord was going to show people which one it was he stood with, so he called the three of them out.

And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed.

He does not say that Miriam and Aaron are not prophets at all. He says, "I may use them," but he says, "if I do, they are in a different category from Moses, because I speak to them in a vision or in a dream. But Moses is different. Moses," he said, "is faithful in all my house. Moses," he said, "with him I speak mouth to mouth, even directly, not in dark speeches. Why then," he says, "were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"

So God has taken up the second part of their complaint, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses?" And the Lord says "No, I don't speak only by Moses; I speak by other people; I may speak by you." But he says, "I speak with Moses a different way than I speak with you; he's in a different category altogether from you."

But then he takes up the first part, "Why are you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" One whom God so used, why were they not afraid to take something that was only the affair of God and Moses and the woman involved; and spread it out like this, and attack Moses on such a ground; and tend to lower his dignity and his influence among the people he must lead?

And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous. And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have

sinned. Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb. And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee. And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again. And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.

Moses prayed that the Lord would heal her; and the Lord said "Yes, she'll be healed, but she must be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that be received again." So they waited seven days until this was over.

A while ago, I heard Dean Inge speak; Dean Inge, the gloomy dean they call him, from London.⁸⁷ I heard him speak in Union Seminary when I was a student [presumably at Princeton]; and his message was on the verse in Genesis [18:25], "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" And he took up various explanations people give to show there's justice; and he showed that none of them are done. And then he said, "There are some people who say it'll all be straightened out in the life after death, but we don't want to think about that." So his conclusion, in answer to the question in Genesis, was "We don't know whether he shall or not." That was his sermon given in the chapel of Union Seminary—the great Anglican Dean, from London. But I think, the Bible's point of it is, that the judge of all the earth does right, if you take the picture as a whole, including the life after death; and that as far as this earth is concerned, punishment in this earth is not a matter of right and justice being done.

There are two aspects of evil, that is, of physical evil in this world; one of them is the direct result of action, in which we do something that is contrary, and it may hurt, bring a result to us. Three young fellows commit a very serious sin; and two of them are quite careful, and the one is not; and the one gets diseased which puts him in misery, and the other two do not get diseased. It is not in relation to their rightness or wrongness; it comes as a direct result of what he did.

That is one aspect; and then another thing is that God, in this world, brings suffering to us for various reasons, one of which may be as an example to deter us. But it is not in this life necessarily as a punishment—a punishment for our moral evil.

A dentist told me once that he had a girl patient who was a Spiritualist; and he did like to have her, because, he said, whenever his drill was a little bit dull and the tooth began to hurt as he drilled in, she—instead of asking him to be careful—said, "Don't you worry, don't you worry, I'm just suffering for some sin I've committed." And she always felt that she was getting the just result of her

⁸⁷ Sir William Ralph Inge (1860–1954) Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral.

desserts, and it wasn't his fault if it was hurting her. Well, in the grand picture, there is justice; but in the picture just in this life there are these two other reasons.

e. The Unsuccessful Repentance, chapter 14:39–45.

Notice that God had told the people to go in and conquer the land, and they refused; they were afraid, and they said, "Why did you bring us out here to kill us in the wilderness?" They refused to go up. Then Moses gave them God's judgment, that they were the generation to die in the wilderness; and we have the people now saying,

[We] will go up unto the place which the Lord hath promised: for we have sinned. And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the Lord? But it shall not prosper. Go not up, for the Lord is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies. For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you. But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.

Before this, they were saying we're well able to take the land. Now Moses says the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and you'll fall by the sword; but the difference is because you've turned away from the Lord; therefore the Lord will not be with you; but they presumed to go up to the mount. And they were defeated.

The unsuccessful repentance, and in it there is a very, very important message there for every one of us. The people were told to go up; God was well able to give them the land; they refused. They were afraid; they lacked faith in God; they were disobedient. Now God punished them; now they turn around, and they're going to do what he said before; but what God said before no longer held now. Now the situation is changed, and they just make a failure of this and suffer from it.

And God gives us opportunities in life, in which we have opportunity to take ahold of and possess the land—opportunities which never come back again. Opportunities which, if we try to take them later on, we are sinning against the Lord, and we will fail. This is, I think, a wonderful example of the fact that there is a time element in God's plan. The opportunity comes; we have his orders, we are to do it; if we don't do it, it may never come again.

But then another thing I think we should notice about Kadesh-Barnea—a more general thing—is this: that Kadesh-Barnea is not simply a case where a person

is confronted with two alternatives; and he picks the wrong one, and so he's up against it. The people here made the wrong choice; they believed the ten spies instead of the two; and so God says, "You go over and die in the wilderness." It's not that simple. The people, by their reception of the spies' attitude, including these ten spies, show that they were not yet ready to go into Canaan. They made clear and evident the fact that they were not; they were out of Egypt, but Egypt was not yet out of them. They were not ready for God to bring them into the Promised Land.

They are in the situation that most of us are in, in our wilderness journey. God has brought us out of Egypt; we are redeemed; we have been justified; we have the merits of Christ applied to us; but we in our actuality, in our state, we are far short of what we should be; and there are many things we should be able to do that we are not yet able to do; and we need lessons, we need training; the Israelites needed that forty years to get Egypt out of them, before they were ready to go into the Promised Land. They needed those forty years to develop their faith in God, to the point where they could go into the Promised Land, and to follow Joshua and to conquer. God revealed by the incident He gave at Kadesh-Barnea, not merely that the people make a wrong choice and that's that. No, but that the people revealed their characteristics, and the attitude of their heart; and that being revealed, the result comes which is necessary.

I think that's a very important thing for us to have in mind in all of God's dealings with us. We're all too ready to think of things that, whether you say the right magic words, you have to take the right attitude in one particular situation. And it's very easy for people to fall into that error, of making little details be the vital thing, instead of the big issue of their relation to God. Well, so much then for this long and involved and important section.

3. The Crisis at Kadesh-Barnea.

The crisis at Kadesh-Barnea, I've asked you to outline it, I believe. I have an outline here in five parts which is taken from the International Critical Commentary. I don't think I will give you the details of the outline, but one point in it I want to draw your attention to rather particularly. That's what I've called in the outline

4. Laws after the Crisis. Chapter 15:1-41.

And, this is a peculiar thing at first sight; here we have this very interesting story of Kadesh-Barnea in chapter 13 and 14; then we have the great rebellions in chapter 16; but chapter 15 is a chapter of law. But I believe it is put right here for a purpose. The laws are given here after the crisis.

a. Rules of Sacrifice for Canaan. 15:1–21. And these rules of sacrifice for Canaan are given here at the beginning of the wilderness journey; not to add any new information; there is very little in them that isn't already contained in the law given at Sinai for the priests; but it is given in the certainty that God is going to bring his people into the Promised Land; just when they failed so miserably that God has had to place this doom upon them—of a whole generation dying in the wilderness. Now he gives them a specific and detailed regulation about what's going to happen after they enter the Promised Land. A renewed assurance of the fact that God is going to carry out his promise, and that their children are going to go in. I think that's a very interesting thing that it should be given right at this point; and then

b. Provision Regarding Sins of Ignorance. 15:22–31. Here the Lord gives special rules for the people, for the cases where they sin through ignorance, or through carelessness. This also gives, at the beginning of the wilderness journey, a very important thing for them to recognize: they are sinners; they continue to be sinners; and the sin needs to be repented of, as we do as Christians. We sin; we fall into error; we need to watch for our errors; we need to repent of it; but that God has a provision for our sins. He wants to teach us to get over them entirely, eventually; but He is giving us a provision for them, as he did then to Israel. But the passage ends with verse 30, which says, "But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among his people." The presumptuous sin is not included in this provision for sins of ignorance. And then we have

c. An Instance of Presumptuous Sin. 15:32–36. This was a man who went out and broke the Sabbath law, and was ordered to be stoned to death. They found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day, and they that found him brought him to Moses and Aaron and put him in ward, and the Lord said to Moses, this man shall surely be put to death and all the congregation stoned him.

It wasn't that gathering sticks on the Sabbath day was such a heinous sin that the man had to be stoned to death; it was that this Sabbath law had been frequently reiterated, during the wilderness journey; and thousands of people were observing the law around him; it was a case where there could be no ignorance involved in it; it was a clear case of flagrant, presumptuous disobedience to God. And clear cases of that sort must be dealt with, or they introduce a contagion that spreads all through; and so it was not that everyone who had to gather sticks on the Sabbath was stoned—nothing of the kind—but that this case was taken as an instance, an example to show the terrible nature of presumptuous sin. And then,

d. The Ribband of Blue. 15:37–41. The Lord told Moses to tell them to put a fringe on their garments—a ribband of blue—which they would look at; and it would remind them of their duty to the Lord, and what he had done for them. And it is a good illustration of the importance of object lessons—that the Lord wants us to put things up before us, which will remind us of his law, his purposes, of his promises, and of his commands. All this given at the beginning of the long wilderness journey, after they had sinned and are told they're all to die there in the wilderness. And then

5. The Great Rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. 16: 1–50.

And this is a very involved story; and so many different elements enter into it, and God deals with them one by one; and the critics try to divide it up into two, and say there are two separate stories here. Actually you can get three or four if you divided that way. But it is a fact that in every true life situation there are various elements that enter in; and the followers of Korah had certain things they were concerned about; the followers of Dathan and Abiram had other things; they did not necessarily have great sympathy with each other's viewpoints, but they were joined together in a common activity at the moment. And this is true of every situation in life, that there are various factors which enter in. And God deals with the factors often individually.

I remember hearing a man tell me—he was President of a Christian college and he was there 13 years and he tripled the student body of the college, and he tremendously increased its endowment, and he did a great deal for it and then suddenly he was fired. And he told me this; he said, "Never since the day I came there was there a time when there not several groups here who were loudly declaring that I should be fired. But," he said, "this time they all got together." That is, they had different objectives, different viewpoints. He was, during those years, doing what he thought was right, and stepping on many toes; and I know the forces that got him at that time; I was quite familiar with several of them, and I saw their viewpoints were absolutely opposite. But though they were different, their objectives were different, they strengthened one another by their common opposition.

There are many things that are important in this section, but they entered into three of your assignments; and so we can assume that you are thoroughly familiar with it and go to

6. The Aftermath of the Rebellion. 17:1–19:22.

That section [5, above] involved particularly the reaffirmation of the privileges and responsibilities of Aaron and the Levites. And God caused Aaron's rod to bud in order to show Aaron was the chosen one for the High Priest—Aaron and his descendants. The prophets did not come of any one family. God could call

this man, the other man—different persons to be a prophet. He might make a man a prophet for a few days, a week, a year, or a lifetime. If a man was a prophet and God chose to use him, if God called him, he might be of any background whatever. But the priesthood which was supposed to perform the ceremonies that illustrate these great truths of God's plan; that had to be kept in a certain orderly fashion, which could only be done by keeping it in one family, and passing on some very strict regulations about it. And therefore it's not so much here a matter of exaltation of Aaron as a man, as it is the singling out of his family to carry forward that particular aspect of God's plan, until the time should come when we knew the facts about Christ, and we didn't need so much of form and ceremony to suggest them to the mind.

The Lord vindicated Aaron, his right to the priesthood and the privileges and responsibilities of Aaron and the Levites; and this was not done on the ground that Aaron was a better man; not on the ground of any particular dessert on their part; but on the ground of God's divine right to arrange things as he thought best. Justice—that is, the receiving of your desserts—is something that God works out perfectly in the world to come; but in this world we need not expect it. We are in Satan's world; many will get many good things they don't deserve; many will have suffering far beyond others who would seem to deserve it more. If we are sinners—if we have not accepted Christ—all the suffering we could possibly get in this world is nothing compared to our desserts. And consequently, no one who has not accepted Christ can say that he is unfairly treated in this world; because compared to his sin, compared to his wickedness, he deserves far more than he gets in this world.

If a person has accepted the Lord—has become a Christian—then he can be assured that there are tremendous physical blessings for him in the hereafter; and in this world, there are tremendous spiritual blessings for him. There may be physical blessings for him; in fact, in the majority of cases there are. You take any community which has a lot of ordinary people; and you change them into Christian people; and over the course of fifty or a hundred years, with very few exceptions, the physical and natural situation improves; and the people are better off in this world's prosperity than they could possibly have been if they had not become Christians.

That is not an invariable rule, but it occurs in the majority of cases. But I don't think it is this way because God blesses them, and rewards them for being Christians; that may enter in to some extent; but it is more a direct result of the improved character which Christianity gives. God does not promise us material prosperity. If we truly are his, that's not what we're seeking; we are seeking to honor him, and to do his will, and to oppose the works of Satan; and sometimes we can do that best by enjoying material prosperity; whereas in other cases, we can do it best by tasting of adversity; and God decides which is the way in which we can serve him best.

And then, there are certain matters in which it is not so vital that the man best prepared do the job, as that the job be done. There might be many who desire a task; but if you have many trying to do it, you have chaos and anarchy; and it is necessary that there be a certain assignment of tasks; and this task be done by the one to which it has been given; and that, I believe, is the case of the priesthood. The prophets' work required very particular ability; God picked a prophet here or there, wherever he might see him; and the prophet hood was rarely passed from a father to a son—very, very rarely. But the priests' work was the matter of an ordinary carrying on of certain prescribed ceremonies, which anybody of ordinary decency of character, and ordinary ability could handle; but it was vital that it be carried out as prescribed. And that it be kept in orderly fashion; and therefore the Lord selected a family for it. Not as a reward for special goodness on the part of this family, but simply as a means of carrying it on in orderly fashion. And God prescribed that Aaron's family should be the ones who did it.

And when Korah opposed them, it doesn't say that Korah was necessarily a worse man than Aaron, because none of them deserved anything good, except through the merits of Christ; but God had assigned this task to Aaron, and Korah was not rebelling against Aaron, he was rebelling against God, in his attitude. And so we have now, in this next chapter, the aftermath of this rebellion. It is a strong vindication, on God's part, of that fact that he had given Aaron the priesthood, and given Aaron and the Levites the particular responsibility that they had. And then there is the removal of the uncleanness resulting from the rebellion in chapter 19. So chapters 18 and 19 are the aftermath of the rebellion. And then,

7. Incidents on the Way to the Plains of Moab. 20:1–22:1.

It's not so long in the Bible—and that's why we give it only one head—although the Rebellion of Korah actually had two heads; but it is long in the sense that it covers a long space of time; and it is long in the sense that there is a great deal of material involved in it.

(Student) The Pastor today is a different—really a different—work than either prophet or priest; but I would say that the similarity was greater between his work and the work of the prophet than that of a priest. I should say the priest's work was very much greater, but there is a definite part of the pastor's work which is like the work of the priest. We believe in the universal priesthood of believers; every believer is a priest, and that there is no man who has a right to represent us before God, as the priest did in ancient time. But of course the biggest part of the priest's work wasn't representing the people, but carrying out the ceremonies. And there is a certain amount of carrying out of ceremonies which impress people's minds, which is a part of his task today.

And in the Episcopal Church that becomes a very, very large part of his work; but in most of our other churches, it is an extremely small part of his work.

And there is an interesting thing there, in the Episcopal Church: in recent years, there has been a great turning aside from the faith. I've gone to an Episcopal church and seen ceremonies gone through in which everything suggests the death of Christ; and what he meant for us; and the most beautiful prayers, summarizing our relationship to God, and His relation to us; and a service which took of the things of Christ and put them before us in striking fashion; and then have it spoiled by the same man, giving a sermon in which he took a strong modernist position, or a social gospel, which practically denied everything the service represented; and it must be said that for the last 30 years the Anglican church as a whole—even in its teaching—has laid very, very little stress on Biblical teaching. But it is remarkable how often you come across men who were brought up in the Episcopal church, and had a background of those ceremonies, the most beautiful prayers and all that; and some of it found lodging in their minds; and the Spirit of God later took that which was lodged in their minds and used it to bring them out to a full understanding and knowledge of God's plan, and a full relationship with His truth.

Now many men whom I know, who are that way, have a great dislike for the Episcopal Church from which they came; and of course it is true that it fell down badly in the task of bringing this understanding to them. But I'd far rather go to an Episcopal church, with forms and ceremonies suggesting the truths of God's Word, even if there is a sermon which denies it, than to go to a modernist Baptist or Methodist church, in which you don't have the ceremonies to drive home the truths, but have the sermon that is denying the truth about Christ.

Well now, the incidents on the way to the plains of Moab. It starts in with a dating, it says in the first month, but it doesn't say what year; and some people say it's the first month of the fortieth year; and some people say it is the first month of the third year; and we do not have absolute proof. I incline personally to think it's the fortieth, because of the fact that it comes so far along in the account. Those who put it the third year think it happened before the crisis at Kadesh-Barnea. That seems to be not impossible, but unlikely.

But there is a space of 38 years between the events at Sinai and the arrival at the plains of Moab; and the scripture does not tell us where that 38 year space occurred. Was it before the rebellion of Korah and Abiram; was it after that rebellion? The scripture does not tell, and so we do not know. My personal guess is that the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram was somewhere in the middle of the 38 years, but that's only a guess. In that case the 38 years would come partly before that and partly after that.

What we do know is that the arrival in the plains of Moab was 40 years after the Exodus. We know that. Just where these things place, we don't know. But we find that in the first month, Miriam died; and does this mean the first month of an early year or a late year? I would think it likely a late year, likely the fortieth, but we cannot be dogmatic. But that is

a. The Death of Miriam. I think it most likely, during these 38 years, that the people roamed through the desert; stayed in one place till the forage gave out; then moved to another; and probably they passed through Kadesh several times. But the 38 year wandering began and ended at Kadesh. Then a very interesting subject:

b. The Sin of Moses and Aaron. 20:2–13. And if you would open either your English or your Hebrew Bible to Numbers 20 we will look at this passage.

...the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there. And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.

Now this is a rebellion. We've had a number of them of course. You've been dealing with the others in your discussions.

And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord! And why have ye brought up the congregation of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there? And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? It is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.

You'd think, "Why on earth do these people so often say things like this?" But when you realize that it's spread over a period of forty years; and realize that people who fall into certain conditions, they're apt to fall into them repeatedly; I would simply suggest that when you make an error; when you fall into some sin; when you make some foolish statement; and you regret later what you've done, write down what you've done; and put down the date; and just watch and see if you don't, within the next forty years, do the same thing perhaps a hundred times instead of maybe ten, the way the Israelites did. Maybe if you write it down, by about the fifth time you'll be ready to make a positive effort to stop.

But people repeat the same things over and over. You'll find it inevitable; you'll find it constantly. And it drives it home to our minds here, where we have the forty years condensed together, to see how often similar events happened in their relationship. You will find, if you have a church, you'll find somebody in your congregation who has a problem; he is discouraged; he just can't believe

that the Lord will save him; he thinks it doesn't look as if it's possible; things are just going wrong. Well, you help him. You're apt to find the same man having the same difficulty six months later. You're apt to find him having that difficulty over and over. Somebody has a different one. You're apt to find that one repeated over and over. Sometimes it sorely tries your patience. And I'm sure it sorely tried Moses' patience to see these same things that these people said, over and over. And Moses could remind them of God's hand in Egypt; he could remind them how God delivered them; he could remind them of what God had done to give them water and give them food through the wilderness; and so on. And when they get their eyes on these things, their difficulties seem small and they're ready to forget them. But then they come back; and it's the same with the people with whom you deal, and it's the same with ourselves. We want to learn what our difficulties are; and bring them to the Lord, and get them settled; instead of pushing them aside, and then going through the same thing over and over, without ever realizing it.

But here the people said this, "Why have ye brought up the congregation of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there? And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? It is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink."

And Moses' patience must have been sorely tried with all the times they had talked this way, after all the Lord had done for them. It's very easy to say, "Oh, those Israelites in the wilderness, weren't they terrible! How superior we are to them!" How we look back and say how we never would've been that way. Chances are, we are exactly that way now, except for the grace of God. And the people with whom we have to deal are exactly that way. The person who himself is most that way is apt to be the one who is most impatient when God puts him in a position of authority with others, when they show this sort of attitude.

Moses wasn't that way. Moses was a very humble man, a meek man, a very patient man; when everybody turned against him; when God was going to destroy the people, time and again Moses interceded for them before the Lord. He said, "Lord, blot me out of your book, but spare this People; bring them up." Time and again, Moses did that.

But this time Moses simply lost his patience, as any human being would,

And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto them. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall

give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him.

God said to Moses, "Speak to the rock before their eyes." You notice God said, "So shalt thou give." Of course, Moses knew that that meant: so will you be the instrument for God to give the congregation and their beasts drink.

And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

There was God's rebuke to Moses and Aaron. "Because ye believed me not to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

What had Moses done? Now if you are dealing with electrical things, and you pull the right switch, the machinery begins to work. But if you pull the wrong switch or touch it the wrong way, you may get a shock and be badly injured, instead of accomplishing the things you wanted. You have to know just how to handle it.

If I went into a big electrical installation, and started in to try to make the thing go, very soon I probably would have a bad shock; and yet I might be a better man morally than the trained electrician who would go in there and do it without being injured. Is this a situation like that? Is this a situation where if Moses had only done it a little different way; he smote that rock twice; now suppose he struck it once; then he would have been all right, wouldn't he? But he made a mistake and struck it twice.

I think that is very easy mistake for us to make about the scriptures. The scripture gives certain ceremonies which are to be done exactly so; but it always makes it very clear. If they are ceremonies, if they are vital, they are done in this way. Ordinarily, what God deals with is the spirit and attitude of people. It is not a matter of precise details of wording or form. In this case, God did not say smite the rock at all. Well, then, is it wrong if Moses smote the rock? Previously God had said, "Smite the rock, and it will bring forth water." Why did Moses smite it twice instead of once? I think the reason is perfectly evident; it was his patience giving way. He was filled with emotion. "Hear, ye rebels, must we bring water for you out of the rock?" Moses thought, these people, all the

things God had done for them and. still they're rebelling, still they're murmuring. Here they can't trust God to bring them water, God loves them, God won't let them starve, he'll supply water, and yet they come and murmur this way.

"Hear, ye rebels, must we bring water to you out of the rock?" And he brings down his rod and he hits it hard twice. It's the expression of the emotion. And God says, "Moses you should have shown forth to these people the patience of God. You should have shown to them the character of the loving God, who looks at their weakness and realizes their infirmities; realizes their sin, but brings them the provision for it; and this gives the glory to God for it. "Must we bring you water?" Well, God said "So shalt thou bring water." Moses did bring water, but he brought it in anger; and he should have given God the glory. Moses failed at his strongest point.

How easy it is for us, when we're with somebody else, to feel uncertain, and think, "Oh I don't need to help this man in this regard; he's stronger than I am in this regard. I can just let myself go and relax here; I don't need to try to help him." But he may be having a struggle on that very point; when you could give him a word of help; but instead of that you just take for granted his strength, and you become the straw that broke the camel's back in leading him to fail at his strongest point.

And Moses failed at his strongest point. And what was his strongest point? His humility. His recognition of God's power as being everything, and his power as being nothing. His absolute subjection to God is a matter which has never been surpassed, or even attained by any other person who has ever lived. But here, in Moses' strongest point, Moses failed, and God said you have not sanctified me and I am not going to permit you to take the people into the land.

Well, now that is certainly sin; and it is failure; failure in patience, failure to give God the glory, giving the impression that he was giving the water instead of God; and not a word in the passage suggests anything else.

While we're on that, please turn to Numbers 27. In Numbers 27:12,

And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. For ye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes: that is the water of Meribah in Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.

And then Moses goes on there, and his whole heart is for the people. He does not complain of God's judgment; he doesn't object to it; he simply asks that

God shall appoint a proper shepherd to take his place. There's nothing more there about his sin.

In Deuteronomy 32:48–52,

And the Lord spake unto Moses that selfsame day, saying, Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession: And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people: Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah–Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel. Yet thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel.

And then in chapter 34 we read how Moses went up into the mountain and he looked at the land across into Palestine, and then he died there. Well, these are the passages which tell about Moses' sin. And there's not a single word in one of them that says anything about whether he struck the rock once or twice or no time. The striking of the rock was an expression of the emotion within him. It was not itself a thing of vital significance. God said "Speak to the rock." On previous occasions God had said strike the rock; on previous occasions he had struck the rock and the water came out. This time he spoke to the people and he struck the rock and the water came out. It was identical this time with the previous time.

Yes? (Student) I doubt if he would've smitten it twice if he had a right attitude. Because I think the smiting of it twice was the emotional feeling expressing itself; and I don't think he would've expressed it that way. I think the smiting of it was an expression of his feelings, I don't think it in itself was the point of disobedience.

(Student) All of the good things that we have come from Christ. Christ is the rock that followed the children of Israel in the wilderness. He's the rock in whom they found protection; he's the rock from whom they received their nourishment; he is similarly the manna, as he says in John "I am the bread that came down from heaven"; and he is similarly the brazen serpent which is lifted up that they may be saved through him.

Whether the additional point—that the rock was smitten—is intended of the Lord as a symbol of Christ being smitten on Calvary, and our blessings flowing from that, I don't recall whether there is any passage in the Word of God that draws that particular picture; but I'm sure the children of Israel on this occasion would not have thought that. They would get that picture from the sacrifice

which represented what God was going to do for them; they would get it from some other things when it's pointed out to them; but here, where they are filled with their thirst, and they are in this terrible situation there, in their rebellion; and Moses said, "God is going to bring you water," I am sure they were thinking of God's provision of water; I don't think they were thinking of atonement for sin then.

It's a figure which might conceivably be used somewhere, but it certainly would be in prominent place. The figure of Christ as the manna, or of Christ as the brazen serpent, would be a much more prominent one, because a much more easily understood one; and the figure of Christ in the tabernacle would be much more suited to them.

Yes? (Student) God said speak to the rock and Moses spoke to the people instead of the rock. He smote it, instead of speaking to it; but on previous occasions God had said smite the rock and he had done that. There were two cases—one or two before—where they didn't have water; God said smite the rock, Moses smote the rock, water came.

Now in this case, he gets up there; he stands before the rock; he looks at the rock; he holds his rod; the people are there; he's all excited, now he says, now here we are a third time, just like the other two. Moses is thinking, "I should smite this rock and bring water out. No, that's not right, God didn't say smite this time, did He? God said speak this time, I shouldn't smite the rock, I should just speak to the rock. Well now is that right, did he say smite or speak?" And he'd try to remember what were the exact words; and if he remembered them wrong, God's going to punish him—I don't think that's the figure at all.

(Student) Yes, but I doubt if that is a type of Christ; I doubt that very much. The rock was following them in the wilderness, yes. But the rock is a type of Christ, just as the brazen serpent is a type of Christ and the manna is a type of Christ; there are many things that are a type of Christ But whether the particular thing of smiting would be to the people at that time—in their eyes—a type of Christ, I really question it.

But perhaps one to us now. So that, for us now, as a type, we could be given one, if Moses would carry out the directions in the new command; but if he made a mistake and carried out the previous directions instead of that one, then he got this terrible punishment. Hardly seems in line with God's normal being, does it?

(Student) No, it doesn't say that; it says he was punished because he did not sanctify God before the people; that's the phrase that's used. Now there's a matter in which there might be variations of interpretation regarding that word "sanctify". My own impression is that the word sanctify means—what is that

phrase there?—he says "Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel." Does that mean to watch out and not smite the rock? There's nothing in the directions about "not smiting the rock" at all: the directions are "speak."

As to his speaking to the people, I don't think it was the fact of his speaking to the people, I think it's the way he spoke to them. He says, "Hear now, ye rebels, must we bring you water?" I think if he had said to the people—if he had said to the people, now as on previous occasions—"You are losing faith in the goodness of God. God's always given you water before; don't you think he's going to give it now? God, is not going to let you die of thirst, or your cattle either. God has a provision for you. God is going to supply. Now see this rock here. God has revealed to me that he is going to bring water out of the rock."

Now in that case, whether God meant him to smite it, and a little touch might have made it come, or whether God would have increased the force back of it, so that it would have burst out at that instant without a touch, I don't know. But I'm quite certain that it was the attitude he showed to the people which sanctified God or failed to sanctify God, rather than the particular detail of what he did.

(Student: Was Moses taking glory from God by claiming the miracle for himself?) It is not a crystal clear thing. I think we must say that. It isn't a crystal clear thing. But it would seem to me that one thing we can be tolerably sure of is, that it was Moses taking a certain part at least of the glory from God for himself—of the credit to himself—instead of giving the whole glory to God. God said, "You did not sanctify me in the eyes of the people." That is the first catastrophe. It seems to me that that must be important. It seems to me that the impatience and the general attitude shown is inappropriate. Beyond that I can't go. But I can say this, that it does not seem to me to be God's character, after Moses has led the people for forty years and has done so many things that no other man in all history has done, and been true to God so marvelously in so many, many ways, and has served God so wonderfully and shown such humility and such patience, that God would now say "If you don't follow the precise exact words that I've given you, in the precise exact form it's to be done; but you vary it a little bit, you're going to get terribly punished." The reason for punishment must be something other than that, I would think very definitely.

Mr. Decker? (Student) In order that he might show, yes, show his complete faith in God by watching the new directions carefully? We had a meeting two weeks ago; there was a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Independent Board [of Presbyterian Foreign Missions], and we have met for years in the office of the Board down on Walnut Lane. I was talking to the General Secretary, and he said, "We're going to save you time this time. I had told him I had to be back for class; I couldn't stay very long. He said, "We'll meet in the home, which is about

three miles further up in Germantown; we'll meet in the home, and we'll have part of the meeting around the luncheon table. We'll eat together and that way we'll save time." Well, I got the notice from them, that it would be at the Independent Board Home at that time. I went there, I was there the 27th, I said, am I the last one to get here (I was two minutes late), or the first one? Well, two minutes later another one came. We waited there, and then we got a phone call; and I think the other five or six—every one of them—went to the office, though the directions said the Home. But everybody went to the place he was accustomed to going, and had to be told to come up here; and we lost time instead of saving it. Simply because, in planning the meeting, it had not been realized the inertia of human beings—even very effective, very successful human beings—in noting a change in their meeting place.

Now, to say that had Moses done the thing in a precise way, to say, "Now you speak to the rock," and then, "Look here, you didn't do this the way I said, but a different way." "Well, why didn't you tell me? Why didn't you underline it in red? Why didn't you make a special postscript? Why didn't you make sure I knew it? I'd be more careful then." But to say, "Now, this is a sin that results in your being barred from entering the Promised Land," I think in a young person it might be a very good thing, to change the directions slightly; and then you'd be sure to do it the other way, and not follow it; and then tell him that he should be more careful, and then give a fairly sharp discipline in order to impress it on him to be very, very careful in observing the instructions exactly. But in Moses' case....

Well, now, there is one more thing I think we should say about this: Why is this in scripture here? Why did this happen? There are two—you might say—general ideas. One: which I don't think is expressed in people's minds, but perhaps is in them to some extent, is this: Moses sinned, proved himself wrong, deserves tremendous punishment, he gets it. Just the bald facts. Now there's an element to that, just the bald facts, that way. It certainly is a tremendous change from the general picture that we have of Moses.

Now the second idea: God wanted to show a type; that Moses would strike the rock once; that would represent Christ. Now Moses struck the rock twice—that ruins the type—and therefore we've got to punish Moses; and letting him be killed, and not have the wonderful things he wants, because he wrecked the type. Well, in such a case we should explain the type; make it clear to him, so he won't make any mistake about it; so that it will be plain what it is, rather than bring a big punishment to him.

I believe that the true explanation is to be sought in a different direction, and that is this: that Moses, up to this point, had been pictured in the scriptures, as he was, as such an outstanding leader; so loyal to God, so true, so humble, so efficient; so much of all the virtues you could ever ask; leading the people

wonderfully; standing alone against them when necessary; interceding for them—blot me out of your book, spare this people—the wonderful character of Moses; that it would be very easy thing for the people to make a sort of a god of Moses; to make a great saint out of Moses; and take him—as is perfectly natural—consider him as a sort of man that never lived on earth, except the Lord Jesus Christ, the most perfect man that ever lived.

Well, it would be very easy to get the impression that Moses is perfect and almost to put him in the place of God. Like Mohammedanism is the religion of Mohammed; Mohammed is a prophet of Allah—yes—but Mohammed is in the center. Where it would be very easy for Judaism to have Moses in the center; and be brought up on Moses' great deeds; on Moses' wonderful character; taking him as an example; put him in a place almost like God. The Lord did not wish that to happen. The Lord wanted it to be very clear, that though Moses was a great and good man, one of the finest men that ever lived, yet he was a sinner like ourselves; a man of flesh and blood, a man who committed error; a man who deserved to die, as we all do; and therefore—instead of his life ending in a great festival of jubilation over the wonderful things Moses has done in leading the people out; in carrying them thus far; and all of the wonderful eulogies that we're apt to say about a grand old man who's had a great life—instead of that, it ends with punishment for Moses to offset this. That is, to prevent that very real danger of the idolatry of a man; of putting a man in a position which, if any man who ever lived deserved it, Moses did. But which no man deserves.

And secondly, I think that there was this in it: That Moses, his eye was not abated, his eye was still clear, his natural strength was not abated, as we read at the end of Deuteronomy. He was an old man, but strong and vigorous; and Moses felt, "Oh I want to take these people into the land of Canaan. I want to lead them in and conquer the land; and do this great work that must be done." But Moses had done his work. It was necessary to have a younger man for this work. It was necessary now to turn him out. Moses was getting old; his temper was shorter than it used to be. He just didn't have the physical strength he used to have—even though outwardly he seemed to—he didn't have the verve or force he used to have. Moses needed to be replaced by a younger man; and this failure on his part—which may have been due to quite an extent from the tiredness of the long strain of all these years and all he'd gone through—this failure on his part, was evidence to him and to the world of the fact that he was not the man to lead the people, that they needed another man.

It's part of God's plan, for these reasons I've mentioned, to replace Moses by the man who is God's choice for this other work, though Moses has done these works in a way that perhaps no man that ever lived could have done them. And to ruin any possibility of people idolizing Moses; or putting him on a pedestal when he should not be on one; by making clear the fact that he was a sinner

like other human beings at the end of his life. And clearly put out before them. "No, you have sinned. You have not sanctified me as you should; you cannot lead the people into the Promised Land." It's all part of God's plan. And I believe that Moses today is praising the Lord for his good sense. He's recognizing his sins and his weaknesses that he has like all of us; he's praising the Lord for saving him as he couldn't have been saved, as none of us could have been saved, except for the Lord's salvation. He's also praising him for this part of the plan in making his sin become evident in this way, in connection with his death, in such a way as to be a help in saving people from that danger which they might so easily have fallen into.

Martin Luther, when he was on his deathbed, said, "Destroy all my works; read the Bible; don't read what Martin Luther wrote." Martin Luther, the last thing in the world he wanted was to have churches named after him. He wanted them named after Christ; he wanted them to follow Christ. But within forty years after Martin Luther's death, he was made such a saint to many of his followers, that if you varied by two words from what they figured Martin Luther had taught, you might be thrown into the dungeon, or even be hanged. He was made an absolute standard among a great part of the church in Germany; and while most of what Martin Luther said was good; and it was a wonderful thing for Germany to have his teaching; yet at this point the church erred very, very badly.

John Calvin was afraid, because of the way, towards his death, the people of Geneva would take anything he'd say; and in fact there were leaders all over Europe who would ask his advice about most anything, and whatever Calvin said that was the last word; and Calvin was afraid that they might make him into a sort of a saint; so when he was on his deathbed, he secretly gave orders that when he died, his body should be taken out in the middle of the night and buried with only two or three people knowing where it was. So nobody knows—there's a place in Geneva today with a big monument to Calvin, called his grave—but nobody knows where it really is. It was put up a hundred or more years after his death. Nobody knows where he was buried, because he was afraid of this danger.

And if there was that danger with Luther and Calvin, far more with Moses; because Moses accomplished a work which, at least in the eyes of the world, was far greater than they did. And it is part of God's plan to do it this way. It wasn't that Moses was a greater sinner than other people; because he was probably less a sinner than most people that ever lived; but he was a sinner before God, and deserved eternal death; and God wanted that fact given; and God wanted to make it clear even to Moses, that he was not the man to lead the people into Canaan.

And so, now you will find people in almost any church you go into, you may find people who are very, very strict on this. Here was Moses' great sin—he smote the rock twice—that ruined the type; he should have done it once. Now personally, I don't think that's the reason; but there are people who get very excited about it; and it's very, very easy to go into a church and find somebody very excited about that; and some think that your greatest duty in life is to clarify their idea, to change them on that; and I think that's an utter mistake. It is, I think, a comparatively minor foible, and I believe that it is very, very foolish to make a fight about such things.

Well, Moses struck the rock, but Aaron died as well as Moses. They are together in it, and they are together punished for it. It was their attitude—it would seem to me—that caused God's judgment. There are other things that happened that some of us might think were worse than this; perhaps they were. This was not their greatest sin, but the point at which the Lord chose to make an example of these two men; to show that they, though great leaders, were also sinful human beings. We looked ahead at the other passages that shed light on this; and then, the next matter dealt with in this area here is

c. Edom's Refusal to Allow Passage through the Land. 20:14–21.

d. The Death of Aaron. 20:22–29. I merely mention these now, because you dealt with it in your assignments. And then

e. The Victory over Arad. 21:1–3. Thirty-eight years earlier there had been the attack on the Israelites after the death of the spies. Now this defeat is avenged, and some of the Canaanites destroyed. At the start of the march toward the plains of Moab, the Lord gives them this earnest of the eventual conquest of Canaan. Then

f. The Incident of the Brazen Serpent. 21:4–9. This is a very interesting incident. It's interesting that today, that area through which they went is still an area infested with serpents. On this way between Sinai and the plains of Moab, there's an area there you pass through. T. E. Lawrence [Lawrence of Arabia] describes it in his book, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. I don't know how many of you have read this book. It was quite a famous book not so long ago—Oh I guess it was twenty years now, wasn't it? He was a leader in the First World War in rousing the Arabs against the Turks; and he went out and conducted guerilla warfare leading the Arabs. And as a young man, he had started to write a book on the verse in Proverbs, "Wisdom has built her house, she has erected her seven pillars." He didn't get very far in it, so now he decided to use that title for an account of his war experiences; and he only printed, I think, about a thousand copies or less for his close friends, and wouldn't let anybody else see it; but in order to make some money, he issued an abridged edition, which he called, I believe, *The War in Arabia*, or some such title. Lowell Thomas made

him famous; went all over the world lecturing about him. And this abridged edition was published; but after his death, the other was made available to the public; and it's an extremely interesting book about the war in the desert there, and his experiences; and I think well worth anybody's reading for the insight it gives there into that section of the Near East.

But in it, I was very much impressed with one incident, where he was going through this area. He said they camped at night; and every morning, the first who would get up would get up very, very gently; and watch closely that he didn't dislodge a serpent that might be lying right next to him; because during the night, the serpents in that area for warmth would come up and would lie right next to those who were camping on the ground; stretch out right next to them; and of course, if you turned over suddenly and aroused it and excited it and scared it, it might bite you. And they did lose some men through that; so the first one that got up would get up very, very gently and easily; and then he'd go and take a big pole; and he'd come and pole the serpents away from the edge of the other men, so they could get up too. And it was quite an experience they had coming through there; and they had a very vivid picture of the situation in this region into which the Israelites came.

We read that the Lord sent fiery serpents among them as a punishment for their murmuring; and then the Lord used it in order to give an object lesson. He told Moses to make a serpent of brass and put it up on a pole; and the Lord gave them the instruction that, when any one of them was bit by one of the serpents, if they'd look up at this serpent of brass on the pole, the Lord would heal them. And of course, it was an object lesson of the way in which by faith in God's provision, they would be healed from sin. Later on, the brazen serpent became an object of worship; it was a wonderful thing, what God used as an object lesson for this, to show this lesson of God's providence; but it became an object of worship; and like any symbol of God's truth, it can become harmful if what is supposed to be in a secondary place, gets the primary place.

You can even take a glorious Biblical teaching; or a fine aspect of God's truth; and put it in the primary position, and it can become an object of harm. And we know that this happened, because in 2 Kings 18:4, we read that Hezekiah took the serpent of brass and destroyed it; he broke it in pieces to keep it from being misused. The thing was right in itself, but it was becoming misused; anything can be misused. And this was, and so he had to destroy it; it had become a snare, a source of injury instead of a beautiful symbol.

And that is so often true in religious history. Something that starts out as a wonderful source of good has its use perverted, and it becomes an instrument of evil. Then the sad thing is that people, after seeing the evil of that, so often will attach the idea of the evil to the particular thing instead of to its misuse.

We had a man right in our chapel—a man who was a member of our faculty at the time—who was referring to a church once; and he said, "You know, it was the sort of a church where they burn candles." Well, what's wrong with burning candles? He said, "This is a church where they had evensong." Well, what's wrong with having evensong and burning candles? Both of them can be a help to us; they can be an aid to our service to the Lord; but they can be so misused as to become evil. When they are, we have to drop them; but we can use most anything for the service of God, if it is used rightly.

Now this serpent of brass, of all things, you wouldn't think could be misused; but it shows how terribly it was misused; and yet it remains a vital part of the history, and people forgot the fact that it was misused and destroyed. It was mentioned in Kings, but it wasn't nearly as widely known as the story of its actual good use. And so it was possible for our Lord to take this, which had become misused and had to be destroyed; it was possible for him to take and to use it as a symbol of himself. He said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:14, leading up to that wonderful summary of the gospel in John 3:16.

Here we have an interesting illustration, too, of the nature of types and symbols. What is this a symbol of? It's a symbol of the fact that Jesus becomes sin for us, that he who knew no sin becomes sin for us. So the serpent there, the brazen serpent stands for the sin laid on Jesus. It hardly stands for Jesus—to compare him to a serpent, to compare him to that which bit them, that which destroyed them—that would certainly be ridiculous. He is not like the serpent, but the sin which is laid on him is like the serpent; and as the serpent was lifted up, even so the Son of Man must be lifted up; that the sin be placed on him; and the sin is represented by the serpent; but it is not the sin we look to, it is the Christ we look to.

It's an illustration of the fact that you cannot expect a figure to be exactly identical with the thing it represents. A figure represents a thing in one way—it may in two—rarely more. A figure takes one aspect of a thing and drives it home. So let's not try to make the figures walk on all fours, because they won't; they will be deceptive and misleading if we try to take them that way. So this incident in the wilderness was a very important thing to the people, their being delivered by the brazen serpent; and it's a wonderful illustration to us of how we too can be delivered from all of the miseries of life through the Lord Jesus Christ; and it is a wonderful example of more than that, not merely of Christ's sacrificial death for us, but of the central Protestant doctrine of salvation by faith alone. There was nothing these people did, absolutely nothing; they just looked at the serpent. They could not earn their freedom from it; they could not earn their deliverance from the serpent's bite; all they could do was just look, in faith, to the God who provided deliverance. And that of course is the central

theme which Luther stressed in the beginning of the Reformation, a thought that has been known to all true Christians through the ages, but perhaps was never so physically stressed as it was by Luther then. And it certainly is very, very clearly taught in this picture right here. Then,

g. The March around Moab. 21:10–20. Instead of crossing Moab they go clear around. They asked the Moabites to let them through, as they asked the Edomites; and when they refused, they went around. There are cases where, in life, we should force our way through obstacles; there are many cases where we should do that, regardless of the outcome; for the sake of the Lord's work we must force our way through, and let nothing stop us. But there are other cases, like the cases of Edom and Moab, where an obstacle is in the way; and the thing to do is to go around the obstacle; rather than to waste our time in fighting over secondary issues, to go around it; to leave it for a time. It may have to be dealt with later, but if we're going to clear every obstacle out of our way, we'll never get to the basic thing, to the main thing. The Lord wants us to use strategy and prayerful thinking in what we do. That is a thing you'll find in many kinds of Christian work; in anything you'll do, you'll find too many people who have some minor thing that they're so aroused about that they forget the big things on account of these minor things, or perhaps things that aren't so minor, but that are not the major things. I've known men who are so strong in their Calvinistic convictions that they could recognize an Arminian three blocks away; and yet could walk right straight up to a modernist and not see anything wrong with him. I've known people who could do that. They were real Christians; they were earnest Christians; and their effort, I believe, was true on the truth they were stressing; but they were stressing it out of proportion; and the result was that, with this disproportionate stress upon a secondary thing, they came not to put the stress they should on the primary thing.

I've known many people who were exactly that way. I think the Lord wants us to guard against overemphasis on what is a secondary thing. There are times when we must push on things; times when we must fight them right straight through; but we want to be mighty sure it is such a time before we divert our energies from the main thing for the sake of the secondary thing. And so we have long tiresome marches around Edom and around Moab, instead of going across. Rather than meet this secondary issue now, when it is God's will that they should go around. Then,

h. Victory over Sihon. 21:21–32. Here was a king who was reigning over the southern part of the area—the southern part of the northern half of the area across Jordan—an area that formerly had belonged to Moab but had been conquered by Sihon not long before; and the area beyond it that he had owned before that. He was asked to grant passage and refused; and he came with an army against Israel; and this time the Israelites attacked. He was differently placed than Edom and Moab. They could be gone around, he could not. To go

around him meant to give up your plan of reaching your objective; and they attacked him and destroyed him and conquered his territory. It was their first real conquest of territory. They could have stopped at Edom or Moab and could have spent five years here, conquering those territories; but God directed them to go around them; but with Sihon they stopped and conquered. Then

i. Victory over Og, King of Bashan 21:33–35. A fine territory north along the River Jordan, east of the Galilee Sea; a region of pastureland, a region which has been one of the most fertile and valuable sections of Palestine at many times in its history; and at other times it has been practically deserted. Great attractiveness, but with such a drawback that more than makes up for it. And that drawback, in a world of peace, would not be a real one; but in the condition the world has usually been in, it was a real drawback; that was, it had no natural defenses. It was a territory just about impossible to defend.

And these cities, with these big walls, and these big strong gates and so on, were necessary over there, because there is no natural frontier. It edges out into the wilderness; and how far it's fertile depends on how much rain comes at any particular time. It's the finest part of Palestine, and the most fertile. It is in many ways the best; but it is not a defensible section, and consequently there had been great civilizations there, which had not lasted long, but had been destroyed.

And Og's civilization had not been continuing very long, before the Israelites came; they conquered it; and now they had the whole area across the Jordan in their hands, And so we come to

j. Arrival in the Plains of Moab. Here they have conquered Trans-Jordan—that is the area just across the Jordan—edging up to the desert; they have conquered that, but the Jordan River is between them and Canaan proper. This is the arrival in the plains of Moab; and yet under our section of the Wilderness Journey, we have two more parts that I'm going to include.

E. The Balaam Incident.

This is an interesting interruption to the main narrative. We suddenly introduce a man we haven't heard of before; and yet we find him to be a worshipper of God; we find him knowing the Lord, calling him by his covenant name, the LORD. And we are introduced to a situation which the Israelites could have learned of only by hearsay, because they had no direct contact; but it is a very interesting section, and one which in the Christian circles, as a whole, is not properly understood. And so I asked you to turn in to me a statement on this, in which I asked you two distinct questions—in other words, four categories:

List all evidence that could be used to show that Balaam was: (1) a true prophet, (2) a false prophet; (3) a good man, and (4) a bad man.

Now to many people, prophets and good men are synonymous. That is to say they don't think necessarily that every good man is a prophet, but they think that a prophet is necessarily just about a perfect man. And we're nowhere told that a prophet was a perfect man; there never was a perfect man except the Lord Jesus Christ. But what is a prophet? Well ... it's interesting that our explanation of what a prophet is, is given us in the scripture.

According to the law of second occurrence, we find the second occurrence of the word prophet gives us a very clear idea of exactly what it means. I say second occurrence because the first occurrence tells us nothing about the word. The first occurrence is where God says to—was it Pharaoh or Abimelech?—he says Abraham is a prophet, and he will pray for you. And all we learn from it is that Abraham is a man whose prayers count with God. And we don't know anything about what a prophet is.

But the second occurrence of the word prophet is in Exodus 7:1. There was only one occurrence of the word in Genesis. In Exodus 7:1 we have the second occurrence of the word prophet.

Well, first before mentioning that, let me call your attention to the fact that the present-day idea of prophet is not a scriptural idea. If somebody today says a man is a prophet they mean, in secular life, he is able to predict the future. And that is not the Biblical idea of a prophet. We have prophets in the Bible who did practically no predicting of the future. A prophet is the only man who can correctly predict the future, and therefore it's easy for the transition to be made from the prophet to a predictor of the future. But the prediction of the future is only a part of the prophet's work, and not even a necessary part.

Well, what then is a prophet? This tells us right here. The word is used figuratively, and yet the figure shows exactly what it is: "And the Lord said unto Moses, see I have made thee a god to Pharaoh." Was Moses a god? Certainly not. Well, what does it mean then—I have made thee a god to Pharaoh? He meant he had put Moses in a position like the position of a god. He put him in a position where Pharaoh would recognize him as possessed of tremendous power that Pharaoh—who claimed to be the god of Egypt—Pharaoh had to recognize him, to reckon with him.

"I have made thee a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." That means Aaron is in a position—not that Aaron was a prophet—but that Aaron was in a position in relation to Moses, that a prophet would be in relation to God. And in fact, I believe it was in chapter 4, the same thing was

told in more literal language, without the use of the figure of speech of God and the prophet. We find it in Exodus 4:10–16,

And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? Or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

And in relation to Pharaoh, Moses is in the place of a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron in the place of a prophet. It makes it perfectly clear that a prophet is one who is a spokesman for a god. A prophet is a mouthpiece for God. A prophet is one whom God uses to express his ideas; he is God's mouthpiece. That is a prophet. Well, now, that I think is made thoroughly clear here, in this use. Now, if a prophet then speaks as God's mouthpiece, it stands to reason that he's the only man who can predict the future correctly, because no one but God knows it. No one else can predict it correctly. And since God can predict the future correctly, it is quite natural to expect a certain amount of prediction of the future from a prophet. And it has developed into a modern idea that that's what a prophet is—a man who predicts the future. But in the Bible a prophet is a man who speaks for God.

Now the modernists like to say: a prophet is not a foreteller but a forthteller. And this is one of those statements—which we every now and then find—which the modernists make, which is a correct statement; but which, as they use it, leads to a wrong interpretation or emphasis. When they say that he is not a foreteller but a forthteller, they are right; that the essence of a prophet is not one who predicts the future, but one who speaks out the message that God gives—one who is a forthteller. But if he speaks for God, then it is entirely right to expect that God may choose to foretell the future. So that a prophet, whenever he speaks of the future, is a forthteller, but he is secondarily a foreteller; he is primarily a forthteller, one who speaks the message God gives him.

Now in the Biblical sense, a prophet is not one who thinks over what he thinks God would want said, and then says it; nor is he one who reads the Word of

God, and studies it, and determines from the word of God what he wants said, and says it. In the strict sense, a prophet is one to whom God directly gives his message, and he passes it on. That's what a prophet is.

Consequently, there is a great deal that is said about the prophets that properly applies to anybody who is a true spokesman for God today. But the main, central essence of being a prophet is something that God has stopped for this age. He has given us his Word in its completeness. Now he wants us to study the Word. He does not, in this age, choose to give his message directly; that is not his habitual way of doing things. We have the Word and that is our source for our message.

Now then, if a prophet is a mouthpiece for God, what's the difference between that and the priest? Well, a priest has stated service to perform at regular intervals. A priest has service to perform on specific occasions; he has a definite, regular, routine work to do. A prophet speaks whenever God gives him a message. And therefore, a man may be a true prophet if God speaks to him once. But ever after—as far as his being a prophet is concerned, even one who was a prophet—we may continue to call him a prophet, but he is not being used as a prophet any more. God may choose to use a man as a prophet when he's twenty, and again when he's sixty, and never in between. Or he may choose to use a man a great deal as a prophet. But that is a basic distinction between a prophet and a priest.

The priesthood is an office. A man is put into the office of regular ceremony. He is inducted into that office. It is understood that he is the one who has the right and the duty to perform these ceremonies. A priest is an officer; a prophet is not an officer; there is no such thing as the office of the prophet, despite the many books that have been written in the last three hundred years claiming there is. They do not rest on any Biblical foundation. The Bible never says an office of a prophet. Prophecy is an activity rather than an office. God directs this man to use as his mouthpiece; and it may be that God will put a man through a long course of training before he uses him as his mouthpiece. Or maybe he just picks him up and uses him. It is not an office; it is a function of representing God as God's mouthpiece. That is extremely important for us to understand as we study the Old Testament.

People try to get the meaning of "prophet" by the studying the etymology of the word. Now etymology sometimes tells you exactly what something means. Like "constitution" is that which constitutes of the nation, so that the etymology tells you what constitution means. But when you get to a word like "dandelion" and "mushroom," why the etymology doesn't tell us anything about the word. Very often the words have developed in a direction away from their etymology.

Now in studying any Hebrew word, usage is the way to determine its meaning. But etymology is worth looking into; and very, very frequently etymology is tremendously helpful. In this particular case, this Hebrew word *navíy* (comes from a verb *naváh*) or something like that, and the only meaning they can find for such a root in Hebrew is to "utter a sound in a low voice", so they think of a prophet as one who is just so filled with his message that he bubbles over. Whether that's what it comes from I don't know, nobody knows. We know what the word *navíy* means, but how it developed in Hebrew before that, nobody knows.

Some of the Modernists have written extensive books, trying to figure out from the etymology what the prophets really were; and they try to make out that they were groups of ecstatic men who went around, got into all kinds of emotional upheavals, and then giving forth torrents of words; and it's purely imaginary, but there are two passages in the scripture which can be drawn upon to give support to their viewpoint. And in these two it describes Samuel as being with a group of people who evidently had certain ceremonies they went through which sound like a rather ecstatic sort of thing. And the first place was I Samuel 10:10 where Saul was searching for his father's asses that had been lost; and with Samuel he joined the prophets. The second case was I Samuel 19:24, where Saul was pursuing David; and he came to the place where Samuel was presiding over these prophets and he was caught with the emotion of the thing "And he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Well, if those two were the only references we had to follow in the Bible, we would tend to think that prophets were something like the dervishes in the Mohammedan world—people that would whirl around, and say certain words, and think thoughts that might be of great cosmic significance, or some thing about great spiritual ideas they were driving home by this tremendously emotional thing they were going through. But we have no other case in the Bible anywhere, except these two; and so it would seem to me likely that, under Samuel's direction, this group of people did go through certain occasions when they allowed their emotions to run free as they thought on the great things of the Lord; and Samuel kept a close hold on them to keep it from getting out of hand, and to keep it in the line of its central thinking; and Saul was just carried away with the emotions on those two occasions; but we have no reference to anything like it anywhere else in the Bible.

So it certainly is not the primary thing about the prophets—or even the usual thing—or we would have reference to it; but rather it seems to be something that developed about Samuel there. And it was that, giving just a little bit of support to this idea of some of the scholars that it is the bubbling over that represented the prophets. It's not impossible, of course—in the development of

language—that the word describing a man sort of bubbling over came to be applied by people who didn't understand certain individuals; and later it came to mean a mouthpiece. But in the scripture to mean a mouthpiece, that's perfectly clear from context, in every case except these two; and since in these two, Samuel is the leader and he was a mouthpiece for God on many occasions, these two don't contradict the others but simply bring in this one additional idea.

So the prophet then, in the scriptural sense, is the one whom God uses, and he is actually a prophet only while God is so using him. But it's rather natural to speak of a man as a prophet if he's ever been used in that way. But he's a prophet in the sense that we give a man a title if he's ever exercised a certain position; but actually he's only entitled to it when he's exercising the position. A man is a governor for four years; he's elected governor for four years, after that he's not governor anymore; but people are apt to call him governor the rest of his life. Well, a prophet is actually a prophet only when God is using him. But the priest is an office in a fixed sense; and there's that difference between the priest and the prophet; but whether we use the word office or some other word, I think there is a real distinction.

Yes? (Student: There was a certain amount of training that the prophets did receive from Samuel though, wasn't there?) There are instances where the prophets received a very considerable amount of training. But there are other instances where we have no evidence of their having any training. And there are some instances where we have pretty good evidence they received no training at all. Amos says, I was not a prophet nor the son of a prophet but God spoke to me. He says, I was a keeper of sheep and a dresser of sycamore trees, and God spoke to me as I followed the flock, and said Go prophesy to thy people Israel. And so Amos picked up and went. God just picked him in that situation and used him.

And there are times when God chose to do that; but ordinarily when it is, it is not a long extensive prophetic ministry. When he chooses to have someone, like Jeremiah or Isaiah, with a long difficult ministry, he's apt to give them a rather extensive preparation; but it's in no sense required. It is part of the requirement for being a priest. And of course today, we'd say a minister is different from a prophet, because he gets his message in a different way; but he has the same ultimate purpose as a prophet. Well today, since the way of getting the message is different, therefore, today training is almost always a requirement.

Today God does not speak right to the man and say "Here's message, give it out now." In which case sometimes a man will do that in the historical sense. Today God says "Here's the Word, study it." And one man can become a Christian, and in three days study of the Bible, can become so filled with love of Christ, and

knowledge of the basic things of the cross, that he may go out and preach wonderful sermons, and be wonderfully used of the Lord. But if one is going to be, not simply a presenter of the basic truths, but a teacher of scripture, he has the whole book which should be mastered; and under ordinary circumstances, it is far safer for him to have a thorough preparation, to know how to interpret the book, and how to present it in a way that will handle the Bible correctly.

So a prophet is different, because God says "Here's the message, give it." And the preparation there was not so much a preparation of understanding the message as it was preparation, perhaps, for withstanding the efforts to persuade him to change the message or to stop him from giving it.

Yes? (Student: Didn't Ahab have what you might call a school of prophets?) Yes, that's right. I believe that there was a tendency, doubtless, on the part of the king, and on the part of the leadership, when he was very successful, it was a tendency to want to have somebody else to perform that function. You remember [2 Chr. 18] when Ahab was visited by Jehoshaphat, Ahab said, "We must go against Ramoth-Gilead, it belongs to us," and Jehoshaphat said, "Well, I'm in league with you; whatever you say I'm willing to do." But Jehoshaphat said, "Is it the Lord's will we do this? Cannot we find a prophet to tell us?" And Ahab said "Sure, I've got a lot of prophets here. Come in here." So he called in his prophets. The prophets came in and they said, "Sure, go up to Ramoth-Gilead and take it, the Lord is going to give it into your hands," and so on. They had the office of prophet; he had them there for the occasion, ready.

But Jehoshaphat was suspicious. Jehoshaphat said, "Isn't there another prophet of the Lord we could ask?" And Ahab says, "Well, there is one here; but I don't like him; he always says what I don't like." See, he didn't have an office under Ahab; he was one whom God was using as a prophet. And so they called Micaiah in; they gave him good advice when he came in. They said, "All the prophets agree. Now you say the same thing they do, and you'll get along."

So Micaiah came in and he said the same thing they did. But he said it in such a tone that it was perfectly obvious that he didn't mean it; so after he finished that, then Ahab had to say, "Well, how often must I tell you: say what the Lord says. Don't give us anything just because you think it will please us." Then he went ahead and gave the truth. And then Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Didn't I tell you? He always says things I don't like." But there was a man who was a true prophet.

Well, back to Balaam. The question then is, "Is Balaam a true prophet? Or was he a false prophet?" And the question isn't, "Is he a good man?" It certainly isn't, "Is he a perfect one?" But this question is, "Is he a true prophet?"

And a man may be a true prophet—greatly used of the Lord—and then prove to be a bad man. That has happened. I know a man, when I used to speak at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles—just before I was there—there had been a student there who spoke on the street, what they call a sidewalk preacher. And there he spoke out on the sidewalk. You could speak to the crowd coming by. And this man gave a wonderful evangelistic message; and a man passing by accepted the Lord. And I knew the man who passed by; and he became a fiery spokesman for God; and he was a tremendously active fellow—very, very earnest and the Lord wonderfully used him. But the man whose message led this man to the Lord—soon after—this sidewalk preacher was proven to be a thief; a man who was stealing, and who was lying. He was fired from the Institute, and nobody ever heard of him again that I know of.

But it was his message that the Lord used, to reach this man who was such a sincere, earnest believer that nothing would stop him. And he had been won by a man who was a crook. That man was performing the part of the true prophet, because it was a true message he gave.

So "a true prophet" can be used in two different senses. Is he a true prophet in the sense that he's one whom God really has spoken to? Or is he a true prophet in the sense that he is one who is giving the message God wants him to give? Now of course the two are, in a way, identical; but they are two different aspects.

And now when we ask of Balaam, "Is Balaam a true prophet? Did God give Balaam messages?" Did God call on Balaam to speak for God? I don't think that anybody can deny that he did. Certainly Balaam was a true prophet in that sense. Secondly, was Balaam a true prophet in the sense that he gave the message God wanted to give him? Or did he adulterate the message? Did he say the things that Balak wanted him to say instead of the things that God gave? Nobody can deny that Balaam fearlessly faced Balak and gave the message that God gave him. Balak said, "I'm ready to give you great rewards," and Balaam said, "I can only say what the Lord gives me to say"; and he did. And he gave wonderful messages for many verses. It was the Word of God given through a prophet. Balaam was a true prophet; and there's much evidence that he was a true prophet; no evidence whatever that he was a false one. And this is absolute.

There are matters which are absolute; there are matters which are relative. As to whether one is a prophet or not, it is absolute. He is or he is not. But when it comes to the second question, "Is he a good man?" That is relative. Because there is no man living who is a good man, in the sense that he is free from imperfection. There's not. No man living who is as bad as the devil. We're all somewhere in between. And so, is he a good man or is he a bad man? You cannot specifically say he's a good man or a bad one. But you can find evidence

of good points and you can find evidence of bad flaws; and the sad thing is that in the end the bad flaws predominate.

So in the New Testament Balaam is pointed out as a terrible example. But if you take away the bad things he did at the end, you could find plenty of good things that Balaam did that are wonderful examples for us to follow. He was a complex character, as all human beings are; but a character who gave in to the bad things, and who in the end was mastered by them; and in the end, his name became a word of reproach, despite all the good he had done before. He became a castaway. And he's a terrible example of what can happen, even to one who has been greatly used of the Lord.

Now that, of course, is not entering in to the question of his salvation. Whether God will ever use as a spokesman one who is not saved, I don't know. If he would, then it would be possible that Balaam might have been one who was going along, interested in and trying to do good, but not really saved. It is hard to believe, because we find God actually telling him at night whether to go or not; we find him asking the Lord; we find the evidence which to me is pretty hard to reconcile with his being lost. But at any rate, he certainly departed very, very far in his life from the life of the Saviour; and toward the end he departed extremely far; and he is a bad example for us. But if you leave out the bad, he is about as good an example in the good part as almost anybody we'll find in the scriptures, of fidelity to the Lord, even at the expense of terrible loss.

Certainly Balaam was a true prophet. And his prophecy was fulfilled—the predictions—literally. And the statements in them are God's message, and can be taken as God's message, and we can rely upon them. But in his life he—in the end—sought ways of fulfilling Balak's wish; and in the end he suffered. In his wonderful prophecy he says, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like theirs!" But in the actual situation he died the death of the wicked, in the midst of the wicked, where he was helping to try to lead Israel astray to different gods.

The general question, first: Was Balaam a true prophet? Did he give the message God gave him, or did he just pretend to have a message from God? And the answer of course is that the scripture definitely says God gave Balaam messages.

And then the second question: Did he give God's message, or did he twist it around, did he change it? Well, there's no evidence in the least that he changed the message God gave him. He certainly—as far as scripture's presentation is concerned—he was a prophet, that is, a mouthpiece; one who received a message from God and passed it on. And he passed it on precisely; there's not the slightest evidence that he made the slightest change in any message he received from God.

Then the other question: Was he a good man or was he a bad man? And as far as that is concerned, we notice that he, like all other human beings, is neither utterly depraved nor absolutely perfect. As the story of Balaam starts, we have evidence to think that he was a good man, because he knew the Lord; he used the covenant name of God, not just God in the general sense, it is the *tetragrammaton*.

I don't know whether you're all familiar with that word. It is a Greek word meaning four letters, that is, *YHWH*. In our King James Version, it is represented by LORD in caps. When you have "Lord" [only first letter capitalized] in the King James Version, it represents *Adonai*, a Hebrew word which means Lord. But when you have it in capitals, "LORD", four capital letters, it is *YHWH*, and the critics are all agreed today that is pronounced Yahweh. Actually, we have no idea how it was pronounced. It may have been that; we don't know. Just about everybody is agreed that it was not pronounced Jehovah. And the ground on which they agree it was not Jehovah is the fact that we have evidence as to how the form "Jehovah" came into existence. The name *YHWH*, the Jews stopped pronouncing at a very early time, lest someone should take the name of God on profane lips. And very frequently, when they came to it in the Bible, they just said "the Name." But then the habit developed, instead of saying that, of saying "the Lord", and we also have God called the Lord, *Adonai*. But when this occurred they would just say the LORD.

Then our Hebrew Bible was originally written with just the consonants written. The Bible is words, but in the writing of these words only consonants were written. And the vowels were recognized usually from the context. And then the rabbis—somewhere between the fifth and eighth century AD—fearing the vowels would be forgotten, began putting these little marks above the letters to indicate what the vowels should be; they did not do that in synagogue manuscripts, but in popular manuscripts. When they came then to a word which they pronounced differently than the way it was written, they put in the vowels of the way they pronounced it rather than of the way it's actually written; so when they came to *YHWH* they put in the vowels of *Adonai*; and so they put the vowels the way they said it, and they'd say *adonai* when they came to *YHWH*.

Now thus far it has been absolute fact. Now here is perhaps a conjecture. Some monk in the early middle ages, knowing a little Hebrew, but not too much, when he came *YHWH* with the vowels of *Adonai* under it, he put these consonants and the vowels of *Adonai* together and got "Jehovah". Now that's conjecture. But it is a very reasonable conjecture because Jehovah is exactly that. You can get Jehovah by making it that way. Now it seems therefore quite unlikely that they actually pronounced the name as "Jehovah." They pronounced it as "Yahweh."

Now how did the ancient Hebrews pronounce it? Well, when you ask how a word is pronounced, I think one thing to remember is that pronunciations are constantly changing in all languages. English has got a great many vowels in it; Hebrew has comparatively few vowels in it. Our vowel quality is changing. The pronunciation of our consonants is changing; all languages are constantly changing in their pronunciation.

Consequently, you know, chances are that if somebody said George Washington came to life today, and he began to talk as he talked when he was living, perhaps nobody could understand him; because the pronunciation of each letter would have changed just enough in these two centuries to make it very, very difficult for us to understand anything that he said. Whether it's changed quite that much, I don't know. But it is a fact that for you to say exactly how anything was pronounced in the past is very, very difficult. You could give perhaps an approximate pronunciation but hardly an exact one. And so it really isn't very important to know just how it was pronounced. But I think this is very important to recognize just what it is in the proper name, not a general thing.

It's a crazy thing. In English, when we say "God," everybody thinks it's a proper name—God. But we say "the Lord" and everybody thinks it's like when you say the automobile, the president, the employer—the Lord. But actually when we say "the LORD," it represents the Hebrew proper name; and when we say God, it represents the Hebrew general term—the God, just like the term for the house, or the book. So it is exactly reversed from what the original was.

Now if you found Balaam talking to God in general—say, if you use that term in the Bible for the heathen god—then we translate it "god". Somebody could then say Balaam is a prophet of a false god; but when he speaks to Jehovah—however you pronounce it—the Bible is representing him as speaking to the very same God who was leading Moses. And then we find somebody who is offered a tremendous reward and says I can't touch a thing until I have found out what Jehovah says.

Personally, it doesn't seem to me to be of a great deal of importance how it was pronounced; but I rather like the word Jehovah because there is no question what it is; it is the spoken name for the God of Abraham. You don't take it for a common word like "people"; it is His proper name; and if it isn't the correct pronunciation, nobody knows the correct pronunciation anyway. And "Yahweh"—though it's probably a great deal nearer to the correct pronunciation—I don't like anyway, because it's used in so many critical books which talk about the Thunder-God of Sinai; and they associate the name with a mythological concept so much, that for me it has a flavor I don't like; but yet it's difficult to argue that it is incorrect.

But when you say "Jehovah", and Balaam asks Jehovah, "men have come; what shall I do?"—that is the mark of a good man. It's very hard to think he's utterly depraved when he asks Jehovah what he shall do; and to my mind, we will get more benefit out of the study of Balaam if we think of him as a man with very, very fine qualities who went astray; and take him as a terrible warning to us; than if we think of him just as a bad man from the start; if we just kind of look askance at him, and that's that. I don't think that's the way the scripture represents him.

I think Balaam had wonderful qualities; and there is many a true Christian leader who—as far as all the evidence goes, except for about three or four verses—would be far inferior as a man. But those three or four verses are tremendously important. But at the end of his life we find him falling into this terrible sin, and he didn't fall all of a sudden. Most people have previous tendencies when they do fall; but it pictures Balaam, in the great bulk, though not the most important part, as good.

(Student: In Joshua, Balaam is called a soothsayer.) Joshua 13:22, "Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them." Yes. Well, of course, the word "soothsayer" is an English word which means truth-teller. The word "sooth" is Old English for truth. And in Old English a soothsayer was a truth-teller; but what it meant was a man who could predict the future. And I'd have to look up the exact Hebrew word but I don't think calling a man a soothsayer necessarily proves him a bad man.⁸⁸ It does represent a man on a definitely lower level than a prophet, but—

Well, the same thing exactly is done with Samuel; when Saul went to find where his father's asses were, the seer was at this town that people went to, to ask questions like that. I think it's very likely that many of the people had that idea of Samuel, that he was a sort of a soothsayer. Actually, of course, Samuel wasn't; he was serving the Lord; but he was misunderstood by some of the people. This of course—the judgment given upon Balaam at his death—is a critical judgment which he fully deserved at that time. But the earlier statement here—to seek enchantments—there again we would have to check what the original word was; but in the previous cases, he put up altars, and he made sacrifices, and so on; but after doing so, he gave a message directly from God and strongly against Balak in each of these cases; so the meaning of this particular verse you point to here is that now, he just goes right out and starts giving the message.

And in Numbers 22 he isn't seeking for a message. God is coming upon him in force; and he's giving a prophecy, so that I don't think this particular verse here

⁸⁸ The word in Joshua 13:22 is *qasam*, generally "to determine by lot or divination" translated "diviner" or "soothsayer"

is against Balaam. But as to his character, there are two or three things I think it's rather vital for us to note.

1. The Summoning of Balaam. 22:2–40. And the first is that very, very excellent thing which Balaam did—in almost his first appearance to us—when the messengers came. Verse 8 is a wonderful verse and verse 19 is a terrible verse. Verse 8 is a verse which shows him acting as a true man of God should:

Lodge here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the LORD shall speak unto me

And verse 19 shows him acting as a true man of God should not; and yet the two verses are almost identical.

Tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the LORD will say unto me more.

Almost the same, and yet one is on the credit side of the ledger and other on the debit side. Here these men came to him and they said, "Balak wants you to curse this people. 'They're too mighty for me. You come and curse them for me, and I'll give you a big reward.'" Now Balaam might have said, "I know this man Balak; he's a bad man, I won't do anything he offers." He might have said that, but he didn't have enough knowledge to say that; because sometimes a bad man goes out for a good cause. You need further evidence before you've a categorical "no," simply on your knowledge of the man.

A man came to me in Wilmington, and he was a man who had a lot to do with putting Dr. Laird out of the Presbyterian Church. He lived there. And Dr. Laird was one of our leaders in the Seminary. And this man had a church a little ways away—thoroughly modernistic preaching—and he came to see me; and he said, "I've already gotten Dr. Laird to join with me in signing a petition; and he said he'd like you to sign as President of the Seminary—a petition to keep them from having a taproom over down here at a place that's half-way between the Seminary and my church." Well, I gladly signed it. He said, "Well I'm glad Dr. Laird and I can still cooperate on something." Well, we would not want to get together in any religious endeavor; but an endeavor to keep our part of town clean; he could carry weight as pastor of a church, or I could carry weight as President of a seminary, to try to keep the liquor out of that area, and we were glad to cooperate. Anything that he came to me with, I would investigate extremely carefully. I wouldn't think of saying, "Well, now you asked me to do this, fine I'll do it." I'd examine it very carefully. But I would not turn it down simply because he suggested it. I would examine it.

And Balak here has sent these people a long way, and Balaam might have investigated very carefully before he would join into anything with Balak, but

just to say, "No, it's from Balak, I'll have nothing to do with it," that was not the proper answer.

And then the second answer which he might give—which he would be less apt to give—but which some people give. The elders of Moab and the elders of Midian came with a big sum of money and they said, "Here's a reward for you." They said "You'll get all this money." Now a person might readily say, "Well if he's going to pay me all this money to do this, that's asking me to serve money instead of serving the Lord. I, of course, won't do that. I will say no immediately." And that is a tremendous lot better attitude than to say, "Yes, all this money's involved; I will do that." Better than that, but neither one is the correct attitude.

I had a friend living in Germany when I was there; he told me that ministers and Christian workers are too much looking for money. And he determined that the right way to serve the Lord was to say, "If I have offers of positions, I'll always take the one that pays the least. I'll take the position with the least money, the least honor—in every phase—and can honor the Lord in that way." And here was a man of great gifts and remarkable ability; and I gained the impression from the way he spoke, that he would soon be pastor of a little tiny church down somewhere; and he would insist on never taking anything any larger, for fear that it was the money or the prestige he was after. But I didn't hear of him for about fifteen years; and then I heard he was the President of a theological seminary of his own denomination. And if he is holding to the fine Christian learning that he had before—I haven't had opportunity to know—but if he is, I'm very glad for him to be in a position of real influence instead of a position of little influence.

I don't think the right attitude is the attitude that we must do whatever brings us least money or least honor. But it is a far better attitude than the attitude that looks to see how much the salary is, and then feels that must be the Lord's call to go. It's a far better attitude. The salary and the prestige, and all those things, should not be an argument for or against; but the sole purpose is how can I honor the Lord best, how can I serve him best?

So in this situation, money from Balak might make Balaam look askance at the thing—very definitely. But it should not decide him. He should investigate. He might even decide, "It's a good thing to do; I won't take money from Balaam, but I will do the thing." But he said, "Wait, and I will bring word again, as the Lord shall speak to me." So that night, God came to Balaam and said, "What men are these with thee?" Why did God have to ask Balaam that? God knew what the men were, but that helped Balaam to get the thing clarified in his mind, to express it clearly. It's always a good thing, when you're thinking a thing over, or when you're praying, to express it clearly in full, to see the full situation. And Balaam told him what they were, and then God gave the answer, "Thou shalt not

go with them; thou shalt not curse the people, for they are blessed." And the next morning Balaam said, "Go to your land; for the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you." And they went. And up to this point Balaam has acted as a good man should, exactly. He did not jump to conclusions without investigating carefully; he found out what the Lord's will was in the matter; once he found the Lord's will he used perfectly clear language what he was going to do. This is an example of a good man thus far.

But now Balak sent more princes, more honorable men, with more money; and he said "I will promote thee to very great honor, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest, and I pray thee, curse me this people." And Balaam answered and said, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God to do less or more." What better could you ask than that? Why did he make a statement like that? There is the example that a good man should set. "Now therefore, tarry this night, that I may know what the Lord shall say to me more. I've got to pray about this matter."

The whole situation does show an attitude of Balaam: that "I've got to get this money; I'm going to go, but I'm going to stand true." I've known plenty of young fellows who've taken exactly that attitude. I remember one fellow fifteen years ago—twenty years ago—he graduated from another seminary. I was teaching there at the time. He graduated and he took a strong position against the modernists in the church. It was the year before we broke with the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. He went before the Presbytery, and they questioned him on his loyalty; and he spoke in such a way as to show so long as they're true to the Lord, I will support them, but in such a way as to make it clear he was going to stand for what was true; he was very uncertain whether he would get into the Presbytery.

Oh, he was so concerned with the stand for the Word of God, that I remember he developed stomach trouble; his doctors told him it was the sort of thing they find in policemen. It was because of his nervousness, his concern, the stand for the Word. And it was a year later that the rest of us went out and left the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. Well, he stayed in it; and he said, "I'm going to stay in; I'm going to stand for the Word of God; I'm going to stand absolutely true." That's twenty years ago; and I didn't hear of him for twenty years—till last year, when there was the union of the Presbyterian Church and the United Church; and I'm not even sure which of the two he was in now; but in the General Assembly at the Union Meeting, he was the one who spoke most strongly against those who wouldn't come into a union; and he proposed taking their property away from them. He had gradually moved during the years, till that man—who was so out and out—giving in a little, and then a little more, and a little more; and always saying, "I'm going to stand for the Lord and for His Word and not make any compromise." In the end he was actually one of the first to do so.

And that's what happens so often; and it does happen so easily. It's not the great crimes that make a crook; it's the first step in that direction. And it's not the great step that determines in our lives—as a rule; occasionally we stand at a great crossroads, but as a rule there's a little deviation, a little bit, a little, a little, and we can always say I'm going to stand absolutely true.

Well, Balaam said, "I'm going to stand absolutely true." And I would interpret what follows now, this way. I would interpret it that the Lord said, "Here's Balaam, and he could say no and stand here and not work with these forces of evil against Israel at all; but he thinks you can stand true to the Lord and at the same time get the rewards of iniquity." Well, he can't get them as long as he stands true. Balak says, "You've lost your chance. I would have given you great honor, now you don't get anything." And in the end Balaam got his reward only in doing what was wicked; even though it was not by changing the word of God. But he did other things that were wicked in the end, or he'd have gotten no rewards.

Now here's Balaam, Balaam is going. "All right," the Lord says, "I'm going to use Balaam, even though he shouldn't go, I'm going to use his testimony as he goes." And therefore, the Lord says, "I'm going to do everything in the situation to strengthen Balaam's determination to speak only the Word of the Lord." And so, as Balaam starts out, God's anger was kindled because he went. God had just said "Go," in his permissive will; but God's directive will was against his going; and God was determined to use what he did for God's purpose, and so to strengthen his determination for this particular situation. That would not eventually make Balaam a good man, but it would strengthen him for this particular vital situation.

And so the angel of the Lord stood in the way as an adversary against him. And, of course, Balaam couldn't see him; the ass could, though, and the ass turned out of the way. And Balaam smote the ass to turn her into the way. And then the angel of the Lord stood further on; and the ass saw the angel of the Lord, and thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall; and he smote her again. And the angel of the Lord went further and stood in a narrow place where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left; and when the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she fell down under Balaam and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff. And the Lord opened the mouth of the ass.

Did the Lord give the ass a human intelligence and understanding and a knowledge of the Hebrew language? It doesn't say so; it just says he opened her mouth. But the Lord opened the mouth of the ass so she could talk; and she said to Balaam, "What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?" And Balaam was so upset, and so excited about the way the ass

had been treating him, that he didn't even notice how strange it was that it began talking. He answered it back, and said to the ass, "Because thou hast mocked me."

We may laugh at Balaam, but we all do the same thing. If we're really concerned with a situation, we'll talk to an automobile or a horse or anything else; and we'll treat them as if they were human beings; and it's a silly thing to see people taking out their anger on animals, and mistreating animals because the animal's not done what they wanted them to. When the animal couldn't even understand just what they wanted them to do. But how much sillier to take out our anger on an inanimate object? Very foolish, but a thing I think we all should be alert about.

Well, anyway, Balaam answered, and he said, "Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, or now would I kill thee." And up to this point he doesn't actually have to speak; but now the ass has a real understanding when it proceeds with verse 30.

And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? Was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay.

It's really intelligent now. The ass doesn't just say, "Look there's an angel in the way, I can't just go there." The ass brings a Socratic argument—presents to him a reasonable argument—that he, before becoming angry at the ass which he had known a long time and it had never before acted like this, that he should investigate. And it's a good lesson for all of us too. It's so easy for us, when we have been with people and have reason to have confidence in them, then to get all upset and to turn upon them about something they do, instead of first investigating the circumstances; instead of saying, "Maybe this person just went haywire all of a sudden, and does things that actually are contrary to what I would expect of them; but more likely they have a reason. Before I show anger against them, I should give them the benefit of the doubt and see if the reason is one worth knowing."

And so the ass shows very fine intelligence in this approach here, Am not I thine ass upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? Was I ever accustomed to do this way? And he said, Nay.

Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face.

And nobody seems to—that I ever heard of—think it was a very strange thing that the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam so he could see the angel of the Lord.

That's perfectly simple. To realize that God has forces that people don't see; and that God could open our eyes that we would see them, and believe them. But with God there's no difference. But that he opened—not the eyes of Balaam—but that he opened the mouth of the ass so it could talk, that is something of a different pattern; it is a much more complex thing. It's a common thing for us to have our eyes opened, so that we understand something we would not understand otherwise, so that we see aspects of truth.

I've known people who heard doctrines presented in seminary—and they hear and they hear and they hear it—and they offer the same argument against it over and over and over, maybe for three years; always the same argument, same argument, same argument. They're never satisfied; and they're given the answer and it's always the same answer and they come up with the same argument; and sometimes all of a sudden, they say, "Now I see it." Their eyes are opened, they see, they understand. It's a common factor of life. And if there's a God; if there is an unseen universe; it is not at all strange that God should open a man's eyes that he could see the angel of the Lord. That we have no difficulty with. But that he would open the mouth of the ass and cause the ass to talk, that is something which is very unusual; some would say, "The Bible is just a bunch of fables; it's like Aesop's fables, talking animals, and all that."

Well, anybody that says that doesn't know much about the Bible; because I only think of two cases in the Bible where animals talk. Of course we have occasionally a parable that is clearly a parable, clearly figurative, but in something given as straight history we only have two instances in the Bible, that I know of, where animals talk.

And in one of these instances it's clear that Satan used the serpent for his purpose; and the serpent was Satan's spokesman, even though the serpent spoke in its own person, it was his instrument. In this case, the voice of the ass of course is God's, even though the ass speaks in his own person. So... did the ass now acquire the power of speaking, so that for the rest of his life he kept on talking? Did the ass now get a power of speaking so that it was able to have human intelligence the rest of its life? We certainly have no evidence that either of those things is true. We would certainly have no reason to think that the ass ever talked except on this occasion. That there was any permanent change in the mind, the intelligence, the linguistic knowledge of the ass, or in the ability of its mouth to frame words.

And the result was much more effective on Balaam's mind, than if the angel of the Lord had stood there, such that Balaam looked and saw the angel right away, perfectly clear and obvious, and the angel said Balaam you shouldn't have gone. That would impress him, but this impressed him a hundred times more. And it impressed Balaam to such an extent, that that man who was wavering in his loyalty to God, was strengthened in his determination to stand and say only

what God said; and when he reached Balak the very first thing he said to Balak, "Lo, I am come to thee, have I now any power at all to say any thing? The word that God puts into my mouth, that shall I speak." And he proceeds and he defends Israel; and he attacks Balak's people in the strongest of language; and it was God's intention that this prophecy should be given at that time, in that way, presenting this; and if Balaam, when he'd finished, had left and gone home, he would not have been as deserving of credit as if he had stayed home in the first place. But still he would be a man who would up to a point be a wonderful example of one who was a true messenger of God. But we find that compromise leads to compromise; and though God strengthened Balaam so that he would give the prophecy exactly as God wants him to; yet after that, Balaam's mind was so filled with all the rewards he could have had, that he proceeded to show Balak how, without in any way changing the word of God, yet using the word of God to destroy Israel.

He said, "God is a good God; God is supporting these people; now, he said, you put enticements to wickedness in front of them which they won't be able to resist; and God cannot defend a wicked people; he will have to destroy them." God did destroy them eventually, but Balaam was acting still in belief in God's great goodness and holiness, that God would not look upon wickedness; and so if you could make the people wicked, naturally God would destroy them. It was a perverted form, and in the end he became a thoroughly bad man. We don't have much evidence of the details but enough to make this judgment.

Now we have in Numbers 25, immediately after this, an account of the wickedness of Balak. But chapter 25 does not state that Balaam showed them how to do this wickedness. If it were not for other statements, I don't think you would know; but there is that statement [Num 31:8] that Balaam the son of Beor they slew with the sword. We have, as you said, that statement in the New Testament [2 Peter 2:15], that he showed them how, that he led them astray, and of course we have it here in verse 25 exactly what happened. And if he had gone to his home as he should have, instead of staying with them, he wouldn't have been there to be killed.

2. Balaam's Prophecies. 22:41–24:24. There are one or two of the prophecies I want to look at very briefly, and then we must rush on. There's the summoning of Balaam and then the Aftermath—that is the seduction of the Israelites which was produced through Balaam's advice.

Now we notice that there is abundant evidence that Balaam was a true prophet. He was one who knew the Lord. He uses the covenant name; he asks the Lord what he shall do. He declares he can do nothing except what the Lord tells him. We are told that the Lord spoke to him. The Lord gave him messages, and he passed on those messages. A false prophet may be one who pretends to receive messages when he does not receive messages; or he could be one who perhaps

receiving a message, falsified it, and gave it incorrectly. We have not the slightest suggestion that Balaam did either of these things. There is no suggestion he ever pretends to be a Prophet when he was not, or that he ever gave a message which had not been given him by the Lord.

So you take all the messages that he gave as from the Lord; and it's pretty hard to conceive of any of them as having been invented by him, because no one of them contains a word that would be for his interest or for his wealth; they were all against his welfare, but for the welfare of what God desired. The fact that they were against his welfare wouldn't prove they were true. But certainly, if they had been for his welfare it would've been easier to prove they were false.

Well, then, we have no evidence that he was a false prophet; we have much evidence that he was a true prophet. Is there any evidence that he was a false prophet? Does anyone have evidence to suggest on that point? There is evidence that can be presented that he was a bad man, but that does not prove him a false prophet. But is there evidence to suggest he's a false prophet? I know of one piece that might be presented.

The Bible does have some examples of false prophets. One example is where Ahab calls in the prophets, in 1 Kings 22, right along near there. Ahab called in the prophets, and he said, "Shall we go to capture Ramoth Gilead or shall we forbear?" And all the prophets said, with one voice, "Go! The Lord is going to give it into your hands." And Jehoshaphat said "Is there some other man we could ask what the Lord's will is?" And they called in another man; and when Micaiah came, they said to him, "Make your word like these men if you're going to get ahead." Well, Micaiah came in, and he said that what the Lord had given him was the exact opposite of the message he had given them. So either they are false prophets or Micaiah was a false prophet, because their message was the exact opposite.

Now of course there are false prophets of Baal, who prophesied in the name of Baal. That would be one kind of false prophet—one who claimed to be a prophet, but the prophet of a false god. But these in 1 Kings 22, who prophesied there, are men who claim to be prophets of the Lord; but whose claim is belied; they were false prophets.

There are a good many instances in the Old Testament of false prophets. And there are people who say Balaam was a false prophet, but we have noticed much evidence that he was a true prophet. We notice a great deal to show that he was a true prophet. Now does anybody have some evidence to present on the other side?

I think it is very foolish to take any question and go to the Bible simply to find evidence on one side of it. The Bible is a book of truth; and your conclusion

should be definite on anything on which the Bible gives us a definite answer. It does not answer all questions of course; but if it does, your answer should be definite; but you should go looking for evidence on all sides, not just on one.

Too many people have been deceived with knowing what they wanted to find before they went to the Bible. They go for proof instead of going to know what God's word is. And so no matter how sure you are of your answer, you—if you do it right—you should look for evidence on the other side; see if anything you can find might—from any conceivable way—be interpreted as being on the other side; and then having done so, examine it carefully and see just how definite it is. And of course the Bible, being a book of truth, in the end you'll find it all fits together on one side or the other. But do it carefully and fairly.

Now, for your papers which you turned in, I said: list evidences to show (1) he was a true prophet, (2) he was a false prophet. Surely, some of you must have given evidence on your papers that he was a false prophet; because I don't believe you can get together with a group of Christian ministers of this size, anywhere, without at least a third of them saying that Balaam was a false prophet. In fact, I spoke once in a seminary less than ten miles from here; I spoke in the Seminary to the students on the subject of Balaam; and I met considerable criticism when I said he was a true prophet. They had it drummed into their heads that he was a false prophet.

I thought that the only passages it would be possible to change it over to "bad man", were the "words of divination" and then the enchantments. Those two seemed to suggest that possibility; and then the fact that God overruled in this case; those taken together might suggest that there was an approach, made from the standpoint of a heathen prophet, unto the gods. I think those should have been observed by everybody. I would be pleased if everybody listed them on your lists.

Now it says these messengers came to him with the rewards of divination in their hands. They came to him with money as a reward for divining; and certainly that sounds as if he was one who was performing heathen rites. I think that it is true that these heathen who came to him, looked upon him as a wonder worker who could do marvelous things; and who, for a reward, might give them what they wanted.

But that doesn't prove that's what he really was. Because an exact parallel to it would perhaps be found in the case where Simon, in the New Testament [Acts 8], in Samaria went to the apostles; he saw them laying their hands on people, and they received the Holy Spirit. He offered them money; he said, "Give me this power, that I can put my hands on people, and they would receive the Holy Spirit." Well, these apostles didn't have the power to put their hands on somebody and they'd get the Holy Spirit; they didn't have that power at all. God

simply used them as indications of his intention to give the Holy Spirit. It was not a power which was in them. But Simon was utterly confused about the matter. He had an entirely heathen viewpoint on it; but the thing of which he had the heathen viewpoint was not heathen.

And so their coming with rewards of divination, they might be rewards for divination to them; but if the prophet proceeded to do what was entirely right and true to God, and they still gave him that, he could consider it as a recompense for his time and effort, even though they considered it as something else.

It would, of course, be much better that he didn't consider it as they did. But the use of the term "divination" in this case, I don't think proves he was a false prophet but it certainly is a point to look at.

(Student. Does this compare with Saul going to the witch of Endor in I Sam. 28:7?) No, I wouldn't think so at all. For one thing, they thought they were doing differently. Balaam said, "I must ask Jehovah what His will is," and the next morning he said, "Jehovah says I may not go with you." The witch was one who had a familiar spirit; she did not think she was dealing with the Lord. She knew she was doing something the Lord had forbidden; so quite different. Now she would be similar to, perhaps, to what Balaam thought they wanted, but not to what he thought himself.

His action proves he was a bad man; very definitely. But unless he gave the counsel as coming from the Lord—if the text said he presented the counsel as the Lord's message—that would prove he was a false prophet; but in fact, that's not correct. It's certainly not in that case.

Well, I would say it's like this: here is a man who is a good artist; and here is another man who is a bad artist. Well, I'd be a bad artist. I'd stand up here, and I would try to make a picture of one of you; and somebody might think it represented an entirely different person here; someone else might think it was the picture of a dog or a cat. I would be a very, very bad artist. But here is another man. He comes in here, and he is a wicked man; he is a thief; he is indecent; he is immoral; he is perhaps a murderer. But he can come in here, and he can take a piece of chalk; he rubs it over this board; and in a few minutes, you have a picture that thrills us as we see the symmetry and the beauty of that which he has presented on the board. I would say he was a good artist but a bad man. Myself, I'd say, I was a bad artist; I'd hope you'd say I was a good man. But you see, our term "good" can be taken as being a moral term, or it can be taken as being a term for being skilled or correct in the thing you claim to be.

Here, it all rests on the interpretation of the word "prophet". Now if the word "prophet" means a good man, then there might an argument be made that Balaam was a bad prophet in the sense that he was a bad man. But if "prophet" means one whom God used as his mouthpiece, we have a tremendous amount of evidence that God used Balaam as his mouthpiece; and then when Balaam said that he was giving God's message, he was giving the message that God gave to him.

So that, just as a man who was a bad man could be a good artist, I would say that Balaam—even if we have evidence in [Numbers] 31:16 that he proved to be a bad man—we have no evidence in these three chapters that prove him to be a bad man. But we do have evidence in these three chapters that prove that he was a true prophet.

(Student. By their fruits shall ye know them.) Yes, well, the fruit of Balaam's prophesying was a message which came out absolutely true; and his predictions of the future were literally fulfilled, and gave the message that God desired him to give about his chosen people. By his fruit as a prophet, you would know him to be a true prophet. By his fruit as a man, you would know him to be a bad man. I think that would be true.

Of course, right there I think of a word of warning to give. The bad things that Balaam did there, might be taken to immediately prove that he was a thoroughgoing wicked man who was lost. Now I don't think that necessarily follows. I'd rather leave that for chapters a little further on. But it is possible that he was a man who had fallen into sin, or at least into serious error. It's entirely possible that that was the situation.

But under this head of the true and false prophet, Mr. Shellabarger has mentioned to you the rewards of enchantment; and whenever you hear of a man being offered rewards of enchantment, you immediately suspect him of being one who is performing sorcery—that which is contrary to God's teaching—and in most cases you will be right. But there are cases where the people's idea of what the man is, and what the man really is, are entirely different.

And Christian people, having an idea of a man, which when you hear, it prejudices you very much against the man; but when you get to know the man, you'll find they were entirely wrong in their judgment. You occasionally come across cases like that—not often—but I have occasionally done so; and I wouldn't take other people's judgments too much one way or the other. You'll find people that others are convinced that they thoroughly good and wonderful men but may prove not to be.

But now Mr. Shellabarger referred to another point which I think also is very important to know. It says in chapter 24:1,

And when Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he went not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness. And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him. And he took up his parable, and said,

Balaam lifted up his eyes and then he gave a message about Israel. And he went not as at other times to seek for enchantments. That certainly sounds as if on the other times he had done that which dealt with the nature of enchantments, rather than with the nature of a true deliverance of God's prophecy. But we look at the other times to see what he did. What would this word "enchantment" mean? Right here we come face to face with the central problem of the difference between magic and religion. And it is a very vital difference, and sometimes it is difficult to be sure whether something is magic or whether it is religion.

But the difference is this—that magic is an attempt to compel the deity to do what you want him to do; that is magic—while religion is an attempt to bring yourself in line with the will of the deity. That is the difference between the two. Magic is taking supernatural forces and thinking you can control them for your purpose. Religion is seeking to bring yourself into proper relation to the supernatural forces in order that they may work their will in you. That is the vital difference, though there are many, many Christians—at least nominal Christians—who have an idea of Christianity which is a magical idea. They think that by going to church; by performing certain rites; they secure for themselves that which will make them happy and successful.

I saw an article once—about twenty-five years ago—in a magazine on the subject of tithing. And this magazine mentioned certain great leading businessmen, they were tried for bribery; there were two of them, one was convicted and one was not; but one of them was convicted and sent to prison. The one I have in mind is Sinclair, the father of the Sinclair Oil Company. Now he and Doheny were both tried; and one of them was sent to prison, I forget which.⁸⁹ The evidence would seem to be they were both equally involved, in the Teapot Dome matter.

Well, at any rate, this article—I'm quite sure I remember correctly—said that Sinclair had made a pledge as a young man that he would tithe, give gifts, to God, one tenth of everything that he earned. And it mentioned others who had also done so; and then it went on to show how these people had become very

⁸⁹ [dcb] This was a politically motivated trial called the "Teapot Dome Scandal". In the end they were found not guilty of bribery but Sinclair served 6 months for contempt of congress.

wealthy. And then it had a psychologist's discussion; and this psychologist stated that these individuals thinking of themselves as in league with deity, because of their pledging to give a tithe, were thereby strengthening their emotional attitudes and as a result showed greater skill and greater ability than would otherwise be the case; and that that was the reason why these men had become so wealthy—these men who tithed.

Well, of course, if a person would tithe; and believed thereby he would force God to make him wealthy; I'm sure he wouldn't get the least bit of credit in the hereafter for tithing; and the same is true of any other Christian thing that we do. If we do it to force God to do something good for us, which is magic, that is not religion.

Well, now, in this case, now enchantments then are usually magic; they are usually the attempt to do something that compelled deity to do what you want him to do. And there are many Christians that think that the most important services of the Christian church can be treated as magic, and understood as magic; and in any large group of people, there are some who consider that which they do as magic, and thereby force God to do something for them.

Well now, was that the nature of what Balaam had done before? Well, Balaam said "Build me seven altars and prepare seven oxen and seven rams"; and he said "Stand by thy burnt offering and I will go, peradventure the Lord will come to meet me, and whatever he shows me I will tell thee."

He does not say, "The Lord will come and will give you the victory over Israel that you want." He says, "Perhaps he will come, and whatever he shows me I'll tell you." It was an attempt on Balaam's part to learn God's will, not an attempt to force God in line with his own will. And the three times it was done—that he put up altars, and then the Lord spoke—the answer which Balaam gave was just the opposite of what Balak wanted in every case.

And now, what is his purpose now as we read it here? When he saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not as at other times to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness, and lifted up his eyes and saw Israel abiding in his tents. He now did not need sacrifices or altars or anything in order to try to find what the Lord's will was; he could simply look at Israel and that would give him the answer. There is in it no attempt to force the deity to do his will and accomplish his purpose, but it is a means used to try to get God to tell them what his will is.

And we find an exact counterpart to it in the case of Elisha in 2 Kings 3, when Elisha was in the wilderness and the King of Judah and the King of Israel came to Elisha, and said "Elisha we are here and there's no water. Has the Lord

brought these three kings out here—the King of Edom was with them—in order to have us die of thirst in the wilderness?"

Elisha looked at the King of Israel and he said "If it wasn't for the presence of the good King of Judah, I wouldn't look at you or say anything. But now," he said, "I will try to find what the Lord's will is, for the sake of the King of Judah."

He said, "Bring me a minstrel," and they brought him a minstrel, and he said "Play, and he played." and when he played Elisha prophesied, and Elisha said, "You will see no rain, you will hear no water coming down, but the ditches will be full of water. Build ditches here, dig dams here and they will be full of water." And they immediately got busy and dug the ditches; and it rained way up in the country where they couldn't see it at all; and the water came flowing down and filled their ditches, and they had plenty of water.

Well, in that case, Elisha used a means, which in the hands of the heathen would be an enchantment; but in Elisha's case, I would say, he played the instrument of music in order to quiet his own soul, which was so upset in the presence of this wicked king of Israel, to the point where he could hear the voice of God and see what his will was in the matter.

This word "enchantment" suggests that he was a false prophet, but examination of the passage yields up the opposite conclusion; though it certainly could be set down as an evidence looking at first sight in the direction of being a false prophet—but on examination, not proving it. It doesn't prove the opposite itself, but the context proves the opposite.

Well, anyway, the two questions, is he a true prophet or a false prophet? The third and fourth, was he a good man or was he a bad man? And when you take the first thing he did, he certainly was a good man. People come with rewards and they say, "You come, you're to curse this people and I'll give you a reward," and he says, "You wait, I'm going to go and see what the Lord says." That was the act of a good man, to go slow and get the Lord's will before acting. And then the next morning, Balaam said to them, "Go to your land, the Lord refuses to give me leave to go with you." That was the act of a good man, refusing to be led by the gifts into doing that which was not the Lord's will.

But then they came back with more money and more honorable messengers; then they asked him to come, and then Balaam said to the servants of Balak, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more." That certainly was the act of a good man to say that; but then he said, "Now therefore, I pray you, tarry you also here this night that I may know what the Lord will say unto me more." That was the act of a bad man. It was the act of a good man to say exactly the same thing before; now that he knew the Lord's will, it was the act of a bad man. But

there's no man living, no matter how good he is, who has not occasionally lapsed as far as that; there's no man except the Lord Jesus Christ who ever kept true, who did not do that action some time.

Then Balaam spoke to the Lord and evidently in such a way that the Lord said "Go." The Lord gave him his permissive will to go; "But say the thing I say, don't give in to them." That was not the Lord's directive will, ever, for a righteous man to go under wicked auspices, where wicked men think they are going to use him. It's never the Lord's will. But there are men who, under those circumstances—under the permissive will of the Lord—do; and do a real service, but it's not the best.

Then the next morning the Lord caused the ass to speak and then the angel spoke to Balaam, and the purpose of it there, of course, was to strengthen Balaam in the intention that Balaam already had spontaneously: if he went, to say only what God wanted, because the Lord was determined to use him for God's purpose.

So at this point, the evidence is a little bit on the side of his being bad rather than good. But I mean all people have that much evidence in their lives. Now he goes; and here he faces Balak and says exactly the opposite of what Balak wants him to say; he gives four messages and in everyone of them he praises Israel; he says that God is going to bless Israel; he says everything exactly opposite of what Balak wants—a wonderful example of constancy and determination and standing for the truth of the Lord.

And if we had nothing more beyond chapter 24, I would think undoubtedly we must say he was a very good man. But when one gives in, to the point he did, and follows the permissive will rather than the directive will of God; even though he stands true to God—and he does—he puts himself in serious danger as Balaam did. And so when the chapter ends, he rose up and went to return to his place; and Balak also went his way; you would think, from that, that Balaam had gone back up to where he lived in Mesopotamia and left the whole business; but when you get over to chapter 31, you find that's not true. It must have been he just went to his tent, in amongst the forces of Balak. Because in chapter 31, you find that, when the Israelites fought against the Midianites, verse 8 says, "Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword." So we learn he was still down there among those wicked men. And that's the great danger, when one goes to bear a testimony to the Lord, under auspices under which he should not go; he may accomplish something for a time for the Lord, but there's grave danger of his staying there to eventually be caught up with their disbelief.

And then in verse 16 we learn much beyond that; because verse 16 says, "Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to

commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor; and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD." And so we know that Balaam gave them advice which led to their seducing the children of Israel.

Well, now it's easy to see what his advice was. Balaam said, "God, is holy; God is righteous; God cannot bless iniquity. Now then," he says, "God being so holy and so righteous," he said, "Balak, I can't curse Israel because God blesses them. I can't give you a prediction from God, because God has given me the opposite; but," he said, "Balak, God is a holy God, he is a righteous God. If you should lead the children of Israel into iniquity, God can't keep on blessing them; he will have to start cursing them, and God will spew them out of his mouth."

And Balaam's idea was entirely right, God will spew out of his mouth those who do wickedness; but it was not the action of his message to lead them to wickedness. That was a case where it could just be, that Balaam must have been so disappointed when—with all his loyalty to the Lord and his standing true and giving the message—he ended up with absolutely nothing for his pay. And he said, "Well, what's the use? I'm going to get something out of this for myself. I can at least tell them how holy God is, and they can get their result by this approach which will recognize the holiness of God instead of opposing it." And Balaam there advised them and brought upon himself the terrible fate that came.

And there's many a man that has been marvelously used of the Lord; who has spoken for the Lord; and presented his word and stood for his truth and was used of the Lord; who has become discouraged and disheartened and dissatisfied; and has let himself become an agent of iniquity. It's very easy for us to sit here in chairs and say, "Well now, here's what's right and there's what's wrong, and I would never think of falling into a thing like that." But many very, very fine people have; and we need to live very, very close the Lord in order to avoid that.

I was talking with a man not long ago who was working for a very fine Christian organization. He was doing publicity work for them; and I was much interested in the work he was doing; and I said to him, "I wonder what experience you've had at this? What is your background?" "Oh," he said, "I've worked for this institution for five years, and for that institution for five years, in their publicity work." And the two institutions he named sounded to me like institutions that would take quite a different stand than the one he was now working in; and I was a bit surprised, and I said to him, "Well, you must have found it rather difficult to write publicity material and advertising material to raise money, and get help and so on, for those two institutions which have such a different view from the one you're working for now." "Oh, no," he said, "a person can do this work objectively. They tell me what the ideas are they want to get across, and I prepare folders and articles and statements to get those ideas across."

Well, actually, I believe I'm right in thinking that he now is there working for that in which he believes, and is doing what he wants to do now; but along the way, when no position opened up to use his talents for that in which he did believe, he felt that he could objectively use them in favor of that which was just a little bit removed from what he believed. And I think he was putting himself into a terribly dangerous situation. I think he was putting himself in a situation which could easily have led him into sin just as bad as that of Balaam—a very dangerous position. But it is typical of the sort of temptations that will come to every Christian sometime in his life—if he's any good at all; along the way he's going to have that sort of temptation.

So I feel that instead of saying, "Oh, look at that wicked man Balaam; we will just have nothing to do with anybody like that," I feel that, instead of that, we can look at him a little bit more sympathetically and objectively; and we can see a warning for ourselves in it, in the way that a man who had so much good in him, as Balaam did, could fall like that. I don't say that any of us who really believe in the Lord could ever be lost; but I do say we can be saved as by fire, and have much more to regret in our life than we have to be thankful for. And unless this group of people facing me today is very, very different from any group of comparable size that I've ever faced in my life before, there will be some here who thirty years from now will look back; and it will be obvious that they are in exactly that situation. I've never known a group of this size of young people anywhere in my life that some have not, in the course of the next thirty years, fallen very, very far away from the things of the Lord—I've never had any one—and I've been in some mighty fine groups of people. But those that I've known twenty or thirty years later, there have always been some—and often some of those whom you would least expect—some of those who seem strongest and clearest in their testimony, who have been one of the ones who have drifted along.

I know a man not connected with any group I'm connected with; but he told me of a couple of groups he was with, where there were two men who were just outstanding. He said to me, "It's lucky those two men are Christians; because, if they weren't, and they did the things that they do in Christian work in other things, they'd both be in jail." Now that's what he said about them; and he was working very closely with them, and thinking very highly of them. I notice now he's broken with one of them; but I don't know why that is. I haven't seen him lately. But the fact is that there are men whom God wonderfully uses who in their personal life have many reprehensible characteristics; and God will judge them for these characteristics, but He is still using them.

On the other band, I know of modernist preachers who are among the finest, most gracious, most loving people you'd ever want to know, and who in their ethical life and in their character just seem to be just the finest examples. Now

it's my contention that in every case that they're like that, you will find a real Christian background; they're living on the Christianity of their parents, of their upbringing; but that would be difficult to prove. But it is a fact that there are very, very good people, ethically, who are working against the Lord; and there are people with very serious faults whose message the Lord has wonderfully used. Now these are the exceptions, they are not the rule.

I've had lots of people say to me, "Well the fundamentalists have got good doctrine, but most of the modernists have got the character; they've got the real love in their hearts and the real character." Now that is absolutely false. Because if you take the fundamentalists, and the modernists—and take them all—my contention is that you would find that the ethical character of the fundamentalists is two or three hundred percent higher than the ethical character of the modernists; but there are striking exceptions in both, very striking exceptions. And so I think it is helpful to us in our thinking to separate between the two. And I think it would be a shame if, on account of the great detestation which we should have for the wicked ending of Balaam's life—if on account of that—we would fail to see the wonderful example he set up to a point, that he stood so true to the Lord and gave his message so faithfully.

In your preparation, I asked you to look at Numbers chapter 24:17–19. Here is a passage which is very, very widely misunderstood, in my opinion. Here we find that he says,

I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.

When I was teaching in another Seminary—before Faith was founded—I remember one time, right at Christmas, when the President of the Seminary in the chapel service read this passage as an appropriate Christmas passage, evidently thereby taking the interpretation of it, which is very widely taken, that this is a Messianic passage in which Balaam predicts the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now is it a passage in which Balaam predicts the Lord Jesus Christ? What does he say about him?

"I see him, but not now, I behold him, but not nigh." And certainly Christ didn't come for centuries after Balaam's prophecy.

"There shall come a star out of Jacob." Well, Jesus was certainly a star out of Jacob.

"A Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." He was certainly a sceptre out of Israel, wasn't he?

"And shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth." Well Christ brought salvation to all people of all lands.

"And Edom shall be a possession, Seir shall be a possession, Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion."

Is this a picture of Christ? Well, I think that if you say somebody is going to be born in Bethlehem, that doesn't necessarily talk about Christ—though Christ was born in Bethlehem. If you say something that could fit Christ, it doesn't necessarily prove it's talking about Christ. You have to ask, What is it talking about? And in this situation here, Balaam is talking about the fact that this Balak and the Moabites and the Edomites want to destroy Israel. And Balaam says, "No, you will not succeed in destroying Israel, but on the contrary," he says, "I see a king coming out of Israel, not in the immediate future—he's not near—but I see a scepter rising out of Israel, who will conquer Moab and conquer Edom."

And a few centuries pass and David was born in Bethlehem; David became king of Israel; David conquered the Moabites and conquered the Edomites; and it was an exact, precise, complete and full and literal fulfillment of this prediction. And, it is a prediction given by Balaam.

Now you can say, "Well Jesus is like David to some extent; and anything that talks about David can also be about Christ." Well, if you wanted, you can say that. You can say that when Samuel went and anointed David and said, "This one is going to be the king," he was predicting Christ; that Christ was going to be anointed to be king. You can say that if you want.

But it seems to me that if you say it, we should recognize it as only a secondary sort of interpretation; that whether it is talking about David, or it is talking about Christ, that ordinarily we don't speak of both of them with the same type of understanding. And in this case the prediction of David fits the context exactly. It's the thing they were dealing with. Is Moab going to be able to conquer Israel? No. A king will come in Israel that will conquer Moab. And so this is a prediction of David; and I personally think it's wrong to use it as a prediction of Christ.

When the Moabites and the Midianites want to destroy Israel, the answer that is given is, "No, you are not going to be able to destroy Israel; in fact, Israel is going to continue, and will continue for a long time; because I see him, but not now. A long ways off, one is coming, one who will lead Israel in destroying you; and Moab and Edom will be conquered by Israel." And we have the account in 2

Samuel of the details of how David conquered Moab and Edom, an exact, literal fulfillment of this promise.

And of course you could take any good statement that's ever made; and you could say, "Well, that could fit Christ." Certainly. You can take any good thing in life and you could find a comparison to Christ. But that this is actually dealing with Christ here, is certainly reading into the scripture something for which there is no warrant. It's very clear that it is dealing with David. And when David becomes a great type of Christ, naturally, most anything about David can, in a secondary sense, be applied to Christ. But this is not a prediction of Christ. It is a prediction of David; and it says David is going to conquer Moab and Edom; and then he goes on, and says that out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion; and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city. And we find David conquering the great cities of these nations and destroying multitudes of their peoples.

And then we read,

And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations; but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever.

And this has nothing to do with Christ but it's literally fulfilled in the history of Amalek. Amalek was completely destroyed.

And he looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable, and said, Strong is thy dwellingplace, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock. Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.

Well, so the Assyrians carry them away captive. Asshur, you know, is the god of Assyria. The Hebrew word is Asshur, which is used for the god Asshur: the land Asshur, and the people Asshur.

In English, if we mean the god, we say "Asshur"; if we mean the people, we say "Assyrians"; if we mean the land, we say "Assyria." In the Hebrew, the one word represents all three. In Babylonian, one word represents all three, but they put a mark to show whether they mean a land or a people or a god. Of course, we don't have that in Hebrew.

And so we look forward to the Assyrian captivity. What book of the Bible describes the Assyrian captivity? How many of you could tell me? What book describes the Assyrian captivity? No one but Mr. Tow and Mr. Blizzard? Evidently, I selected the right ones then to help with the organization. But the northern kingdom [Israel or Ephraim] was conquered in 721 BC by the Assyrians who took them captive. Then the Babylonians conquered the Assyrians; and they conquered the southern kingdom [Judah] in 587 BC Those are two dates

that we will, by the end of this semester, have as two of the four or five most important dates in all Biblical history, because they are dates that are definitely fixed by archaeological evidence.

But the Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom in 721 BC Assyria was a great marauding force for several centuries, the greatest aggressor force in the world. I remember reading an article by a young fellow, who was one of the leading Assyriologists of Germany, back in 1936; and he called it "The Rise of Assyria to a Great Conquering Power," and of course he was trying to curry favor with the Nazi leaders by showing how the Assyrians had conquered the world, and now the Nazis were rising in similar fashion. And the Nazis were utterly destroyed; and so were the Assyrians. But the Assyrian aggressive conquest, one of the most ruthless in all history, one of the most bloody in all history, lasted for three or four centuries, while Hitler's lasted for not over three or four years.

I saw this same man recently, in Munich last summer; he was with the Nazis actively working with them; and then, when the war came to an end, he was imprisoned as a Nazi; and there in prison, in suffering, someone came in contact with him, gave him the gospel; and in the condition he was in, he was ready to listen to him. He is now a Professor of Assyriology in Vienna and very active Christian. If I had picked the ones I knew in Germany twenty years ago, I knew him very slightly—if I had picked the ones I ever thought would become active Christians, I'm sure he'd have been very low on the list of probabilities. It shows the Lord's working in His wonderful way.

But the Assyrian conquest is described mostly in 2 Kings, and also a very little in 2 Chronicles. 2 Chronicles deals mostly with the southern kingdom; while 2 Kings deals with both. So that here, Balaam was looking way forward to the Assyrian conquest, many centuries before the end of the Israelite kingdom, of the northern kingdom.

Verse 22: "Until Asshur shall carry thee away captive." Asshur was way across the desert. And then he looked still further, took up his parable, and said, verses 23 and 24:

Alas, who shall live when God doeth this! And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever.

Here you have Alexander the Great's forces, coming, way from the Mediterranean, attacking, and they also coming to their end. So, Balaam had a view of the distant future in which he touched upon important changes that were going to take place in the political history of the world.

3. The Aftermath of the Balaam Incident. Numbers 25.

Chapter 25 would hardly impress a reader as having anything to do with what preceded if the book ended with chapter 25. Chapter 25 tells of how these people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab; and they called the people to the sacrifices of their gods; and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. Instead of war between Moab and Israel, it shows infiltration. It shows the Israelites being led away in sin, a much more effective method of destroying the witness of God than war.

But you would never dream from this chapter that Balaam had anything to do with it. It follows the previous chapter which tells about Balaam. You say well, the book talks about Balaam and then they go and they tell about this. You'd never think there was a relation till you get on to Chapter 31 where you read how Balaam had counseled them to lead the people into wickedness. And that one verse in 31, and the reference to it in the New Testament, shows us that the order of the chapters here is not just tying together two unrelated things which happened about the same time, but that there's a definite positive relationship. And that Balaam who gave these wonderful prophecies; who presented God's word so faithfully in his messages; yet in his private life and private counsel, sought for his own advancement.

Some people think that Judas took a similar attitude. There are those who think that Judas Iscariot felt absolutely certain that Christ would assert his power and would not be injured, but that meantime he could pick up a few extra pieces of silver by playing along with the other side for a little bit, giving them the information they wanted. Well, we can't see into the heart of Judas; certainly he must've had some feeling of great interest in Christ for a while; or he wouldn't have followed along with him, and become—or seemed to be—so ardent a member of the group that they gave him the job of treasurer. He gradually began taking out of the bag a little for himself; and then he found himself in financial difficulties; and perhaps just for a temporary thing, he tried to help himself out, thinking perhaps that he couldn't hurt Christ after all; but in the end he got himself a name of being the son of perdition, the very one who is detested throughout the Christian world ever since.

And Balaam, here, standing so true, giving the message so faithfully; yet he ruined it all, by his private life, having this covetousness for money; and giving the people a very reasonable argument: God sees no iniquity in Israel, and he blesses them. Introduce iniquity into Israel and God will curse them. I can't curse them, but God wants to bless them; and we can't change God's attitude. It is true that God's attitude toward the nations does change, when a nation goes into iniquity. He no longer blesses it, but woe to him that leads it into iniquity.

Well, we won't take time to go into the details of this chapter 25 but we will go on to

F. Preparation for Entrance into Canaan. 26:1–36:13.

These are the last ten chapters of the book of Numbers; and it is much less interesting reading than the earlier part, though there are many lessons in it for us. We won't take time for these lessons—just mention very briefly one or two of them. It is mostly legal and that's not essential for this particular course. So

1. The New Census, Numbers 26.

The book of Numbers is so-called for having a lot of numbers. Well, where are they? Chapters 1 and 26 are all numbers; most of the rest of the book has very few numbers. It is a very poor title. But chapter 1 gives the census as they left Sinai, ready to make the conquest. Then they failed at Kadesh-Barnea; the whole generation died in the wilderness, so the generation later was to make the conquest; and so a new census is necessary, because the people were going forward to accomplish God's purpose; and preparation is necessary for a purpose. There are times when God will bring great results suddenly and sporadically, but they are rare. Ordinarily, great results come as a result of careful preparation. So the census is a vital part of the preparation. He wants us to survey our resources, and understand what they are, and see that we are ready for the task we undertake for him; and if we're not ready, to get ready.

You don't need to worry about finding opportunities for serving the Lord; the world is full of them. You need to worry about being fit to meet the opportunities when the time comes. Here the word *eleph* "thousands" is used to represent a unit; it's not a unit of an ordinary family, but it's used for a large unit, which probably comes from one ancestor. It speaks, for instance, about Bethlehem in one of the predictions [Micah 5:2], "Though thou art small among the thousands of Judah." So the term thousands is used in the sense of a division of people, which could conceivably be more than a thousand or less than a thousand—could be a lot less.

And there are places in the Bible where undoubtedly the Hebrew word *eleph* should be translated as meaning a family unit or some other aggregation. But in this particular case that is not true at all, because it gives the figures of the tribes and then it adds them up to give the total. There are places where people have tried to make a mathematical figure out of where it isn't, because the word doesn't mean thousand in those cases. But in this chapter it does.

2. A Special Problem Regarding Inheritance of Land. 27:1–11.

This is a matter of law; I only mention it here for completeness. It is a very interesting problem, but we won't have time for it in this course.

3. The Appointment of a New Leader for the Conquest of Canaan 27:12–26.

And this is a very instructive passage. I have asked you, for last Friday, to turn in a study of everything we learned about Joshua previous to this time, and to see how thoroughly God prepared him for his work.

The average Seminary student of intelligence and energy, when he graduates from Seminary, is all ready to turn the world upside down; and whatever church or situation he goes into, he wants to make everything different in it, to make it exactly right and the most efficient possible. A very fine ambition; but unfortunately, after he gets a few hard knocks because he finds the people don't move quite that fast; and a lot of his good ideas—or he thinks they are—in practice prove to need considerable rethinking before they're in shape to put through. The average fellow loses all that, and is ready to fit into a groove and carry on in strictly normal fashion the rest of his life.

Now Joshua had a long period of work with others and under others, in which he learned how to do things well; and he had some times when he was in a position of leadership, when he could use all his initiative and all his energy in thinking things through and doing it the very best way possible. It is well to conserve that energy and that initiative until the time when you're in a position properly to use it; and not to lose it by thinking that you can immediately do things that you're not yet ready for. It's alright to try things; but when you get a few knocks, don't lose your desire to go forward. Simply realize that it just means you weren't ready.

Now here's Joshua, who has gone through all this long preparation; and he has been ready to be subject to Moses, and to assist Moses in every conceivable way. I know a young fellow, twenty years ago, out of Seminary, who went out to Southern California; he started a radio program, and he was able to get some money to support it; he had a good gospel message, and was doing a good piece of work, but in a very limited way. Young people heard the program and they said, "There's no life to it; there is some good stuff, but there's nothing really to hold you in it." It really wasn't going as it should; and a man who had a very successful radio program invited this man to come and assist him, to work with him. And he told a friend of mine, "No indeed, I'm going to be the head of my own show. I'm going to run my own program, because I'm not going to be an assistant to anybody." Well, in a very short time, his program failed; I don't know what became of it; he had a lot of good thoughts, and a lot of fine ideas; but he needed experience; he needed what he could learn from others. And he

was not willing to take a second place, and wait for the Lord to show him that he had secured the necessary training and the necessary qualities to be ready to take a primary place.

Well, Joshua had been willing to take the low place, and to work hard for years here; and now the Lord said to him, at the beginning of this passage, verse 12,

And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. For ye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes: that is the water of Meribah in Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.

Now can't you just imagine Moses: nothing in the world he's more anxious to do than to lead the people into Canaan? Nothing in the world that he wants better to do than to carry on the work to completion; and God gives him this message. And if you or I were in his place we would say "Oh God, can't you forgive me for that? I made one misstep; but think of all the good things I did. Why can't I keep on a bit longer? After all, I'm just as strong as I ever was, even if I am a hundred and twenty years old, I'm just as strong as I ever was. You let me keep on and lead them into Canaan and have the joy of that conquest."

But what does Moses say?

And Moses spake unto the Lord, saying, Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd.

Moses' thought was not for himself but for the people. Moses, in a position where his work is finished; instead of complaining, or arguing, or seeking release from the penalty; his full concern is that the work may go forward; and that God will provide proper leadership for it. And it is a wonderful example for us here. Those that honor the Lord, the Lord will honor; and those whose interest is in the Lord's work, rather than in their own success or effectiveness, will find themselves honored of the Lord in the end. No one has been more honored than Moses, aside from the Lord Jesus Christ. But he did not seek honor for himself. He sought for the success of God's work; and here his first thought, faced with this situation, is "Oh, the people left without a leader! May the Lord provide a leader."

And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him;

I heard a great Jewish scholar, three or four weeks ago, speaking on Bible translation; and he said that in Genesis 1:2, it shouldn't be the spirit of God moved on the face of the water; he said it was a mighty wind, the wind of God, moving on the waters. Because, he said, it wasn't until about the time of Christ, that they began thinking of that as spirit. But he said the word *ruach* means wind in early days, it was only later the idea of spirit gets added.

I wonder if he would translate this, take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the wind, and lay thine hand upon him? Certainly the word means spirit in many of the very earliest illustrations, if you look for them. And here the Lord says, take a man—the important thing is that he has the spirit of God—that's the most important point. But unfortunately, when a church is selecting a leader, the big question is, does he have a nice voice? Does he know how to mix pleasantly with people? Does he make a good impression? And in all those things, even with good Christian people, who should be thinking first: "does he have the Spirit of God?"

But that is what God gave as the primary thing for Joshua. Now this was no surprise to Moses. Moses had been working with Joshua for years; but the final decision was not made, as far as Moses knew, until this time. Joshua had a chance to prove himself; and it's all too often that we take an inexperienced person, and we say, "Now you be my assistant; you study with me and work with me, and you'll step into my shoes when I retire." It's all too often that decisions like that are made earlier, instead of giving a person a chance to prove himself.

I don't know what sad experiences in that line Professor Robert Dick Wilson may have had, but I think at least he had the thought well in mind; because when he was getting near the end of his life; and he was very interested in my training, my preparation; and interested in my going over to Europe to study, as I did for two and a half years—the Semitic languages and so on—and he got me a special fellowship from the President of the American Bible Society to pay for my first year in Europe. And he was thoroughly interested; yet whenever he would speak of the future, he never made a definite committal to me that I would eventually be his assistant or his successor. He never did. And he would always say, "Well, the Lord will lead; the Lord will show us where He wants you to work." And I got a letter from him when he joined with others in starting a new Seminary [Westminster]; I got a letter from another member of the group asking me to buy some books in Germany for the new Seminary, and saying that we are starting, and of course Dr. Wilson expects you to be his assistant.

But he himself went very, very slowly in any committal for the future, in order to give me a full and complete chance to prove myself before any committal was made. And that was what was done here with Joshua. Joshua did the task before

him and did it well, not receiving any promises of advancement for the future, until the time came. And then it was plain that he was ready; that the spirit of God was in Him; and the Lord gave the definite word; and before Moses died, the successor was recognized. The successor, not one picked at random, but who had been thoroughly proven.

Now I know of one minister, who was a fine Christian minister, and a very, very excellent pastor, and he left his church, and I said to him, "Well, now, who is going to succeed you in this church?" "Oh," he said, "When I leave a church, I believe in leaving it." He left the people absolutely like sheep without a shepherd; and they looked around, and they got a man with a nice pleasant voice; an attractive fellow, who came in and gave them good modernistic sermons; and tore down everything this man had built up. Now course, the previous pastor was reacting against the attitude that some have, of leaving a church and trying to keep their finger on it; and there's many a minister who has had his ministry wrecked by a previous minister talking to people in the congregation about how this is done and that's done and the other's done, and interfering. That should never be done. It is true: when you leave a church, you should leave it. But it's a very good idea, when you leave it, to try to do something about being sure the next leader is one who is true to the Lord. There's a middle ground between these two extremes.

And Moses went up to the mountaintop, knowing that there was a leader ready and able to carry on. He didn't have to try to keep a finger on it; you can't do it; you can't keep your finger on it. When you're out, any attempt to keep your finger on details just wrecks things. But you can take an interest in helping them to get a proper leader to follow; and that's what Moses did here, and set a wonderful example for us.

Now about the Holy Spirit coming into a man, that is a figure of speech. The Holy Spirit does not geographically go into a man. God is everywhere. The Holy Spirit is everywhere. But when you say he enters in, we mean that he takes possession; and so in this case—probably in accordance with our present usage—the Holy Spirit is dwelling in him, not only for salvation but also for service. But in the true sense, it probably is that the Holy Spirit is controlling him; he is directed by the Holy Spirit; so that I would say that in this case, either translation is correct. The "in" would be in line with our normal usage, but the "with" would be more what it really means, even though we usually say "in". So that the Hebrew *ásher-ruach*, in this case we don't have to say is it this or that, but to recognize the wealth of meaning in the preposition and see what it is in this particular case.

4. Laws Regarding Sacrifice and Vows. Numbers 28–30.

Again it's legal, and I only mention it here in order to have our outline complete in this section. Very interesting and important; if you want some discussion on it, you will find it in [my] remarks on this passage in Intervarsity's *New Bible Commentary*, which I figured out with a great deal of care:

The modern reader will sometimes ask whether such detailed prescriptions as are set out in these chapters are relevant to this modern age, since the prescriptions do not apply in the worship of the Christian church today. Clearly the prescriptions for worship in one age do not necessarily apply in another and modifications are constantly being made to old forms of worship. What one needs to do in these cases is to recognize behind each expression of worship the great principles. These remain and find newer expressions in the course of time. The ancient Tabernacle and its rituals and feasts gave testimony to the belief that God was in the midst of His people, that He could be approached, and that with Him in the midst the people ought to order their lives in accordance with the fact that God the Holy One dwelt among them. The whole system demonstrated to Israel, and to men of all ages, that sinful men may approach God through a consecrated mediatorial priesthood, that constant cleansing for sins was possible, that constant guidance for life was available and that great saving acts of God in centuries past could be remembered by noble festivals and feasts such as Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles.

With the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ the necessity for all the temporary forms, shadows of the true (cf. Heb 10:1), was past. He was at once the sacrifice for all sins and the High Priest who offered the sacrifice. By His Spirit He guides His people today. His saving work wrought at the cross may be remembered each time when men gather at the Lord's Table 'to proclaim the Lord's death until he comes'. Yet the 'shadows' and 'symbols' of the OT system, if understood as pictures of the true, have much to teach the modern Christian and they should be studied for the light they give on the great underlying principles of God's ways with men.⁹⁰

Some day you may be dealing with this section; and as you read it, it's an involved thing. You can spend three or four hours getting the exact relationship of its parts. But I put in the three or four hours myself, and I summarized the results in this column; this one column here, so that if you're ever wanting to study this particular passage, I think you'll find it very helpful, what I did with it. It's not really history, so we merely mention it here for the sake of context.

⁹⁰ D. Guthrie, ed., *The New Bible Commentary Revised*, (1970) p. 194. This portion was written by Dr. Allan MacRae.

5. Vengeance on the Midianites. Numbers 31.

We have already referred to this in connection with Balaam, because it tells of his death and gives us the hint that it was he who counseled them how they could win out against the Israelites. But they didn't win out, and actually it meant his own death. It tells how the women were spared; and then Moses heard how they spared all the women, and he was very angry and had them kill the women too. And of course, this goes contrary to modern ideas; I can just imagine a modernist preacher of today pointing this out as an example of the bloodthirstiness of the God of the Old Testament, in whom he does not believe. Because it is a God who ordered the Midianites to be ruthlessly exterminated; and not only the men but also the women—even to kill the women. How terrible.

Well, the fact of the matter is, of course, that in most heathen lands, and most heathen religions, there is a ruthlessness about human life; and killing people, and a letting them die—that to us with a Christian background is very, very disagreeable. And the callousness about human life in heathen lands and heathen backgrounds is something that is terribly disgusting to people with a Christian background.

Christianity teaches the worth of a human soul, and has the command "Thou shalt not murder." Not merely you shall not kill the king; you shall not kill the person of importance; but you shall not kill, shall not murder anybody. And Christianity is against the callousness of the heathen religion; puts a standard of value on a human life and a human soul. And then the modernist—taking one point, taking a few points of truth, out of scripture and neglecting the scripture as a whole—takes these few points and elevates them into being the most important thing in the world. And we get pacifism, and we get the attitude of various modernist groups of the day, that the only thing that matters in life, almost, is keeping from having anybody killed. And that that is more important than our relation to God, or than eternity, or our belief in Christ, or than all the great central things of the scripture. They take the opposite error from the error of the heathen; and it is a much better error of the two, but both are errors. The proper ground is in between.

Here is a fact: that human life is sacred before God, and should not be taken without a reason. On the other hand, it is a fact that every human being has to die; that death is the result of sin; we all have to die sometime anyway. There are more important things in life than whether we die a little sooner than we might otherwise. Much more important things in life than that. And the Bible teaches the value of the human soul and the importance of safety from ruthless killing; but it also teaches that there are circumstances under which the situation is very different. The Bible teaches that war for true principles is

justified, right and necessary in this age of sin, in which Satan is so powerful in the world.

And when the Pilgrim Fathers came to Massachusetts, if they had arrived there five years earlier, they would have been wiped out in a year; and there never would've been a great Christian nation founded in this continent. We might eventually have had a nation here; we might have had many people; but it wouldn't have been established on the Christian principles on which it was. But they got there; and within the previous three years, there had been a pestilence which had killed thousands of those Indians; and the Pilgrims had a tough time to subsist against the opposition they had, or the difficulties, with the few Indians that remained. Not to show what the situation would've been if there'd been forty times as many Indians all through that area. There had been a pestilence which killed them off. Well, God prepared the way for them at that particular time. I don't think there's any question, that God chose to cut down the population in preparation for them; and when the Israelites went into Canaan, God ordered them to completely destroy the Canaanites, who had sunk in wickedness to the point where the contagion of their lives and their attitudes was a very, very terrible thing. The scripture does teach that there are circumstances under which the taking of human life is not only permissible but is required. And if we look at it from the viewpoint that God's purposes are the important thing, and not some particular principle that we set up, that's impossible in this world anyway and can't be carried through, we do not find reason to set out to judge the God of the Old Testament; but rather to take the God of the Bible, and see what he holds; and try to mold our lives in accordance with it. Its penalties for murder are very, very severe, but it does seem that there are circumstances under which the taking of human life is entirely justified and right.

(Student. Who were the Midianites?) They are entirely different people who were temporarily working together. The Moabites are a settled people in this area. The Midianites are a nomadic people, mostly in the Arabian Desert, who at this time evidently were working together with the Moabites against the menace of the coming of the Israelites. Later on we find the Midianites conquering the Israelites after they're settled; and it's the Midianites whom Gideon's band attacked. But they're two distinct people who were working together at this time. So in this particular section of Numbers, you'll speak of the Moabites and the Midianites more or less indiscriminately, because they're both working together. It's as if somebody in the German army in either of the world wars were to speak of the French soldiers and the British soldiers and the American soldiers. They might be a group of them, one of them next to this group, and the other next to this; and their enemies would include all three, and you might speak rather freely of whichever happened to be involved in the particular situation.

Yes? (Student. Why were the little boys killed but not the little unmarried girls?) The determination here was to wipe out the plague which these Midianites had brought in, and the attitude which had been taken by them. The women were killed because they had been the very instruments of the seduction of the Israelites, and they in this case were very thoroughly involved with the attitude. The boys in this particular situation would have grown up to be a menace,⁹¹ while the girls would probably have their whole attitude pretty thoroughly changed before they grew up. That is not given as a rule for conquest by any means. You will find various attitudes taken in various commentaries. This is one of the most thoroughgoing of the conquests you find anywhere; but when you read chapter 25, and what they had produced among them, it's thoroughly understandable.

6. The Apportionment of Transjordan. Chapter 32.

We already, before the Balaam incident, read about the conquest of the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites and Og, king of Bashan. And so the whole northern portion of Transjordan was now in the hands of the Israelites. And two and a half tribes came to Moses; and here they are, in this lovely country. Why do we have to go and fight and all this? We've got this lovely country now; let's take it, let's be satisfied.

And it's very easy for us to take that sort of an attitude. We get into a good situation; it's good enough for me, why go further? Well, maybe it is. No use chasing will-o-the-wisps all our lives. But on the other hand, if God's will is something further, we should not be satisfied to stop there. But these people saw that wonderful land, and they said, "Why can't we have it?" Actually, from the first sight, it was the best part of Palestine; but if you knew the facts, it was one of the worst parts. Because, though it had as much fertility as any section; it had fine land; lots of space; a grand place for raising cattle; yet there were two objections, which we've already noted. One is its dependence on the varying rainfalls for crops. They didn't know it when they first came in, but the clouds may or may not come in that far from the Mediterranean. In some years it's tremendously fertile; and other years it's almost sterile. The area that is reached by the rain varies tremendously. And it gradually levels off into almost complete desert, so the people on the fringes would have a very, very uncertain existence. So that it's a very sporadic sort of a place to live. Wonderful when you have the good rain.

And a greater difficulty even than that: it had no natural frontiers. It is exposed to the attack of Bedouin tribes from the desert; and to the attack of people from

⁹¹ In many pagan cultures the sexual perversion of pedophilia, particularly between men and young boys was (and still is) rampant—whether or not officially condemned by the society or religion. This action against the boys may have been necessary—if directed by a sovereign Lord—to address that evil. [dcb]

other lands. And the result was that, all through the three centuries before the time of Christ—and even after that—there are great civilizations built; everything built up wonderfully, and then wiped off by invasion; and they have to build again from scratch. And there are long periods in which there's nothing there. And so it was necessary somebody take it; but for these people to be so anxious to get it for themselves was shortsighted. They simply didn't know the basic facts.

We're always better to advance the work of the Lord; but as far as what we're going to get out of it, let's just leave that in his hands. Well, they came to Moses; and immediately there was a great danger. If two and a half tribes settled here, will the rest be enough to conquer Canaan? And so Moses makes them promise, over and over, that they will join in the conquest of Canaan; and he makes the promise so absolutely clear and strong that there is going to be no question about it—the promise that they would go over and join in the conquest and to help get the land for the others. And the fact of the matter, of course, is that in subsequent history—time and again—we find the Israelites from Canaan having to come over and rescue them, when they've been taken by the Assyrians or by some other invaders. Remember how Ahab said, "Ramoth-Gilead is ours and why don't we take it back?" What's Ramoth-Gilead? One of the finest cities over here in Transjordan, taken by the Syrians because it was open and exposed. And they had to come over from Canaan and rescue them time and again.

7. The Summary of Journeys 33:1–49.

This is a summary of the journeys written by Moses, at the express command of God. Here they are leaving one important part of their experience and going to enter another. They're leaving the wilderness journey and going to enter on the conquest of Canaan. And so he makes a summary of what has been done. Somebody has said that if you want to develop a good memory, one of the best possible ways to do it is, every night before you go to bed, to think through the events of the day and see how much you can remember of them then when it's still fresh in your recollection. It develops your habit of recall. It's very, very easy to finish up a stage of our life or our experience; and everything is so prominent and so clear, so well-known to you, that there doesn't seem to be any point in thinking it through; you just know it all, at an instant you could answer any question about it; but then you enter another phase of your experience, and you don't have any occasion to think of these things; and you're in the other phase for a few months or years; and then you think back to this and you just can't remember, it's just gone. And it is very helpful to stop and to survey a stage of your experience; see what the advantages have been; see what the disadvantages; see what the mistakes are that you don't want to repeat; see the things in it that are worth carrying on with you. Make a survey

as you leave one stage and go into another. It is a very, very useful thing. And here at the end of this important section, there is this survey.

8. The Plans for the Division of Canaan. Chapter 33:50–36:13.

Now they don't work out the details, but they work out the system for determination of the details; and before they start the conquest they work these things out. A very, very wise procedure, and an excellent example to us as we undertake different areas of our lives.

G. Moses' Last Days.

1. The Addresses in Deuteronomy.

The book of Deuteronomy has a name, a Greek name which translated into English means "second law." It is the second giving of the law; and this giving of the law is simply a reiteration of the law with certain changes, an attempt to drive it home to people's hearts and minds; what it amounts to is the farewell addresses given by Moses there in the Plains of Moab; and there are three main addresses. The first of those is

a. First Discourse: Historical Retrospective to God's Dealings. 1:6–4:40. This one is mainly a historical retrospect to God's dealings with them, and then a call to obedience. Then, after a brief section, telling of the appointing of the three cities of refuge, you have the

b. Second Discourse: Exhortations to Fidelity and Obedience. 4:44–26:19. This is a very long section, including many exhortations to fidelity and obedience, and much repetition of laws that he wanted to drive home to their hearts and minds. Then comes the inscription of the law, with the blessings and cursings, followed by Moses'

c. Third Discourse: Difference between Life and Death. 29–30. This is a discourse in which he presses home to them strongly the difference between life and death, and the choice of whether they will follow the Lord or not.

Then after the three discourses you have

d. Moses' Song. 32:1–43. Moses taking leave of the people.

Now this book of Deuteronomy is a very important and interesting study, very vital for Christian understanding; but for our particular course in Old Testament History, we will have to merely glance at it. The view the critics support is that Moses never gave such addresses; but it was written in the time of the later

Israelite kingdom; that it was palmed off on the people at the time of Josiah in order to get them to agree to a centralized worship in Jerusalem.

This is very important in the study of criticism, this theory of the critics which is accepted by all liberal scholars—though there are details of it on which they differ slightly—in the main features of it they agree. But we cannot go into it, though there are certain matters which are vital from the viewpoint of history. One of these matters we note is the great literary quality of these addresses. It is pretty hard to believe that the men wishing to get more income for the Jerusalem Temple, and to get people to worship there instead of making sacrifices other places, would be able to prepare for this purpose addresses supposedly by the great lawgiver of a thousand years before; these were so fine that Professor Moulton of the University of Chicago, the author of the *Modern Reader's Bible*, said that after reading the great orations of Demosthenes and Cicero, and the other great orators of secular history, he turns to Moses' farewell addresses in the book of Deuteronomy; and he feels that, just from the viewpoint of literature alone, he is on a higher level of oratorical grandeur in Moses' addresses in the book of Deuteronomy.

Now it is pretty hard to think that is written just for the viewpoint of getting more income for the Jerusalem Temple. They show the transcendent ability of Moses, that great leader, one of the greatest leaders in the world's history. They have this wonderful literary quality; and this fine presentation of the alternatives of life and death; between obeying the Lord, following his will, and going on to have the sins that lead to destruction. So the literary quality of these is something that is unfortunately little realized in our present day, but ought to be realized.

Now in addition to that we'd like to say about these addresses, that there are in them certain

e. Marks of the Approaching Entrance to Canaan. I want to mention four. Four marks in these addresses of the near approach to the entrance to Canaan.

(1). They constantly mention towns instead of the camp. The Israelites in the wilderness naturally centered their life around the camp. But they were going into Canaan, where they would be scattered about in these different sections of the land; and Moses, in giving these addresses, is urging them to obey God's law in Canaan; and so there is a background of reference to towns rather than to the camp. Now naturally, the critics say that's because it was written at a time when they were all living in the land; but it certainly is not at all unfitting to the time of Moses. Then

(2). There are minor changes of law. You'll find contradictions among them between the law in Deuteronomy and the law in Exodus or in Leviticus. But they

are not contradictory; they are minor changes, in view of the new situation into which they are going.

When I used to live in Los Angeles, we would go downtown; and on the way there was a tunnel under a large hill; and as you came up to the entrance you saw a big sign: "One hundred dollars fine for travelling at a speed faster than 8 miles an hour through this tunnel." But when I was there, I never saw a car go through that tunnel at less than 30 miles an hour, but there was the sign still there. The last time I was in Los Angeles, I was glad to see that sign had been taken down. But I'm sure that when the tunnel was built, people would've been scandalized at the thought of going through that tunnel at rate faster than 8 miles per hour.

I was told when I was a student in Los Angeles, that it still was written on the statute books there that it was illegal to shoot rabbits from the vestibule of the streetcars. When I was there, it was already much too urbanized to think of such a thing.

But conditions change. The great essential principles of God's law never change, but the application of the principles change as conditions change. People talk as if there were no fixed principles. They are absolutely wrong; there are great fundamental principles that are inherent in the nature of the universe that God has established.

But then people, who recognize this great fact of the essential great absolute principles of the universe, sometimes go on from there to think that every little tiny detail of life is exactly so and remains static; and that is not true. Life is constantly changing; and small changes on questions of law and habit are absolutely necessary; and so we have contradictions between Deuteronomy and Exodus and Leviticus; but these are contradictions simply of application to different situations.

(3). There is interest taken in the well-being of the poorer classes. These are such as you don't find in Exodus and Leviticus. There are special regulations given, like leaving the corners of your fields so that they can pluck what's left there; leaving some of the grapes so they can glean; there are restrictions that would have no application in the wilderness, where they were all together under one closely centralized body with a close oversight; but spread out over the land, it is very easy for oppression and for mistreatment to spring up, which this anticipates; and special consideration is given. And then

(4) There is an insistence on one central altar. The unity of God, the fact that there is one God, that Israel is one nation, worshipping one God was stressed by the insistence that they were not to break up into little separate communities in Canaan; they were to covenant together to worship on the one altar; that

once a year, they were to come to this place and make all their sacrifices on this one altar. And so we have insistence on one altar in the book of Deuteronomy; which fits the situation, as Moses was speaking there, just before they went into the land of Canaan.

The critics say that the book of Exodus—the book of the Covenant, as they call it—permits an altar anywhere, anywhere that God gives his name; because in the book of the covenant, it says when you make an altar make it in certain ways; but the fact is, they were moving through the wilderness; and they made altars at different places as they moved. It does not mean chaos, as the critics allege; it simply means the situation where they were on the move; and so, the altar naturally moved.

And then in Leviticus, there's nothing said about it; it is assumed that there is one altar. It is not stated; Leviticus is the law book. But now we have the command given as they enter the land; and this is vital, that the people realize this and understand it; because it will be a vital factor in keeping them as one nation; worshipping one God; and enabling a central control to keep heretical ideas from getting in and spreading through the land. So it is reasonable the way it stands.

And the critics claim that Exodus shows the early situation, when you can worship anywhere that God put his name; that Deuteronomy shows the change made to get the worship in one place; and that in Leviticus, it already was established in one place, so it's just taken for granted and not mentioned. This is not the necessary way of interpreting it.

Well, these addresses are very much worth reading and studying but not for this particular course; so we move on to number

2. The Death of Moses. Deut. 34.

We read how Moses went up into the mountain and there the Lord took him; and nobody knows where he's buried. And then, it has a eulogy of him in the end, that no one rose up quite the equal of Moses, thereafter.

This little section about the death of Moses has received discussion far out of proportion to its merit. Those who have said that the five books of Moses are by Moses have found a tremendous problem: how could Moses write the account of his own death? And so there've been arguments at length whether Moses wrote these or whether he didn't. And actually, what difference does it make? The book of Deuteronomy is God's Word; and it is true, and it gives us the addresses that Moses gave. Well, did God say to Moses, "Now you're going up in the mountain and die; finish out the book, and write it in there, and tell what happened"? Tell it in advance; God has already predicted it; it is told in

Numbers; it is told in Deuteronomy; it's perfectly clear what's going to happen; you go ahead and tell about it before it happens, Moses; and then after it happens, they will have the account. Did he do that? Or did Moses stop the book and go up in the mountain; and Joshua wrote the next part of it, telling about his death; and nobody knows where he's buried; and Joshua says nobody rose up like Moses? Well, as far as I can see, both are possible, and I don't see what difference it makes. God wrote it; it is God's word; God led whoever the human author was. God directed what to put down; it is God's word; it is one complete book that is free from error, the book of Deuteronomy; and so I don't see any reason why there needs to be any great argument.

But people will ask me, "Do you believe that Moses wrote the Pentateuch? Well, what about the end of Deuteronomy? How could he have written the last chapter?" Well, I think he could have personally. But I don't think believing Moses wrote the Pentateuch necessarily means you have to believe he wrote those verses—the last few verses. It would be perfectly proper for him to have instructed Joshua.

But this end of Moses life—his death there—was done in such a way that they would not have a place where they would be tempted to worship a man rather than God. Moses was a very great man, a very wonderful man, a tremendous influence on Israel; and he is revered by the Jews as perhaps no other man is, and deservedly so; but he certainly is in an utterly different class from Christ. And so Moses is off the scene and we move on to number

VI. The Book of Joshua.

The land west of the Jordan River, between there and the Mediterranean Sea, is Canaan proper; and this is the land which God had promised to give Abraham. It was a land filled with strong cities which had existed there for hundreds of years. It was a powerful and highly civilized people. The Jews had been slaves in Egypt, and now they've been forty years in the wilderness. It took forty years to get Egypt out of the people, though you could get them out of Egypt in a few days. But it was not only to get Egypt out of the people; but while you were doing it, they lost their arts and crafts. There was no opportunity for the exercise of them there in the wilderness. And so you have a comparatively uncivilized people about to enter the land. A people whom the Lord has led; they are following him. But from the viewpoint of culture; from the viewpoint of training in arts and crafts and all that; they are not in a class with the Egyptians, or with the Canaanites.

And those tremendous walls around those great Canaanite cities; and their strong armies; it was a real problem in the conquest of Canaan. And the conquest and the division of the land of Canaan are dealt with in the book of Joshua.

A. Introduction.

1. Authorship and Type of Material.

It is quite generally assumed that Joshua wrote this book of Joshua, but that is certainly not a necessary principle of the faith. I do not recall anywhere in the Bible where it says Joshua wrote the book of Joshua. We do have the statement that Moses wrote the five books of Moses; Moses was the author of those books.

The book of Joshua is the book that tells about Joshua. It tells about his activity as leader; his activity while he was directing the people; and about the subsequent life of the people as long as Joshua lived. So it is a book about Joshua, about Joshua's leadership; but that doesn't necessarily mean that Joshua wrote it. But I have never heard any suggestion of some other person who may have written it. It is, I would think, quite probable that Joshua wrote it, but I don't think it is proven.

At least it is a true book, a book which tells the facts about the career of Joshua. And so the authorship of the book of Joshua is not a point of near the same importance as the authorship of the Pentateuch. It is important that they both are God's Word. The critics used to talk about the Pentateuch; and then they talked about the documents of the Pentateuch; and then they changed their language, and started talking about the Hexateuch—that is, a six-fold

division instead of five. And the critical theory, as it has been held for many years, includes portions of Joshua in the various documents; but any critical student will readily admit—if he has done any special study in this field—that it is much harder to be sure which sections of Joshua belong to different documents than which sections of the different parts of the Pentateuch. There are points of similarity of style and of prose of Joshua as compared to different parts of the Pentateuch, but the critics do not use the same criteria that they think they find in the Pentateuch.

Well, the material in the book of Joshua is very different from the material in Deuteronomy. The last chapter and a half of Joshua—Joshua's last days—contains two addresses that he gave the people exhorting them to follow the Lord. Now this is naturally similar to Deuteronomy. Moses gave addresses and so did Joshua. But the first twelve chapters of the book—the first half of the book Joshua—is narrative. And that, naturally, is similar to Genesis narrative. Then we have the account of the division of the land; and this account of the division of the land—which takes up ten chapters—is very largely a matter of precise details of the borders of the different tribes; very important; very interesting for them during the long period of Israel's history in the land; but it's hardly a matter of interest to us now.

But these first twelve chapters are the account of the conquest; therefore it is an orderly, organized, systematic presentation of a series of closely related events; and as such, it is one of the most interesting portions of the Bible, perhaps one of the best-known parts of the Old Testament.

2. External Evidence Regarding the History.

Now we are not in one of the places in the Bible where we have a great deal of external evidence. There is considerably more for Genesis than there is for Joshua; there is not a great deal for Exodus; there is some in the early part of Exodus; none for Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy, of course.

Now in Joshua there is a little, but not a great deal. What is it? Well, from the viewpoint of the great empires, the book describes events that occurred off on the borders of a primitive civilization. You take a cultivated Roman in the days of Christ, and he was much interested in the great events that occurred in Rome. He was interested—to a much less extent, and yet definitely—in the great events that occurred in Athens and in Alexandria and a few other great centers. But Palestine he thought of as sort of out on the fringes of civilization; something would have to be very, very important there to attract much of his attention.

Palestine has been an important crossroads between the great empires, but it has not normally been a great center of civilization and life itself. H. G. Wells

wrote an article twenty years ago in the current history magazine, *America*. He wrote it about English education, and he regretted greatly that English education busied itself so much with Palestine. He said, "Why don't we spend that time studying England, studying something important?" He said, "Nothing of any importance happened in Palestine." He said, "Palestine has never had any real greatness, except just a very small period in the time of Solomon." And he said, "The importance of that period is greatly exaggerated." He said the pride of Solomon was a little temple that Hiram of Tyre built for him; and that he compared to the pride of a Negro chauffeur on the gold coast of Chicago, in a new automobile that his employer purchased.

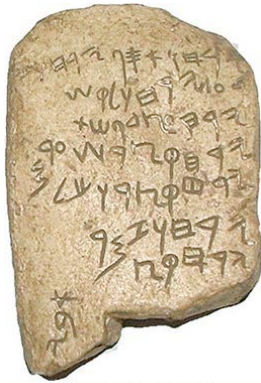
Now that's this famous English writer, H. G. Wells' idea of the importance of Palestine. And of course, his idea is tremendously exaggerated. It is easy to show that it's quite absurd. But yet there's an element of truth in it—that Palestine was not one of the great imperial centers.

When Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees, I'm sure he felt that he was going to the outskirts of civilization; and when his father got as far as Haran he said, "If you want to go any further, you go alone; this is as far as I'm going to go." He thought he was going out to the Wild West, when he went out to Palestine. Well, under the circumstances then, we do not have big monuments in Rome, or in Egypt, or in Mesopotamia, telling of great events occurring in Palestine. So that in our great amount of material we have from ancient civilization, we don't have references to the conquest of Palestine by Joshua. The material has to be sought in Palestine itself almost entirely.

And, as we've already noticed in our survey of archaeology, Palestine was near enough to Egypt to have access to papyrus. But Palestine was enough damper than Egypt that the papyrus didn't last. It doesn't last in Egypt unless it's buried; but even if it's buried in Palestine, it doesn't last. The result is that, over in Mesopotamia, almost everything that anybody wrote was preserved; it was on clay tablets; while in Egypt, only the things they put up on monuments; things that they wanted the future to know; were remembered, except when a papyrus got buried.

But in Palestine the monuments have not been extensive; they've been destroyed in the many wars that occurred there; they weren't as finely built as in Egypt anyway; and the papyrus on which most of the writing doubtless was made, has almost entirely disappeared.

And you find scholars got all excited fifty years ago when excavating at Gezer in Palestine; McAllister found the little piece of pottery about 4" long, a piece of a broken dish, on which somebody had scratched the name of the months, and telling the kind of work he did each month. This is the month for plowing; this is the month for planting wheat, and so on; and they call it the Gezer Calendar,



GEZER CALENDAR

and they were all thrilled about it. The chances are it's just somebody that, in an offhand moment, scratched on a piece of clay—not having some papyrus handy—some offhand thoughts; he was doodling, perhaps. And that was preserved; and the very fact that somebody was able to do it; and bothered to do it; is pretty good evidence that there was a tremendous amount of writing done on papyrus that has just disappeared. So we do not have actual written evidence from Palestine from this period. Very, very little; practically none.

So, the external evidence regarding the history in Palestine is actually very slight. Most of what we know about it is from the book of Joshua, except for the excavation of cities in Palestine; and there we have a tremendous amount of material, but very, very little writing; and it's not easy to tell from that, what time it comes from, or to tell a great deal about it. You can learn much, but there are many, many very vital things you can't learn at all. I want to mention a few items.

a. The El Amarna Tablets. We've already spoken of the El Amarna Tablets. In this book, *The Ancient Near East*⁹² there are translations of a few of them. The El Amarna Tablets were clay tablets; they were preserved in Egypt, because of the fact that King Akhenaten moved his court away from the great centers; and then, when they moved to the place he made, the old place was ruined and the archives wrecked. There must have been tremendous archives from other periods in Egyptian history which were not preserved; but these, through that action of Akhenaten have been preserved.

And so we have the El Amarna Tablets which come from the reign of Amenhotep III and IV. Amenhotep III, Albright states, from 1406 to 1370; and his successor, Akhenaten or Amenhotep IV, whichever name you want to use, succeeded him.

Well, these tablets suffer, of course, from the disadvantage that letters suffer from. I used to get, when I was in Jerusalem studying—before the days of airmail—I'd get a letter from my mother in Los Angeles; and she would say, "Last evening, Sam came over and we had a very interesting talk." And I would get that letter six weeks after she wrote it. It took that long for the letter to get to me. And I would read it and I would wonder, "Now Sam came over; what Sam was it? Was this Uncle Sam, a very good friend of ours? Or was this Sam Sutherland, who'd been my classmate in college and Seminary and was pastor of a small church in the neighborhood then (and is now President of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles)?" And so I would write, I'd be curious, which one was

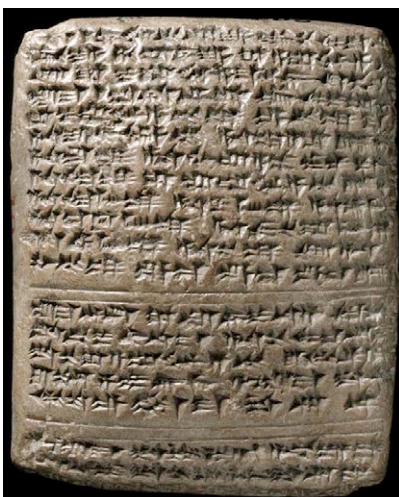
⁹² James B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (1958; a second more extensive volume was published in 1975).

it? To me they were so different, and yet Sam could fit either; so I'd say which Sam was it came over that evening? She'd get the letter twelve weeks after she wrote; and she'd say, "Well now, which Sam was it?" And so, she would make inquiries around; and they'd figure it out; they'd write back; and maybe twelve weeks after I wrote the question I'd get the answer; and I'd completely forgotten the question.

But it brings home to you how, in letters, you speak in abbreviated fashion. You discuss things and take a great deal of knowledge for granted; and if it hadn't been Sam, if it had been a name that we only knew one person with the name, I would know who she was talking about; but anybody else reading the letter, or even I myself thirty years later, might have great difficulty in figuring out what it was all about.

Now that difficulty, of course, is less when you get official political letters, and that sort of thing; but yet it's there, and so these El Amarna letters often don't explain the most important things because they're letters from people to other people who know a good deal already about what you're speaking of, and you don't have to explain the full details about it. And so they are a very unsatisfactory source for history, though a very important one. But there's this about them: that nobody in them is trying to fool us, it's not as if somebody puts up a monument to tell how great he was and you may think that he was just bluffing, and pretending for future generations.

Though even in these letters, they may bluff each other; as the kings of Canaan try to get Egyptian help, and they say things that aren't true. You can't tell about that. But they are a fine source of historical information, and yet a very, very fragmentary source. We can date the El Amarna letters and that's of tremendous importance about them. They come from about 1400 BC And these letters, the bulk of them, are between kings of Canaan and Pharaohs of Egypt. The writer always starts, "To Pharaoh, the great god, the Sun of the universe; I bow seven times and then I bow seven times again; I who am nothing but a worm of the ground, want to bring my petition before the great Pharaoh." And then he goes on and tells how he's the only one in Palestine that's still loyal to Pharaoh and all the others have turned against Pharaoh and Pharaoh should send him a lot of money and a lot of support so that he could stand true by Pharaoh.



Cuneiform Amarna Tablet
(palm-sized)

And then you get another letter, from the king of another town ten miles away; and he says exactly the same thing about himself; and you don't know which one is telling the truth, or whether either is; and Pharaoh is too busy spreading his new ideas of philosophy to bother with any of them. So the Egyptian empire in Palestine, around 1400, went to pieces. But in the course of these letters these kings will make a statement like this: "All the territory under Pharaoh has fallen away to the Habiru, and I only am left." Or, "The Habiru has taken such and such a city." This word "Habiru" sounds a good bit like "Hebrew", and we see that the Habiru are a marauding people who are conquering in Palestine.

I remember, in 1925, picking up a magazine of Biblical study, and finding articles by two great archaeologists on the Habiru; and one of them said when you examine the evidence on the Habiru, it becomes absolutely certain that the Habiru and the Hebrews are identical; this is the Hebrews under Joshua. And the other article by an equally famous archaeologist said, when we compare what we know about the Habiru with the evidence about the Hebrews in the Bible, it becomes absolutely clear that they are an entirely different people—entirely different situation—with no reason in the world to equate them. As to whether the Habiru and the Hebrews are the same ... Well, since that time we've learned a good deal more about the Habiru, and we know this: that when it says in Genesis 4:13 that "Abram the Hebrew" rescued Lot, that's pretty good proof Abraham wasn't the only Hebrew. You don't call a man "the Hebrew" if he's the only one; and there are references in various parts of the Old Testament, and in most of them "Hebrew" is a wider term in the Bible than just Abraham's descendents. Jews are called the sons of Abraham.

Some take it that the word means a nomad, one who is a wanderer; possibly so, so that the reference to "Abram the Hebrew" indicates his nomadic character.

But we have tablets from various places, in which Habiru are mentioned; and we find that there are various sections of the world in those days in which there are people called Habiru. And then in Egypt, we have a people called the Apiru, which I mentioned in connection with the entrance into Canaan; some think they are the Hebrews and some think they aren't; but it's quite clear that the word Apiru is much wider; and so, if these Habiru are found there in Palestine at that time, that doesn't prove they are the Biblical Hebrews, although it offers a starting point for the suggestion that they may be.

And, so, from the viewpoint of the study of the conquest, the El Amarna tablets present material of real importance. They mention cities in Palestine; they mention the kings of these cities; they tell us incidentally something of the life of the people there; something of the situation. And if we could be sure that that's when the conquest occurred, it would tremendously enrich our knowledge of the conquest. But if it isn't, if it's two hundred years later, then the tablets actually don't throw much light on the conquest, but merely on the general condition in Palestine; and nobody knows which it is.

One of these days, we may discover something that will tremendously increase our knowledge and understanding of this area; and if we do, the El Amarna tablets may become of greater importance than they are now, because we'll be able to understand them better and to get many facts from them that at present escape us. At present, I do not consider them any tremendously important source of understanding about the conquest. But at least they are a source that must be mentioned.

b. The Israel Stele (Merneptah Stele). We should mention a stele is a rock (or something like that), a black stone rock put up as a monument, like the black stone images. The [Merneptah Stele](#) stands about 3 ft. wide by 7 ft. high, and honors the Egyptian king Merneptah for his victories in Palestine. This stele is the only instance of the name "Israel" in ancient writing; and that's why, naturally, people who are interested in the Bible are far more interested in that than in anything else about it; so when it was discovered they called it the "Israel" Stele.

This stele was put up about 1230 BC. You see, it's 200 years later than the El Amarna Tablets. And, this King Merneptah, as we already mentioned, I believe, in our account of the Egyptian background of the Exodus [syllabus #28], is the son of Rameses II.

And Rameses II, who reigned for about fifty years, was about ninety when he died. I think he had fifty sons; I think it was the twelfth son that succeeded him; and he was already a rather elderly man when he succeeded him; and it's very interesting to go in to a museum on Egyptology, and look at things about Merneptah. Because Rameses was a great conqueror—a powerful king—and

there are all sorts of things celebrating him; but Merneptah, his son, by the time he became king, was too old to do anything much; so the main thing he could do was to boast and bluff and pretend that he was as great as his father.

And they'd actually take a poem, written to celebrate his father, and copy it word for word—only putting his name in instead of his father's. And I've seen statues on which they have on the front the name of Merneptah, and you look around in the back somewhere and you find there in small letters the name of a Pharaoh a few hundred years earlier. He found this beautiful statue, and he just stuck his name on it; and so there's so much bluff about him, that it's a little hard to be sure just how much of it is true.

Rameses II also had an awful lot of bluff and bluster; but he had the facts to back up most of what he said. But Merneptah had put up this monument, this stele; and let me read you a translation of it. This translation is from the book, *The Ancient Near East*,⁹³ which many of you have, on page 231.

The princes are prostrate, saying: "Mercy!"
Not one raises his head among the Nile Bows.
Desolation is for Tehenu; Hatti⁹⁴ is pacified;
Plundered is the Canaan with every evil;
Carried off is Ashkelon; seized upon is Gezer;
Yanoam is made as that which does not exist;
Israel is laid waste, his seed is not;
Hurru⁹⁵ is become a widow for Egypt!
All lands together, they are pacified;
Everyone who was restless, he has been bound
By the King of Upper and Lower Egypt:
Ba-en-Re Meri-amon; the Son of Re:
Mer-ne-Ptah Hotep-hir-Maat,
Given life like Re every day.

This tells you then how great this king Merneptah is, that he's had a great conquest; and this is what has happened. Well, it doesn't help us a great deal, but it names cities in Palestine. It names various cities and various people in Palestine; and it uses the word Israel—Israel is laid waste, his seed is not.

Now that's funny—that mention of seed there—a very strange thing in a celebration of a victory. His seed is not. Does it mean that his soldiers went through and destroyed all the Israelites' farms? And in the course of doing it they destroyed the grain so completely that they don't have any seed to replant?

⁹³ James B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East*, Vol. I. (1955). Quote is from p. 231.

⁹⁴ Land of the Hittites.

⁹⁵ Greater Palestine.

Well, of course, that might occur; but it would be a very unusual thing to mention in a writing like this, celebrating a victory.

To me, it is very tempting to bring it together with the fact, in the early part of Exodus, about how the Egyptians determined to kill all the Israelite children, all the sons of Israel. To me the word seed there, just like our English word, can mean grain seeds or it can mean human posterity. To me it's very natural to think that he—in describing a raid which conquered a number of towns in Palestine, or at least made them pay tribute not to destroy them—that Israel, which belonged in Palestine, had come from Palestine, and which he was oppressing in Egypt; he mentioned in its proper place in the list; and mentions what he is doing to them: Israel is laid waste, his seed is not.

Now an interesting thing, too, about this, is that all the people here—the lands and the cities—they have a determinative before them which indicates a place; but Israel has a determinative here which indicates a people. Some take that as meaning that Israel was not yet a settled people: if it was the land of Israel, it would have a determinative for a settled people. But it could be used if Israel was still in Egypt and being still oppressed at this time. Now that's only a possibility; we don't know. If you believe the Exodus was two hundred years earlier, why it must refer to some reign in which he claims to have destroyed all the seed of the Israelites; but if so, we have no mention whatever of it in the Bible. And so the Merneptah Stele, the "Israel" Stele, doesn't throw much light on the conquest; but it is interesting because of its mention of Israel; and it is one of the few things that are much discussed in this connection simply because we have so little to go on. Now,

c. Excavations in Palestine. This is a much bigger subject. You would think those monuments would tell us exactly what the facts are, wouldn't you? But it is a sad thing, that when great nations have been destroyed, it has not usually been true that they immediately stop to put up a big monument, to show just how they were destroyed; and who did it; and what happened; and all about it. The people who have been destroyed have been too busy, seeking shelter for the few survivors trying to escape, to think of stopping and making a big record for history. And the people who conquer them—unless it's a great empire that simply adds it to their empire—if it's a people coming in, they're apt to be so busy getting themselves settled and established that they don't take time to leave records.

I remember when I was in Budapest and there I saw a monument to "Anonymous," the only monument to Anonymous I've ever seen in my life. I was much interested. The monument was in the main park there in Budapest; and on it, there was a monk with the cowl sort of hiding his face; you saw the monk sitting writing, but you couldn't see his face. It's a monument to Anonymous; but it's a very interesting idea, unique as far as I know. But the reason for it is

that when the Magyar people came into that area; and conquered them, and settled themselves, and established themselves there; they were too busy getting settled and established to stop to write a history of who they were, or where they came from, and what they built, and so on; and the result was that, later on, a monk wrote a history; and this history goes back to a much earlier time; but it's passed on by tradition; it's not very complete; and of the manuscript that he wrote, the first few pages got torn off; and that included the name of the author; so since we don't know his name we put up the statue to Anonymous.

But it's, I think, a striking illustration of the fact that, in early settlements like that, ordinarily the records are extremely scanty. Here of course in the Bible, we have an unusual situation; because God ordered these men to write an account of his dealings with them; and God led them in this; but as far as other evidence is concerned, we have the remains of the cities, but we just don't have writings to tell us about the conquest. They were too busy conquering to try to write; and so we don't have the writing there, though we have the tremendous cities. I remember Dr. Albright said that he thought that a visit to Palestine was in itself a good destruction of many of the liberal theories; because, he said, you read how the Israelites drifted in the wilderness; you see those great strong walls they've built there, and how they were knocked over and destroyed; and you know that that took a big organized group of people to ever succeed in doing that.

And so you have the remains of great cities in Palestine that have been excavated, but we have practically no writing; and at just about 1230 BC, we have most of them destroyed; and that fits with the Biblical accounts. But we also have certain destructions that may have taken place about two hundred years earlier, but to a much lesser extent than that. So the evidence is not such as to be able to build very secure historical conclusions on. You never know when a new excavation—a new discovery in Palestine—may give us the evidence that will make it absolutely certain when the conquest was. And once you have such evidence, you will find a great deal—that's already been accepted and excavated and published—that will fit in with it, and can be explained in the light of it, and throw further light on it; and it will be tremendously important. But up to the present, we have some remains, which may be about 1400 BC, of a destruction but not a tremendously great destruction; and then we have a far greater destruction up to and before 1200. And we have some cities which we can't be sure just when they were destroyed.

And, I must say—personally—some of the arguments that are given by people who are very determined to maintain the early date of the Exodus have done more to drive people to the late date than any arguments for the late date. That is, I've known people who were so determined to keep the early date, that they advanced what I think are very silly arguments. Like Professor Garstang in the

University of Liverpool; he was very anxious to prove the early date, even to give us the exact year. And he was going to a place where you have a temple which was destroyed about 1400 BC; and you have two temples which were built on top of each other. One was built, and then it deteriorated; and they built another on the same plan as the first one; and then you have on top of that a building that's entirely different, built about 1200. Now he would say this, "and then you have the Israelites turning to the Lord and turning away from idols." Well, maybe he's right; but to me it sounds like an argument just made because you're determined to prove an early date.

And Marston, the motorcycle king, who was supporting the excavations, was a determined supporter of the early date of the Exodus; and he was furnishing the money which Garstang was using to excavate. Garstang had some very good arguments, and he had some not so good.

The evidence from Canaan, then, throws interesting light on some aspects of the conquest. But the vital thing, of just when it happened, we do not yet have sufficient evidence either way, the early date or the late date. The critical scholars used to say, many of them, the story in the Bible is a compilation of two conquests. It has some incidents from the conquest of 1400, some from the conquest at 1200; two different groups that came in. That's what they used to say, and they tried to work it that way. Well, I think that view is rather largely given up; and at present most of the critical scholars hold to the late date.

There are a great many conservative scholars who hold to the early date, but some who hold to the late one. And actually I feel we don't know which date it is. But we do know this: that the Bible is true; and when the Bible says that God enabled the Israelites to conquer the land, that is a fact which occurred; and we know from archaeology that there was a conquest at about 1200 and there was a lesser conquest at about 1400; but which of the two it was, we don't know. To me, it's a little hard, if it was the early date, to imagine where the later conquest came in.

The excavations are not a very good source for information about the downfall of an area, or about the early beginnings of one. Excavations, and also historical writings, are best when an area is at its height. The times of downfall and of start are not times, ordinarily, when there are a great number of writings. Most of them have to be made up later for such very difficult conditions. People are too busy, too excited, as a rule to do much in trying to leave historical records. And things are just wrecked when something is destroyed, and so it is not too easy to get results from it.

We have quite a few cities in Palestine that have been excavated from this period; and they agree in showing a tremendous destruction around 1230 BC. Now of course, that date is rather an estimate because you don't have anything

to base exact dates on; but that is the time, shortly before 1200, when most archaeologists agree that great destruction took place. But there is another destruction which is found to quite an extent, not as great as this, around 1400.

Now of course these are general terms because the cities vary; and naturally one city might be destroyed at a time no other was. But at least this can be said in general on the book of Joshua: that sometime between 1400 and 1200 there was a tremendous destruction of not one city but many, many cities, such as is represented in the book of Joshua; that much is clear. But now, I don't like personally to try to work out precise details in order to try to prove the date of the conquest from the materials; it is too scant, and you're soon arguing on very fine points, on which fine-spun arguments are made on both sides and there just is not enough data. But one of these days, some new discovery may put us in a position where much of this data will come to be of tremendous importance as we see how it fits or doesn't fit with some new discovery. We have not got that yet. There are points at which archaeological information from these excavations relates to particular events. And we'll go on to now

B. The Entrance into Canaan, Joshua 1:1–5:12.

I'm using this title, the entry into Canaan, to describe the first portion of the book of Joshua. And we'll subdivide that into

1. Joshua's Commission. 1:1–9.

This is one of the best-known passages in the book of Joshua. It—particularly the last two or three verses—is a wonderful passage, full of lessons for us in serving the Lord.

The LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. 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. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

And God promises that they shall succeed. Now God has not promised us that we will succeed in winning any particular individual; any particular city; any particular area for Christ; he does not promise that. He promised the Israelites

they would take Canaan. He promised them that. That was his definite promise. They knew that plan because he had revealed it. Now his plan for our age is that we are to have a written message; and we are to win those whom he has chosen for eternal life; but we have no way of knowing who they are. We have a right to claim for him a great witness in any particular area; we have a right, like John Knox, who cried, "Lord, give me Scotland or I die!" Well, the Lord enabled him to make tremendous changes there in Scotland; but there were many unbelievers left, many unregenerate. The Lord has not promised any particular individual salvation; but he has promised that if we are faithful he will give us many souls, and we can claim that. We can claim a city—not in the sense that everyone in that city we claim will be saved; but in the sense that we will be able to establish a real witness, through which many will be reached for the Lord.

And so, the example of Joshua here is not an exact analogy of what we have a right to claim. We don't have the Lord's specific statement, "This city is going to be yours," in the sense that they took everything in Canaan. But we have his promise which we can claim that we can raise a real and effective witness in any area of the world to which he leads us.

And then, however, it is very important in his commission to note the stress on the Bible, the book of the law.

Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Here is a man starting to lead the soldiers to conquer a territory. You might say, "Well, after Canaan's conquered, then we'll sit down, and we'll take Moses' laws and we'll apply them." But no. He's starting the conquest, and the Lord said that this book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth. It is important, at every stage of the work, that the Bible be at the foundation; and we have it not merely as a banner but as a guide.

The modernists like to call that Bibliolatry—worship of the Bible—which of course is ridiculous. There have been people who have worshipped the Bible; there have been ignorant people who have worshipped perhaps a church building, or the pulpit, or something like that; but they have been very, very few; and no large group of people has ever worshipped the Bible. But true Christians put the Bible in a primary place, as that through which they learn about the One whom they are to worship, and learn how to worship.

And the stress on the Bible, at the beginning of Joshua here, must be in every successful work for Christ. Then he goes on,

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed:

Four times: be strong, be of good courage, be not afraid, neither be dismayed. Talk about repetition, four times the same thing is said. And if that was necessary to get the thought across to a bright, intelligent leader like Joshua, how much do you expect to have to repeat to get it to the minds of poor ignorant people?

Any minister who thinks he comes to give somebody the gospel; thinks now they've got the word; we can shake the dust off our feet and go on to some other area, because they've had the word and they've refused. No! It's just the beginning. Because you have to repeat in order to get anything across; even in a highly intelligent class like this one, I have to repeat. And the Lord repeats it four times; be strong, be of good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed. And we need that as much as Joshua did. How easy it is for us, who wrestle not with flesh and blood, to be pretty cowardly at times; to lose our courage; fail to push forward. But we couldn't do it in our own strength.

The commission ends,

for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

And if you're not sure that you're in a relation to God, in which you can know that he is with you, as you go, you better stop and get that clarified before you try to accomplish anything for Him; for that is absolutely necessary.

So much then for the commission.

2. The People Mobilize. 1:10–18.

First, the order is given, in nine verses of instruction, information, and an exhortation. Then you have nine more verses, in which the word is passed on to the people—especially the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh—they get five verses out of these nine, because they're the people that Moses was afraid would stay there and not take part. They promised over and over, but now Joshua gives them very explicit directions; you leave your families, but you come across and join with us in the conquest as you have promised; and they answered Joshua, we will do it; so that the preparation is made before they march forward.

Many a Christian minister is content with a little tiny work; he drags along and accomplishes very little; because he is just satisfied to have a little candle in a small place and nothing more. There are many, many who could reach out for God and accomplish much larger things; but there's a smaller number—perhaps a fifth as many, but yet a very real number—who go to the opposite extreme; they start right out, without any preparation, any mobilization of their resources, to have a big work for God; and they start out, start big things, and they naturally all fizzle out.

Joshua here is commanded to be strong and of good courage; but then he proceeds to mobilize and prepare. And it's all too common for us, when we're young, to be led to attempt all kinds of things which we haven't got the training for; and then when we get a little older, our courage fails us, and we become content with much less than we could achieve.

Joshua mobilizes the people; he says, "Be strong and of good courage!" And you might say, "All right; let's cross the Jordan." But before he crosses the Jordan, he sends the spies. He's mobilized the people; but he also sends the spies, in order to be sure what they've got to meet over there; in order that he can be ready for them. And the survey of the opposition—the job we're to do, the inspection, examination, to determine just what the facts are—will be often of tremendous help as you go about it. And these preliminary surveys are usually very wise.

I've been reading a little bit about advertisers. I think it was the man who made such tremendous money out of Pepsodent advertising. He made up a plan for a big advertising campaign; and then he took just one city, and he carried out his plan; and in that city, he examined very, very carefully to see just how much the sales of Pepsodent increased with this advertising plan; and then from it, he learned how to improve his plan, before he started on a nationwide tour. And we're all too ready to jump out with the big plan, before we have made our survey, and worked out the situation, and have some reason to know whether it's going to be effective or not.

Dr. [Carl] McIntire started a radio program, and was three years on one station; and on the one station, he learned a great deal of technique; he learned what sort of thing would reach people; and what other ways of presenting the same truth would get it across quite as well. He learned how to interest them in sending in the funds to carry on the work. And for three years, every day he got up at 6:30 in the morning, and was busy working on getting his mind prepared for that; and then put on his broadcast.

After three years, then—he told me yesterday—the thing began to open up to extend to other stations; how in one year he jumped from one station to about 25 stations. He told me that two years ago, his whole radio budget for the year

was about \$7,000, and they'd raise \$7,500. Now his budget—his actual cost that he's committed to now for stations—is \$84,000 instead of \$7,000; and the money is coming in at a rate now that should bring in about \$100,000.

He did not start in to get a lot of stations and to reach out with this tremendous force; he started in to work it in a way to see how it worked; to learn the technique; to see whether this was the way that would reach them. He's been working with his paper [the *Christian Beacon*]; he's been working with his meetings; he's doing all sorts of things through these years; some of them have had great effectiveness; some of them less effectiveness; he hardly tried radio in all these years. Of course, he had his sermon on radio, but he never tried the radio for daily use. When he did, he went at it slowly, started as a small thing; he got into it, and learned details and methods, and now he's ready to branch out. He tells me he believes it's the Lord's will to give him a hundred stations; and, if so, there'll be a way of really getting the message to the people that will make the modernists also recognize him. Because while they know how to get their message to the ministers—most of whom are conditioned pretty thoroughly in their seminaries with the modernistic outlook—they have no message for the rank and file of people. But they have most of the church pulpits, so that we have a very difficult task to get to the people directly. Now this may give a wonderful way to get to them.

But he didn't just start out on a big scale and do it; he started out, he surveyed, he worked at it, and gradually it has developed—but he was wide awake, watching and waiting to make the Lord's will known. And so Joshua—over across the Jordan there—the Lord has said follow, be of good courage, go forward. Yes, that's what he must do; but he must also use all the visible means he has at his disposal; all the intellectual resources that he possibly can use; he must use, because he needs all the power of God beyond that. And God wants us to use what we have; and He doesn't want us to sit still. And so he sent the spies into Jericho.

3. The Spies into Jericho. Chapter 2.

Now this story in chapter 2 is one that I expect all of you are quite familiar with. Then of course, in addition, you studied it in your assignment two weeks ago. It is a story that these men came into Jericho; they sought out something of the morale, the attitude of the people; and it's mighty good to be aware of the attitude of the people. I've known many ministers, who have gone into a town and started a testimony that was absolutely loyal to the Lord; but they have been just against a stone wall as far as reaching others is concerned. They've given everybody else in the community the impression that they thought that these others were utterly wicked: they didn't see the whole truth immediately when it was first presented to them. I know of others, who have gone to a community, and started there a testimony that was absolutely loyal to the Lord;

but they have looked around, and gained an idea of the general situation; and they have seen, for instance, a fine evangelical church in the area which belonged to an apostate denomination; and instead of trying immediately to tell the people in that church they should immediately come out, they've gotten acquainted with the minister; and learned a little bit of how he's been trying to stand true to the Lord in the face of great difficulty in the denomination; and then the time has come, as it will in every case, when this man moves on or when he dies; and then the hierarchy of the denomination put a modernist in; and then in that situation, they could immediately start a campaign, and take perhaps half the people from that church over into a sound testimony, because they were in a situation there where it was easy to make clear what was going on in their denomination.

Now of course, something else may make the opportunity. But watch for the opportunity; utilize it, rather than just charging in without a clear message that you could make clear to the average person that doesn't understand it. So here, Joshua wanted to know what is the morale of these people? What is the situation in Jericho? And so he sent the spies. And it's one thing about any war, that spies are used. Personally, I don't see how a Christian could be a spy; but it has to be done in a war. In any war spies are used; and the side that doesn't use spies is at a tremendous disadvantage.

Now how much dissembling these spies did, we are not told a great deal about them; but they came into Jericho, and they went to a harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there. And here was a harlot; here was a wicked woman in Jericho; but this wicked woman had a dissatisfaction with her life, and with her whole situation, and was longing for something better. And this wicked woman threw in her lot with the people of God; she helped these spies, saved their lives, and gave them good advice. She let them out when the king of Jericho sent to inquire whether there was anybody in her house like that; she hid them upon her roof; and then when they went, she let them down with a rope over the wall—her house was upon the city wall.

And then she gave them good advice. She said, "Go not hence toward your own people; go in the opposite direction." Because if they'd gone down to the Jordan, they would have met the forces the king of Jericho had sent there to pursue them; to look where he thought they had gone. Go in the opposite direction; there are mountains right next to the town—within half a mile—and these mountains are full of caves. It would be easy to hide there so you couldn't be found for months. And she said, "You go up there, and you hide for three or four days; and these forces from Jericho and Jordan will come back and give up the search. And then you can get out."

And for her good advice—her help in get them out—they said to her, "You put a special indication in the window, and we will spare you and your family." She

had the faith that God was going to give the Israelites the victory, to take the city; she asked them to help her when they did, and her family, her relatives; and they agreed to do it; and she actually became an ancestor of the Lord Jesus.

And it seems terrible to think that a woman of that bad character, and that bad situation, was actually an ancestor to the Lord Jesus Christ; but the fact is that every one of his ancestors was a sinner, every single one of them. And some of them were less obvious sinners—in fact most of them—but in our hearts many of us may be much worse sinners than Rahab ever was. Only God sees the heart.

God did not commend Rahab for her life. God took a wicked woman, who had a glimmer of faith, and saved her and her family. In the course of that he proved this woman without any training in sound ethics; with this wicked background, she did the best she knew how; and God used her, but he did not commend her. And if this woman had not done that, you might say, "Well then, suppose she hadn't done it; the whole thing would've failed." Well, that's not true. God would've worked it some other way. I think that in a time of war, it ought to be accepted as a good plan. Was it *per se* wicked? This world is a world of wickedness; and it is necessary, in this world, to have that which is not good in itself.

Killing is bad, but in war it becomes necessary; and the Christian can kill in war, he has to. The soldier profits by the works of a spy; but for him actually himself to volunteer to be a spy... I don't want to dictate to anybody else's conscience, but I just don't see how I could do it. It seems to me you'd have to do things, you'd have to go too far.

(Student. Are you saying there is no time when a Christian can spy?) Well, then too of course, this was not like ordinary war spies. These spies here, the war hadn't actually begun. These spies went up there to see what the situation was; and that certainly is right for anybody to do. Well, I don't think we'd better get into it. I've merely expressed my opinion, and don't take it as part of the course.

But now I was with a professor of the University of Chicago, who does not claim to be—or did not then, he does now—did not claim to believe anything of Christian doctrine as far as I could see; and he said to me—all he knew about me was I was doing graduate work there at the University. They were preparing my thesis—though I had my degree, they were preparing it for publication. He was one of their students. He saw me there day after day around the University; and I went into his office and asked him a question about a factual matter that he knew; and he got to talk to me.

And he got to telling me about his contact with various men. He said, "Well I go into this Bible society that I belong to here—forty men—" and he says, "every

one except me is in the denominational school, where they have taken a pledge that they believe certain doctrines." He says, "I don't believe any of those doctrines," but he says, "They say they believe them." He says, "At least I'm honest." And he talked with me about these things. And I'm not at all sure he would've talked as freely, as openly as he did, if he'd known who I was, and what my whole viewpoint was; if I was telling him where I was from, what my background was, what my attitude was. I got very valuable information from him, which was very much worth hearing and worth knowing. I did not deceive him in any way; I did not say anything whatever to make him think that I agreed with him on anything that he said. But I did not think it was necessary for me to start with a big pronouncement to him of how I disagreed with him; how I thought that, after all, if he had a job like they had, which depended on his signing a creed, I'm not sure that he'd be so honest as he claimed to be. He didn't have to; his livelihood didn't depend on it. But I didn't see any necessity of entering into it.

Now, certainly I think that to witness to that man is a fine thing; but I don't think that there's anything wrong in simply listening and letting him talk to you, and getting information under these circumstances, without entering into a big argument. I think there were many places where it is foolish to enter into a big argument. But for me to have gone into him, and talked as if I agreed with him; and started saying things to him that would give him the impression I had views I don't have; I don't see how a Christian could possibly do that. That would seem to me like a lie.

But these are matters that everyone has to work out himself in the light of the Word; and where you're in doubt, it's better to stay on the side of inducement than to lapse over into deception, much better. But we do recognize that Joshua sent men to see what the situation was; and if these men had walked in through the gate there, and had said, "Gentlemen, we have come from the Israelites in order to destroy your land, and we want to know what your attitude is here and what your situation is, so we can carry word back," they of course would immediately have been killed. Or at least put in jail. And so the Israelites would've failed. But they didn't do that. They went in, saw what they could find out and brought the information back; and then the attack was next.

Well, nothing that Rahab did is here commended; but the glimmer of faith she had; the fact that she, in her ignorance, yet decided to align herself with the people of God; and to turn against her whole background in which she was. And my guess is that not so much later she looked back with detestation on her previous life, including her previous deception. But the men followed her advice and hid in the mountains for a few days; and then they made their way down to Jordan; and they said to Joshua, "Truly the Lord has delivered all the land into our hands, for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us." Why did they faint because of them? It was because they had heard how they

conquered Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan. They had made a good start.

The New Testament verse, "To him that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath," is true in every aspect of life. The start is the hardest thing to make. Having made a decent start, many things grow like a snowball. And here, having made the start—they'd heard of them and they knew they were a force to be recognized—and there was a fear there which always gave a kind of a good start. And so,

4. The Crossing over Jordan. 3:1–5:1.

And this is a very interesting account. Here was a problem: forty thousand armed men, to get them across this river. If the people of Jericho, looking from the top of the wall, glimpsed them there; they see the encampment over on the other side; they can see the movement as they start toward the river; they see these people coming. The people of Jericho are going to stay behind their walls, where they think they're safe behind those tremendous walls; they're going to stay there until they give up the siege. But if they see them trying to cross a rapid muddy river, to get all those people across, it's an ideal plan to go out and attack and drive them away. It's a very, very dangerous thing in war, crossing a barrier like a big river. And here the people would be at a tremendous disadvantage.

And here the Lord chose to give a marvelous sign to the people in order to strengthen their courage; to increase their faith; to lead them to realize that he was with them; and he had promised, and he was going to carry them through safely. The Lord gave them this marvelous sign; and so Joshua came and commanded the people to sanctify themselves, because tomorrow the Lord was going to show them his marvelous blessing. And the Lord told Joshua to tell the priests, to take the ark and come to the brink of Jordan; and he said, "These priests are going to stand still in the Jordan River while you cross over." And of course that sounds fantastic. How could they stand—the priests holding the ark—stand still in the middle of that river? It would carry them off, sweep them off their feet—perhaps over their heads, we're not sure—but at least it would sweep them off their feet; and it would be impossible for them to stand alone, if they hadn't been standing there holding the ark in the river, while all the people go over.

We want to say just a word at this point in connection with the matter of miracles. We do not want to take a great deal of time here; because for one thing, we already discussed it in connection with Egypt, and we will touch upon it in connection with later subjects. But I think that there are a few things which are important to mention here.

The one thing that is interesting is the widespread idea—very common today—that there are such things as natural laws, which God could hardly break. It is a very interesting idea, a very widespread idea. Would it be possible for God to break a natural law? Now, of course, one would ask, what is a natural law? And I do not know who could give a satisfactory answer to that question. The assumption, it seems to me, is a pure assumption with no proof whatever, that there is such a thing as a natural law which God cannot break. It is of course proper and right that we should all assume that there is a regularity in the phenomena of nature. But we do not assume this without any proof, something which we simply say that it must be so. We observe in our life that there is regularity; and as a result of our observation of regularity—which repeats over and over—we draw these natural conclusions that there is something that makes the regularity, and that it is natural to expect that it will continue that way at least for a long time.

But when it comes to anybody making the statement that it will *always* be as it is today, that is a pure guess for which there is no warrant. If you do five experiments and you get the same results—you find a new medicine, a new combination of materials that is good for medical purposes; and you take people who have cancer, and you give five of them this medicine; and you say, "All right, here is a natural law, this is your chance that if a person with cancer should take this medicine, they will get well." Well, any scientist or medical man would laugh at you for such a statement. They say, "That is utterly absurd; you will have to find at least 300 cancer cases that are cured by this before we would think of saying such a thing as that would cure cancer." There may be some other factor which has entered into these five cases. There may be something which has nothing to do with the medicine. Maybe they didn't have cancer in the first place, and maybe they were mistaken in the diagnosis. There are all sorts of possibilities; and so after you examined 300 cases and say "This is a pretty good thing to use in the cure of cancer," then he sets to work, and tries to find the reason, and tries to figure out why it is, and how it works; and whether there are certain factors in it which could be changed, and you still get the same result; and what are the factors that cannot be changed in it. We don't move forward on an inductive basis, and make a rule and say, "This is a natural law that can never be broken." We would have to examine all stages; and it is only if we examine a great many, and find that our assumption fits those cases that we are justified in saying, "This seems to be pretty well evident as a regular feature in the operation of nature, and this seems to be the reason for it."

The true nature of natural laws to quite an extent is uncertain. A thing has a high degree of certainty after it has been tested over a long period of time and found to apply; but there always is the possibility that on further examination of more cases, we will find that the underlying principle there has been incorrectly stated; and as it actually should be stated, it involves certain characteristics that we hadn't thought of before. And therefore there may be

cases which we would previously have thought of as coming into it which now we do not.

To me the outstanding example is the matter of gravitation. During the middle ages, people said, "The earth cannot be round. If the earth were round, people on the other side would fall off from it, therefore it can't be round." And that sounds silly and ridiculous today, but it was actually a very, very sensible statement. It was a fact universally appreciated. People had observed for centuries that things fall down. You drop something out of your hand and it falls down. Everything falls down. That was universally observed. Thousands and thousands of people had observed it. Nobody had ever seen an exception to it. They had never see anything fall to the right or to the left; things always fell down and therefore it was only logical that if things fall down, God couldn't make a world that would be round because he would have to break natural laws in order to have things on the other side of the world stay on the world, and not fall down away from the world. That was only logical common sense.

But then as a result of the study of the heavenly bodies, it was seen that there were phenomena in the universe which needed some explanation which was not yet available. And one day Newton saw an apple fall and—it is commonly said—he then thought of the law of gravitation. And very few people realize what it means; but what it means is that, when he saw the apple fall, he was reminded of the fact that he already knew: that things fall towards the earth; and the problem he was thinking of was—not why things fall towards the earth—but the problem was why do the heavenly bodies behave as they do? He had observed the heavens before for 40 years with his telescope, much inferior to present ones, but yet sufficient to get a great deal of data; and Newton was trying to explain the data in the heavens⁹⁶ and then he was reminded that on earth here things fall down; and he saw that instead of falling down towards the earth, there is a force which drew things towards each other—and that if this is so that would explain the movement of the heavenly bodies; and therefore he advanced the suggestion which was contrary to all previous observations: that things don't fall down, but to each other—every particle, every body attracts every other body by an amount that is proportional to its mass; but the reason that he could advance it was that all the previous thousands, yes millions, of observations of things falling down were observations made near this earth. And therefore what people said when people said "down" could just as well mean "towards the earth" and it could be that "down" had nothing in the world to do with it; that it was simply that you happened to be near the earth.

⁹⁶ [dcb] For example, the fact that the moons of Jupiter appear to orbit that planet so that "down" for them means "towards Jupiter". This fact was discovered by Galileo in 1612, some 30 years before Newton was born.

And so the new law, as Newton suggested it was entirely different from the old law; and it took care of the old phenomena, and of a great many more; and it excluded phenomena, or ideas that were assumed to come under the old law.⁹⁷

Now, it seems to me then that there is no one living who has enough knowledge of anything to say that this is a law of nature which God cannot break. There is no one living who could say such a thing. A person can take thousands or millions of observations; we generalize the result; we try to suggest an explanation for them; we find an explanation, which seems to us to meet all the possibilities that we have looked at; but we cannot deny that there may be some other factor, that we haven't noticed, that is more important than the factors that we have taken into account. We may have to revise our definitions, just as completely as the idea that things fall down was revised by Newton as the result of observation of the movement of the heavenly bodies.

(Student. Does the weighing of probability factors mean that we can't prove that the Bible is God's Word?) Well, personally, my answer would be the argument that Dr. Machen got from Dr. Warfield as a student. Dr. Warfield said that if a person *had* to cross the ocean, then you had to cross the ocean; there is no question about it. We have to do something in relation to eternity. We will go to eternity, we can't help ourselves, we will.

Now, suppose you have to cross the ocean, and here is a boat that is starting; and the boat has a captain that is well experienced; and it has a crew which has been highly spoken of; and everything that you have heard of it is good; and you know thousands of people who have trusted themselves to that boat; and all your evidence is that they have made the trip safe. Then, here is another boat beside it; and this other boat has a drunken captain, and it is full of holes; it looks as if it mightn't go very many miles safely. The crew is constantly fighting among themselves over the principles of navigation.

And you look at the two boats and you say, "Well, now, all the evidence that I have points to the fact that this boat here with this experienced captain that so many people trust so well is fully capable of making the journey." Well, but how do I know that it is? Maybe after all there is a hole somewhere in it; maybe a leak will be sprung; maybe there is a leak somewhere that I don't know about; therefore I am going to take the other boat."

⁹⁷ [dcb] Part of Newton's genius is that he did not try to explain the nature of gravity or of action at a distance. He confined his work to the observable data, which he encapsulated in his famous equation for gravitational force. Even today, science does not know what gravitation or even energy really "is". Or exactly how action at a distance works—at one time it was thought that the "ether" was a medium for action at a distance, but experiments showed that there doesn't appear to be any such medium.

Well now, you say, what kind of a silly fool would do that? A lot of people. That is an argument which some people would call a probability argument; and they would say that it is fantastic, and you have got to have certainty. Well, they would sit down on the dock and wait for certainty. I don't know how long they would wait, because the fact of the matter is that you have the one boat. And there are thousands of people in the state of the one we mentioned.

On the one hand, if you want to say, "I've got to be certain that the Bible is God's word; and therefore I am going to just presuppose it is God's word, then I am certain."⁹⁸ I can't see any difference from that and putting your head in the sand like an ostrich, and the ostrich saying, "Nobody is chasing me, and I'm just going to say nobody is chasing me." I cannot see how that can give you any possible evidence for anything.

But to look at the facts and to say, "Here is something that is strong evidence that it is God's Word; and there is something else, that has one thousandth of the evidence for its being God's Word." There are many things which are "peoples' theories", but most of them can be quite easily demolished as far as anything positive is concerned. We have something for which there are many, many evidences for its being God's Word. Evidences as to its accuracy, its reliability, and above all, its great effect on many human lives. We have that, and if we do not take that, we have nothing to compare with it that has any such claim of being God's word. We have only the guess that there may be a god after all; and if there is, we don't know anything about him; and the observations that we can make on our own are all that we can use to build a judgment on as to how to make a boat that can carry us across the ocean.

I do not personally think that it is possible to rule out the element of probability from any argument on an intellectual basis. I do believe that when one accepts Christ, that the Holy Spirit works a conviction in his mind. I believe that the Holy Spirit testifies to us that the Bible is the Word of God.

Now, that is not an argument you can use with an unbeliever; but the thing for the unbeliever is to show him his need of God; to show him his sin, to show him his guilt; to show him the facts of eternity; to show him his need of help; and here is the help. The only help that is really worth anything is the help which the Scripture gives; and when he comes to Christ as Saviour then it is important that he realize that this is God's word

Well, now then, the idea of a universal law of nature that God cannot break is purely an idea with no evidence, no foundation whatever. On the other hand, we find many people saying our proof that God is God is that he breaks these laws.

⁹⁸ [dcb] Dr. MacRae probably has in mind Cornelius van Til's Presuppositionalism, which was one of the factors that led to the decision of some faculty to leave Westminster Theological Seminary and form Faith Theological Seminary.

Now, it seems to me that that is not as harmful as the idea that there are laws that God can't break, and therefore there can't be miracles, but that it is just about as silly. I don't know what it can possibly be based upon, how it may be so. I am not saying it isn't so, but I am saying that I don't know what there is that anybody can base it on. It is a common idea—here we have the laws of nature; a miracle is that God comes in and turns them upside down, and does something the opposite way; and that proves that He is God. There is no evidence in the Scripture of any such claim. The fact is that God made the laws, and he could change them if he chooses. I don't see how anybody could deny that God could change any law—if there is such a thing—if he chooses. But I don't see what right we have to say that a law of nature is anything but the way God has chosen to have things act; and that he chooses that in our present universe, they act that way. And whether in the new heaven and the new earth, He will have them work that way, or a different way, is something on which He has absolute choice; and we have no right to say.

And He may have certain phenomena in this galaxy; and He might conceivably have other phenomena in another galaxy; and he might have phenomena in this earth, and other phenomena on another planet. He may have different substances here, and He may have different metals there, and different things that will make different situations. He is free to do as he chooses.⁹⁹

(Student.) I am not speaking of universal and eternal moral principles. There are universal and eternal moral principles and logical principles; that concept seems to be pretty difficult to get away from. That is, that God, in his nature, is good and not bad, and there is a difference between goodness and badness; and God, in his nature, is truth; and there is a difference between what is and what isn't true. Those are great fixed eternal principles.

But as to whether one's substance is such-a-way, what makes it true? It is because God chooses to; and He has established it that way; and we observe this; and we observe his acting in a certain sphere; and we draw certain conclusions from it; and we expect that it will continue to act that way; and if, in a limited period of a few centuries, we have been observing it as such; and therefore we are quite justified in going ahead, on the expectation that it will

⁹⁹ [dcb] One of the firm conclusions of modern science is that the chemical and physical laws are valid throughout the universe. This is demonstrated in many ways. There are only, for example about 100 elements in the universe, and the most distant stars are made up of the same elements, with the same physical and chemical properties as the ones we find here on earth. One way that unbelieving scientists avoid the conclusion that our universe is "finely tuned" for human life is to postulate that there is an infinity of universes (of course totally inaccessible to us) in which all possible variations of the physical and chemical laws may exist—so the fact that ours is one that appears to be uniquely designed and finely-tuned to support life—is pure accident: after all it must be because we are here. Thus God's glory and handiwork displayed in the natural world (Psalm 19) are dismissed as pure accident, the result of pure chance.

continue to do such during the remainder of the present age of the world. But when God creates the new heaven and new earth, he could make changes in his way of doing things if he chooses to do so. It is for our convenience and His convenience that he chooses them to work in certain definite ways, rather than because they have to. I don't see how anybody can get away from that. There is nothing on which anyone can base the idea that there are certain laws which are so fixed that God couldn't change them. How do they come to be? If you had observed everything in the universe through billions and billions of years, you could say "Everything I have ever observed up to this point acts this way," so that has been a fixed law in the past; but that wouldn't justify your saying that anything must be fixed in the future; and the little observation that we can do doesn't qualify us to make such a statement. We do not have enough knowledge to say that.

I never say anything is or is not contrary to law. I do not know; but I insist that God could change any natural law if He chooses. He could do away with what we might think is a natural law. He can do anything he chooses in the world he has made; but I don't think that we know enough about it to say when he does or when he doesn't.

If God chooses that a thing shall always act in a certain way during the existence of our present earth; if he chooses that for a period of 10,000—or 100 million or billion or whatever years—that a thing shall always happen in a certain way, that makes that thing a natural law. Well now, if that is the case, nothing could happen contrary to it unless God chose to make it so. And if there is a natural law which has been during the existence of our universe—if there is such a thing and if God establishes it that way—it would seem likely that, rather than simply arbitrarily making an exception, he would avail himself of another natural law. It seems likely but we don't know.

It seems to me there are two opposite errors which are related to the same original fundamental assumption—the assumption that there are fixed laws in nature that we can't get around. The man in India assumes that water always flows, because he has never experienced frozen water. If he sees water piled up in a heap—in a frozen state—and the air all around it may be warm; and yet here is this frozen column of ice; and he sees that, and concludes that it is contrary to the law of nature, because water flows. And then he finds that, actually, his idea of the laws of nature must be extended; because when a substance gets below a certain temperature—which varies for different substances—it changes from a liquid to a solid, and no longer flows; and this changes his previous idea of water altogether; and science moves forward that way.

And our science—if you take all the knowledge of the universe as being this room—our science would be from there up to here; and any scientist would

recognize that there is at least that much difference between what we know and what we do not; and that may greatly alter our formulation of it; but the vital thing is, that what we are formulating is what we observe of how nature acts; and we have no right to say, "This is a law of nature which can't be broken." For in the first place, our formulation may be wrong; further data may greatly effect our formulation; and in the second place, on what does it base the idea that things must always be the same? We see a regularity; and we say "There is a regularity; there must continue to be a regularity." Well, it has always been; it is reasonable to think that it will continue during our present age; but what is beyond our present age is anybody's guess. But why is it this way? Isn't it because God chose that it should be this way? Well, then to say God chose is it to be this way, and then to say that God couldn't break the natural laws seems rather inconsistent.

On the other hand, to say that every time that a sign is given, it has to be a breaking of natural law is equally absurd. It is equally absurd because for the first thing, the Bible doesn't say any such thing, but that a miracle is generally defined as a direct act of God given as a sign to a message or messenger. A direct act of God, not an indirect one. Well now, how do we know what is a direct act or an indirect one? The Bible doesn't say that anywhere; it doesn't make that distinction. You take the word "sign" and trace it through the scripture; you find that when God says he will give a sign, He means either: (1) that he will give something that presents a truth in such form as to make it clear to your mind; he may use a sign in that sense. A sign may be simply a picture. Or, (2) He may use it in the sense that He gives you an evidence or an indication, something that should produce a certain assurance in your mind.

We have made a Latin word "miracle"; and we have taken some of these signs and applied the word "miracle" to them; and we have said a miracle is a breaking of the law of nature. Well, the Bible never said any such thing; and we are people who know (say) one one-hundredth of one percent of the laws of nature. "Well," we say, "if God is going to prove that He is God, he has got to do something which goes beyond all the laws of nature." Well, to say that, if that had any validity, he would have to tell them all the laws, in order that they would know that it was beyond them. There is no evidence in the Scripture of any such thing.

So I would say that, if God gives us a sign, a sign is something that should naturally arouse an idea that this is so in our minds; and it would be something that is contrary to our usual experience; not contrary to a law of nature, necessarily, though it might be. That is a sign; and God might choose at any time to do something, by using laws of nature of which we don't know. Why on earth should He have to make new ones for a particular sign? He could make a new one, if He chooses, or God might choose in any particular case to have made a law or a situation in the past which would be suited to the particular

situation. He might have cause, for instance, if He chose, at the Jordan there to have had a hole under the earth. There are thousands of holes and caves in the earth. There are many rivers that go underground. It would be entirely possible for the Jordan River to do like a river does in California. It flows as a big river on the surface; and then it disappears into the earth for many miles; and then it comes out again. It would be entirely possible for God to divert the Jordan's flow that way; and then to have the entrance of the hole get filled up with silt in the flow through its natural channel; and to have it break through the hole and go underground again; and then to have a lot of rocks come down and fill up the hole and have it flow on top again. He could have prepared the situation that way for a particular sign anywhere in the world, if he chose to do so.

People a few years ago said, "It is fantastic to think of carrying a message over a wire. You talk and somebody hears you; but to say that you can make a little wire carry it across the country is utterly fantastic." And then they put up a wire, and carried a message all the way from Baltimore to Washington; that convinced people. The message said that President Polk had been nominated for President; and that convinced people that you could carry a message over a wire; and so nobody was surprised when they carried it over a wire clear across the country, or even across the ocean. But then, eventually, somebody came along and said that you can carry a message without a wire, even. And certainly he seemed utterly crazy. How could you cause that what I say here would be heard in Italy, without having a wire stretching from here to there? Well, they thought Marconi was utterly stupid to advance such a silly idea as that; but there were forces in the universe that nobody previously had ever dreamed of which made it possible to do that.

Now, I read just recently in a magazine, that somebody has made a house in which the air in the house might be at the temperature of 10 degrees above zero; and one person can sit in his shirt-sleeves in absolute comfort in that house, and another person could sit there in the same room, with a fur coat on and not be warm. It sounds utterly fantastic; but it is simply utilizing principles now known: radiation of heat in such a way that the heat is radiated into the room and that everything else in the room simply reflects the heat back and doesn't absorb it except the individual there; and consequently the writer suggested that it is now possible to make a house in which you don't need to heat the air, you only have to heat the person. (laughter) Well, as I understand it, that seems to be quite definitely not contrary to present theory; and it even is working out in a practical sense today. It is contrary to our previous ideas of heating a house.

Now, if we can do that, God could—if he chose—cause that in some way, heat could, as in the house, be radiated here, and could be projected there, in such a way as to freeze the Jordan at one particular point, without causing any great difficulty to people not far away from it. He could have chosen to do that, to

utilize a natural law that people were not familiar with. He could have chosen to have something prepared at that particular place that we didn't know of; to choose either of these; or he could choose to simply make a complete change in natural law and do something utterly contradictory. We don't know which; and we have no right to say that God couldn't do any one of the three he chose.

Now, in this particular case, the crossing of the Jordan, the Scripture does not go into the matter of a full explanation of whether God completely used natural law or not. In this situation, it doesn't go into it. But the Scripture does give some hints—make some rather specific statements which we will discuss—just as he did in the passage on the crossing of the Red Sea; and just as he does in the passage on Joshua's long day, which we will get to later.

The Lord knew what he was going to do, and so he told them to come; and they came, and as soon as their feet were dipped in the river, in the brim of the river, because Jordan was overflowing all its banks at the time of harvest, we read in verse 16 that God caused that the water right there should stop, and stand up in a high heap ten feet above them; and just stand right there, and they could walk over.

Is that what it says? Anybody have their Bible open to it? Be sure, because there's no point in what I tell you, but it's that I want you to understand what the Bible has to say. And that's not what it says. Read it and see what it says. It says [Joshua 3:16],

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

Well, isn't that a funny thing to say, "very far from the city Adam." You might say that the American troops landed in Normandy, very far from the city of New York. What would be the point of it? Very far from the city of Adam.

I don't know why the King James' version translated it this way. The Hebrew is that "they stood up in an heap very far off *v'Adam*, in Adam. When did *v'* ever mean "from"? "Very far from the city of Adam?" No, it's "very far off, in Adam, the city that is by Zaretan." And there is a place today, a few miles up the river—above Jericho—which today is called "Adamia". And that's just an ending, you see, that "ia"; it's "Adam" with an ending. Adamia is the present name of that place. And there is a tell there, which would have been a city or a town in ancient times. And this place, which they today call Adamia, would seem most likely to be that place which this refers to when it says "at Adam." It is a few miles up the Jordan from Jericho. And it says it is across from Zaretan; and we know Zaretan, which is near that same area, which is a few miles away, across

the Jordan. And that's what the Hebrew says; I don't know how the King James ever came to say "very far from the city Adam"; there's no foundation for that in the Bible here at all.

But it's very far off, at the city of Adam, where the water stood still on a heap. And those that came down toward the sea of the plain failed; and were cut off, and the people passed over right against Jericho. So the account here is not an account of the priests stepping into the water, and right there where they are, the waters stand up as a heap; that's not what it says here. But what it says here: they stood up as a heap at the city Adam, very far off, that is a few miles up the river.

Well now, when you're down there at Jericho, you have a fairly wide valley, the Jordan Valley down there is quite a wide valley; but you go a few miles up the stream, and you come to Adamia; and today there is a ferry at Adamia. I crossed at Adamia at the end of a three-week horseback trip through the back country of Palestine [in 1929]. We got onto the ferry; I think we had about 8 horses and there were four professors—born on four different continents—in our party; then some Arab muleteers to take care of the horses and the mules. Well, we crossed in this ferry; and it was a fairly narrow place where the ferry crossed there; and on both sides the valley goes only a short distance. Instead of the wide valley at Jericho, it's a fairly narrow valley; and then there are high cliffs on both sides. These cliffs go up two or three hundred feet; and it looks almost like just a dirt cliff, it didn't look like a steep rock cliff at all, it looked like a dirt cliff. I didn't stop to examine it carefully, but I mean that's the general impression given.

And there is an Arabic account, in Arab history, of one time in the Middle Ages, when they say that there was a landslide there, which filled up the river and held it back for many hours. Professor Garstang, of the University of Liverpool, tells of finding evidence of similar occurrences in this very setting. Garstang, in his book which he calls, *The Foundation of Bible History: Joshua to Judges*¹⁰⁰, a professor at the University of Liverpool; he was the director of excavation for the Palestine Mandate for a number of years.

I will just say a word about this book. *The Foundation of Bible History* is a book which was published in America in 1931. The first American edition was in 1931—I don't know what the date was in England, but not much before this, perhaps the year before. It is written by John Garstang who is a professor in Liverpool University in England, who was for quite a time director of antiquities in Palestine, in charge over all archaeological work in Palestine. He himself was many years excavating at Jericho; and professor Garstang wrote this book on Joshua and Judges, in which he goes through these books in order and gives archaeological material dealing with statements of the books; and then in the

¹⁰⁰ John Garstang, *The Foundation of Bible History: Joshua Judges*. (1931).

end of the book, he has—what is much more valuable than the rest of the book—he has an appendix in which he takes up different places in Palestine and tells the facts about these places, the observations of the materials there and this last part of the book is very valuable.

In the first part of the book, he goes through and looks at things; and he gives his theories in relation to them. Sometimes his theories are very good; and sometimes they are very bad; and in reading anybody's theories, it is good to go through and see what are the facts from which he bases his theory; and distinguish the facts that may be valuable from the theory. Unfortunately, some of his theories are pretty bad. Others are pretty good; but he is a good observer of facts; a good observer, a good worker, an accurate archaeologist. When he makes a statement of fact, it is quite dependable; that that is what he saw, or what he read in a book written by someone else, who was in authority in that particular area.

A very interesting thing about this book is that Dr. Garstang is familiar with the theory of the critics, that the Pentateuch is made up of documents J, D, E, P; and he apparently accepts that theory; and he knows that the critics divide up Joshua and Judges as they do the Pentateuch, even though it is much less certain in Joshua and Judges than in the Pentateuch. They divide it up into these documents, with J and E being the earlier documents. And he shows us how remarkable—at point after point—the archaeological evidence fits with the statements of the documents J and E in the Bible—

[T]he historic sites and walled cities, which the writer had the privilege of visiting repeatedly while excavation was in progress, during the seven years that he directed the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem and the Department of Antiquities in Palestine, impressed him deeply with a sense of material reality underlying the historical narrative.... Every identified site mentioned in the oldest sources (J, E and JE) of the Books of Joshua and Judges was revisited; while the three selected cities, Jericho, Ai and Hazor, were examined more thoroughly with the spade. The impression now became positive. No radical flaw was found at all in the topography and archaeology of these documents.... [T]hese old portions... are relatively free from discrepancies, giving a straightforward and fairly continuous account of the sequence of events.

[N]ot only were these records in general founded upon fact, but they must have been derived from earlier writings, almost contemporary with the events described, so detailed and reliable is their information. [*Ibid.*, Preface]

Now he says in his introduction, "I have found quite strangely a number of things where statements in P seem to be evidence for archaeology, places that I haven't bothered to give in the book." Garstang does not say there is any

evidence of inaccuracy or undependability in those parts of Joshua and Judges which belong to P. In fact quite to the contrary there is some evidence of remarkable accuracy in those statements; but the thing that we are interested in is that there are parts of Joshua and Judges which he thinks that he has most remarkable evidence of accuracy; and we don't particularly care whether they were in J or E or P; and so he gives these evidences and, as I say, his facts are reliable; he is a solid dependable man; he doesn't twist facts to fit his theories; he sometimes twists interpretations of facts to fit his theories.

Now regarding the crossing of the Jordan, Garstang says:

"Adam or 'Adamia' is found about sixteen miles up the river from Jericho... about half a mile eastward from the best ford of the middle Jordan, the *Jisr el Damieh*. It so happens that the river near this ford is liable to be blocked at intervals by great landslides. Several of these are on record. The earliest occurrence dates from AD 1266, when the Sultan Bibars ordered a bridge to be built across the Jordan in the neighbourhood of Damieh. The task was found to be difficult owing to the rise of the waters. But in the night preceding the 8th December, 1267, a lofty mound, which overlooked the river on the west, fell into it and dammed it up, so that the water of the river ceased to flow and none remained in its bed. The waters spread over the valley above the dam and none flowed down the bed for some sixteen hours. There was another similar occurrence about the year 1906, and the most recent during the earthquakes of 1927.

On this last occasion the high west bank immediately below the ford collapsed, carrying with it the roadway... and just below, a section of the cliff, which here rises to a height of 150 feet, fell bodily across the river and completely dammed it, so that no water flowed down the river bed for twenty-one and a half hours. Meanwhile the waters gradually filled up the plain around Tell el Damieh, and found their way eventually back to the river bed when the temporary barrage¹⁰¹ was in turn destroyed, and normal conditions were gradually resumed. During this time, it is asserted by several living witnesses, that they crossed and re-crossed the bed of the river freely on foot.¹⁰²

Now that is what Garstang claims to have happened in 1927, when he was there shortly afterward; he got pictures of the situation, and he talked with people who claim to have crossed it at that time.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Term in civil engineering "an artificial obstruction in a watercourse."

¹⁰² Garstang, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

¹⁰³ Bryant Wood, "[The Jordan Blockage Reexamined \(Joshua 3:15-16\)](#)" *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Sept. 25, 2015 states "Israeli geologist Ron Avni studied the 1927 earthquake in great detail, examining all of the contemporary records in Arabic, English, French and Hebrew..." John Garstang was the only witness he found for this blockage of the Jordan. None of his "living witnesses" have been identified, but Avni could find no independent corroboration. However

Now the Bible here doesn't say that at Jericho, God caused the river to stand right up; but it says at the city Adam he caused it to stand up in heaps. Well, now God could stand them up in a heap by putting an invisible shield there very easily. God could put an invisible shield there that no one could see, that would hold the waters back and stand them up in a heap. Or he could put a visible shield there; and since it mentions Adam, it would sound as if what God did was exactly what happened in 1927. I don't say that it is certain but it would sound as if that is what happened then.



Garstang, Joshua, Judges plate XXV

THE WEST BANK OF THE JORDAN, OPPOSITE EL DAMIEH, 1928.

Where falls of this high bank destroyed the roadway during the earthquakes of 1927

It happened just at the time when God had the people there; they had already spied out Jericho; they were ready to try; he caused this to happen to stop the water going down Jordan and make it easy for them to cross over.

Yes? (Student: Did the same thing happen at the Red Sea when almost the same words are used, that the floods stood upright as an heap?) Well, see, here you have a river and if you put a dam across a river, the water will stop. The Red Sea is not a river flowing. It's a solid body of water so I wouldn't think there would be an analogy. And here it mentions the place that God used; there it mentions

Wood continues, "we have two well-documented instances in the recent past of the Jordan River being dammed as described in the Bible, one in AD 1267 and another in AD 1546." dcb.

that God used a wind. And the precise details of it, I wouldn't say—I don't know in either case—but the same thing that I notice here is that there the scripture mentions the means, a natural means; in this case it mentions a place. Now God could have put an invisible shield right there, and chosen it to happen just when they needed it. But whether naturally or by an invisible shield, it is a sign; it is a miracle, regardless of what the means was, whether he used the means and rushed the dirt over into the river and stopped the river, or whether he caused the water to stand up there.

There are people who try to get all the supernatural out of this picture. They explain everything away. There are other people who try to make everything just as different from ordinary life as they possibly can. I don't think we should try to do either; I think we should see what it says and try to understand it; but it is my personal impression that the Lord is anxious that we realize not just that he did wonderful works, long, long ago, and that nothing like this happens today, but that He is always interested in and directing everything in accordance with his plan and for his purpose; and that His hand is just as real in our lives today as it was in the lives of the Israelites, even though he may not choose to do the things in a way that seems the same type of miraculous deed today as it did then. Yet it is providence. He is doing what he chooses for his purposes in the lives of his children. But that is the statement here in verse 16: that it was a heap very far away from the crossing. It was very far from Jericho, very far back towards Adam. I'd have to look at this passage again; perhaps there is a commentator's suggestion. Perhaps it could be it stood very far unto, reaching unto the city of Adam.

Well, this is a very important incident in the story; you notice two chapters are given it. It is one of the great events of the conquest of Canaan; it was a great sign God gave them right at the beginning to show them he was with them; leading them; and making them bold to go forth. It's a very great sign; it gets two chapters in the Bible. Of course, when you say two chapters, it would just mean where the Archbishop divided it; but actually, it is a long two ordinary chapters in the book of Joshua. It is quite as much material as we have even about the conquest of Jericho. The conquest of Jericho has 27 verses altogether describing it; the crossing of the Jordan has 41, so about fifty to sixty per cent more space given to it than was given even to the great conquest of Jericho. The conquest of Jericho was a much greater event, but this was in some ways even more striking—to get this great body of Israelites across that river without any difficulty at all, because of the marvelous means that the Lord had provided.

And so he tells us how God commanded they take stones, and they make a monument in the middle of the river, so they could say we put up a monument right in the middle of that river; and they took stones from the middle of the

river, and made up a monument on the side, that people could see; and he says in Joshua 4:21,

And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, 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.

5. The General Circumcision and the Encampment at Gilgal. 5:2–12.

Here we find that the people have been in the wilderness under God's wrath; he's ordered they must go forty years in the wilderness, and the whole generation must die there; and under those circumstances, they had not been circumcised; and so now the order is given for the circumcision of all the men before they begin their actual attack on Jericho; and so here at Gilgal, we have this circumcision of all the men. And just as Moses when he began—he was already circumcised of course—it was necessary that his child be circumcised, before he began his great work; here the whole nation had to be circumcised as the evidence given that they were a holy people, set apart to the Lord, ready to undertake the conquest of Canaan.

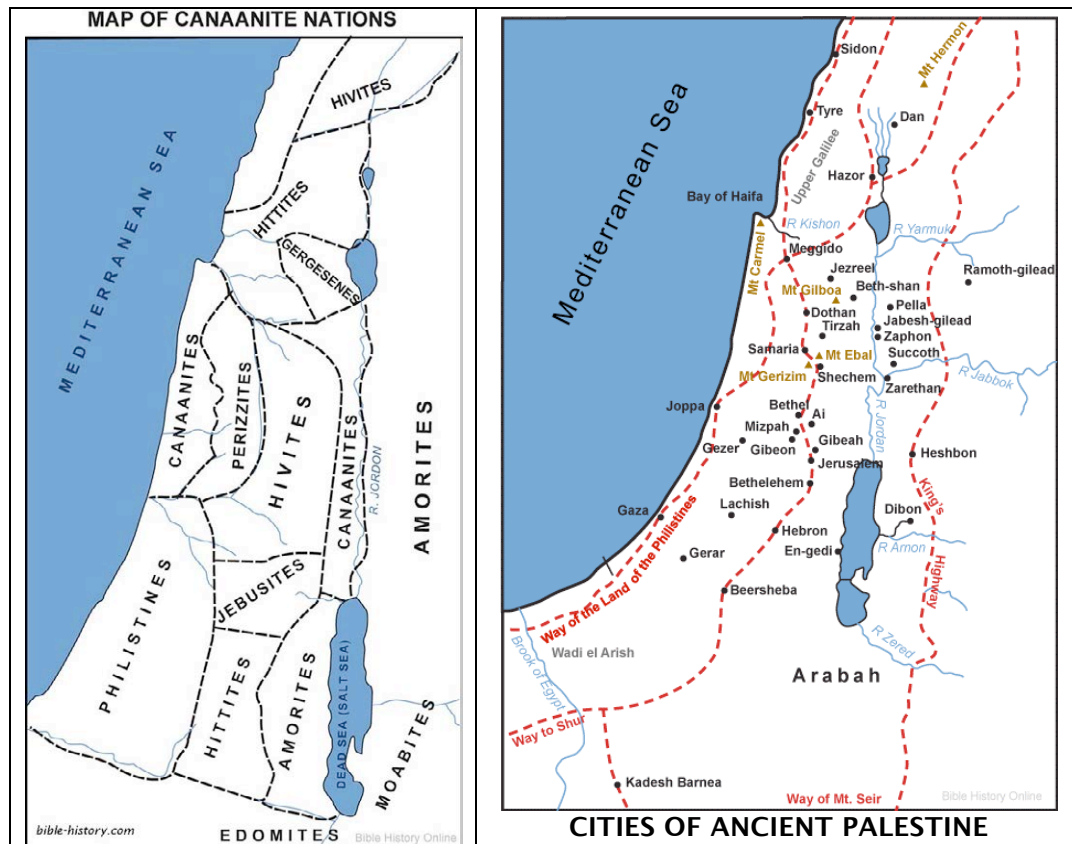
And the camp here at Gilgal—a name meaning "rolling"—and he called it that because there they had rolled away their reproach of Egypt from them. Well, now to call it rolling doesn't seem a very natural thing—that they rolled away the reproach—so my guess is that the name may have already been Gilgal, but that they said, "How appropriate is the name Gilgal; here is where the reproach of Egypt was rolled away from us." Now I'm not sure; maybe they give the name first there; but there are cases where a name is connected up by its appropriateness, rather than just a name given. So that would be a guess on my part about that. Next

C. The Conquest of Canaan. 5:13–12:24.

1. The General Strategy.

If somebody will draw a map of Palestine on the board we can look at it there; otherwise look at the back of your Bibles, see if you have a map of Palestine. And on this map of Palestine, you'll notice that the Israelites didn't come up from the south, which they would have done at Kadesh-Barnea, and attacked the land at one end of it; but they came around the Dead Sea and conquered Trans-Jordan; and then came in from the east. And they came in there at the

northern end of the Dead Sea, so that it was more or less in the middle of the land that they came. So that they attacked Jericho, a little south of the middle of the land; and from Jericho then they moved north up the Jordan Valley—which was hardly settled at all at this time—a few miles, and then on up to Shechem, which is just about in the very middle of the land.





Joshua's Conquest of Canaan

Scale of Miles

0 5 10 15 20 25



Right there near Shechem, or a little south of it, they start their conquest; that is, they continue the conquest, because they've already conquered Jericho and Ai; but then they conquer the states to the south of that first; and then the states—the cities—the different groups to the north of it. So they do not attack all the groups of Palestine at once, but they take them piecemeal; and they take it in the center, divide it into two sections in such a way that the two have no communication with each other. You could start in attacking in the south—in the very south—and the word might spread from one to the other all along about this attack, this danger to come; if you start in the middle to come south, then the north only gets slight rumors about it; and then, when you're through with the south, then you take up the north. So in three different movements—if you count Trans-Jordan, four different movements—the land was taken piecemeal. It was a very effective strategy. Good to have that in mind as we look at the whole procedure, the attack upon Palestine, as they are planning to take it for God. They did not go in there and send notices to every section of it, "We're now going to conquer this whole land, take it all over; we're going to meet you all at once." They took it piecemeal, section by section they conquered it.

2. The Divine Commander 5:13–15.

We do not have the whole story given here. We hardly could, because there's something in it that we just don't have fully explained.

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

And Joshua immediately said, "Who are you to come in here and take ahold of this force? Capture him, guards! He's probably a spy, or something. Bind him until he manages to give information." That is what would normally happen if anybody came and said things like that. But we read that Joshua fell on his face and did worship and said to him, "What saith my lord to his servant?" It's perfectly obvious that there is some further evidence given to Joshua. It wasn't just a man who could make this statement, and Joshua immediately accept it at face value. It is perfectly evident that there was some indication, some way in which Joshua had absolute proof that this was not an ordinary man, but this was a vision from the Lord.

There is doubtless further detail that we are not told, because the purpose is not to give us all the facts that occur. To give all the facts that occurred anywhere in any one year would take several encyclopedias; but it is to bring out the main fact here, which is that at this point God gave Joshua a special vision. He had a truth he wanted to drive home to Joshua; and so Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped; and he says, "What says my Lord to his servant?" So we are not given to believe that this was a vision to bring information to Joshua; God could have sent him facts, given him information, if he chose at this time, any way he chose; but the passage does not suggest that that is the purpose of this incident. The passage—as far as the passage goes—we have no reason to think anything more is involved in the incident than is here described. Except that there was some way in which Joshua knew who it was.

The purpose of the incident was simply to reinforce Joshua's understanding; that he was not the great one who had the power to do these great things; but that he was merely an instrument in the hands of the Lord; and that if the Lord chose to send somebody else to be his superior, that was entirely up to the Lord. It was to help keep Joshua humble, and to help keep Joshua looking to the Lord for his leadership, and giving the Lord the glory.

And Joshua was like every one of us, when we begin any great deed for Him. He would like us to have a similar realization brought home to us: that the Lord is the one who is doing it, and we are only an instrument in his hand. And our place is not standing up and saying, "I am the great mighty one who is doing this," but "I am an instrument in the Lord's hands."

I was reading how General Grant, when he was brought East to take over the command of the United States forces; he went to the army of the Potomac, which General George McClellan had trained so wonderfully; and they were drilled so, and they just loved McClellan. And McClellan couldn't bear to think of anything happening to this wonderful army he'd trained; so they never were much good for fighting, just for drilling and marching and obeying the commands of this great leader. And when Grant came in, he went to the headquarters; and he found the tents all out, with their beautiful signs and insignias, and everything so wonderful; and he says, "What is this? Is this the headquarters of Imperial Caesar?"

And General Grant lived about as simply as any one of the soldiers. He did not conceive of himself as a great one on a pedestal above them, but as a man who had a job to do; and he was getting to work to get the job done. And that's of course the attitude that Joshua had. But at this very important point, at the beginning here of the actual great conquest, God wanted to drive it home to Joshua's mind that he was nothing but an instrument in the Lord's hands for the accomplishment of the Lord's work. So he gave him this vision. Was this Christ

who came and appeared to him there? Was it? It surely was not an ordinary man; it was a vision from God. Was it a tangible being, something you could touch? What was it? We're not told.

But we are told this occurred, to drive home to Joshua's mind that important fact at this important point. Remember Alexander the Great, when he took the wonderful armies that his father had organized and trained, and started to conquer lands, going further and further eastward; he started out as one of the men; he was excellent at handling horses, and a very fine fighter himself; and the men just loved him. But he started out leading them; and they conquered land after land; and when he came in contact with the Persians, pretty soon Alexander decided that if the Persian king was a god, he was one too; and he told his comrades in arms they must come and kneel before him, and do him all sorts of homage, as if he were a god or some high imperial figure, lofty and above them. And it went to his head. Who knows what might have happened if he hadn't died when he was only about thirty.

But in the history books, man after man has done a great work, and then the success has gone to his head. It never did with Joshua. To the end of the history here he remains a humble man, devoted to the service of the Lord. But God gave him these experiences in order to reinforce them, just as he gave Balaam experiences to reinforce Balaam's decision to say only what the Lord told him to say. He gave Joshua this vision to reinforce his realization that he was merely an instrument in God's hands. He does not ordinarily give us experiences like that in these days; but he wants us to study his Word, and see what he did for Joshua, and to get the same results for ourselves from the study of the Word, that we would get if He actually interfered in such fashion. Now

3. The Conquest of Jericho. Chapter 6.

One of the most interesting—one of the best known—passages, probably, in the whole Bible. There's never a Sunday School course that goes through the Old Testament that does not deal with this particular chapter. So it is very, very well known; and it is interesting how the men march around Jericho every day; and on the seventh day they march around seven times; and they blow the trumpets, and the walls fall down; and Joshua said, "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city." And they just marched right straight up over these fallen walls and took the city, as the Lord had given it to them.

Now this does not happen in the other cities they conquer. They didn't march around the later cities. People read about a marvelous experience in the life of some man of God, where God has just handed him the thing with no effort on his part; and then they think that that should be their normal experience. But it was not; they had to fight hard for the other cities they conquered.

But here at the outset of the conquest of Canaan, God gave them this wonderful sign of his presence with them. And in this marvelous way, he turned it over to them with no effort on their part, except the marching around which certainly played no part in the actual conquest of the city. It's merely going through something the Lord commanded, and the Lord handed it over.

There are times when the Lord does things like that for us, but we are not to expect it to be the normal thing; because normally he expects us to work for what we accomplish, as the Israelites had to work very hard for what they accomplished later on in this conquest. But the Bible tells us the supernatural story of how this happened. And naturally, people who have not believed in the Bible would find this a very natural place to stop and ridicule; the idea that such a thing as this would happen, that marching around could make a city fall down, or the blowing of trumpets could knock over the walls of the city. And so it is interesting to see what archaeology has to say about the conquest of Jericho.

Well the place Jericho has been known for a very long time. The name has been preserved, though the town was moved a short distance. The New Testament Jericho is about a mile and a half away from Old Testament Jericho, in a different place but in the same general locality. And the present little town of Jericho, where there are a great many refugees, is a little removed from either of those. But they're in the same general locality.

So there wasn't much difficulty in finding the place of the Old Testament Jericho; and it was very early in the history of archaeology, in the years 1907–09, that the German archaeologists began excavation of Jericho. The German Orient Society began excavation of Jericho and carried on 1907–1909: digging about three weeks in the spring of 1907; and about three months in the years of 1908–1909. And digging in there through the city, they found many interesting things; they really only made a start in excavation in that small amount of time, but they did enough to map the walls, and to compare different strata, and to tell a certain amount about it. And it used to be customary to discuss how the Canaanite Blue City was destroyed in around two or three hundred years before the Israelites came, but the Canaanite Red City was the city that Joshua destroyed.¹⁰⁴

Once I remember asking an archaeologist, with whom I was visiting Jericho at the time, why it was that one was the blue city and the other the red city. "Well," he said, "the first excavator marked one set of walls in blue ink and one in red, so that's how those names came to be applied." And very often names are given in that sort of fashion; and sometimes they become established, and people think they have historical significance. But the blue city was the last city that

¹⁰⁴ The "Blue" City is the lower and older; the "Red" City is more recent and built over the ruins of the Blue City.

was found, there in the early period. And there is another city on top of that; and what the Germans noticed was that the type of civilization found in the blue city, and the city above it, did not come immediately after one another as in other places in Palestine.

Pottery from the two had at least two or three centuries in between. And the remains which they found from the period above, the Canaanite red city, was similar to that that was found in other places from the time of the later Israelite kingdom, say the time of Ahab. And that was very interesting; to bring the connection with Joshua 6 here, with the end of the chapter, where it says in Joshua 6:26,

And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.

And then if you turn over to 1 Kings 16:34, you find this statement about King Ahab,

In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.

Here then we have a prophecy given, and the prophecy fulfilled; but the prophecy implies that there was no city there in between. And then, this says that the curse Joshua laid upon him was fulfilled when he and the Bethelites built it in the days of King Ahab.

And so according to the Bible, the site was unoccupied by a fortified city during this period from Joshua to Ahab; and there was a gap found there by the German excavators, in the remains during this period, of at least three hundred years; and some would say six hundred. And so that is an interesting element of confirmation of the Biblical account.

Now somebody told me, several years ago, that they saw an account in an article in a Sunday supplement of a newspaper, telling how in the excavations that were going on in 1932 at Jericho, that they had found buried under the base of the city the skeleton of a young man; they claim this confirms the story that he laid the foundation in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates in his youngest son Segub. Now I haven't come across the article; and my guess is that it was a bit of questionable writing, I don't know. Maybe.

But I think more important than that is to note what this means. Joshua laid a curse on it, and said this would be done. This says it was done. Does that mean that Hiel helped to sacrifice his sons? His two sons? Well, that would hardly fit the curse, would it? A curse is some misfortune. It seems to me it's much more reasonable to think that what it means is that in connection with the laying of the foundation of the city, the eldest son was killed in some accident; and then in connection with the setting up of the gates, the youngest son was killed in an accident. Now whether that happened, that they were then buried under the gate or not, we don't know. And if you found the skeleton of a young man there, that wouldn't necessarily prove it—it might be someone else. But I think that's what it means: how Joshua predicted two accidents happening to the two sons of the man who rebuilt it; and in Kings it says that that actually did occur; there were these accidents. Well, the vital thing there is that during this period in between, there was not a fortified city at Jericho.

Now after the excavation carried on from 1907–09, there were many interesting things discovered there: details, nothing especially important at this point in connection with the story of the conquest. But in 1930 and 1931, further excavations were begun at Jericho; and this excavation which began in 1930 was carried on for a number of years by Dr. John Garstang, who was a professor of the University of Liverpool; he had been the Director of Antiquities for the Palestine Mandate, which had oversight over all excavations in Palestine for a time. An interesting thing about it was that Dr. John Garstang received a great part of the funds necessary for the excavation from Sir Charles Martin, a motorcycle manufacturer in England; I think it was London, I'm not sure. And Martin was a very earnest Christian anxious to discover evidence supporting the dependability of the Bible; and I think Garstang was anxious to please Martin.

I don't think Garstang himself had any special interest in this phase. Now Garstang excavated there for a number of years, and Martin and others supported him. But after a while, Marston withdrew his support. I believe the reason he withdrew it was because they got down to where they were excavating lower strata, long before any connection with the Bible; and Garstang was tremendously interested in that, but I don't think that Marston was. But Marston spent a good deal of time there at the excavation, taking considerable interest in it; and one thing that was sort of hobby with Marston was to prove that the date of the Exodus and the Conquest was the so-called early date, about 1400 BC And Garstang wrote a book to prove that the destruction of Jericho took place in 1407. And you can't be as exact as that on anything, but that's the date he gave, 1407 BC¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Garstang, *op. cit.*, p. 61: "Happily the reference to Solomon enables us to adopt a fixed standpoint, for the fourth year of his reign is determined by calculation as 967 BC, and from this starting point, as already indicated, we arrive at 1407 BC for the beginning of the history of Israel in Canaan under Joshua." He details his calculations on the preceding pages of his book,

And Garstang took all the events of the conquest, Joshua and Judges, and he gave them dates and then took the events of Egyptian history of this period and he took the dates of them and tried to show over a period of a century or more how it just fits together, Egyptian history and Biblical history, and fit with this date of 1407.

Well, since we don't know these exact Egyptian dates—we know approximately the relation to each other—but scholars vary within a period of thirty or forty years. And for the Biblical dates, scholars vary within a period of about two hundred years; so I think we're far from ready to begin that sort of investigation.

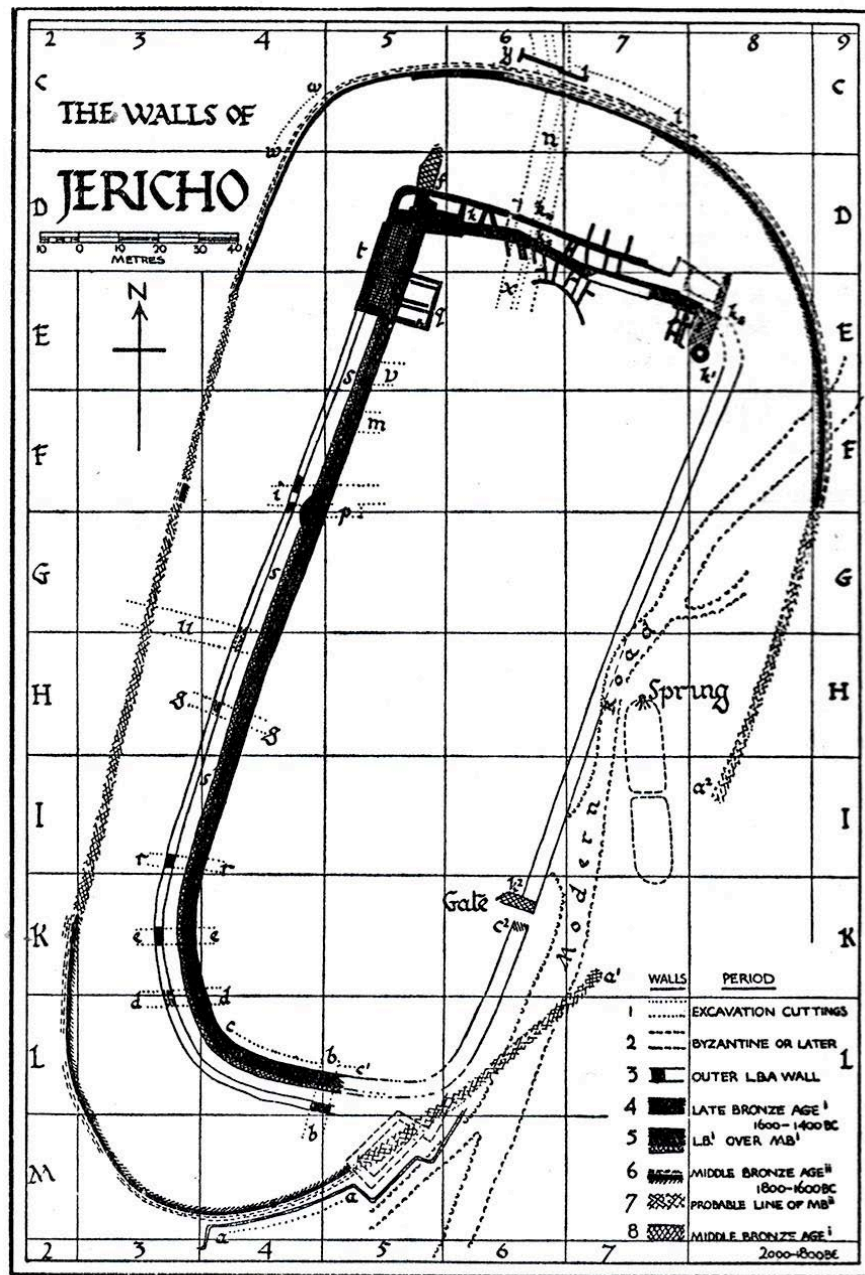
Garstang was in Palestine many years; and he studied each one of these locations very carefully; and especially in the last part of the book, in which he takes up the places in Palestine mentioned in Joshua and Judges; and he tells about where they are; what the situation is; what kind of pottery they found there; whatever excavation has been done there and so on; and that material is extremely valuable in the latter part of the book, even though now of course it's already—well it was about 1930 it came out—so it's already nearly thirty years old. But the material up to that time is very well given there; and in the discussion the book, he takes up the events in Joshua and Judges—particularly in Joshua—and he discusses the evidence; and there's much of real value in the book, although his theorizing based on his fitting together with Egyptian dates; and his strong support of this early date which leads him I think to confuse evidence in many points; is a very definite detriment to the effectiveness of the book.

But Garstang tells in the book how he excavated there at Jericho; he was particularly interested in the walls of the latest Canaanite city there; and he examined the stone of the wall, as they excavated it. There were other cities on top from later, so all this was buried. He excavated them. One point that someone raised against it, was, "How could an army march seven times around the city? If you got too near to it, naturally you'd have rocks and things thrown at you from the wall; so you'd have to be a little distance away; and to march seven times around in one day, you couldn't march seven times around Philadelphia, you'd have a job doing it once." He writes:

About 1600 BC some catastrophe had overwhelmed the city, which when rebuilt was confined to the top of the mound. The old wall at the foot of the slope was largely demolished, and the fosse filled with debris. The new ramparts followed the shorter contour around the top of the slope. The city was accordingly much smaller, being rather less than 230 yards in length and

in which he computes a total of 482 years, compared with the 480 years of I Kings 6:1. So this date is not derived from archaeological material *per se*.

about 130 yards in width, so that its whole circumference was not more than 650 yards. Its area was thus less than six acres, and the population it contained could hardly have numbered more than 1500 people. The defenses at this time consisted of two parallel walls built of brick.... Though massive, these walls were faulty in construction. *ibid.* p. 130-131.



Garstang, Joshua and Judges, p. 387

WALLS OF JERICHO - Site Plan

Jericho was not a large city, but it was a very, very strong city. The walls—the stones in them—are tremendously large; and it was a double wall. It was built for protection, and the people would gather together there behind those strong

walls, in case of siege; and they had a wonderful fountain inside, later called Elisha's fountain; the water gushes out at a tremendous rate, and there's plenty of water, and they were able to withstand a very, very long siege. It was not a large area at all in the city, so the task of marching around it is not so difficult.

That's one thing that light was thrown on by it; but then Garstang was greatly interested in examining the nature of the wall; and he found that indeed the walls had fallen down flat as described here; that the walls were not standing up to a certain height, except in one place, which we assume is where Rahab's house was; but that, in the other places, the walls had fallen over; the inner wall had fallen over into the moat, because if they could get in the outer wall, it would make it easy to get across the moat; and the outer wall had fallen outside down the slopes of the outside, so that you could climb across the ruins of it and get into the city very easily.

Writing further on Rahab's house, Garstang says,

The pressure upon the limited building-space within the original enclosure seems to have become so great that houses had arisen upon the walls themselves, the intervening space [between the two walls – dcb] being bridged with timber, traces of which are clear among the excavated remains. *Ibid. p.132.*

Now there are a couple of very interesting pages here about it, I want to read to you, what Garstang says. He says

The collapse of the walls of Jericho is not attributed by the Bible narrative to a physical agency. But we should not overlook in this connexion the possible effect of earthquakes, which would doubtless have been regarded at the time as direct manifestations of Jehovah's powers." *Ibid. p. 133.*

Notice the condescension. Of course, he's with Marston to prove the Bible is correct; but his attitude toward the religious life is not very satisfactory to my mind. He says,

Walls of the period both at Ai and at Jerusalem, on excavation, showed signs of subsidence and dislocation such as might be attributed to earth tremors; but there is no indication as to the date of these shocks, which may even have happened since the abandonment of the sites. We have already noted that earthquakes are said to have heralded the arrival of the Israelites, and we have seen that in recent years an earthquake produced at tell El Damieh the very phenomenon which is said to have made possible the crossing of the Jordan. Palestine is subject to earthquakes, some of which have wrought great damage. In 1837 four thousand people were killed in the district of Safed. The havoc caused by the earthquakes of 1927 amounted to a national disaster. Violent tremors were felt throughout the country on both sides of

the river. At Nablus two whole streets of houses completely disappeared [this was in 1927 (aam)], and in all several hundred houses fell, leaving thousands of people homeless. At Amman also the shocks caused much material damage; while at Jericho itself a hotel collapsed, with fatal consequences, and the ends of the Allenby Bridge over the Jordan were displaced. Jericho lies particularly within the earthquake zone, and on that occasion violent shocks were recorded on four days out of seven. Theoretically, then, the possibility of the walls of Jericho having been damaged or destroyed by earthquakes is to be admitted. But an examination of the remains of the walls themselves hardly substantiates the suggestion. *Ibid.*

That's very interesting: that he, rather expecting to find that earthquakes did it, would find that in his opinion the evidence looked away from that rather than toward it. He says

But an examination of the remains of the walls themselves hardly substantiates the suggestion. Both lie in ruins, but the lowest courses are preserved to a height varying from one to three yards according to the depth of ground. Neither shows much sign of transverse fracture. Dislocation of the bricks is noticeable in certain sections of the inner wall along the western side, but not to an extent that cannot be explained by normal subsidence arising from the unequal strength of its foundations. Moreover, the collapse of a wall of this thickness, standing upon relatively level ground, would probably begin with a lateral splitting from the top; and in this case the process would involve not only the crumbling edges of the main wall itself, but the rooms or houses built thereon, and the debris might be expected to fall inwards almost as much as outwards. But in those few places where the inner face of the wall has been discovered undisturbed, this is not found to have been the case. Ruins and signs of burning are found against the wall in plenty, but they are apparently the last traces of houses that rested against the wall. Signs of damage and destruction are more apparent on the outer sides, in the space, that is, between the walls, and outside, down the slopes. Here several sections cut through both walls and into the ground below them tell plainly a consistent story which was summarised at the close of the excavations in the following memorandum. *Ibid.*

And now there's a memorandum which was written, describing what they found, and signed on March 2, 1930, by the Père Vincent and Garstang, and endorsed as to its archaeological conclusions by Dr. Clarence Fisher. Dr. Fisher, originally from Norristown, Pa., spent I guess 30 years in Palestine. He began nearly every big excavation which Garstang started in those years. He was counselor and archaeological adviser on practically every expedition during those years. He's considered a thorough master of the art of excavation and interpretation. Père Vincent was a Dominican who lived in Palestine for many

years, visited at the French school in Palestine, visited every archaeological site, and was recognized as a man of tremendous knowledge and understanding.

Well, these two and Garstang signed this memorandum, and Fisher endorsed it as to its archaeological conclusions. Now here is the memorandum which they signed. It says,

The main defences of Jericho in the Late Bronze Age (c. 1600–1200 BC) followed the upper brink of the city mound, and comprised two parallel walls, the outer six feet and the inner twelve feet thick. Investigations along the west side show continuous signs of destruction and conflagration. The outer wall suffered most, its remains falling down the slope. The inner wall is preserved only where it abuts upon the citadel, or tower, to a height of eighteen feet; elsewhere it is found largely to have fallen, together with the remains of buildings upon it, into the space between the walls which was filled with ruins and debris. Traces of intense fire are plain to see, including reddened masses of brick, cracked stones, charred timbers and ashes. Houses alongside the wall are found burned to the ground, their roofs fallen upon the domestic pottery within.

After quoting this, Garstang continues:

As to the main fact, then, there remains no doubt: the walls fell outwards so completely that the attackers would be able to clamber up and over their ruins into the city. *Ibid.*

Now that's very interesting: that these men would have signed this memorandum, and declared that this is what they found evidence of there at Jericho; which remarkably corroborates the Biblical statement, that the walls suddenly fell over; and they say they do not think that it looks as if it was the result of an earthquake.

There was one English writer who, after this came out, told how he thought it actually happened. He said, the Israelites marched around the city in order to divert the attention of the people of the city; so that the people on the walls would be noticing the Israelites marching around, and wouldn't see the fact that a few of them crawled up to the wall, and dug and undermined it so it would fall; which of course is a fantastic idea. If they ever were to do that with the outer wall, they'd certainly never be able to do it with the inner wall; and I'm quite sure that the people inside would be watching much more keenly than to allow that to happen.

Yes? (Student: Could the vibrations of marching or the trumpets cause the walls to fall?) It is true that for the soldiers marching across a bridge—a metal bridge—in unison, the vibration could be very harmful; but marching on dirt,

half a mile or so away from the city, and the walls of the city made of stone, it would seem to be an extreme unlikelihood that such a thing would enter in. Now I couldn't say what the Lord might use, but at least I don't think it entered in sufficiently that at any other time in history, people have felt safe in thinking they could knock walls down with marching around them. It is true that a train—something like that—or a jar, shaking would be like an earthquake, in the course of time it could cause a break at one place, but I certainly don't think it would cause the walls to fall outward one bit.

Mr. Tow. (Student: Did the walls fall on a Sabbath?) Now it doesn't say what day of the week they marched, does it? I don't think that we have evidence on that point. The Lord said you shall conquer the city and go round it once; thus shall you do six days. What day did they start on? It doesn't say. And the seventh day you shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets.

Now was the seventh day the seventh day of the week? The one on which they went around it seven times? I don't believe it says anywhere here; so I would think that there are three possibilities. One possibility would be that they started in on a Sunday and that on the Sabbath day they marched around it seven times, thus doing this very special work of the Lord on that day, the result of a very special command. That is one possibility. A second possibility is that they started out on Wednesday or Thursday and when it came to the Sabbath they marched around once that day as other days. And the third possibility that they started on a Wednesday or a Thursday and that the, say, the third day of marching was Friday, then Saturday being the Sabbath, they did not march that day; but the fourth day of marching would then be Sunday, and that way they would march around on six consecutive work days, skipping the Sabbath.

Now I think any one of the three is a possibility, we do not have that quite clear.

Yes? (Student: Would the Israelites march on the Sabbath?) We just have no evidence on that. We do know that—in the time of the revolt of Bar Kokhba, I believe it was—there was one time when the Roman soldiers saw that these Jews wouldn't fight on the Sabbath; and so a group that they were unable to conquer, they attacked on the Sabbath day; and the men did not resist and were slaughtered. But that's a long, long time after this; and as to what the attitude was at this time, we're just not told. I don't think we can say. There's no explicit statement about it in connection with the Sabbath; and I imagine which of the three possibilities was the situation was made very clear to Joshua and to the people there. It has not been entered into the account.

To me the biggest difficulty of its being on the Sabbath isn't so much the marching as it is the fighting to take it, which would be rather strange. Well,

that is a problem then—which we answer in a way that we must answer problems on which scripture does not give us light—by saying we don't know. I think it's always good to note the facts, and see whether we do not know, or whether we have evidence.

But now we have a little more development about this. One thing I imagine some of you noticed, is that this memorandum began with a statement, "The main defenses of Jericho in the Late Bronze Age (about 1600–1200 BC)"—but Garstang himself goes on to say that it was about 1400 when it fell. In fact he said, in some places specifically, it was 1407 when it fell. Well the statement here says the Late Bronze Age (1600–1200). Père Vincent is one of the strongest contenders for a date just about 1200. He feels that it was much later than 1400. He takes the late date for it. Gastang takes the early date, but this memorandum was a statement on which they agree, but it does not speak specifically about the date.

Well, this was the beginning of about 1930 when these excavations took place in Jericho, and Garstang continued for a good many years. He claimed for instance that powder was invented at Jericho. He traced it back to show its history as a prehistoric invention going back to a very, very early time. He was much interested in those facts which don't have much to do with our particular course now. But Garstang did this work from 1930 on, and he made this memorandum which was signed by himself and Vincent and was endorsed as to its archaeological conclusions by Clarence Fisher.

Now within the last five or six years, an English archaeologist, Miss Kathleen Kenyon—daughter of the man who was Director of Antiquities in the British Museum; he was one of our greatest authorities on Greek paleography, and he has very strongly written against the radicals in England who deny the accuracy of the Bible. But his daughter, Kathleen Kenyon—who is a very, very fine archaeologist—has issued some amazing statements; and there was an article five or six years ago in *Life Magazine*, a brief article in which it told about Dr. Kenyon and her associates who excavated at Jericho and found there was no city there at all in the time of the Israelites. She says there was no city there at all; and I have friends who have been working in Palestine, and they have talked to her; and they claim she has admitted having found a certain amount of material from that time—that she admits this but yet ignores it.

She's in Philadelphia I believe right now; wish I'd hear she was speaking somewhere on the subject; I'd like to go and hear her on it. But I think it's the most remarkable thing, that three men of the standing of Garstang and Vincent and Fisher can sign a statement like this; and then that somebody about twenty years later can talk as if they just dreamed it up. They certainly believed they were seeing evidence such as Garstang describes here. And I can't understand how she can take such an attitude. It would seem a more normal thing, surely,

to think that when they excavated this area they removed what they found; and possibly she is excavating on a section they hadn't excavated, a section in which there might have been erosion or something, which had removed the material from this period in that particular section.

There's been quite a bit of publicity, in these last five or six years, that there was no Jericho. On the other hand, Garstang claims that it [destruction of Jericho] was 1407 BC when it was excavated; and most scholars believe that the great change in Palestinian culture takes place about 1200. And there was a professor of Old Testament in the University of Southern California, who had an article in a paper fifteen or twenty years ago in California; in which I remember he said, "How remarkable to find that when Moses led the children of Israel into Palestine, Jericho had already been destroyed two hundred years before." That was his interpretation of it, which of course would make the whole Bible utterly unreliable.

To my notion, we do not know whether it happened in 1400 or whether it happened in 1200, we do not know. And there isn't much evidence which has come to light in recent years which points toward the later date, yet it may be wrong; it's not conclusive, there's not enough proof; but there certainly is enough to raise very, very serious questions about the early date.

I believe we can say that Garstang and Vincent found evidence which remarkably corroborates the Biblical statement, that when the Israelites marched around the city of Jericho, the walls fell down in one great cataclysm; which does not look at all like what we would expect an earthquake to do to the walls: suddenly fell down and fell outward, making it easy to march in and conquer; but that we do not yet know just when it was.

But there are a good many other evidences which enter in. We could spend weeks on this. I think I mentioned it to you that, not many years ago, this class of Old Testament History was taught right in this room by a different man who spent I think six weeks trying to prove the early date for the conquest. And he had some very interesting evidence, but I think there's more on the other side. But I think there are much more important things to do in Old Testament History than to argue over the two dates. One of these days the Lord may give us evidence so we can know with certainty. At present I think the vital thing is it did happen; and that is quite evident and now I think we can rely upon it quite solidly.

(Student). Very good question. And I think there is a basic thing about archaeology which is very important. I think it's worth taking two or three minutes on now, the basic principle in back of that, that enters into that.

That is, when a city is buried, all sorts of things are there in the ground; there may be important documents. Of course, we haven't found much in the way of documents in Palestine; in other places there may be. There may be in Palestine, we just haven't found them. But there may be important documents. There are different sorts of walls, of buildings, of kinds of pottery; there are all sorts of things. These things have a meaning for the one who knows how to interpret them. Not only do they have a meaning, but their relation to one another has a meaning; the way they lie, and what is next to one another. The line in between [levels] is not like the floor of this room; it is a curved line; it is quite a different line, because you have a city here that is destroyed, that is left in ruins; and another city is built on top of it. Or during the period when the city isn't destroyed, they may take a big building and tear down three fourths of it and rebuild it; and so you have a new stage of building at the same level. And all the evidence is there; and if a man is a first-class interpreter, he may be able to figure it out; but of course for every one that is examined thoroughly, there is a basis laid in increased knowledge for doing a better job with the next one.

But once this material is taken out of the ground, it is then no longer of value as far as interpreting is concerned. Of course, if there is a piece of pottery, that's important. If there is something with writing on it, that's important; but where it came from, you have only the excavator's word, and any pictures which he may have taken; and it is mighty hard to go much further in your interpretation than was done when there was something there to see. Now of course, you may notice certain facts that he doesn't understand; and others may interpret those facts in a true way; but it's only what he notices that is available. In the early days of excavation, there were some excavators who were right on the ground, constantly watching everything that happened; they did an excellent job of excavation; but when it came to the record of it, it was very poor, and it was very difficult for people later to be sure.

Then there were others who were so determined to get the record just right, that they spent all their time making the record, and left to local people to do the digging up for them; and consequently the digging wasn't done right. Today they try to have different people doing the digging and the recording, but it has to be organized. Well, once your city has been dug up, the possibility of re-doing that job is lost.

Now when I was at Megiddo in 1929, half of the city of the time of Solomon was visible; because walls standing to half the height of this room were visible in all its layout; you could see it, and the director of the excavation took me all over and pointed out everything and explained it; but the next day, his expert foremen were arriving from Egypt, who would take the local people and direct them in clearing all this away in order that they could get at what was underneath.

Now Garstang examined these walls very, very carefully; he did the best he could to interpret them. Then, having done so, he dug up the stuff and threw it out in the dump in order to get at the next level; and he went at least ten levels below this. The next one, you see; this would be somewhere between 1400 and 1200 BC; and he dug down to maybe 3,500 BC So that he was working perhaps forty or fifty feet below this, and it all disappeared.

Now, I thoroughly agree with you, that you can't understand—I can't either—how Miss Kenyon can cast aside statements made by three men of high standing in their field like these; how she can cast it aside and say there was no city there at that time; I can't understand how she can do that. But as far as the actual evidence is concerned, she can well say "I don't find any evidence." Well, he's dug it up; it's not there to find. And, of course, it does seem to me that the possibility must be admitted that there's a part of the city that he didn't excavate, that she has excavated; and it would be possible that, in that part, there had been a little stream coming down the side and eroded away one section, or something, so that she didn't find there evidence of a city at this time. Something like that might be true, I don't know.

But I've talked to two or three different Christian archaeologists who've been there and talked with her; and she has admitted finding a certain amount of things from this period; which they think are sufficient to prove that there were things of this period in the parts she excavated; but which I suppose she thinks were left there by some traveler, just this little bit left there by some traveler, carried there by accident.

When I was in the American School in Jerusalem, we would go and visit a mound that hadn't been excavated; and we would go up and down, and pick up pieces of pottery; and then we'd bring them to Dr. Albright, and he'd say, "Well, this one comes from about 1150 BC; this one comes from about 700 BC; this one from about 1100 and so on. And we would look at them and try to learn something about the method of interpreting them; and we'd fill our pockets with the best specimens. Then we'd go on to another mound, maybe ten miles away—we were on horseback—we'd get to this other mound; and we'd find more interesting specimens, so we would take these out of our pockets and put the others in. Then an archaeologist comes along a month later, and he finds remains on this mound from that period which we had discarded. How could somebody have broken a pot on a mound over there and then it get over here ten miles away? Well, if you'd never heard of the American School of Oriental Research, you'd say it's absolutely impossible. But if you know how people travel around, visit one and the other and fill their pockets up and then had to make space for others later, you get twenty people doing that, you carry quite a bit of pottery.

So that, I don't say that Miss Kenyon is dishonest; I don't say that at all; I think she's thoroughly convinced of what she says. But it does seem to me that she is going pretty far when you have a statement by—Garstang is not; I wouldn't call him a top-ranking archaeologist, but he's not far below it—he is a solid man. He makes his mistakes; and most everybody laughs at his idea of saying Jericho was destroyed in 1407 BC But he's done a lot of good solid work; he's a man of high rank. And Père Vincent—Dr. Albright has always believed he is the best authority on Palestinian archaeology. He's a French Dominican monk who has lived in the land for thirty years; highly trained, constantly working on this; visiting every excavation; talks with all the people, and he signed this paper with Garstang; and it was endorsed by Clarence Fisher as to its archaeological conclusions; and everyone recognizes that Clarence Fisher was one of the best authorities on Palestinian archaeology there was.

Now when they sign a statement, it seems to me that for her to just dismiss it like that is really going too far. I feel that we can rest upon it that what they said is proven; but I do feel that our position will be a more pleasant one five or six years from now, when more things will come to light that even Miss Kenyon will have to admit prove it.¹⁰⁶

4. Attack on Ai.

And Ai is said in the Bible to be a much smaller place than Jericho. Jericho was a great fortress which seemed unconquerable. Ai, they said, is just a small town; they said, "Let's send just a little force to take it, it's not much." Ai is a much smaller place than Jericho, according to the Biblical account; and yet Ai has two chapters and Jericho has only one. And the reason for that is, of course, well known to those of you who have studied Joshua much. Those of you who have not studied it anything to speak of before this year, I hope you have it well in mind from your studies two weeks ago; the assignment on Joshua there; the details of the situation at Ai. I do not wish to repeat what is simply given in the scripture, but to call your attention to certain basic things, and above all to deal with an explanation of matters which may not otherwise be obvious.

Now chapter 7 begins with a statement which is, you might say, behind the scenes. We were told at the end of chapter 6 that they burnt the city [of Jericho] and destroyed everything there except the metal; and the metal they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. And then everything there was to be destroyed; it was the first city conquered, and it was left absolutely desolate. But in the beginning of chapter 7 we find that

Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel.

¹⁰⁶ See the articles by Dr. Bryant Wood on Jericho at the Associates for Biblical Research website.

Achan took of these things, which were supposed to be utterly destroyed or put in the treasury of the house of the Lord; but he took of this and hid it, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel. We read that in the first verse.

Now of course that is something which nobody there, except maybe Achan, and maybe a few friends knew. It is something which came out later, which at the beginning of the story was unknown. But the Bible tells us this right at the beginning; and then it goes on to tell how Joshua sent some men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Bethaven, on the east side of Bethel. Now I expect you all have Bibles with maps in them; and it would be helpful to have that in mind, if any of you do not have it in mind. You see Jericho on the map just a very short distance north of the Dead Sea. And then if you will move a little bit to the left of Jericho, you will go from a place that is maybe 600 feet below sea level—the Dead Sea there is about 1400 feet below sea level. You go north of the Dead Sea, and most of the maps have something to indicate a mountain; well it's a plateau, sort of, but it's very steep in there; it's 2500 feet above sea level, so compared to Jericho it's up on the top of a mountain, and that's where Jerusalem is. Jerusalem is a bit south of Jericho. But you follow that hill country, the top of that, north a short distance; well it's a distance of maybe thirty miles, and you come to Bethel and Ai. I imagine Bethel is on all your maps. And this says that Ai is east of Bethel. It's definitely sloping in here so you see; that means you'd have to pass Jericho, go north up the Jordan Valley; and then you would turn west, up through a side valley there, in those hills, and you would come up there to Ai. Well, that's where it says it was.

But we notice the story: it was a little distance from Jericho up there to Ai, which is beside Bethaven on the east side of Bethel. And he said to them, "Go and view the country." And they came back and said, "Don't send all the people; send two or three thousand; and go up and smite Ai. Don't make all the people go to the trouble of going up there, climbing up this valley, going clear up to that place."

I went up there in 1950, and it's quite a walk up that valley. Up through the crest of the hill there, where the ruins of Ai are. They said, "Don't everybody go up there, because it's just a little place; send two or three thousand people to smite Ai." Well it won't be much of a place, if two or three thousand people could do it, would it? So the Biblical impression is that it is just a little place. It's not an important place; just send two or three thousand.

Well in this, we already begin to see an attitude don't we? Here's this great fortress of Jericho, and they march around Jericho; and after marching around Jericho for seven days, seven times they just march around; and they blow their trumpets, and the wall falls down. Well, there's nothing to worry about now is there? Any difficulty will just disappear before us; we don't need to work any

more. All we need to do is blow the trumpet, and look at it and it's gone. Life is just simple; just go forward and everything just drops like this great fortress of Jericho. So, why send a lot of people? Just send two or three thousand, that's all.

Over-confidence is one of the things that can beset the believer in his life for the Lord very easily. Before dealing with that, God dealt with another thing that can beset them, which is fear. We have to have confidence in the Lord. If we have fear and terror, the people could easily have fled before Jericho; they never dreamed they could take that big city. God caused Jericho to fall before them; but that doesn't mean now they could go to the other extreme; and having won a victory, be overconfident and think everything is just going to fall into their hands. God wants us to work and toil and struggle; and to think and to plan; but to know that he in the end will control whatever happens in his providence. And then, at certain crucial points, he may choose to cause the walls of Jericho to crumble before him and give a great unexpected victory by his power; but that doesn't mean we can become over-confident and say, "Oh, two or three thousand men will do." So one lesson that God wanted to teach here was the lesson of over-confidence.

Now this is complicated by the fact that there was another very important lesson he wanted to teach them; that is the lesson of strict obedience. And here in Jericho, one of the people had taken of the cursed things; and probably in just about every battle, there was one person out of the thousands who committed sin. There probably was nearly always something like this that took place. But God wanted to drive home to the people's minds how important it is that such things be kept to an absolute minimum; that they follow his will and obey his command; and that they avoid the unholy and the wicked thing just as far as they possibly can, and to keep it out of their midst.

So on this occasion, God makes a terrible example of Achan. I don't think that we can go on from there to say that every time that they succeeded there was no Achan present. There certainly, in as great a group as that, there were other wicked people. I don't think he wants us to think that in every battle after this, every Israelite was strictly true in his dealings. But probably they were a great deal truer than they would have been, if they hadn't been frightened by what happened to Achan. And it is very easy for us—when things go wrong through our poor planning—it is very easy for us to say, "Oh well, there's an Achan in the camp." Well, there may be; and if there is we want to find him and get rid of him; but that doesn't mean that we can put ourselves up as holier than thou, and say the whole thing is that there's someone who is a pretty bad sinner; because there's sin in all of us.

And if God won't use anybody who is a sinner, he wouldn't use any of us. He uses wicked, weak people, who are sinners saved by grace, to accomplish his work in the world. So his main purpose, in this incident of Achan, was not to

show that as long as we are perfect we can succeed; and if we're not, we're to pick out one person in our group and say he's the Achan and get rid of him. It doesn't mean that at all; I think many people draw that false lesson; but it means to teach the lesson to all of us, that we should avoid sin; that we should avoid wickedness; and that we should try to live close to him and do his will; and when there is any clear evidence that there is an Achan in the camp, well of course we must get rid of him; because the Lord cannot bless that sort of thing.

But this Ai attack is complicated by the fact that the two lessons are in it, which God wants to teach us. And the lesson of Achan is such a very, very important lesson that most of us, seeing that lesson, completely overlook the other lesson. But if the other lesson wasn't there too, I don't believe the Lord would have needed to take two chapters to give us the story. The other lesson is brought out very, very clearly in the course of the chapter, though not explicitly stated in words as the Achan one is.

The Lord said in verse 11 on, he said, "Somebody has done this terrible thing"; he said, "I cannot bless you while this sin is there." Then there are a good many verses given of how the Lord showed them gradually who it was; how they found him; how they got rid of him. And then after they finish all that in verse 26, we might have had a verse 27, that said the three thousand men were then sent the next day up to Ai; and they took the city without difficulty, now that they were rid of Achan; and there would be no need of an eighth chapter.

One more verse in the seventh chapter would have been quite sufficient for it, if that was all there was to it. But we do have a whole additional chapter, 29 more verses. That's longer than the seventh chapter, which has 26. And we find that the first time they sent two or three thousand men—that's all that is necessary to take it—and it didn't work. Then they prayed to the Lord; and the Lord told them about Achan; and they got rid of Achan. And then the Lord said in chapter 8, "Fear not, neither be dismayed; send another three thousand people, and you can take Ai"? No. The Lord said,

Fear not, neither be thou dismayed; take all the people of war with you; and arise, go up to Ai; see I have given into thy hand the king of Ai and his people, and his city and his land.

Don't send two or three thousand, take all the people; that's tremendously different, isn't it? They tried with just two or three thousand; but now, after they got rid of Achan, they have to take them all. Well, they should have sent a lot more of them in the first place. Why see if you can do it with two or three thousand, unless you're overconfident? Then, he says, "Take them all," and what do they do next? They had previously sent two or three thousand people up to take Ai; and they fled before the people, they were driven back, and thirty-six of them were wounded.

But in this case, now, they don't just send even all the people to go straight up and take Ai. They plan an ambush. And we read here a very detailed account, about how they send this group which goes up and gets around in back of Ai very secretly during the night; gets up to a place where they can't see them; and then how the others come in the other direction; and they attack. And we read in verse 12, he took about five thousand men and set them to lie in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of the city. See, they've gone way past Ai. And then they took all the people, they sent them past it the other way, to the north of the city; and this great crowd is on the north of the city; and they made an attack, and the people of Ai, we read, thought that they would be driven back like they drove back the previous force, and they all rushed out of the city. This time we'll finish them up, so they won't come back again. We got 36 last time; this time we'll kill them all.

And we read they rushed out; and in verse 17, we read there was not a man left in Ai and Bethel that went not out after Israel. And they left the city open and pursued after Israel. And the Lord said to Joshua, "Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai, for I will give it into thy hand." And, verse 19, the ambush arose quickly out of their place; and they ran, as soon as he had stretched out his hand, and they entered into the city and took it; and hastened and set the city on fire. And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw and behold the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven; and they had no power to flee this way or that way; and the people that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers.

So here we have a very complex system of strategy worked out with, not three thousand people used as the total attacking force, but with five thousand—nearly double the number—three thousand as just an ambush to hide; and then the whole mass of the people come in from the opposite direction and then, attacking and running and working this trick on the people of Ai; and of course the previous ones had run; they thought, "Well they're running again; this time we'll finish them; and so they, being over-confident, rushed out of the city and left it for the others to get in. It was sort of a Trojan War stunt, almost, which got into the city behind them that way and wrecked it.

And here we have careful planning; a well-worked-out system; sufficient resources used to accomplish the purpose; all the people instead of just three-thousand; double the three-thousand in ambush behind; we have a carefully worked-out system. And I'm not saying that God would've allowed a carefully-worked-out system like this to have worked in the first place; because there was Achan, and the Achan matter had to be dealt with. But after they dealt with the Achan matter, then they went ahead, not over-confident any more, but looking to the Lord at each stage of the way for help; and using the best intelligence the Lord had given them to work out a way to do it.

And so it seems to me that, while the Achan lesson is a tremendously important lesson, and one we must not overlook, that the other lesson is also important; and it is also an important lesson for us, to have them both in mind and to use them in our Christian life and in our Christian walk. The lessons of faith, that God will knock down the walls of Jericho, is a tremendously vital lesson we must have; without it we are nothing, but sometimes...

I've heard men speak right in our chapel, and give a message that sounded as if all you need to do is to look to the Lord, have faith and step forward; and everything in the world will just fall before you. I've heard them give a talk like that; and I've talked with the same man over the luncheon table, and heard him tell how he worked out a plan; how he worked it out in all its details and everything; where he'd made a mistake, and how the next time he'd avoided that mistake; and I had seen that he was stressing a vital lesson we all need to get: the first lesson that we must have faith; and that if the Lord does not build the city they labor in vain that build it; and that the Lord is going to accomplish anything that is in His will to accomplish. But we also have the second lesson in the scripture: that we are first to clear out sin; but second to use the brain given us, and use all the skill we have to do the task.

Well now, there's one thing here I'd like to ask you after what we've looked at. How many of you would be in a position now to tell us everything to which I have called attention this morning, about the city of Bethel? Would you raise your hand? All who are now in a position to call our attention to everything about Bethel to which I have attention, that is every reference I have made this morning, to that city.

I had a course in Old Testament History from Dr. Robert Dick Wilson in Princeton Seminary; he was a great master in the defense of the scripture, having devoted fifty years to it; and after having been there with him for three years, I went over to Germany and studied with a fellowship he got for me; and after one year there, I came back and paid a visit to the Seminary; and I visited one of his classes; and I got more out of that one class than I got out of any class when I was a student; and I figured that, while it may be true that my presence in the class led him to give more material than he usually did, maybe; having had the year in Germany, my opinion is that a great part of the reason was because I had had this additional graduate work, and had my eyes opened to problems that he was dealing with; but that most of the class didn't have enough background; and I didn't, when I was an undergraduate student, to get the full value of it.

And so a thing like this gives me a little interesting evidence of how alert you are in class. I have not specifically stressed Bethel at all today; but in the first class I showed you where Bethel was on the map; then I did not today, of

course, refer to our previous contacts with Bethel: Jacob's dream and so on. We didn't refer to those today in class, but I stressed where it was on the map; today, I stressed that it was an important city, I stressed two or three times, when Ai is mentioned, it is mentioned as being east of Bethel. It is identified by showing its relation to Bethel, and I mentioned it as being about two miles east of Bethel, on the high ridge of the hills.

Then there is one thing which I would be surprised if many of you noticed, because I didn't stress it at all; but I purposely read a verse of the scripture to bring it out. I wonder how many of you noticed, that when the people fled before the men of Ai, it said in verse 16 the people that were in Ai were called together to pursue after them, but verse 17 says there was not a man left in Ai or Bethel that went not out after Israel? And that's the only mention of Bethel in the chapter, except for the fact that Bethel is used for location. But I read the verse purposely to you, to see how many of you would be surprised that when they're attacking Ai there's not a man left in Bethel, that doesn't run after them. It's a strange thing, isn't it? Why would the people leave Bethel and not just Ai? It's a very interesting thing; I don't know whether until recent years it ever was noticed; but I believe it's a very important fact.

Oh, yes, one more word about Bethel, that I had not pointed out to you. If you look over at chapter 12, you read about the kings that they conquered. Chapter 12:7, these are the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel smote in this area. Now what are they? Verse 9, the king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one. Then you read down in verse 16, it says the king of Bethel, one.

But in the account here it tells of the conquest of various cities and does not mention Bethel. It is not till you get over to Judges 1, where you read about the cities that the Israelites had not conquered in the conquest—or at least that were now standing there unconquered—and you read about a lot of cities that had been conquered by Joshua, that had to be conquered again; so my opinion is that they conquered these cities, and they did a certain amount of ruin; conquered them, and they went on to others; and a lot of them the people came back and re-established themselves.

But in Judges 1 you have an account of a conquest of Bethel, but none of Ai. Back here in Joshua 8, you have an account of the conquest of Ai, but no account of a conquest of Bethel; but in Judges you have you have the mention of the king of Bethel but no mention of Ai. In Joshua, all the men came out of Bethel and Ai. And if all the men came out of Bethel and Ai, it would be rather strange for them to just take Ai and make no effort to take the far more important city of Bethel.

The local people's name for Bethel was "Luz". The Israelites named it "Bethel" probably because it was near where Jacob had had his dream; but the name that carries back is Luz.

Yes? (Student: Do you think it could be that they didn't mention the city of Bethel as being captured because they were specifically trying to capture Ai?) Yes, as far as the interest here is in Ai, as far as the chapter is concerned, that's the inference here; that it's Ai, that's what they were after. But Bethel is mentioned this way which raises the question: did they conquer Bethel too at that time? Later on, we read they had conquered it, but we don't read of any conquest.

From down in the Jordan valley, you look up to the mountains, and there are all these ridges very steep; and they were in the valley between Bethel and Ai; but the area between Bethel and Ai has hills and valleys, so if they were between the two cities here, they could go out from both cities to attack from the north. (Student: Without being seen?) Oh, they were doubtless pretty well hidden. It's very easy to hide there. I spent a whole morning, looking for Ai. I walked up and down one valley after another, and all around, that day, and I didn't find it. I had an Arab with me who knew English; and he had a good map of the country, but he'd left it home that day—didn't have his map with him—and we hunted all around for Ai, and we didn't find it. I came back in a car two or three days later; and this time we came up from the Jordan Valley; and we came to quite a town there, and we left the car there; we had to leave the chauffeur with the car because it wouldn't be safe to leave the car there; there might be nothing left of it when we came back. But we left him with the car, and we went up; and then pretty soon, we had people from around following us up; and we had quite a time before we got back. The first day there wasn't a soul in sight. I hunted for half a day; we didn't run into any of these people, because we were in that desolate country, going through valley after valley; and we didn't come near the village, which was a few miles down there, where there's all this great mass of people that followed us when we went back another day.

But it's very hilly country through there and very easy to hide. But now the thing I want to bring out to you is that in the early 1930's Madame Marquet-Krause¹⁰⁷—I don't think you need to bother with her name; this is the only instance where I know of her being in archaeology—but she conducted a French expedition to excavate a mound which was called Et-Tell. Now "Et" is just the Arabic for "the". So Et-Tell means "the tell"; and you know what a tell is in archaeology, simply the Arabic word for a mound. The ruin, the mound, that's the name which has been attached for centuries, perhaps for millennia, to this

¹⁰⁷ Judith Marquet-Krause excavated at et-Tell between 1933 and her untimely death in 1936.

place on the high ridge about two miles east of Bethel, which is thought to be Ai,¹⁰⁸ we call it the ruins. The city was never repaired. We call it the ruins.

And she reported that they found no remains whatever later than 2000 BC They excavated; there were fortified small cities on the site, only about two and a half acres; but they report no pottery evidence of occupation after 2000 BC Now previous to that, Garstang had visited the place without excavating this; and in his book on *Joshua and Judges* he says he found pottery there from this city, but he decided that somebody else had dropped it there in a previous visit or something; but he says that he found pottery; he made no excavation. And this report was given; and it is today accepted by all archaeologists I know of, that the city was destroyed about 2000 BC And we have a problem. Then Garstang goes on, some writers have preferred to follow a harmonizing path, and have conjectured there has been a confusion between Ai and the neighboring, Bethel. I think Albright said that it was Bethel that was about to be conquered and the account is confused and says Ai where it means Bethel; but you notice in that one verse it mentions both.¹⁰⁹ Everywhere else it just mentions Ai. Or the natural strength of the position of Ai may have made it a temporary stronghold in the time of Joshua; and here he quotes L. H. Vincent, who presents that theory,¹¹⁰ and that impressed me as an excellent interpretation.¹¹¹ Well, continuing what he says, he says, "A further suggestion is that the identification of Et-Tell and Ai is not secure. New light may yet be shed by further excavation on this site but meanwhile the age of Ai is of equal embarrassment to every view of the Exodus and cannot be integrated presently with any Biblical or non-Biblical material; it must be left out of the conquest." He's trying to work up a theory, and he says, was the conquest in 1400 or 1200 BC?

¹⁰⁸ [dcb] Et-Tell was once thought to be Ai, but Dr. Bryant Wood later placed Ai at a nearby site on an adjacent hill, Kirbet el Maqatir. I believe the issue is still open as to the correct identity of Ai's ruins.

¹⁰⁹ See previous note.

¹¹⁰ L. H. Vincent, "Les fouilles d'et-Tell='Ai,'" ["The excavations at et-Tell = Ai"] *Revue Biblique*, Vol. 46 [1937], pp. 231-66.

¹¹¹ [dcb] Moorey, *A Century of Biblical Archaeology* (Westminster Press, 1992) p.65, states: "When Garstang cut a trial trench into et-Tell (Ai) in 1929, both Albright and he had concluded on the basis of the pottery he recovered that there had been a settlement on this site in the Late Bronze Age; but as it happened, the pottery was much older. This became evident when the site was more fully excavated from 1933-35 by Judith Marquet-Krause, a locally born archaeologist... Her death brought this project to a premature end in 1936, but not before she had demonstrated a long break in the occupation of et-Tell between the end of the Early Bronze Age, about 2200 BC, and an early stage in the Iron Age, over a thousand years later. Evidence that seemed to run so directly against other archaeological information for the authenticity of the Conquest narratives inevitably evoked a whole variety of explanations in the following decades. Those who wished to sustain the integrity of the given text (Joshua 8:28) have either denied that et-Tell is indeed ancient Ai, or argued that there was a confusion between Ai and nearby Bethel, or claimed that et-Tell was a temporary stronghold at the time, so not recognizable to excavators."

Well, Garstang says Jericho was conquered in 1407 BC Albright excavated at Bethel briefly, just dug a trench in to see what he could find, but he says that Bethel was destroyed a little before 1200 BC Lachish had a big destruction before 1200, a little one about 1400. Which is it? Between 1200 and 1400? Well, what does Ai say? Ai says 2000. So it doesn't throw any light on either one; but I was there in 1950 at Ai; and a group of three of us went, including Father O'Callahan, a Jesuit scholar who has written on archaeology; he was killed in Iraq shortly afterward, but a very able young fellow, a very interesting chap; but I suggested to O'Callahan, this theory which Vincent presents. I don't believe I realized at that time Vincent had presented it.

But I presented to him evidence from the book of Joshua to support it, as it seemed to me, and he seemed very impressed; he had never heard of such a theory. His feeling was "Well Ai, I don't know what to do with it. It was destroyed in 2000 BC, so there's just something wrong with the story probably." I don't think there's anything wrong with the story; I think the Bible is true in every detail. I think it's entirely possible that any particular version may have been corrupted in the course of transmission—because we have evidence that verses have—but when we find Ai mentioned thirty times in the chapter I don't think there's any error there. If it was only once that they mentioned Ai, there might be an error.

Now this one verse—that they came out of Ai and Bethel—is the only such reference to Bethel there. It could be a mistake. I would readily admit it might be a mistake, but it certainly is more likely it isn't; because the errors in transmission are few, though there are errors. My guess is that the brief mention of Bethel here calls our attention to the fact of the matter. My guess is that, what happened was that the people of this important city of Bethel, seeing the entrance of the Israelites; seeing them coming and hearing of their preparing to attack; their marching around them at least, which they probably could see from some outpost on a hill; that they went to this town of Ai, not far from their town, and in the direction of the Israelites; and hurriedly built a little temporary addition to protect them in it; strengthened the walls, that still lay there—lay there for six or eight hundred years—and put a force in there, under the command of a man who would then be king of Ai. And that his force was there as an advance force to protect Bethel; and then the Israelites—their observers—came up the valley to see what was in their way; they looked up and saw these old walls of Ai, the city that had been quite a strong city though not a large city, six or eight hundred years before; and they saw people looking out from the top of it, watching for them; and they went back and said, "It's just a small city, two or three thousand people. Take it." It was just a small city, but it was an outpost of a strong city; and the men in it were strong men and they were prepared to resist attack; and when they went up against it, they were driven back; and then maybe, when they were driven back, the men in Ai who

had been protecting it went back to Bethel and were replaced by another contingent. We don't know.

But when they made their attack this time, and they went out, Ai and Bethel were left without anybody; because they said, "We're going to end this thing right now; we drove back the first attack; there's a much larger group now; we're going to end it, drive them back and be done with it; and they all came back, not knowing about the ambush, which took over their city and wrecked it. Now that's my guess. That is a guess which, I believe, does no violence to the facts as stated here; because we read later on Bethel had been taken, but we read no account of the taking of Bethel. It does no violence to the scripture facts as stated here; it may be true; it accounts for their being no archaeological evidence at Ai of a settlement at this time, because men living in it for a few weeks or months wouldn't leave enough evidence to say here's proof it was occupied at this time. If the people occupied it for a period of a few years, we'd have pottery evidence of the city there at that time. So that it does no violence to the evidence; it is a possibility; it is not proven; it is only a suggestion.

Now it is possible that there is a mistake on the identification; it is possible that there is another place near there somewhere that is the actual Ai; but it is quite unlikely*, because that area has been pretty thoroughly examined, looking for ancient sites; a place important enough to play this role in the book of Joshua would surely leave more evidence of it, enough evidence that somebody would find it. And this is exactly the place described, east of Bethel, where you would see it coming up the valley there.

*[dcb Note. The location of Kirbet el Maqatir which Dr. Bryant Wood considers the location of Ai is SE of Bethel, but would be "East of Bethel" because the route from Bethel would begin in an Easterly direction. This map shows the relative positions of Bethel, et-Tell and Kirbet el Maqatir (Mukatir).]



Mr. Jaggard? (Student: Does the Bible say people were killed at Ai?) Scripture says that they came out of it to chase the Israelites; and then behind them, the ambush went into Ai and burned the city; and the other people were killed out there in the plain. There's nothing said of anybody being killed in Ai.

I could say this: that ancient bones in a country with as much dampness as Palestine, if left on the ground or in a burnt city, do not last; they have to be pretty well buried to have any trace found at all. I was in a class once in the University of Pennsylvania some years ago, in which they asked a girl who was an anthropologist to give a discussion of the evidence from bones in Mesopotamia and in Egypt; and she came in and told us how, in Mesopotamia, there had been three races that came in—judging by the bones—people that

had a certain bone of a certain length and a certain proportion; and a race corresponding to the face of the skull had come from the north; and another group had come from the east; she told how they met and came together and all that.

And she said, "In Egypt the evidence is so complicated that I just couldn't do anything with it." This is the situation in Mesopotamia. So then they began asking her how much evidence in Mesopotamia did she base this on; and we found out it was five skeletons she had studied; and she brought this evidence about three different races in Mesopotamia on the basis of the observation of five skeletons. Because in Mesopotamia your skeletons don't last long on account of the dampness of the climate.

Now in Egypt it's a much dryer climate, and they have thousands of skeletons; and consequently it's too complicated to build anything on. I thought it was very interesting in showing the difference of the preservation of skeletal material in Mesopotamia and in Egypt. But it also was interesting as showing how, when you have enough material to prove something, it's pretty hard to prove much from skeletons.¹¹² The chances are, with all the wars and fighting there's been in Palestine, that there's not an area as big as this room anywhere in Palestine that hasn't had a person killed in it in the course of the last four thousand years. There have been bodies all over, but they've disintegrated and disappeared. It's only when very carefully buried and thus protected that you find much there.

Any other question? I did not want anyone to get the idea that I feel at all dogmatic about Ai having been an outpost of Bethel at the time. The only evidence in the Bible to suggest this is this statement. If Ai and Bethel were two independent cities, and Ai was thus under attack; and the men of Ai thought the Israelites were fleeing from them; and went out to pursue them; it would seem quite unlikely that Bethel, another city two miles away, would join in. The fact that they came out from Ai and from Bethel looks to me as if either there were two cities working together, or else Ai was simply an outpost of Bethel; one or the other. But of course those words may not be in the original; "and from Bethel" is the only mention of Bethel aside from the geographical reference in the chapter. It's a strange thing here; there's nothing else in the chapter to explain it; and perhaps those words have gotten in there by mistake; that is always possible in anything that occurs only once in scripture. It is possible but, I would say, not likely.

¹¹² [dcb] Attempts to trace the ancestry of the human race also have this problem of lack of skeletal material. The reconstruction of many humanoid lines, including the Neanderthals, is based on a small number of skeletal parts, particularly skulls. For the same reason (damp climate) the fossil record of primates (chimpanzees, apes) is also very sparse: "There are thousands of fossils of hominins, but no fossil chimpanzee has yet been reported." *Nature* 437, 105 (2005) reporting the first fossil chimpanzee.

The scripture has been remarkably well preserved; and you have no right to say if something only occurs once, therefore it isn't genuine; most of it is genuine; but there are cases where errors have come in, sufficient of them that I would not dogmatically build anything whatever on something that occurred in only one verse of scripture. I merely make it as a suggestion. And it is entirely possible that that verse might not belong there. But it is also possible that the archaeologists are completely wrong, and this place was occupied at this time. It is possible. But in view of the excavation having been made as recently as 1930—there had been a great deal of archaeological work before that—much has been learned; and much Biblical material has been proven accurate from what archaeologists have done.

Is the location of Ai mistaken? That also seems extremely unlikely; this location exactly fits the description of the place, and certainly if there was another place—another fortified town in that area—it would be strange indeed if somebody didn't find it. Fortified towns in Palestine are usually pretty easy to find. A tell has a pretty typical appearance. When I'd been there only two or three months, I could look out over the country where there were several high hills; and you could see a tremendous area; and I could pick a tell here and a tell there; and a natural hill you would rarely take for a tell, because they have a very distinct shape; and an archaeologist who has worked there for years explained it would be very, very strange if there was another city of this time in that area that had not been found.

And yet, I don't say it's impossible. It is possible, but I think extremely unlikely. And I would not be at all dogmatic that Ai was at that time an outpost for Bethel, hastily fortified in order to be ready for the Israelite incursion; I would not be at all dogmatic. It may not be the case at all. But I say here is a possible interpretation which fits with that reference to Bethel, that one verse in the chapter; and I don't see much explanation for that reference to Bethel, which fits with it, which does not do violence to the text: like the theories of those who say Ai was destroyed earlier and the story was put in here 800 years later; or that this represents some other destruction later; or those who say it's all a mistake for Bethel; it isn't Ai in the first place.

The suggestion that I make requires no change of any single word in the passage, but takes the passage as it is; it takes the archaeological evidence as known to us today as it is; it is a theory which can be accepted without having to change a single word of the text. And therefore it impresses me as an altogether possible interpretation of what actually happened. There may be some other interpretation that is more correct, that nobody has yet found. But to me the most important thing is not to try to find out exactly what happened at Ai. To me the most important thing is to know that I can take the Bible as it

stands, and not have to throw aside any section of it; or say this is a mistake; it was about Bethel, but they got it all mixed up and said Ai, or anything like that.

So I wouldn't want you to think I was dogmatic on this at all, but it impresses me that it is not necessary for somebody to say, "Well, archaeology proves Ai was destroyed 800 years earlier; therefore the Bible is wrong." It impresses me as not necessary to say that, nor to say "Archaeology says it's earlier; archaeology is infallible," but to say "In the light of present knowledge, with all the facts at present known from archaeology, and the precise statement of the Bible as it stands, here is a suggestion which accepts both; it doesn't have to deny or change any verse of the Bible; and it does not have to deny the validity of the results which are agreed upon by all archaeologists today. I certainly wouldn't be dogmatic on it.

Suppose somebody comes along and proves ten years from now the archaeologists were wrong? I don't want them to say that I said that the Bible proves the archaeologists were right. But the Bible can be interpreted in such a way that it fits with their present presentation of facts.

Yes? (Student: Dr. MacRae, are there any ways in which one town or one city could notify another very quickly of such an army coming upon them, and then withdrawing? And if they should attack, in a short enough time that an army coming from another city would be able to be of some help? In other words, is there any evidence to show that they used certain types of runners or a communication system between these two cities, or between any two cities, which would be proficient enough to unite the two so that they could go out and do combat in a short period of time? Because if the Israelites came up, and they saw them out there; and then when they saw them retreat, right away they'd rush out after them; well how could the other city know that they were withdrawing at that time, and that they should come?)

Well, my guess on that would like this. My guess would be that the people of Bethel knew about the crossing of the Jordan and the coming of the Israelites. Then they said, "Let's protect ourselves by a line some distance from our town. Here's this strong old fortification that's been abandoned for many, many years; let's fortify it as a protection for us." And that they put men into it, and had a king over that area. Then two or three thousand men attacked it and were driven back. After that happened, of course, Bethel would have heard all about what happened. Then, naturally they'd all be excited, wondering if they were coming back again. Then, when they came back—according to the statement there—you have here the Jordan Valley; and here are your hills and valleys which come down through here; very uneven like that, all kinds of ridges and valleys and so on; and you have such a line of ridges back here; and you have Ai on one of the ridges out there somewhere; and you have various gorges in between.

You have the one army comes up here at night—five thousand men—and hides in one of these valleys here somewhere in between the two. And then to the left of Ai, not seen by the people from either one, you have the army—the main army—come from the north; so they come down probably in here. They come from the north and make an attack against Ai; the men of Ai come out and attack, and the Israelites begin to flee; and all this time, the people in Bethel are up on the highest point they could find, watching to see what happens; and when they see them begin to run, they say, "Let's finish them off so we won't be attacked another time." So these armies coming up through here attacking, these armies come up through here and join them and they both attack. That would seem to me to be the probable way that it was. Because the scripture says that the Israelites were north; that would be north of both of them—perhaps more or less equidistant. We don't know exactly; we would have to study the exact terrain to make a guess; but it's very rugged country; I described how I walked up and down through those valleys, looking for it for some time, and not finding it. I came from a town down below where there was a good trail going up, and found it easier, but had the nuisance of the people of this town.

(Student) Yes. Dr. Albright used to waver between the idea of a conquest about 1400; a conquest about 1200; and a mixed story, which had some elements from one conquest about 1400 and some from another conquest about 1200. Then he conducted a brief series of excavations at Bethel. And in those excavations, they merely dug some trenches and went down to try to get some evidence from different areas. It wasn't a thorough and complete excavation by any means. But from it—this was about twenty years ago—he got sufficient evidence that Bethel had been destroyed at about 1200 to lead him to revise his previous theory and to adopt the view that the conquest all occurred at a little before 1200—about 1250—and that is the view which he has held very strongly ever since.

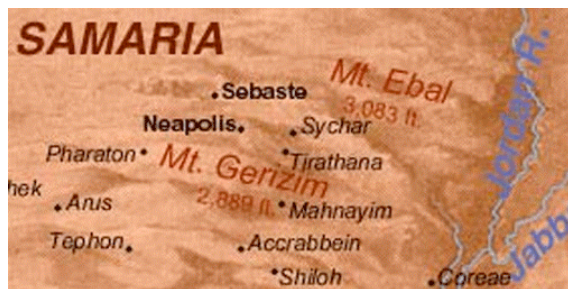
That doesn't prove his theory is correct, but he is a very able scholar; and of course there's much evidence that's not yet found; but the interpretation of the evidence at present in hand, he feels very strongly, points in that direction. And it was Bethel that led him to adopt that view. But Joshua tells nothing of any conquest of Bethel, except it says, all the men of Bethel came out; and then, at the end of the section when it lists the kings who were conquered (12:7–24), after the next great campaign, it lists the king of Bethel, though it says nothing about the conquest; and that doesn't prove this is a true theory, but it fits very well with it. Well, we'll move on to

5. The Ceremony at Shechem. Joshua 8:30–35.

This is a brief section which is found here in the latter part of chapter 8. We read in verse 29 that the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide, and as soon as the sun was set, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcass down and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remains to this day. That is, till when the book of Joshua was written, there still was that heap of stones.

When the French excavators excavated, they tore down the heap of stones; it was among the many other heaps and they didn't recognize which one this one was. But then verse 30 says: and Joshua built an altar to the Lord God of Israel in mount Ebal.

And here we have an account of something in verses 30 to 35 which was commanded by Moses in the book of Deuteronomy. He told the people there, that when they came in to the land they should go to Shechem; and there at Shechem that they should give certain blessings and certain curses. We find it in Deuteronomy 27 and 28. In Deuteronomy 27, Moses commanded them, after they'd gone over Jordan, to go to Mount Ebal, and to put up a monument with the law of God on it and plaster it with plaster. And on this altar there, he said, put up the law of God; and it says in Deut. 27:8 thou shalt write upon the



stones all the words of this law very plainly. And then it says in verses 11 and 12 that Moses charged the people that same day saying, certain tribes shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people; certain tribes shall stand upon mount Ebal to curse. And then he tells the curses and blessings which they are to give. Well, that's the command in

Deut. 27 and 28; and here we find in Joshua 8, that they did it, Joshua 8:30–35.

It says, "Then Joshua built an altar to the Lord God of Israel in mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the Lord commanded." And he wrote there on the stones a copy of the Law of Moses; and they read the blessings and the curses, half of them against mount Gerizim and half of them against mount Ebal. Those are the two mounts there near the present town of Nablus, the Arabic pronunciation of Neapolis. And any of you who've ever had Greek would immediately recognize that Neapolis means "new city" and that's the name that the Romans gave to this city which is at the place of the old Shechem.

And though Shechem is not mentioned here, it is the old Shechem. It's the place which was the headquarters of the Samaritans through the Middle Ages; and the Samaritans are still there to this day. And they are the two high hills—mount Gerizim and mount Ebal—and they have the cursings given from one of the hills and the blessings from the other. You can imagine how the voice

would resound against those hills, back and forth, to impress on the people's minds the law of God. Just another illustration of the fact that God wants us to take these truths and drive them home to our hearts; and put ourselves in a position where we know it, where it's living to us, where it's real. Make it so that it impresses our minds.

Somebody said, "Why is it, that when our preacher reads the Bible I go to sleep, and when Orson Wells reads it I see stars?" Well, the fact of the matter was that the minister was a man who evidently felt that reading the scripture was just a part of the service; so get up and read it. Orson Wells was a man who was trained as an actor; and to try to get across the thoughts that he was reading; it was the Bible he wanted to get across. And I fear that nine-tenths of us read the scripture in such a way that it does not enter into people's minds particularly.

But if we look back on this; and think about it; and pray about it; and learn to read the scripture in a way that impresses people's minds; and drives home the thoughts in it; it can be more effective than any word that we can probably give. It is, I think, disrespectful to the Word of God to just get up and read it off in any old way. It is not accomplishing its purpose. Well, here they spoke the Word of God in this very impressive way: to drive it home to the hearts of the people. And so we have this description here; and it describes it here after the destruction of Ai; actually it's quite a distance from Ai; because Gilgal is north of Ai, but then you have to go even further than that—quite a bit further north—to get to a valley where you can go up into the hill country; and there you come out at Shechem; and at Shechem you have mount Ebal and mount Gerizim.

6. The Gibeonite Deception. chapter 9.

We find, in verse 3, that the inhabitants of Gibeon—Gibeon is a town a few miles north of Jerusalem, quite a town there to this day, town of Gibeon, up on that hilltop, north of Jerusalem. And the inhabitants of Gibeon hear what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai; and they did work wilily—reminds you of the wiles of the devil. They worked wilily—I don't think we use the word wilily in modern English any more. In English we say "wiles." They played a trick. They made as if they were ambassadors; and took old sacks on their asses; and wine bottles, old and rent and bound up; and old shoes and clouted on their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy. And they went to Joshua to the camp at Gilgal. They could reach it in a few hours. But when they got there they said, "We've come from a far country to make a league."

And the men of Israel said, "How do we know you don't live here in this area?" And they said, "Well, look at our provisions; look at how old they are; look at how our soles are worn." They said, "We've come from a very far country and,

we've heard of the wonderful things you've done and the wonders of your God; now we want to make an alliance with you."

And so we find that, though Joshua had been commanded to make no alliances with the Canaanites; that they were to be wiped out completely; that they had fallen so deeply into sin that it was necessary that they be entirely removed lest the temptation of their wickedness spread among the Israelites who were to keep alive the knowledge of God. That Joshua, believing the evidence of his eyes; which led him to believe that these people were not Canaanites but came from a long distance away; that he made a league with them, and swore to them that they would have a non-aggression pact; they would be friends, allies.

And three days after they made this league, they found out they come from right in the very center of the land of Canaan. And they made a trip up there and they came to their city the third day; they must have gone pretty slowly, because it's pretty far for one; but if you move rapidly you can do it one day. And they took three days and found them there; and found where they were, and they, some of the congregation murmured that we've sworn to destroy all these people; now these should be destroyed. But the princes said, "We swore to them by the Lord God of Israel; we must not touch them. We must stand by our oath." And so they said, "Let them live; but let them be hewers of wood, drawers of water unto all the congregation," since the princes had promised.

And so Joshua said, "Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying we are very far from you, when you dwell among us? Now therefore you are cursed. None of you shall be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God." And they said, "Well, we're in your hands; do what's best in your eyes." And so they agreed to make them slaves—make them servants to the nation—but allowed them to live; and in fact, they protected them; and the result was that there were five Canaanite cities in the middle of the land—separating the north of Israel from the south—which made it easy for the two sections to lose close contact with each other; to draw apart, to get separate viewpoints on things. And eventually we find division among them, coming up now and then in the book of Judges.

We find in the time of David that the northerners kept on with the house of Saul, while David was in Hebron and had the house of Judah. Eventually they were united, but only during David's and Solomon's reign; and then they split, and they remained two separate kingdoms ever after. And thus great harm came to the people of Israel because of their failure to investigate before they acted; their failure to know what they were doing; their making an agreement with these people, made under false pretenses; but yet stood by—stood faithfully by—the agreement in the main.

And when Israel failed to stand by it, the Lord punished them for their failure so to do. We find over in 2 Kings 21,

Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the Lord. And the Lord answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites. And the king called the Gibeonites, and said unto them; (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; and the children of Israel had sworn unto them: and Saul sought to slay them in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah.) Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you? And wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord?

And as a result, seven of the sons of Saul had to lose their lives here—a very sad story in chapter 21 here—of the results that came there as a result of the non-keeping of the oath which had been made long ago; it had been entered into rashly, and yet the Lord compelled them to maintain and obey it after they had made it.

Now there are cases—I've heard it said—that a wrong promise is better broken than kept; and there is an element of truth in that; there are people who make very, very foolish promises, not knowing what they are doing, which they should not stand by; they should make a revision of it. But such cases are comparatively seldom.

God wants his people to be known as those whose word is dependable; and when they make a promise, to stand by it, even if they themselves are injured by it. And he gave us a lesson here of the importance of standing by our word which we have given, even though we've given it wrongly as in this instance here. So we have these great truths brought out in this story: first of the great error of acting without knowing the facts; and of proceeding to make alliances with those whom you think it is all right to make alliance with, before making absolutely sure that it is; and that they are not those whom God does not want you to make alliances with; but second, it shows the importance of not giving your word rashly or lightly, but standing by your pledged word that you've given.

7. The Conquest of the Southern Confederates. 10:1–43.

And we find that it immediately begins with the Gibeonites being that which drags them into the first attack. Gibeon was a royal city, much greater than Ai, and the men thereof were mighty. And when Adonizedec king of Jerusalem—What does the name Adonizedec remind you of? No. Adonizedec would surely remind you of Melchizedec. Melchizedec, which means "my king is righteous", was a king of Jerusalem at the time of Abraham.

Here, at a later time, we find Adonizedec, which means "my Lord is righteous", as the king of that same city; and it fits together as a natural expectation that there might be a similarity of names of two kings of the same city. Now there wouldn't have to be, but there might be; and there was in this case.

And so we have Adonizedec, the king of Jerusalem; also the king of Hebron, the kings of other cities to the south there, hearing what the Gibeonites had done; they came up and attacked Gibeon because they had made peace with Joshua; but this was foolish on their part. They should first have sent messengers to the north—to the cities of the north—to invite them to come and attack too. But evidently they felt that all of us together are far more than enough for Gibeon; we will attack Gibeon, and we will destroy these Gibeonite cities; and we will hold them and be in a position to resist Israelite attack; and so they came to attack Gibeon.

The Gibeonites immediately sent messengers down to Gilgal where the Israelites were; and they said, "We are attacked by this great body which is encamped here against us; if you don't come soon, we will be in a desperate plight. You have sworn to protect us—now come and help us." And here is a case where Joshua acted quickly in an emergency. If Joshua had waited now, the southern confederacy could have destroyed the Gibeonites, taken over their cities, and strongly entrenched themselves there; and it would have been much more difficult for Joshua to carry on the conquest. They could have kept these cities; they would be at the top of the hill country; the Israelites trying to come in—it would be much easier fighting down hill against them than coming up.

But instead, of that, the Israelites now have an outpost right in the middle of the land by means of the Gibeonites; and so the Gibeonites are holding back this great force, but they can't hold them long; it's much too large for them; and the kings there figure that before the Israelites get there in any substantial force, they'll have the Gibeonites at their mercy and be in a good position to stand off the Israelites.

But instead of that, we find that Joshua, when he heard this, acted immediately; and Joshua went up—we find in verse 9—that he went up from Gilgal all night. And so, when the southern confederacy thought they had only the Gibeonites to fear, and they were going to conquer them quickly, Joshua and the men of war came up speedily through the valley—up to Gibeon—through the night; and the next morning, when the southern confederacy had no idea they could do that so rapidly, or be anywhere near, they suddenly attacked; we read, verse 9

Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night. And the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Bethhoron, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. And it came to

pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Bethhoron, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

See, they're going up through the pass there; that's the ascent that forms the top of the pass; the descent of that forms the bottom part of the other side of it.

So they came up the pass and started down the other side, helter-skelter, with the Israelites pursuing them; and as they went down through the descent of Beth Horon there, the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them to Azekah and they died. They were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword. And so here we have the great victory over the southern confederacy, which was the result of the agreement with the Gibeonites.

Joshua had attacked with his rapid forced march at night, which resulted in the early morning, when they were just rather drowsy, being suddenly attacked; and their camp was torn to pieces, and the people were running helter-skelter; and the Israelites pursuing them and destroying them; and then the Lord intervened in the way of letting them be killed with these hailstones. And it says that those who were killed with hailstones were more than those who were destroyed with the sword.

So we have this book of Joshua, which is so full of great spiritual lessons—such a marvelous book—on the way God used the Israelites to accomplish his purposes, despite their errors; of the way he used them, blessed them, gave them the land, a wonderful book; but unfortunately the next two verses after this have gotten more attention from the Christian world than all the rest of the book put together—at least if we leave out the falling of the walls of Jericho. And they are two of the most cryptic, difficult verses in the whole Bible—very hard to know exactly what they mean.

Now the most reasonable interpretation that I have ever heard of what they mean is one which probably none of you have ever heard. And I will mention it to you; and you will be surprised and aghast, because you probably have heard so much about these two verses. But after I mention it, then we'll come back and look at these verses, and look at other possible interpretations of them; and I certainly do not insist on the interpretation I mention to you now, but merely say they are two very difficult, very difficult verses from any viewpoint. But then we read those who died with the hailstones were more than those whom the children of Israel slew with the sword. So God worked this victory with the weather, to overcome great numbers of the enemy; and the southern confederacy is pretty completely wrecked. And then of course, Israel comes

back; and then they meet the northern confederacy, and that ends the conquest.

But now we read in verse 12,

Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the Sun stood still, and the Moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the Sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel.

Gibeon is, of course, to their east. "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon." We can just see the scene there; they have come up all night, up the valley from Gilgal. They have attacked in the early morning; and they pursue them, and they are running; and then they begin to see the Sun show over the side of the hill, and he says, "Sun, be silent, be silent, be quiet there, Sun, on Gibeon to the east." The Hebrew word translated "stand still" is *dawmam* "be dumb, be silent."

And then he looks off to the west; and he sees the Moon just going down, and he says to the Moon, "thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon." No verb here. See—don't give these people light there in the west, that they can escape safely. We've attacked them in the dark and pursued them; and if we're going to put an end to them—as it looks like—now don't come up and give them light, that they can see where to go and how to escape. Sun, be silent, and Moon, in the valley of Ajalon; Sun to the east don't come up; Moon over there in the west, don't shine to give them light so that they can see to get down.

It would be a full Moon of course if he saw it in the west, just before sunup or just after dawn in the morning. And so he says be silent; and literally, the Sun was silent, and the Moon stood; the Moon stopped giving its light, the Sun was silent until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.¹¹³

"Is not this written in the book of Jasher?" Jasher, as you know, literally means "let's sing"; it is a book of songs; it is now lost, but it was evidently a book of songs celebrating the victory; and in this book of songs, these two verses occur. "Is not this written in the book of Jasher?" So the Sun was silent in the midst of the heavens and did not hurry to go down about a whole day. And there was no day; now this word "to go down", literally means "to come in"—it

¹¹³ [dcb] See Walter [Maunder, *Astronomy in the Old Testament*](#). In his analysis of this event, the darkness was due to heavy cloud cover, especially in the west—a storm that resulted in the huge hailstones.

did not hurry to come in. The word is sometimes used where you see the Sun, and then it comes in to the mountains, out of sight.

It's used of the setting Sun; but it's also used if I come into a room; if I rap at the door, you immediately say "come in." So I enter; I come in. And the Sun at night—you say the Sun goes in, goes in out of sight—but this is early morning; and here in the early morning, the Sun is just beginning to come up and cast light upon them; and he says, "Sun, be silent," and the Sun didn't come in for a whole day. That is to say, they had the hailstones—hailstones coming—they had the big storm.

Have you ever been out on the farm, in the fall, on a bright hot day? And then the cloud comes over all of a sudden; and it gets almost as black as night; and then these hailstones begin to drop and—We saw a man out in Montana; he was driving his horses on the farm; the hailstones, some of them nearly as big as oranges dropping; and his wheat there, he had this wonderful wheat out there; and inside of, I think, 15 minutes, all of his wheat was just absolutely flat on the ground, completely wrecked by those hailstones. Not many as big as oranges; many about as big as your thumb. But all of a sudden in this country they come; and the work of a whole summer is wrecked just like that.

Well, here we read that more people died from the hailstones than died from the sword of the children of Israel. The people couldn't see where they were going; it was dark, and the night was coming; and the Sun didn't come up for about a whole day—nearly the whole day. They were at the mercy of the Israelites and even more of the hailstones. And so it says there was not a day like that before or after, that the Lord hearkened to the voice of a man, for the Lord fought for Israel.

Now it impresses me—I would not be dogmatic about it at all—but it impresses me that that is what those words probably mean in the context there—what they probably mean. The thing that looks against it, is that the word *bow'* the Sun didn't "come in" for a whole day. That is an idiom, frequently used to mean "go in out of sight at night", but this started in the morning, "It didn't come in all night." And of course it translates it here, Sun, stand still, but the Hebrew isn't "stand still", the Hebrew is "be silent", the word regularly translated be silent—or it may be "cease from whatever you're doing"—be silent from work; or be silent, cease from whatever you're doing. It would fit exactly with the Sun starting to come up, stopping coming any further with that.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ [dcb] Maunder, *op. cit.* gives an alternative interpretation that the sun's "silence" was due to the same thick storm clouds that produced the hailstones. The clouds brought to Joshua's army, not hailstones, but welcome coolness and protection from the heat of the sun which they rendered "silent". The same clouds hid the full moon from shining.

But the People have grabbed these two verses out of context—with no relation to the battle, with no relation to the situation, with no relation to what meaning it would have—because we don't find in scripture that God performed big miracles just to do wonderful things, to arouse excitement. He didn't cause polar bears to walk around in Egypt in the time of the plagues. He does not ordinarily do things that are just bizarre and strange and queer; he does things that have a purpose, they may be things requiring power beyond what any human being would ever have, but they have a purpose in the situation.

Christ did his miracles not only to excite astonishment, but to heal people; to produce, to cause some good to be done. God could work a miracle in order to help to win the battle, but in this case the hailstones and the darkness helped in the complete routing of the southern confederacy.

Now if, instead of that, in the morning the Sun stopped coming higher in the heavens—instead of its simply not showing itself—it stopped coming any more; and the Sun stayed in that place, so that twelve hours later, it began to come up, and you had a day twice as long; I'm afraid the Israelites would have been utterly exhausted by the end of that day, because they'd gone all the night before; and now if they fought all day, and then had another whole day to fight, the Lord would certainly have to work another miracle in order to give them the strength to get through that day; and I don't see why it was necessary; the people were already running anyway, and they were pursuing them; and anyway the hailstones, we read, killed more than the sword of the Israelites killed.

And so, to me, I do not see the purpose in this connection, of working a great cosmic change in all the forces of nature. Now, that's not to say but what the Lord could work such a thing if he chose; he could pick up polar bears and cause them to walk in Egypt, if he chose; he could cause the water to stand up just absolutely straight up in the air, if he chose. We could say, "Well how could God cause the Sun to stand still? It would upset gravity, and all the buildings would fall over." Well, if God could make gravity, he could interrupt the gravity for a day if he chose. If God can create the world and cause it to go this way, he could cause it to go a different way if he chose. I have no difficulty in believing that God could cause the solar system to start going the other direction, or to stop going at all, and cause no results to happen from it, if he chose.

But it does not seem to me that is at all a required interpretation of the verses. It seems to me that it is an interpretation which doesn't take the words in quite the literal natural sense; and more than that, it seems to me that it is an interpretation which makes a miracle which would be simply a great exhibition of force and not in any way a help; because they got all the help they needed with the hailstones and with the darkness in the situation. I don't see any need at this point, in this one battle, of all the battles they had, how there would be any great help by performing a great cosmic miracle of that type. As I say, I

personally regret very much that people have spent so much attention on two verses—which are difficult verses at the least, from any interpretation—instead of spending it on the many spiritual lessons, the many important things for us, in this book of Joshua as it's written. I certainly think the Lord could do it if he chose; it's just a question what does the passage say, and I personally do not think that that is what this statement has said.

Now there was an instructor in military science—I think he was a lieutenant in the army—who was sent to Yale University to drill the boys there, a good many years ago; and while he was drilling the fellows in marching and so on, at Yale University, he set to work studying astronomy; and he worked out a theory to prove that there is missing in the history of the Sun, the length of time that it took the Sun to move this distance here. I've never been able to figure what that would mean, what the sense would be to it. I've often heard him quoted as this great professor of Yale University; but looking into it, he was I think a lieutenant—he may have been a higher officer—sent there to instruct them in the manual of arms; and he wrote this and all it says, the Sun was over Gibeon, the Moon was over...the Sun was east and the Moon was west, without telling the exact time or anything. It is certain such evidence is not involved in it.¹¹⁵

Now a man named Velikovsky a few years ago wrote a book called *Worlds in Collision*. And in this book he advanced the theory that the Sun and the earth used to revolve in the opposite direction to what it does now. So the Sun would rise in the west and set in the east. And there was a planet came near the earth and the planet Venus caused a change so that the earth stopped going to the west and started going the direction it now is. And he wrote this book which got a great deal of attention and many people think this proves the Bible is true, this one thing particularly.

He was a man who I think was very well trained in the theories of education. I think that was his field; he had a doctor's degree. Suddenly he got tremendous attention when his book first came out. After they read it, most people recognized he didn't know positively, he doesn't have any particular knowledge in that field; he has a lot of theory. I don't see how the cause of the Lord is advanced by taking these verses and insisting on interpreting them in a way that I don't think the context calls for, and then making a big effort to try to prove them. And anything like that is very difficult to prove unless you were there at the time it happened. It seems very unlikely that any other proof could prove it. If God's word says it happens, you have no difficulty in accepting it, no difficulty in believing, but I don't see how it can be proven to the unbeliever in any event, and if this isn't what it says, I don't see how we're glorifying the Lord any more by interpreting it in that way.

¹¹⁵ [rcn] This was Charles Adiel Lewis Totten, and he wrote up his material in *Joshua's Long Day and the Dial of Ahaz*. I have responded to this in a Power-Point presentation "Joshua's Long Day and the NASA Computers" which is posted on our IBRI website www.ibri.org.

Of course, there is one further word of caution. The thing we are to convince the world of, is that the lost in sin need a savior, Jesus Christ, the one through whom they can be saved. And after they're saved, that this book, the Bible, is entirely dependable and reliable and glorious. Everything it says is true; and it can show them how to grow in grace and how to follow Him. That's the thing we need to convince them of. And if somebody comes along, and they tell you this man is such a great Christian, and thoroughly believes that Joshua made the Sun stand still, I'm not going to raise an issue about it. But I don't think anything's gained by our going out and making it a point of argument that the Sun did stand still. And I think that in the end we understand God's way better if we try carefully to see what the Bible really does say, rather than grab superficial interpretations and spend a lot of time trying to prove those superficial interpretations are correct.

A further word of caution is warranted, I think—it says it's taken from the book of Jasher; it's taken from the book of poems. It is like if you compare the song of Deborah in Judges 5 with the story of Deborah's and Barak's conquest in Judges 4. One is a prose account; the other is a poetical celebration. This quotation from Jasher is taken from this poetic celebration of this great victory; and it seems to me that what it's *not* saying is that Joshua said "Oh my, now, we've got a wonderful chance to get these people and here's the Sun coming up. Oh Sun, don't come up, don't come up and make them be able to see to escape. Stay back there." And then we read the hailstorm came and the darkness continued for about a day. That would be my guess, I wouldn't be dogmatic, but I just would say that I personally do not believe that it teaches that God stopped the Sun. What it does teach, I wouldn't be dogmatic on that point.

Another point: These verses—this event—are not referred to, as far as I recall, anywhere else in the scripture. They're not put in an emphatic part of the chapter; they're rather incidental. These verses are rather incidental to a great victory. In the case of Deborah and Barak, we have the account in Judges 4 of their great victory; and then we have the beautiful poem describing it in the next chapter. Here in this account in Joshua, we have two verses quoted from the Jasher poem here; and I personally think that these two verses are a poetic description of the hailstorm that is described in prose in the verse before. But I wouldn't be dogmatic on that, because very often in poetry it is hard to be sure of the exact significance. If you have any doubt of that statement, read Judges 4 and get the definite history of Deborah and Barak. Then take Judges 5 and tell me what every verse in it means. And you'll find that Judges 5 is quite easy to get the general idea of a poem of praise to God for the victory in Judges 4; and it even adds interesting details for our understanding of 4. But the statements in it—some of them—are highly figurative; and there are instances where it's hard to be sure which aspect of the battle it is referring to in the statement.

Now if somebody prefers to believe that these two verses mean that God caused the whole solar system to stop for 24 hours, or for a substantial portion thereof, and all the planets to stop their motion and stand where they were for that length of time, I do not believe that that is the least bit beyond the power of God to do; I would have no difficulty whatever in accepting that God did that—if the scripture says he did. But it does not seem to me that that is the correct interpretation of these two verses. I don't think the verses as they stand require it at all; more than that, I don't think that the context shows in this situation such an interpretation. But I certainly don't want to be dogmatic about it, because I don't think the evidence is sufficient to be clear. There may be another interpretation, than the one which I suggested, which is the true one instead of the one I have given you. But if you prefer to take it that it means a cessation of the turning around of the earth on its axis for a length of time, well, maybe it was; but I just would recommend not being dogmatic about it because it's far from certain.

Well, the rest of the chapter has interesting details about this conquest; I don't think we need to take the time in this class to go into these details. It is very important that we have the main strategy in mind: how first it was the Jordan Valley in the center, then it is the southern section, then the northern section of Canaan. And this conquest of the south continues; it took quite a while, though the first day of it was one great overwhelming victory, which made a big start to the conquest; but then there is described the many cities that were taken; and a list is given of the kings who were taken; and among them the king of Bethel is placed in his proper geographical situation—although there's no mention of the conquest of Bethel here as there is on the other cities.

8. The Northern Campaign. 11:1–20.

And the kings of Canaan made that mistake which is so common in history—so very, very common in history. Seeing an aggressor coming, instead of uniting to drive him off, they let him take them piecemeal. And, we find over and over and over in history, that forces which could easily have won a victory—I don't say they could've in this case—but I say in history there are many cases, where forces which could have easily won a victory if they were united, have lost it because they allowed themselves to be conquered piecemeal.

And I think that, aside from the matter of the Lord's help, that would be true in this case also; that, humanly speaking, if these Canaanites had stood together, the probabilities of the Israelites defeating them would've been very, very slight.

Somebody will say "Well, it would have been a far greater display of God's power, if God had caused the Israelites to stay over in the plain of Moab and

send a message over asking them all to surrender; and then they all got together and stood together and the Israelites would have had to meet them all at once instead of piecemeal like this; and then God might have had the Sun stand still, and a few other things happen all at once, to cause a tremendous display of God's power to show that he could defeat all the Canaanites together at once."

But that is not what happened. What happened is that God did intervene with his marvelous power, as in the fall of the walls of Jericho; but he caused that Joshua should use his best intelligence he could; and that they should move forward according to a reasonable plan; in order to make it clear to us, that we are not to simply expect him to "carry us to the sky on flowery beds of ease" and to cause everything just to open up before us; but that he wants to train and develop us in character that amounts to something.

And while he will give us very special help at crucial points, it is his desire that we plan things in a reasonable way, and that we struggle forward against odds and gain the victory.

And so in the book of Joshua, along with the wonderful display of the marvelous power of God, we also have the evidence of a reasonable plan carried through in a reasonable way. And so we have this strategy here; and we have the land reduced now to the point where everything is in their hands, except the Northern area, north of Gibeon. And now the kings of the northern area—who, humanly speaking, should have disturbed themselves long before this to help the southern kings, or even to help the people of Jericho—they, now, when everything else is gone, they now bestir themselves to do something.

Remember when Hitler began moving, when he took Czechoslovakia, when he took Austria, the powers could easily have stepped in and stopped him. When he moved into the Rhineland, which according to the treaty was supposed to be demilitarized, they could easily have stopped him. A force 1/20th as big as the final forces that had to oppose him could have put a stop to him with no difficulty whatever. In fact, his troops were ordered to move back from the Rhineland quickly if they saw opposition developing, because he knew he couldn't resist. But as he toppled the treaties one by one by one, the western powers just stepped back and let him do it, one after another, until he got stronger and stronger and stronger; and finally they had to use a hundred times the power to overcome him.

And it's exactly the same situation today with the Communists. We let them grab one thing after another, one after another; and if we ever do keep them from destroying us it will require many times the effort that it would have had we done the sensible thing and finished the thing up ten years ago. But in this case of Israel in Canaan, of course, right is on the side of the aggressor.

There's a common idea today that the worst thing in the world is aggressive war. And we would never fight a preventive war; that's said by our leaders in Washington over and over. We would never fight a preventive war. If somebody else attacks us, then we'll fight; but they can do anything they want to until they attack us, and we will do nothing; and of course it's a perfectly silly, ridiculous, nonsensical attitude. If war is ever right, it is right for a principle, not just because somebody else attacks you personally. And if there isn't a real reason to fight, there shouldn't be a fight even if they did slap us. We should take the slap if there's not a principle. And if there is a principle involved, we should fight over the principle, not wait for them to slap first.

But if anything is a Biblical principle, it is the sacredness of human life, which God has established; this is not recognized by any other religion except Christianity, unless you take Buddhism, which carries that to the extreme of even thinking of the flies and the insects being sacred and must not be injured; but aside from that, the religions do not recognize human life as sacred and are very, very callous about their treatment of human life. And Christianity teaches a care of human life: "Thou shalt not murder" is a command that we have which has not been observed by other religions. And that being the case it is the right thing to take it in its true perspective.

Of course, the modernists carry it to extremes—make a religion out of it—leaving the other things of Christianity out; and they develop their pacifistic theories; and one part of them is this: we will not fight unless we are attacked. And of course it's utter nonsense. But it is the stand which they are stressing, and which is having a tremendous influence upon our leaders in Washington. Now if anybody is to say that that is a Biblical principle, all they have to do is to look at the book of Joshua in order to see that it is a ridiculous thing, that it is not scriptural teaching.

There was a principle involved here; the Canaanites have sunk into such wickedness and degradation that it was God's will to wipe them off the face of the earth. There was a principle involved. And God was giving that land to the Israelites and ordering them to take it. And under the circumstances they moved forward to take it. The people of Jericho didn't do that of course; they just got behind their walls, and stayed there, and hoped to be safe. It was not that they were attacked, but that there was a principle involved, and they proceeded to act upon it. So we find here, that the people of the northern part of the land, who had sat back and hoped that the thing would blow over; and hoped that maybe the Israelites, having conquered the rest of the land, might be willing to live in peaceful co-existence with them; now at last they saw that was impossible, and gathered themselves together; and Joshua attacked them.

(Student. "Now in Canaan, we are not told; but are there not some who would be innocent, such as the Russian people?") A lot of the Russian people are innocent in effect; thereby if we fought it as an aggressor nation, many innocent people would surely be killed. The Russian people have had for centuries the influence of a form of Christianity—very corrupt and degenerate, but nevertheless a form—and there has been an influence on their character which the Canaanites did not have. And it is my personal opinion that the Russians as a people are about as nice a people as you'll find anywhere. I don't think there's anything wrong with the Russians as a people. But I think there's a gang of thugs that's hurting them, and controlling and using them for its purposes; and I think it's an awful shame to have to kill any of the Russian people in order to get at the thugs; but it's exactly the situation we had in Germany, who are among the finest people on the face of the earth, but who fell into the control of a gang of thugs. And it is easier for a nice people to fall into the control of a gang of thugs than it is for a people that aren't nice. If they sit back and surrender, they can be forced into line and used to form an instrument of terrible wickedness.

In chapter 10 we found that there was a great force that came against the Gibeonites; but the southern force is not described as anything as great as this northern force. Read what it says in verse 4 of chapter 11. "They went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the seashore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many."

"As the sand on the seashore in multitude." The people of Jericho weren't in that category; the people of Ai weren't in that category; the southern confederacy was not in that category. These forces that the Israelites had been meeting had been growing in strength and in intensity. And that is true in the Christian life. God is apt to give us situations to meet within our strength to meet—or at least our strength increased by his enablement—but he's apt to give us more difficult situations as we become more advanced in our Christian life and more able to take them on.

So each situation that the Israelites met was larger than the one before; and this is the largest yet of all. As the sand of the seashore for multitude, this tremendous force that met the people. But God said to him, "Don't be afraid of them; tomorrow about this time I will deliver them all up to you." And so Joshua came and met them; and Joshua overcame them. There is no account in this chapter of any miraculous intervention of the Lord; and this chapter has received less attention than most of the chapters of Joshua; but actually, the victory which he gained here was the greatest victory in the whole book; because the force that he opposed was the greatest force that he met anywhere in the book. But God gave him the complete victory over them.

And so the northern confederacy being overcome, the whole land lay before them; but it was a tremendous land for a people of this size; and they did not have the garrisons and the forces, or the training or the knowledge, to immediately take it over and occupy it and hold it; and so many, many people who had fled to the hills, came back and reestablished themselves in these cities; and much of the land had to be conquered all over again.

9. Summary of the Conquest. 11:21–12:24.

It's very interesting, though, to note how Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord said unto Moses. Joshua took the whole land. Verse 22 says there was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel; only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod they remained. Leave off the last half of the verse, and it seems that every single one had vanished; but then it says only in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod there remained.

Well, now you take this statement here in verse 2: Joshua took the whole land; and then you look over to chapter 13, verse 1, and what does the Lord say? Now Joshua was old and stricken in years and the Lord said to him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remains yet very much land to be possessed. Who says there's no contradiction in the Bible? Here are two verses a chapter and a half apart; one says that all the land was conquered; the next says that there remained yet very much land to be possessed. This is the land that yet remained, and then he goes on to describe areas which remained.

The fact of the matter is that we have to recognize that statements in the Bible, as anywhere else, have to be taken for their significance, rather than taking them word by word, an extremely literal interpretation of each word. You have to get their significance each time. This was a tremendous victory of Joshua's, which overcame these mighty forces opposed to the Israelites; which broke the backbone of the power of the Canaanites and laid the whole land prostrate before them. But there were outlying sections—some of them very important—which Joshua's force didn't get into at all. And there were many sections in the midst of the land which the Israelites—the separate tribes—had to overcome. And in some of these, it took them a couple of hundred years to do it.

So in the actual conquest there was great deal left, but the big main portion of it was done; and with that understanding, there is no contradiction between the two statements; but take each of them by itself, and one would rule the other out. And that is true often with doctrine in scripture. The Lord takes one side of a doctrine, and he stresses it; and he speaks in such language that you'd almost think—Paul says we are saved by faith without any works of the law; and James says we are not saved by faith alone; he says that faith without works is dead. Show me your faith without your works; I'll show you my faith by my works. And each of them is stressing a vital truth; and the fact is there's no contradiction

between them, if you understand correctly what they say. But verbally there is a contradiction; there is an apparent contradiction if you take the Bible as a set of mathematical formulas, each of which can be pulled out from the rest and taken alone and looked at with the extreme significance of each word alone. But if you take them as a presentation of God's truth; stressing various aspects of it; and each to be interpreted in the light of the other; then there is no contradiction.

Well, so much then for the summary of the conquest, at the details of which we will not look here. It lists the kings at the end, you notice, the kings whom they have taken; and then we have

D. The Division of the Land. 13–22.

Almost as much material as we've already looked at. And the division of the land, if you read it carefully, is not something which the Lord simply gave to them, and had it all fixed and set, and here it is. But he gave them some principles to use; and they proceeded to apply the principles; and in the application of the principles, there were certain things they did which later had to be revised and changed.

First he assigned the land in Transjordan: the two and a half tribes over there; that had already been done. But now, it is repeated as a part of the general distribution of the land. They've been given that land, by Moses; now it is stated again, and the area is listed—the two and a half tribes, that is the tribe of Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manassah, which had the territory across the Jordan.

And then we have the children of Judah in chapter 14. The children of Judah come to Joshua in Gilgal; and they ask for a certain part of the land which Caleb had spied out when he'd been up to Kadesh-Barnea forty years before. And Joshua agrees to give them this section of the land. And so this section is given to Caleb and to the people of Judah.

And then in chapter 15 we have the division given to Judah. And it describes the southern portion of the land that was given to the tribe of Judah; and so the tribe of Judah gets this large section, the southern portion of the land there; and then later on we find that the section they have is too big for them.

And they take away the southern part of it and they give it to the tribe of Simeon. And so they give them a section out of what had already been given to Judah. You find that mentioned in chapter 19:9:

Out of the portion of the children of Judah was the inheritance of the children of Simeon, for the part of the children of Judah was too much for them:

therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of the people of Judah.

The system of dividing up the land is not a thing that came down from God ready-made; but it is like most things in our lives. We have the principles, and we have to apply them; and when we find it doesn't fit this way, we regulate it that way; and we change it and try to apply the Lord's principles. And so they found Judah had too much. They took part of it and they gave it to Simeon. And we must, in everything we do in life, we must have established principles we can't switch too easily. People come to me and say, "I think we should change this about our time of classes" or something like that and so on; and I say, "I'm tremendously interested in all the suggestions that anyone has to make; but we have to make our definite plans at the beginning of the term and carry them through the semester; we can't be changing back and forth up and down during the semester." But the situation established for one semester does not necessarily run into another. You have to use the experience gained in one semester in making your plans for the next, and try to make it better. Now there are some times when people will make a plan and they think they've got to stick to it regardless.

We must not go to one extreme or the other, doing all of our activities for the Lord. To keep a certain stability, you have to have it. If you are too ready to change, we have no order; but you need to be watching for means of improvement; and making adjustments from time to time, such improvements as are necessary. And anything you do, you will find that your changes will move this way and that way; that you'll decide to go that way, and you'll go too far, and then you have to back up; and then you may back up a little too far, but eventually you may find the correct situation.

And we could learn a lot about methods from this account of the division of the tribes. The children of Judah were the largest tribe; they had Caleb, who was one of the two faithful spies; and they gave the section he asked, but they gave too big a section. And then they didn't say, "Well we've given it to Judah; there's nothing we can do about it." They'd given him too big a section; they took a part of it out now, and they gave it to Simeon. But Judah would not be the largest tribe if it were not that Joseph had been divided into two tribes. Joseph would be the largest tribe probably otherwise. But Joseph had been given two tribes—two sons—and each of them had a very large section; and consequently, if you look on the map of the tribal boundaries over in Transjordan, you will find the tribe of Reuben and the tribe of Gad, and then the half tribe of Manassah almost larger than either of the other two whole tribes, because Manassah was a larger tribe. So they had a large area of Transjordan, half the tribe; and the other half is over on the other side.

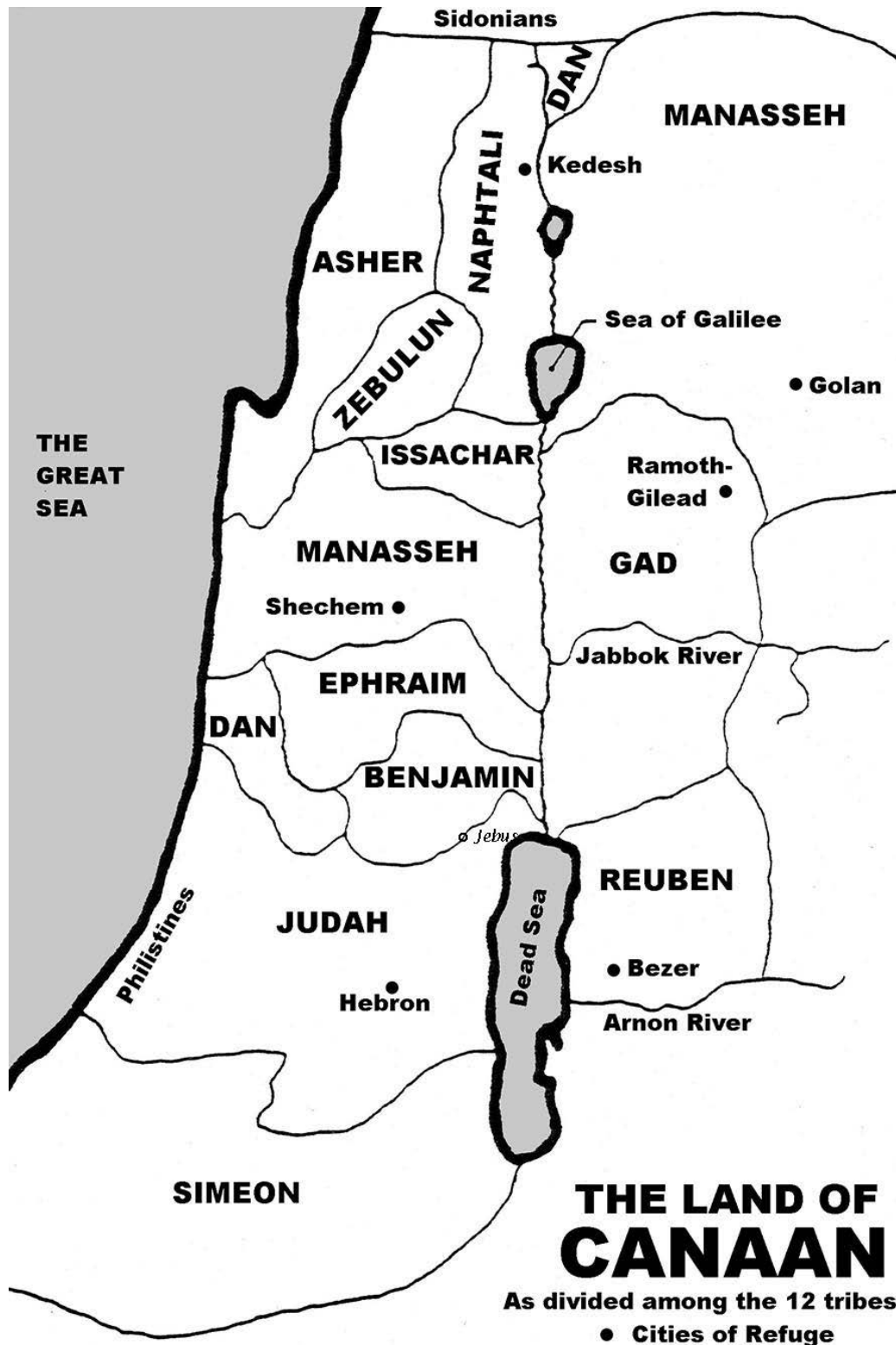
So now after Joshua took up Judah, then he took up Joseph, chapter 18. And Joseph is two tribes, Ephraim and Manassah. Here it names Manassah first; we don't usually name Manassah first; Manassah was the oldest, but Ephraim was the most important so it was usually Ephraim first. And then they give Benjamin the territory between Judah and Manassah. That's in chapter 18. Then they gave Dan a territory which was west of Benjamin, between Judah and Ephraim; and we find in chapter 19:47 that the area of the children of Dan was too small for them, so we find the children of Dan, though given the territory between Judah and Ephraim, migrating eventually to the north and taking a territory way up in the north; so here is a change which was not part of the original plan.

One other verse I should call your attention to, here in this section, is the remark about the tribe of Judah in chapter 15:63:

As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.

What does that prove about the authorship of the book of Joshua? That one statement? It proves it was written before the time of David; because David drove the Jebusites out; David conquered Jerusalem, but all through the time from Joshua to David, Jerusalem, which had been one of the prime movers in the southern confederacy, remained as a Jebusite city.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ [dcb] Jebus (Jerusalem) was on the border between Judah and Benjamin (see map). See Joshua 15:8 and 18:28. [John Lightfoot](#) (see [Third Millennium Ministries](#)) states that according to Jewish tradition the altars and sanctuary were in Benjamin, while the courts of the temple were in Judah. dcb.



I think chapter 18:1 should also be noticed, that the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled at Shiloh and set up the tabernacle there. That was the place where they took the tabernacle for its final resting place. Shiloh,

during the period of the Judges—during most of it, until Shiloh was destroyed—the place where the tabernacle is, and that's a very important historical fact to be aware of. And that's brought out in chapter 18, verse 1.

I knew a man who was very anxious—he was a Dane, a very fine Christian man—very anxious to excavate the tabernacle; and he dug at Shiloh, I visited when he was excavating there; and he had another very fine archaeologist, who wasn't so interested in the Bible, but who was a very fine archaeologist working with him; and they had some funds from Denmark, largely given through the other man who was connected with a big museum there; and they began excavating, looking for evidence of the original tabernacle which was destroyed by the Philistines.

And as they began to dig there, they dug a while, and then they came to the remains of a Byzantine church; and of course, it may be that the church was put there because that was the place where the tabernacle was; we don't know. But anyway, this had a beautiful mosaic floor; and this man wasn't the least bit interested in Byzantine history, or Byzantine churches, or mosaic floors in Byzantine churches; but the only way he could get at what was underneath was to take this up, bit by bit, and photograph it, and chart it, and make it clear, so that it would be available for students of Byzantine history; and they worked for weeks on it, greatly disappointed in having to put all their time and energy and money on it; and then, just as they got that finished, the other archaeologist died, and the excavation had to be discontinued; so we never have learned yet whether it was the place where the Bible says the tabernacle was, the place at Shiloh. It would be very interesting to find out.

But this is one of the hazards of archaeology: looking for something, and you find something else; and you're not interested in it, but you have to deal fairly, and examine the other thing, and deal with it properly—unless you want to leave it for someone else to recognize; but you cannot just dig it up. The earliest archaeologists did that; they were interested in one thing; and they would just dig off anything else, throw it out and get rid of it; but that we consider vandalism; and no honorable person would do that today.

And then in chapter 22 we find a section which tells how these people from Transjordan went back home again. And when they went back home, we have a very interesting event that occurred.

This chapter 22 is one of the least known chapters in the Bible; very few people know anything about it, chapter 22 of Joshua. I think if more people were familiar with chapter 22 of Joshua, it would not be quite as easy for the critics to lead people astray as it is. Because many a young man goes to college, or goes to seminary, from a Christian background; knows all about the story of the conquest of Jericho, but never having the slightest recollection of the events

described in Joshua 22. I didn't have myself. And many a young man, thrown in that situation, gets into a class in which he is told that the book of Deuteronomy was written at the time of Josiah by the Jerusalem priesthood, in order to centralize worship at Jerusalem, and to get a bigger income for themselves that way. And a mighty big argument can be made for this by the critics.

And having made this argument, they go on to say that this idea of one place to worship is unknown before the time of Josiah. It's a new thing in Josiah's time. There was no such thing as one place where they must worship before Josiah's time. Critics say, "This idea of centralization of worship at Shiloh is surely mythical; we have no evidence on it." We know it was centralized in Jerusalem, but they have this come about gradually; on account of the importance of the Davidic kingship, worship became more focused on Jerusalem; and eventually the book of Deuteronomy was written in order to centralize all worship in Jerusalem.

Now if a student went into a class and heard a professor say that, and he was familiar with Joshua 22, he would not be nearly as ready to accept the theory as he is if he has no knowledge; because Joshua 22 tells us how the people of the two and a half tribes, Reuben, Gad, and half of Manassah, after the conquest was over and the land was divided, how they departed. It tells us in verse 9

And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go unto the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereof they were possessed, according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses. And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.

"And the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manassah built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar." Well, this fits of course, doesn't it, with the critics' idea? That they did not sacrifice just this one place, like the book of Deuteronomy commands; but that this command was not even given till the time of Josiah; because here we have right in the time of Joshua, when—if there was any one place to worship, it wasn't Jerusalem at all, it was Shiloh—right at that time we have these two and a half tribes building a big altar over there by the Jordan. That fits with the critics' theory.

We read on, what happens?

And the children of Israel heard say, Behold, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar over

against the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, at the passage of the children of Israel. And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against them.

Why did they want to go to war against them? After all, if they could have various altars in various places, what was the harm in building a great altar there? So they went up to go to war against this two and, a half tribes that had just recently been helping them conquering Canaan.

And the children of Israel sent unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and with him ten princes, of each chief house a prince throughout all the tribes of Israel; and each one was an head of the house of their fathers among the thousands of Israel. And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, unto the land of Gilead, and they spake with them, saying, Thus saith the whole congregation of the Lord, What trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the Lord, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel this day against the Lord?

Well, if the command to have only one altar wasn't given until the time of Josiah, how could these people of Joshua's know about it? To talk this way to Reuben, Gad and Manasseh for building their great altar? Even being ready to go to war?

Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the Lord, but that ye must turn away this day from following the Lord? And it will be, seeing ye rebel to day against the Lord, that to morrow he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel.

They say in the end of verse 19,

Rebel not against the Lord, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar beside the altar of the Lord our God. Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel?

So here we have what fits with the critical theory, that they had many altars; that Reuben, Gad and Manasseh built another altar, instead of sacrificing at Shiloh; but then we have what absolutely denies the critical theory, that the rest of the Israelites immediately prepare to make war on them; they're so determined it shall not go through, and they send to them the son of the high

priest, to go over there to ask them not to do this terrible thing, because the altar of the Lord their God is at Shiloh and they should not have another altar of the Lord.

And, then we see what the children of Reuben, and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh did about this, verse 22 tells us what they said.

The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, (save us not this day,) That we have built us an altar to turn from following the Lord, or if to offer thereon burnt offering or meat offering, or if to offer peace offerings thereon, let the Lord himself require it;

They say let the Lord see if we've done the terrible thing you think we have and let him judge. Because, they say in verse 26,

We said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice: But that it may be a witness between us, and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the Lord before him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the Lord. Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should so say to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say again, Behold the pattern of the altar of the Lord, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between us and you. God forbid that we should rebel against the Lord, and turn this day from following the Lord, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for meat offerings, or for sacrifices, beside the altar of the Lord our God that is before his tabernacle.

Well here then, we have the situation that the people are incensed against this; and Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh say we didn't think of doing what you're accusing us of doing at all; we had an entirely different purpose in mind; it's only a memorial, it's only for a witness; it's not a place to sacrifice; we have no thought of breaking the command of God there. So they wouldn't talk that way if they didn't know it was God's command there be one place to sacrifice.

The children of Israel wouldn't go to attack them; they wouldn't give this defense—they never dreamed of such a thing as defying the Lord in this way—if it had not been known then that it was the Lord's command.

So anybody who is aware of Joshua 22, and hears the theories about Deuteronomy, immediately says, "Well now that contradicts Joshua. Joshua shows Deuteronomy was already known."

Of course, the critics have a very, very easy way to get around it. For them it is very simple. They have said that because Deuteronomy requires only one altar, it must be the time of Josiah when they say the command was given. Now you say, "Yes, but Joshua 22 proves they already had that command." Well, they say, "Joshua 22 must have been written in the time of Josiah also." So that's what they agree on: that Joshua 22 must be also later. And of course you can prove that anything is late, if you put everything forward that way. You can prove that George Washington never existed if you take everything that was written that mentions his name, and say it wasn't written till the year 2000 AD. If you do that, why you can prove there never was any George Washington. But we have enough different things referring to George Washington from an early time to be pretty good evidence that he did exist at that time, and is not a figure of later imagination.

And here, if it's just a matter of Deuteronomy, well then the critics can make an argument. But then when, in addition to that, they have to take Joshua 22 and push it forward, it weakens the argument; because the argument has to account for so many more things.

Somebody comes along and says, "I don't believe that George Washington ever cut down a cherry tree." Well, you say, "What's the evidence?" And if we find that the first evidence of such a thing is forty years after his time, when Parson Weems wrote the story in his book of fables for children; if we find that, and if we can't find any earlier mention of it, we say we don't know; maybe it is just a story that somebody made up in order to point to a moral; it didn't really happen.

But if we would come across a letter written by George Washington's father to his cousin in England telling him about what the boy had done; if we would come across that, and there would be evidence of the genuine letter; if we would have a history book written at, say 1780, something like that, we would have a situation that would be very difficult to deny.

Now for Joshua we have no other evidence from that early period. So Joshua is late, too, if you want. But the more things you have to say that about, the weaker your argument becomes. So I would think that a person who is going to meet the critical argument ought to be familiar with the fact that this occurs.

And I think it is very unfortunate that in our Christian schools, our Sunday Schools, our churches, instead of obeying the Lord's command to study all his word, we have taken Jericho and Ai, and two or three things like that, and talked about them a great deal, and utterly neglected this part which would have prepared people not to be so ready to swallow the critics' theory.

E. Joshua's Last Days. 23–24.

And here we find that Joshua had led these people into the land, had conquered the land for them under the Lord's direction, with the Lord's help. They have got what God has promised, and yet Joshua is not satisfied. Chapter 23 begins,

And it came to pass a long time after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age. And Joshua called for all Israel, and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age:

Now when did this happen—if the conquest was in 1400 BC, did this happen in 1399? We don't know the date; but supposing the conquest was in 1400; supposing that was when the land was divided among the people who had conquered it; then we read, Joshua called for all Israel and their elders and their heads and their judges and he addressed them. Was this in the year 1399 if the conquest was finished in 1400? Would that be a fair estimate of the date?

In Judges 2:7 we read that the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua. And the question there is how long is this period? There's no number given for this. How long were the days of Joshua after the forty years? Well, they would include the time of the conquest; and then this verse says a very long time; we can't tell what it is.

So anybody that gives precise dates in here is simply using his imagination. Precise dates are not given; and so you cannot add these figures up and get an exact figure. But this you can say, that when it says a very long time here, it doesn't mean one year or two years or five years. Now maybe some of you might think it means ten. Whatever time the conquest took, plus at least ten years, is involved in the life of Joshua; and then there is the period of the elders who succeeded Joshua; and how long was that? Again it doesn't say. But that was for a few years, but surely at least twenty or thirty. Well, it's a sizeable number, we can say that.

We certainly can say it's a very, very long time. I don't think forty is too big for it at all. I think sixty might be it. But how old was Joshua when they entered Canaan? When was he born? We know that Joshua when he died was 110; and we know from the present passage he was old and stricken in years when he died; and I think at 110 most of us would be old and stricken in years. But how many years? I don't know.

A man told me—I was at the Mayo clinic in 1915; and a man told me there, that one of their doctors there had retired at the age of 70, retired from the clinic; and he was a mountain climber; he'd go and climb these very difficult mountains with peaks on them; and all that sort of thing, where you pull

yourself up and do tremendous acrobatics and so on; and he said the man has now been retired over ten years, and he's still at it as strong as ever. Joshua directed the army while Moses sat up on the hill and held his arms up. That was before they came to Sinai.

I was amazed to learn for the first time, that in 1864 the commander-in-chief of the Union forces, General Grant, was only 42. Lee, I think, was—how old was he? 57? Quite a bit older, but Grant was only 42. That is to say, some of the greatest commanders-in-chief have been very young, though as a rule it will not be so. People vary. Well, the thing I wanted to bring out here is: there is a period, which you can say not less than this, more than that, but you can't tell exactly. You certainly can't ignore it when you're adding up to get the total of these figures.

It looks to me as if the conquest was done quite quickly, but I don't know. Of course most of the critics today say that this is a tremendously foreshortened account of something that might have taken a hundred years; a slow conquest—I think they're entirely wrong in that; but if somebody wants to say that it was 8 or 10 years involved in it, I don't think you can disprove it; but my impression would be maybe a couple of years; I don't think we have any basis.

Well, here then, Joshua is an old man; some years have passed since the conquest, but still he was there; he knows the people; he has these good elements; and yet he calls the people together, and he gives them a charge, and urges them to stay true to the Lord. He doesn't even take for granted they will stay true; he assumes there is a great danger that they will fall aside from the Lord. But he urges them to stand true to the Lord; and he makes a great exhortation to them, trying to impress and stress it to their minds; how different from the attitude of those who win a great victory, and then say the thing's done; we've won; we've conquered; the world is safe for democracy; let's tear up our battleships and forget about it.

He realized that, in this world, every battle has to be fought over and over till our Lord comes back. You do not win a conclusive victory in this world. You overcome the evil, and it begins to come up again in another way; because we're in a world of sin, and there's sin in the heart of each one of us; and we never fight a final battle. We have to see what the Lord's will is for us at a particular time, and go forward on that; and keep exhorting one another as Joshua did here, to stand true. Not that we can lose our salvation; but we can easily fall into a situation or an attitude in which our lives will accomplish very, very little for the Lord's cause.

And so we have this great exhortation here to the people; and he says that they can choose what they will, but he is going to choose the Lord. And they declare

that they will do the same. He repeatedly makes them declare their intention to stand by the Lord.

Before I was here, I was on the faculty of a different institution at one time; and we had a discussion at a faculty meeting about our entrance requirements for the next year. We had a certain financial situation, which made it necessary to discuss them; and in the particular situation, there were things in the arrangement made that no one of the faculty liked. Actually, out of a faculty of 8, there were only two votes for the arrangement at the end. But nobody voted against it, so it was passed. Everybody there had things in it that they didn't like. But they didn't know anything better to do under the circumstances, so they were quiet and let the thing be adopted; but they didn't vote.

But when they were discussing it, I said at one point, "I'd like this written in; here's a section I don't like at all; I'd like this written into it, it being understood that these arrangements apply only to the academic year 1933–34." And the chairman says, "Why we know the whole thing is just for 1933 and 1934. It has nothing to do with any subsequent year. Why put that in there?" Well, I said, "I don't like this particular thing; I can put up with it for one year, but I'd like that written in so it's understood." "All right, if you'd like it, we'll put it in." So they put it in, it being understood.

And for the next four years that thing stood and was never questioned. I was gone before four years were up; I don't know, it may have stood for thirty years for all I know; but I know that as long as I was there, the whole thing stood. This was the established rule of the Medes and Persians. Even though it was explicitly stated in it, it being understood that it was for only that year.

Well, it's so easy for people to change their minds; so easy. Joshua came and presented these things to them and called upon them to consider; and it is a mighty good thing for us to do for ourselves and for those with whom we are associated. Get back to first principles, and consider the first principles; and when you get into some big struggle over some temporary issue, something which has arisen, which is important and has got to be dealt with, and it may take two years, five years, ten years, twenty years before this thing is settled, nevertheless, keep getting back to first principles; getting the main things that are of all things vital; that you don't forget them, in order to handle your immediate situation; for it is so very easy to do.

And so these two chapters of exhortation, as Joshua gave to the people; and the way he made them repeatedly pledge that they would stand for the Lord, probably resulted in their standing true—a little truer than they would have otherwise—and were a vital factor in the Lord's work.

Well, that covers then the book of Joshua.

VII. The Book of Judges.

A. Introduction.

This Book of Judges is a book which includes some of the best-known sections of the Bible, and some of the least-known sections of the Bible. There are chapters in it that are practically never discussed—practically never mentioned—in churches or in Sundays schools or in Bible classes; and there are chapters which are mentioned repeatedly and which are constantly dealt with. It is a very uneven section of the Bible—a section uneven in its interest; and the Book of Judges is the darkest period in the history of Israel. It is the darkest period; it is the period of which we know the least. There are certain points in it of which we know a great deal, but many of which we know very little. Now,

1. There seems to have been no established continuous political organization in this period.

Now that is the impression you get from the book. You read this man judges Israel so many years, that man judged Israel so many years.

The word "judge" does not mean simply that he dealt with legal cases; it deals with, covers more than that, more than our English word covers. He was a leader; he was a rescuer; he was a military leader; he was much more than just somebody who had to settle cases brought before him. And yet it is hard to tell just what the limit of his authority was. There's much reason to think that it was quite limited; we find in Judges 17:6 the statement is made, "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

And the same verse is repeated in chapters 21 and 25: "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Well, if every man would do what was right—if every man was really doing what was right in his own eyes and would spend a bit of time clearing out his eyes so he could see fairly well—you'd have a fairly decent community; but there are plenty of people who do not try to clarify their ideas of what is right—I don't think we can take this—every man did what was right in his own eyes—as meaning what was righteous; it means what he chose to do. Every man did what he chose to do; if he was good man, what he chose to do was good; and if he was a bad man, what he chose to do might be very evil. Every man did what was right in his eyes. What he wanted to do, rather than what he, after careful consideration, decided was a true and upright thing to do.

Well, that's the reason we have to have political authority—because people don't see what's right; and people don't do what they see is right. And in this period we have a great deal of confusion. Some of the chapters in this book are very

bad, in the account of the events that occur. But some of them are wonderful examples of loyalty to the Lord and of following him very closely.

In this book we have evidence the law existed—the people knew God's law; many of them tried to follow it very definitely; others did not. You have two examples. We have Samson, who lived in many ways quite an immoral life; Samson, who in utter disregard to God's command, married a Philistine woman, an ungodly woman; he risked his life in his living with her as he did, until finally she succeeded in ferreting out his secret and eventually in destroying him. We have Jephthah who was described as a ne'er-do-well—a man of rather wicked type, sort of an outlaw—but when the people came to him for help, he became a rescuer and a judge.

And both of these men, strangely, are named in the New Testament among the great heroes of faith [Hebrews 11]. It's pretty good evidence of the fact that the heroes of faith were not perfect men. Of course, no man is perfect except the Lord Jesus Christ. And Jephthah and Samson were men who were very, very imperfect. And even Gideon made an ephod which became a snare to the people—which they came to worship. But Gideon and Jephthah and Samson are named among the heroes of faith, because to a point at least they followed the Lord with single heart—or rather at a certain time of their life they did—and the Lord used them and used their efforts.

And of course we have other characters in the scriptures who are far, far better than any one of these here; but these were heroes of faith; they were men whom the Lord used. That doesn't mean that the Lord is going to rate them higher than many other men, who were far better characters, but who lived in a period when a hero of conquest wasn't necessary, and who consequently did not display the particular qualities these men do.

There seems to have been no established continuous political organization in this period. I guess that seems a little bit strong. There would seem to have been a continuous ecclesiastical headship, though very little is said about it. The prophets were raised up here and there, as God called a man from one area or another area; the priesthood would seem to have continued, though it's hardly mentioned during the book. But at the beginning of I Samuel, we find Eli the high priest at Shiloh, the place which Joshua tells us was established as the ecclesiastical center of the land. And we find Eli there carrying on the sacrifices; and it would seem a reasonable assumption that these had been carried on at Shiloh all through the long period of the book of Judges.

But there's very little evidence in the book of Judges bearing directly on that. It deals, not with the affairs of the priesthood, but with the affairs of the political situation, and of the prophets, and of the deliverance of Israel from the oppression into which they fell.

2. The Law Existed and Judges ruled irregularly.

We are not told of a continuous political organization, but we are told of the various judges—that he judged Israel 40 years, he judged Israel 20 years, and so on—and the word "Judges" as used here does not mean simply settle cases; it means more than that; it means also directing their life, particularly as regards protection against enemies. And then

3. The Book has a Succession of Cycles.

It has a succession of cycles: of apostasies, of oppressions, of penalties, of deliverances. These four stages appear over and over and over in the book of Judges. The people fall into sin; they forget the Lord. The Lord permits a foreign enemy to conquer them. The people in captivity call out in anguish to the Lord for help and repent of their sins; the Lord sends a deliverer.

This cycle appears in Judges over and over and over. The principle of the book of Judges would seem to be quite clear. The main purpose is to impress this upon our minds. It is quite evident that the book was not written to give us history in the ordinary sense; not as if someone were to write a book to list the presidents of the United States; to tell of their main accomplishments and of their relationship to each other. It is not that the purpose was to show how the United States gained freedom from Great Britain, and how it became established as a nation. Such a title might refer to Joshua, but not to Judges.

Judges—the deliverances in it are very important—but they are not the main purpose of the book. The book is very clear, to show Israel's relation to God; how they fell into apostasy; how the Lord permitted them to be taken captive and oppressed; how they repented; and how the Lord delivered them. And this cycle is repeated over and over. Who wrote the book we do not know; there is no statement in it to say who wrote it. The critics used to talk about the Pentateuch; but they never refer to the Pentateuch anymore; they usually refer to the Hexateuch, including Joshua; but some of them talk of an Octateuch, including eight books; and one of those is Judges. They think that the various documents they find in the Pentateuch run on into these books.

Now in the case of the five books of Moses, we can say we believe Moses wrote these books; the New Testament refers to them as the work of Moses; but there is, so far as I know, no evidence anywhere to say who wrote the book of Judges. I would think that the one who wrote the book of Judges doubtless had records telling him a good many facts about these different tribes, and facts about various judges; doubtless he had heard a good deal by word of mouth. And as he wrote the Holy Spirit inspired him; kept him from error; guided him in the selection of his material and in its arrangement.

But his purpose in arranging it was not specifically to give us political history in the ordinary sense. His purpose was to tell us of Israel's relation with God. And so I believe he had this in mind very, very strongly—this cycle of apostasy, oppression, penitence and deliverance—because it is repeated so often in the book; he had this in mind as an important feature of God's dealing with his people; and he was interested in giving illustrations of it; and showing us how it had worked out. And this then is, I would say, the outlook, the outline plan, the general purpose of the author of the book.

Of course it's true of the whole testament; the purpose of the Old Testament is not to give us a history of Israel; it is to tell us about God's dealings with mankind. Israel is very important in this purpose, but it's not the real purpose; it is incidental to it, though very, very important. But the purpose is to tell us God's relations with his people, not to give us a political history on the basis of which we can reconstruct details of chronology. Dates, of course, are purely a modern invention. But to say how many years then, exactly, before the time of Christ; to show the exact relationship chronologically to each other of the events; to show exactly what conditions were in every part of the land at any particular time; that's not the purpose of the book. The purpose is to show their relation to the Lord, and how the Lord dealt with his people.

So this cycle is very, very important; and it is important for us, of course, to study the book as a book of history; but it is still more important that we study it as a book of God's dealings with man; and that we get from it the many spiritual lessons which are there, which he wants us to have; and we will look at some of these as we go along. But we will not have time to look at more than a fraction of them; because, after all, this is a course in Old Testament History; and while the spiritual lessons are more important than the history by far; yet the spiritual lessons—many, many of them—are quite easy to get by oneself; and in some cases when they are not, they are much more easily gotten if one has an idea of the background or skeleton of the history.

We are dealing, you might say, mainly with material that is less important than the spiritual lesson; but that is helpful to get the spiritual lessons; and therefore they have a derived importance of great moment, because of the light they may show on the spiritual lessons.

B. The Chronology of the Period.

You have listed, from the references I gave you, the statements which you find there about the early judges, and how long they ruled. And adding these statements together, you cannot get an exact sum, because we're not told how long Joshua lived after the conquest. We're not told how long the conquest

took. We're not told how long the elders ruled after Joshua, before the people fell into apostasy.

But then after that, we have a number of dates. We have dates when the people were in bondage; we have dates when the land had rest; we have dates when certain men ruled as prophets. And if we add all these dates together—that you can figure from the account—you get a list that runs you up to nearly six hundred years; and if you figure that backwards from the time of David and Solomon to the beginning of the period, you would get the Exodus at about 1600 BC. And I don't know of anybody who has ever taught the Exodus took place in 1600 BC. Those who take the early dates think it was nearer 1400; those who take the late dates think it was about 1250. But I know of no one who thinks it is as early as 1600.

If the Bible clearly said the Exodus was about 1600 BC, I would have no question. But when we get complete evidence—if we ever do—we will find that the Bible is correct, that this is true. But the only evidence on which to make such a long period for the period of Judges is adding these dates up one after another. It does not fit with evidence from other sources, it does not fit with Biblical statements, such as the one in 1 Kings 6:1, where it says that it was 480 years after the coming out of Egypt that Solomon dedicated the temple. It is about a hundred years less than you get if you simply add all these figures together.

And so it seems to me that as far as the chronology is concerned we have to ask the question: did the Lord intend to give us a complete chronology in which the figures could quickly be added together and give us precise chronological history for this period? We notice how many, many of these are forty years. The land had rest forty years; he reigned forty years. Now forty in the first place sounds like a round number. Now it may not be a round number; a man may rule exactly forty years.

There's no reason in the world why it cannot be exactly 40 years. But when you have a series of them; and you note that ordinarily in life, these things do not run exactly the same; ordinarily there is more variation. You have this series; you wonder, in the first place, whether the 40 is a round number in a good many cases; and another thing: you wonder whether 40 might even more than that, you might say would be a rounder round number. That is to say, the figure 40 is often used for testing. A period of testing is often suggested by the number 40.

Now did he mean here to say—I don't think when he says Solomon reigned 40 years, that David reigned 40 years, that he means there was a period of testing of 40 years—I think that's the length of time David reigned. I don't think there's any question of that. But when you have a whole series of judges of whom

variable amounts of detail are given; they fit into this cycle of deliverance and oppression; and in case after case they reigned 40 years, or the land had rest 40 years, the question well may be asked: does he mean a precise period of 40 years or does he mean there was a long period in which this was the case? I don't think we can answer the question; I don't think we can say they did *not* reign exactly 40 years each. I think it is extremely unlikely it means exactly 40 to the day; it might be 39 1/2 or 40 1/2; in fact it might be 37, 38, or 43 or 44; but whether you can go further than that, I don't know. I merely call attention to the number of 40's with an occasional 20 which is half of 40, and which would fit into this general method of speaking, if that is what is meant here.

Now I simply mention this as a point on which we cannot speak with certainty, but I think we must notice it. And another thing is that, if we add the dates together, it gives you a period which seems to be much longer than fit together without evidence from other sources in the Bible.

And so my personal opinion is that on the chronology of the period we just have not been given in the book the evidence on which to build up a chronology; we just do not know. And I believe that the reason for this, aside from the possibility of local judges, two other factors may well be mentioned.

One of them is that it is entirely possible, in fact I think extremely probable, that many of these judges were local judges rather than national judges. That is to say, that Othniel, the first of the 4 judges, who lived in the extreme southern part of Judah, may have ruled over Judah, or possibly over a somewhat larger area, rather than necessarily over the whole nation. And then we have a series of judges who are mostly in the northern section and we have some who are over in Trans-Jordan.

To how great an extent these were men who ruled over the whole country, and to how great an extent they were men who delivered a particular section of the country which had been overrun by an enemy; and they delivered and moved in that section, I don't think we're in a position to say.

So it is altogether possible that two of these judges may have been operating at the same time in different parts of the country. Or even three, on certain occasions, though probably not as a rule. This of course is again a question of the purpose of the book. If the Lord had intended to give us a one-two-three chronological account that we could tell exactly what happened in what year right straight through, I think he would have added further detail on which to establish that for a certainty; and he would have given us detail elsewhere in the Bible on which to feel definitely that this is a six-hundred year period, from the Exodus to the building of the Temple, rather than the only other statement we have about it, that says 480, which again some people notice points to 12x40 and wonder whether it is to some extent a round number.

Personally, I hesitate very much about saying a thing like that about a number of stories; I hesitate very much about it, but it is an isolated number; we have no other reference to it anywhere; no other evidence that fits in with it. I never like to build an argument on one verse of scripture by itself. I feel that there is always a possibility of an error in any one verse; I think it is a slight possibility; I think the Bible has been wonderfully well preserved; but there are cases I could point to—a good many cases—where there is absolute proof that an error has occurred in one verse.

Like where you read about Ben-Hadad in one book and Ben-Hadar in another one. And then particularly when we know that Hadad was the god of the Syrians and Ben-Hadad is derived from Hadad. We have those inscriptions where he's called Ben-Hadad; it certainly wasn't Ben-Hadar. To change a d to an r is the simplest thing in the world in copying in Hebrew because the two letters were so much alike that very often on your own papers, it's hard to tell which they are; and always when I teach Hebrew, I try to get students to always write their "d"-daleth  so that there is a line across up there; and always to make the "r"-resh  [writing on the blackboard?] but most make it like this; or more like this; or it's very hard to be sure which it is. And that is a fault in students which I did my best to correct when I taught beginning Hebrew; but there was no possibility of my getting back and teaching the writers of Hebrew in ancient times with my ideas on the subject; and you find that the writers of ancient Hebrew and Aramaic both, in their writings, quite generally write the daleth and the resh in such a way that it is very, very difficult sometimes to tell which is which.

And so there are more variations in the Bible text between daleth and resh than anything else that I know of. There are cases where you read the Septuagint text [Greek] and you compare it to Hebrew and it sounds like two entirely different things. You think there's no relation whatever between the two statements. But you take the Greek of the Septuagint in some of these cases, and you translate it back into Hebrew, and you find that it can represent a word which is identical with the word we have in the Hebrew, except for a daleth and a resh. And when it does that, you can't be sure whether the manuscript the Greek was translated from had an error in copying, or whether the one that ours has been copied from in Hebrew had an error in copying.

I would say that probably the Hebrew is correct rather than the Greek, but not necessarily. There doubtless are cases where the daleth and resh have been confused in our Hebrew manuscripts since the time when the Greek was taken. And so we have many cases where there is one verse in which a slight error has come in; and I think the Lord intentionally caused it to be that way. Because it is

very, very easy for you to take a sentence out of any book, and on that sentence build up dogmatic statements which were never intended.

And I think it is the Lord's will that we compare scripture with scripture, and to have more than one verse for everything that we feel at all dogmatic on. So when we read in only one place in the Old Testament that it was 480 years, I would say, "Well, probably that is correct," unless I find some evidence which differs from it. If I find it is repeated two or three times, I would say definitely it is correct; I have no question in the world that it is. But when I find it only once it may be incorrect; I will accept it as correct unless there is some evidence against it.

Now I find the judges listed here run to 570 years, contradicting it [the 480 year statement in 1 Kings 6:1]; and that raises some question about it; then I find archaeological evidence which led most archaeologists today to think the conquest was about somewhere around 1230 or 1200 BC, which would make the period around 250 years instead of 480. And I say it's only the one verse that says 480 years. This is an isolated number; and it may be exactly right, and we may find evidence that it is exactly right sometime.

But at present I do not feel that we can stand upon it; I feel that we can say, "What does the evidence look like?" At the present, the external evidence that we have, in my opinion, looks about 60% in favor of the date between 1250 and 1200. That's not enough to feel that it's established; it may very well be that an earlier date will become established; but it is enough, I think, to lead us not to be dogmatic. At any rate, with 1400 or 1200 or with any date that archaeology seems to fit with, you cannot get all these judges one right after the other.

And so the evidence of the judges—of many of them being local judges as far as any evidence goes—seems to me to be very reasonable that it was not a period when the whole land was under one king. The judge came more or less spontaneously into position, people recognizing his wisdom and needing a leader. And they come from different sections of the land; and my guess is that they are, many of them, active in a certain section rather than in the whole country.

Yes? (student). Yes, it sounds like the whole nation, "judging Israel," but I think it could be used of judging a substantial portion of it. As a matter of fact, when you get on into the time of David, after Solomon's time, the land of Israel is divided into two parts, and the northern part is regularly called Israel, although they both [south and north] were Israel. And after the northern is taken into captivity, then the southern part is regularly called Israel; and in between, we generally call the southern part "Judah" to distinguish it from the northern part. That is a case where "Israel" was definitely used of one part, when there was a

specific political division. Now that isn't proof that the book of Judges could be this way, but I think it suggests it.

Yes? (student. "In Judges 11:26, Jephthah says he lived 300 years after Israel crossed the Jordan....") Yes, that's right, and it may be that it was exactly three hundred years, it may be. But I personally hesitate about putting too much weight on Jephthah's statement. For one thing, we have no evidence that they were maintaining precise records there to know exactly how many years it was; and Jephthah was a rather wild sort of a fellow whom they had called to be leader. He was called out to give this talk when he said 300. Had he consulted evidence to get the exact time? Does he mean 300 years or does he mean centuries?

Jesus was three days and three nights in the grave. Most Protestants believe, and most Christians believe—not all but most—that when it says three days and three nights, it means three periods, each of which is called a day and a night; and not that it's three whole [24-hour days], but that it's parts of three periods. Most of us observe the remembrance of his death on Friday. That is a tradition which goes back to the very early days of the Christian church. It may be wrong, but there's no proof that it's wrong. Most interpreters believe that when he was three days and nights in the grave it means a portion of three twenty-four periods. And actually the portion in that case was so small that the total is less than two 24-hour periods, but it was a part of one and part of the other.

Now what I mean to say is that a century—you say the United States has been here for two centuries. Well, I guess you'd say that's now, from 1776—it's getting near to two centuries, about 15 years short. We'd say two centuries; we wouldn't be apt to figure the exact number of years when we speak in centuries. If somebody said it is 212 years since the United States was established, we wouldn't mean it is 227 years; but if we say 200 years, we're using round numbers.

Now it is possible that we may find that that period of which Jephthah speaks in his talk with the king of the Ammonites was exactly a 300 year period. It's possible, but personally I'll be rather surprised if we find it works that way.

Yes? (student.) Well, I just don't know. I just personally don't feel like contradicting all the evidence of archaeology on the strength of a statement of Jephthah in a heated argument with this king when he was starting to deliver them and had no time for research, for investigation, or anything like that. And, especially a statement of round numbers. Now if Jephthah had said, it's 272 years, something like that, I would feel that surely the Holy Spirit would not have preserved to us the precise number that he used unless that precise number was correct. But I incline to think that the 300 years means three centuries, that's it's just his way of saying it's a long time ago.

Yes? (student. "In I Kings 6:1 it says 480, and in Acts 15:20 it says 450 years.") 450, yes. Yes, now this statement in Kings is 480 from the Exodus to the fourth year of Solomon's reign. This statement from Acts says 450 years from the end of the conquest to Samuel the prophet—that's 40 short on that end, up to Samuel the prophet. So that would make it not 480 but nearer 600 wouldn't it? That wouldn't fit with the 480 statement in Kings at all. You'd have to say that either that or the statement of 480 is not a precise statement.

(Student. "I was thinking that it's possible that a judge could rise in a local area; and then later become recognized in the whole; have jurisdiction over the whole; and appeals be made to him from other portions, which he would adjudicate; and then when his history was made up, his history would state his total judgeship from the time of its beginning; and that would overlap another judgeship where another man would be rising up in an other portion of the country and so these would overlap.") That's an interesting suggestion. The suggestion of Mr. Shellabarger as I understand it is this, that these judges were recognized throughout the land but maybe not for a very long time, and if the period of their judgeship is their ruling in their local area, the periods might very well overlap. Now that is entirely possible and a very interesting suggestion.

But some have suggested that these are inclusive figures. That is to say that when it speaks of the men who judge Israel so long, it does not just include the period after the deliverance but also includes the period before the deliverance, the period when they were under the hands of the enemy, that the figures may be inclusive figures in that sense. But you can't add them all up, one below the other; but in some cases one of the figures you have in your list includes another one, dealing with the same period. And that is—I don't think you could make that as a rule with all these judges—it certainly is a possibility in some cases. Personally I could take a month studying these figures of the judges; studying all such figures in the Bible; trying to work out a precise chronology through this period; trying to fit them together and decide whether to consider these two overlap or these don't; which ones might be judges for a part of the time and which not, and so on; and work up an impression of the situation. But I feel that I should do far more in the Lord's service at present, spending that month working on other matters, which I feel will advance the Lord's cause more.

That is to say, if the Lord should bring us further evidence to relate to it, it might be well worth someone's time taking up what is left afterwards. But I don't think we have enough evidence at present to bring us a worthwhile conclusion on it. My feeling at present is that we have figures, some of which are round numbers, some of which overlap, some of which are either in part or

in whole local judgeships, and that the Lord simply has not given us the material toward a complete and a correct chronology on this.

The same thing is true of the archaeologist. The archaeologists have constructed a system upon which they give us rather precise dates for a great many events. There are many points at which their evidence is watertight. There are other points at which their evidence rests upon building a great deal upon a little bit of evidence. In some cases, these conclusions which are built upon a very small amount of evidence affect only one city or one particular area. In other parts, they may affect the whole period. It takes a great deal of study to know exactly where these points are; where there have been inferences and guesses without sufficient evidence on which really to base anything. There is not sufficient evidence as yet to prove that their general conclusions are right or are wrong, I see no point at present, in trying to maintain that they are wrong. We may very well get new evidence from archaeology which will change or clarify things very greatly.

But when the Biblical evidence that we have upon the matter is quite scanty at present; and the little we have is based in a number of cases on only one statement; it is very differently put together [by various scholars]; and there are places where we are just not told. The Old Testament nowhere tells us how long Saul reigned. We have this statement in Acts that says he reigned 40 years. But the Old Testament nowhere gives us evidence on that; and it certainly does not give us evidence on the length of Joshua's reign.

I think that as far as this class is concerned, the important thing to have in mind is that, in the light of present archaeological discovery, there is a great deal of evidence which could fit with a conquest, somewhere between 1230 and 1200 BC. And that if we get more evidence from archaeology fitting in with this evidence—enough to make it seem almost watertight—if that is the case, I do not believe we have any Biblical statement that flatly and sharply is sufficient to say this is what the Bible says. That is, we do not have sufficient Biblical evidence to say, "All of the archaeologists may say this, but I'm convinced they are wrong."

On the other hand, we have a little archaeological evidence which would fit with a somewhat earlier date. And a somewhat earlier date would fit with this date 480 years, which is given in I Kings. But it would be very difficult to fit that figure of 480 years in I Kings with the 450 years statement in Acts. We would have to do some juggling (I don't mean juggling in a bad sense), but some taking both statements in a straight literal way, to fit it into that; and at present the evidence for an earlier period in Exodus has many serious questions, though it may prove to be right. And then it may prove that the statement in Kings there is wrong—the 480—and somewhere in the archaeological history there is a big gap, of something the archaeologists have overlooked, and the

whole thing can be moved back long enough to make the period of Judges 600 years. That also is not impossible, but it would seem to me very unlikely. And it would seem to me also unlikely, from the Biblical viewpoint, that our big evidence—that is in the Bible—is God's bringing the people into the land, and then of David's leading of them—David the man after God's own heart—and the dealings with the people during his Kingship, are so specifically detailed in so much of it, that this period [of the Judges] of which comparatively little is given, was such a very long period—twice as long as the whole kingship—and so little given on it. It would hardly seem what you would expect in line with the general plan of God. Now that doesn't prove it is wrong, but I think that as far as chronology is concerned, we just do not know.

I feel that the purpose of the book of the Judges is to show how God dealt with His people: to give us vital lessons of individual judges; and their relation to God and to the people; to show us how wonderfully God delivered on certain occasions; and to show us a general idea of the progression between Joshua and the time when the Bible begins to give us far more detail about Samuel, Saul, David, and the rest. So much, then, for this question, "Chronology of the Period," on which I feel that we must simply say, "We do not know, the Lord has not told us."

C. The Completion of the Conquest.

As you read Joshua 10, and the chapters just before it, you would easily get the impression that the whole land was conquered, and was at their mercy. The Canaanites were done for. You would get that impression; and then you start Judges, and you find there is much land yet to be conquered. In fact, the Lord even says that to them when they begin the division of the land. He doesn't say to them in Joshua after the Conquest, "Here is the land. It is all in your hands. Take it." He says there is much land to be conquered. Now divide it up. In other words, "Let each tribe take on the individual responsibility for mopping up in its own area, now that the backbone of the opposition has been broken by the great campaigns of Joshua." But the beginning of Judges tells us that the different tribes failed to drive out the Canaanites from certain big cities. There were other tribes who take this area, that area, and the other area. There is a great deal of the land which they were not able to take; and it wasn't until the very end of the period of the Judges that they did succeed in taking it; or it was still later than that.

A good many of the critical scholars today will say, "Here are two stories flatly contradicting each other. Joshua says the whole land was conquered. Judges says there is a good deal of it not yet conquered." They say the story in Joshua must be a rapid summary of the whole thing, while Judges is more in detail; and actually, instead of it occurring in a few years, it was spread over several hundred years. Personally I think that is wrong. I don't think that is the correct

approach to it. I believe the account in Joshua describes one great conquest; but in the light of the rest of Joshua and of Judges, I think we have to say this: "This is not a conquest which was complete, in the sense that the Canaanites were done for and everything was in the Israelites' hands; but it was a conquest which broke the back of the opposition, which conquered many of these cities; but the Israelites did not have enough personnel or organization to hold them; so the people drifted back into them, and they had to be taken over again by the local tribe.

(Question: Isn't that exactly parallel to our trouble in Korea?) There is a certain analogy there. Of course there are other factors that enter in there, such as the Chinese communists coming in. There is an analogy there. I think there is a definite analogy to a certain extent there. Fortunately there was no United Nations at the time. The completion of the conquest, though, is interesting to notice; that at the beginning of Judges, there is still a great deal that needs to be conquered. And it wasn't all conquered by any means. And when you get to the very end of Joshua you find a strong fortress in the very heart of the land, held by the Canaanites—the Jebusite fortress; and it continued so during the whole time of Samuel, and during the reign of Saul; only about 5 miles south of Saul's capital at Gibeah. And it remained unconquered until David becomes king.

And David says, "I'm going to conquer Jerusalem." And the Jebusite people there are strong enough that they say, "The lame and the blind can protect this city so your men can't get in it." But David, the great military conqueror, conquered Jerusalem. But this great central city, worthy to be the capital of the land, remained right in the heart there unconquered, all through the period of the Judges, and through the reign of Saul. And there is no evidence of any strong effort to take it. Now Joshua says it was conquered. But it was there of course. So either Joshua was wrong—which I don't believe to be the case at all; or the force from Jerusalem was conquered, but the city was not held; and the Jebusite people came back and reestablished it.

Well, the completion of the conquest then—it was not complete until into the time of David. However, I think it is important to note that at this point it was complicated by a new factor. The Israelites conquered the Canaanites. But we have no mention in Joshua of any conflict between Israel and the Philistines. And archaeologists do not believe that there were any Philistines in the land at all at the time of Joshua. And consequently from their viewpoint, it is a mark of genuineness, and authenticity on the part of Joshua, that it does not describe any conflicts with Philistines. They went in to conquer the land from the Canaanites. And they conquered the Canaanites. But at some time between the time of Joshua and the time of Samuel, the Philistines came into the land.

Now archaeologists believe they can tell us when they came into the land, because at around 1200 BC or a little later, we have in Egypt an account of the great attack upon Egypt by the people they called "the people of the sea." And these people of the sea attacked Egypt by sea and land, and were driven back. And there are many reasons why archaeologists believe that a strong component of these people of the sea, was the people which we call the Philistines. And that these Philistines, driven back from Egypt, settled on the coastal area of Southern Palestine.

There is certainly no evidence that they were there a hundred years before that. And the Egyptian references to the area speak of the Canaanites there before that time. But now we find the Philistines landing there, as we've seen, and establishing themselves. And in the early part of the book of Judges, you don't read about the Philistines. But in the latter part, the Philistines become the primary force with which they have to reckon. It would seem that when the Philistines came in, the Philistines were enemies of the Canaanites, just as much as the Israelites were.

In fact, there are even some who think that the two were friendly at that time. We have no evidence of that, so that is purely a guess. But at any rate, it wasn't long before the Philistines proceeded to put the Israelites into subjection to themselves. The story of Samuel is the story of a time when the Philistines held most of the land in subjection; all through the period of Samuel, he was going about from place to place among the people, who were under constant oppression from the Philistines.

And after Samuel, we find Saul always facing a great Philistine danger; and eventually he was destroyed by the Philistines; and yet David isn't king very long before the Philistines almost disappear as a menace. We have them referred to occasionally later; but they seem to disappear just like that, as far as an important menace is concerned. They are such a tremendously important force; and yet, in the later parts of David's rule, they are not very important. Why this quick change in a very short time?

The idea of archaeologists is that the Philistines were not a great numerous people like the Canaanites. They were comparatively small people numerically, far less of them than of the Israelites. But the Philistines came from a land to the west, where they had discovered the use of iron; and the Philistines knew how to make iron weapons. And from our archaeological artifacts from this period we begin to find iron in Palestine. And they threatened the judges, for a long period because of their superior weapons.

And, then after David was down among the Philistines—lived with them and worked with them for a time—he learned the secret of the handling of iron, and the making of iron weapons; and after David became king, before long the

Israelites had just as many iron weapons as the Philistines; and with Israel having equal weapons and far superior numbers, the Philistines ceased to be a vital menace from that time on. They are mentioned in Kings, but there are many other people mentioned just as much or more.

Now this is not purely an extra-Biblical theory. In I Samuel 3:19–22, we have statements which throw great light upon this situation. It is a very interesting case. We have an extremely important fact in cultural history and in military history, which is not discussed in the Bible; but it is just barely touched upon for another purpose here, to show how it came about that Jonathan and Saul had iron weapons and the rest of the Israelites didn't. So why was that? The reason was because the Philistines were in the place where you had to go to them to get the iron. You had to get the strong iron weapons from them; and naturally they wouldn't give them to equip the Israelites to fight them with. They had more sense than some modern nations do in that regard. But at the same time, the leaders, the king and his eldest son, naturally they couldn't refuse to give it to them. That we find in modern times too. The leaders can always get ahold of that. They are almost sure to be given that, as an honor when they come together in times of peace, but it was kept from the people here.

Mr. Shellabarger. (Question: In addition to that, they could have taken them as trophies of warfare, and they would always go up to the king wouldn't they?) Yes, that would have been another way they could have gotten it. Naturally, as Mr. Shellabarger says, they might have captured some; and if they did, naturally the King would have the first choice.

Mr. Deshpande. (Back in Genesis, Tubal-Cain is spoken of as having iron and copper weapons.) Yes, that's right. And that of course is a real difficulty in the acceptance of this part of Genesis; because it is perfectly clear that it was very long after the flood before iron or copper weapons were used. But the understanding of what happened before the flood is lost to us. We have no remains of it. Evidently Noah and his sons did not have that knowledge or pass it along after the flood. According to any estimate of the time of the flood, there would have been at least a thousand years after the flood, before iron weapons were used. I say it may have been 10,000 years. But according to this account in Genesis, they had it before the Flood; but after the Flood, whenever it occurred, it was just about 3000 BC when copper began to come in. Then it was about 1200 BC that iron began to come in, when the iron weapons were coming in.

We have another trace of the coming of iron at the time, in one of the books of the Pentateuch, which is something which used to be considered by the critics as a proof that Moses didn't write it. And that was the statement that Og had an iron bedstead. Well now, why bother to mention that this king had an iron

bedstead? You wouldn't bother to mention that Hitler had an iron bedstead; but the thing was that it was not known at that time. Iron was not used. This king had this rare treasure, which he had secured, which was just in advance of the coming in of the use of the iron. He secured the bedstead but he certainly did not have knowledge of how to handle iron or to forge it together or to make weapons with it.

But it is just a trace of the beginning of its time. Well, these verses, maybe we should glance at them, a little more fully, although I think we've covered everything that is vital in them. We read in 1 Samuel 13:19, that there was no [black]smith in all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears. And this commentator a hundred years ago or a little less, would say well, the Philistines destroyed the smiths, they said, lest they make swords or spears. they just destroyed the smiths. That would be a natural interpretation. But it is not the correct interpretation.

The correct Interpretation is that they didn't have smiths because the Philistines didn't let them learn that skill. It is not an art which requires a great deal of difficult equipment, but the art of forging iron was not widely known, and could easily be destroyed. It would not be easy to destroy all the smiths, but if you keep them from learning how to be smiths in the first place, it was fairly simple.

And so the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock. They had iron agricultural things first, before iron weapons, and that is what archaeology shows.

We mentioned earlier that Aaron knew how to make a molten image. This was gold, of course. But the art of smelting copper in a cold mold was only introduced into Egypt by the Hyksos, about 1600 BC.

Getting back to the iron weapons of Saul and Jonathan: that was a very peculiar situation, but under these circumstances it was understandable that the rest of Saul's army didn't have iron weapons. There's one little side line here that we should look at some time during the course and since we're glancing at this passage now, I might save time by doing it now. Beginning with I Samuel 13:20:

Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears: But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock. Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads.

Yet they have a file—that "file" is a guess. The Hebrew word is *pim*, And this word occurs nowhere else in the OT and consequently it was a guess. They had

a *pim* for the coulters and the axes etc. A file was a good idea, a good guess, so they put it in. After all, in translation there is often an element of guesswork, particularly when the word only occurs once. How else are you going to know what it means? You know by context; and when you come to proving exactly what a word means, the best guide as to the meaning of the word is context. How was it used? If you have a theory that a word has a certain meaning, if you find a usage that contradicts that, that proves that you are wrong. But when the word only occurs once, you have to look at the context. Now you have *pim* given. What was a *pim*?

They had a *pim* for the mattocks. Well, in one of the excavations, there has been found a stone—a weight—on this it said *pim*. So we know that a *pim* is a weight. What good would a piece of stone be to sharpen the mattocks and the swords? A good whetstone would, but just a little piece of stone that seems to have no purpose except to be a weight? It is a measure for money; it shows how much money—how much silver—you had to pay to get it sharpened. It shows that the Philistines kept the prices high on the agricultural implements, naturally having a monopoly, they kept the price high on the agricultural implements, but they didn't let them have the spears and the swords at all.¹¹⁷

When Protestantism got a good start in Czechoslovakia—one of the most sedate and solid people in the world—Protestantism got an excellent start there in this land of Czechoslovakia, which is also sometimes called Bohemia. And then the forces determined to destroy it; and they set to work to utterly destroy Protestantism in that area; and they did eventually destroy it. 95% of Protestants were wiped out; but it was a long time before they succeeded; and there was quite a period there in which the local peasants came out with their agricultural instruments, with their hay forks, with their hoes; and they were so filled with zeal for their cause that they fought back some of the best armies of Europe, with armor and with swords and with spears. Of course they did not permanently succeed; in the end, 95% in Czechoslovakia were Roman Catholics. But when 80% of them were still Protestants, they were so zealous for the cause that they, with these agricultural instruments, fought back the best they could; and it made such a stir—this story that was told all over Europe—in Germany to this day people fear the Bohemians; and in Paris the story was told about these wild people with agricultural instruments, fighting back seasoned armies. And just at that time a group of gypsies happened to enter Paris, and they said, "Oh they must be the Bohemians"; and the result is that today people speak of Bohemian life meaning sort of Gypsy life, a wild sort of life; and the word they

¹¹⁷ [dcb] The English Standard Version translates these verses as: "But every one of the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen his plowshare, his mattock, his axe, or his sickle, and the charge was two-thirds of a shekel for the plowshares and for the mattocks, and a third of a shekel for sharpening the axes and for setting the goads." A note states that the meaning of v21 is uncertain. In this interpretation, the Israelites did not have tools hard enough to sharpen their iron agricultural tools, much less weapons.

use for it, "Bohemian," is as unfitted for it as any word could be; because actually it is the name of one of the most solid and substantial groups of people in the world. But that simply illustrates the fact that though agricultural weapons have been used for weapons very effectively, it's only rare that it's been done. They are not fitted for the purpose particularly well, and an equally good force with equal enthusiasm will easily wipe them out, if they have good regular support.

Well, the conquest then is not really over until the Philistines are out of the way; but of course when the conquest came, there were no Philistines there, as far as we know. It was the Canaanites they were to possess. And when God says he'll drive out seven nations greater and mightier than they from the land, several times these nations are mentioned, and the Philistines are not included in the list. And it would be very strange for God to promise to give them the land of Palestine—the word Palestine is derived from Philistine—but to promise to give them the land of Canaan, and say he'll drive out the great enemy—seven nations greater and mightier than they—and not name the Philistines, if the Philistines were the most important one of all.

But if the Philistines weren't even there when God gave those promises, that explains it. And our archaeological evidence would be that they came in later. And that for a time, they were overcoming some of the Canaanites, and the Israelites were overcoming some of the Canaanites. For all we know, they may have had a very friendly feeling toward each other, as people usually do when they're fighting the same enemy. Roosevelt felt that the Russians could do nothing bad at all; they were against Germany as we were too; so he could trust them perfectly on everything. That's a usual feeling, so long as two people have the same enemy, but it's not a wise thing.

We don't know whether the Israelites took that attitude toward the Philistines or not; but if they did they speedily lost it, because the Philistines, in the last half of Judges, are the great enemy of the Hebrews; and the Hebrews do not overcome them in Judges or in 1 Samuel. But you get into 2 Samuel, and pretty soon the Philistines almost disappear; and it's other people that David is fighting.

With equal weapons the Philistines were no longer a great factor. Well, the conquest then was complete by the time of David as far as the land of Canaan is concerned. And then we'll go on to

D. A Few Points about Outstanding Judges.

You will see from this that we are not going to take time to go into details on the various portions of the book of Judges. We could spend a year or two on it easily. But for this course in Old Testament History, we will have to move on

rapidly; and there are other matters we must spend time on, and I want therefore just to touch on a few vital points here.

1. Deborah and Barak.

We find in Judges 4 that it tells about Deborah and Barak; how Deborah said to Barak, "Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun." She didn't say anything about taking any people from Judah, which was the largest tribe of all. She didn't even say anything about the tribe of Ephraim and Manasseh, which were larger than the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun. It would seem to be a north Israelite occurrence here, and of course Hazor was in the north and it was the northern part of the land that he held.

And she said "I will draw unto thee, to the river Kishon, Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand." And then we read how Barak did this; and they got up on mount Tabor; and then we read that Deborah said to him, in verse 14, "Up; for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: is not the Lord gone out before thee?" And that means of course that when she said this, he looked up and he saw the clouds, and he knew that she was right in her prognostication that the Lord would send rain at that time, to make it possible for them to conquer Sisera's chariots and horses.

And then we read on how Barak's men rushed down mount Tabor among the chariots and horses down at the bottom which would have completely and easily destroyed them had not the Lord sent the rain, which caused the ground to be all clogged up so that they were unable to maneuver; in fact the horses got mired in the wet clay soil there and they were discomfited; and the great mass of Israel were able to overcome the smaller group of Canaanites, which could've easily destroyed them, because of their horses and chariots and their far better weapons than the Israelites had, if it were not for these weather conditions.

And then in chapter 5, Deborah and Barak sing their song of victory; and in this song of victory, we would never know what really happened if we just had the song of victory; never. It's the story in chapter 4 that tells what happens; and yet in chapter 4, some of the most important parts of it are passed over so rapidly, we couldn't be dogmatic what they were if we didn't have the reflections of them in chapter 5. In the straight story in chapter 4, some points are passed over so rapidly.

And they speak in here of how the Lord came, verse 4, "Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water." Describing

how the rains came; and then when it came, it made it so that the horses could not be used as they should.

Verse 21,

"The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength. Then were the horsehoofs broken by the means of the pransings, the pransings of their mighty ones. Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

We are not told in the previous chapter what Meroz had done; but here in the song we learn that the people of Meroz, although wishing to stand with the people of God against Sisera's force, had not dared to do so. They feared that it might be an abortive uprising which would fail, and they themselves lose out by it; so they have stayed at home, ready to espouse whichever won.

So they sang "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty;" and there are many today who are in just that situation, like Meroz.

Well, maybe; I gave a talk in chapel last fall, in which I discussed prophetic aspects of these two chapters, and dealt with some matters which are very important from the viewpoint of prophecy; and of understanding the work of a prophet. They would not particularly enter into this course in Old Testament History, so I do not hold you at all in this course for that knowledge of the prophetic aspect. But the historical aspect—which I gave then—I very rapidly looked at again now, because I think we should understand it.

Deborah and Barak were the deliverers together; but as to the judge, what does it say? Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, judged Israel at that time. I do not notice anywhere that it says that Barak judged. It says definitely that Barak assisted Deborah; and it's interesting the way some people have the attitude today, that the woman's place is in the home, and taking care of the children; and she not should not have any active part in church leadership. It is true that woman's place is in the home taking care of children, when there are children there for her to take care of. She makes one of the most vital services to the world that she can possibly make in her work with the children. But the idea that women are constitutionally unable to help in other phases of the work is something for which I think there is no support anywhere in the scripture. Women are piled up with the activities of the home, to the extent that they cannot do the work that men can; and it is certainly the Lord's will that there should be a head in the family; and the man is the head in the family; and it is

normal that in other activities, he should be the head. But here is the Old Testament which is a very, very vital, definite part of God's Word, and most of the judges were men....

"But in Christ, there is neither bond nor free, male nor female, Jew nor Gentile, and we are all one in Him" [Gal 3:28]. Hebrews 11 speaks of the heroes of faith; and Barak was a hero of faith, and led the troops in deliverance. I don't think it says there he was a judge. But he was one of the heroes of faith; there's no question about that. And he may have been a judge, but I don't think we have any evidence of that. But I think the fact that Deborah, in her clear and vital decisions, is something which Barak used as coming from God. I would advise every man who is going to be in the active ministry to try to be careful to get a wife with a little less intelligence than his; because it is a bit embarrassing when she can give a Bible talk that is better than his sermon—a bit embarrassing.

But it doesn't need to be embarrassing, because after all we have different gifts; and the Lord may have given a man a gift for pastoral work that is extremely important in the work; and he may be better in this phase of the work and not so good in another. And if the wife can help out in that phase, why should she not? But just for your own ease and comfort it might be a good qualification in selecting your wife to try to make sure her intelligence is less than yours.

Mr. Shellabarger? (Student. "It's a pretty embarrassing thing for Israel to be so lacking in men that a woman has to spring into the gap in a case like this. What's this going to do before the other nations who are witnessing this thing?") Well, as long as they won the battle... (Student. "That's worse.") Sort of like Abraham Lincoln, you remember, when they came and they claimed that General Grant is a drunkard and should be dropped from the army—that was before he became commander-in-chief—and they pressed Lincoln about it, until Lincoln sent investigators to examine it; and they found that the criticism was not a true one. But when people brought that criticism against General Grant, Lincoln said "Well I'd like to know what brand he used, so I could give some to all my generals, so they'll fight like he does." And I think that it would have been very embarrassing for them, if a woman had stepped into the gap and they'd lost the battle. But in this case they won. So in this particular case I don't think there'd be any embarrassment.

But I think that it certainly definitely denies some of the extreme attitudes taken that a woman's ability should not be used in some way in the Lord's work, I certainly believe that.

Yes? (student. "The thing that I'm saying is that one of these judges had a stone dropped on his head from a wall, and he was very embarrassed that a woman had killed him, so this feeling was there.") Well, now his embarrassment had taken place just before his death. He had himself killed because he didn't want

to be exposed. Of course that ties up with what Paul said about women in Corinthians. And I think we should note that Paul says that a woman should not pray without a veil over her face, and people take it as meaning a hat, it isn't a hat, it's a veil. She should not pray without having a veil over her face.

Well, I don't think that Paul meant that there was a special merit in a woman being dressed in any certain particular way. I think that what was meant was that in the custom in Corinth, in which the Greeks had the very wicked practice of thinking that all decent women had to be as ignorant as possible; and keeping their women at home, shut up, where they never had any contact with other people hardly at all; and keeping them in utter ignorance; and then the men, starved for intelligent companionship, went out with loose women; and they had loose women who were highly educated; and under the circumstances, for a woman to take a prominent part in any discussion of subjects or any thing like that, that would be interpreted as her being that type of a person.

And under the circumstances which were in Corinth, Paul advised that they act in such a way as to avoid giving unnecessary offence. And if people are going to think that you're a loose woman because you don't wear a veil in that particular area, well, why not wear a veil? What's the harm in it? But as a practice to be kept up permanently, it is a silly sort of a thing.

Now, as I say, when I was in Palestine in 1929, I could see how some of the feelings of the Arabs against the Jews would naturally arise. Because we'd come through an Arab town, and here would be these Arab women with skirts that would drag on the ground, and with their faces covered with a veil—just covered up like a Roman nun—as if there was something that was unholy and wicked in your seeing her. And then you'd go a mile down the street, and you'd come to a Jewish colony; and you'd see the girls there all out, like you would on the streets of New York, with high skirts and, rouged lips and painted faces; and the contrast was so sharp that naturally the Arabs would become highly incensed at it, the impact that it would have on their children and on their general situation.

I don't think the Arabs there had any higher standard of morality than the Jews, but they had a much different custom; and it is wise for us to avoid giving offence in unnecessary ways. That doesn't mean that we need to be bound by the ideas of other people, which are often very silly ideas—but in situations where people have strong ideas which there's no harm in, there's no reason why we should not cooperate to some extent.

2. Gideon.

Gideon is far better known to the average Christian than Deborah is, because the story of Gideon is one that we tell over and over. But even that, we don't

talk much about. A few main aspects of the story of Gideon are repeated over and over. Now of course Gideon is a very interesting story—a vital story—a story filled with important spiritual lessons; and it is well worth all the time that is given it. But Gideon is not a typical story; it is a very unusual story, and the Lord richly blessed in these unusual ways; it's good for us to be aware of the story, but not to think that the Gideon story is an example of what everything should be.

Of course, you often hear people say, "I'm going to put out the fleece." And sometimes what they mean is, "I mustn't do anything until the Lord gives me a miraculous sign." I don't think that we have a right to expect the Lord to give us a miraculous sign at every decision of life. And to some extent, Gideon's attitude might be taken as an attitude showing lack of faith, when the Lord had specifically spoken to Gideon. The Lord said, "You're the one to deliver Israel." And Gideon said, "I'm from a very small and unimportant family; how can I do it?" Well, the Lord said, "You're the one I've chosen for it, and I want you to do it." And then Gideon went and knocked over one of the idols; and he got away with that without being destroyed; but then there was the question of what to do about facing the Midianites. God had told him he was to go and lead the people and deliver them. Then Gideon said, "Lord, if you're going to give deliverance by me, show it by working this miracle": The fleece to be wet and the ground dry; and the next time he said, "Let the fleece be dry and the ground wet." Well, was Gideon so lacking in faith that, even when God had said this is what you're to do, he wouldn't believe it until God would work a miracle? Personally, I incline rather to think that the purpose of this particular thing was different; that in this case, Gideon was asking the Lord if he would choose to give him a marvelous sign to assure *others* of the fact that he was the one through whom God would give the victory; and thus to lead the others to join with him in the work, rather than that Gideon himself didn't know what to do, because God had told him very specifically.

And then, in this particular case, God wanted to show them that God can win with few as well as with many; and so he told Gideon the army was too big; everybody that's the least bit fearful, tell them to go home; and they went home. And then he said, "It's still too big," and they cut it down to just those that were alert—on their toes—picked by the way which they would drink their water. And it was in this way that God cut his army way down.

Well in the case of Deborah and Barak he said bring 20,000 men; he didn't ask to cut it down. Ordinarily God uses the resources that are available. And he said to Joshua, send all the force against Ai, in the end. It is not usually God's plan to cut them down. I've known people that have done foolish things that have alienated others from them. And, when the others have been alienated and have left them, have said, "Oh well, we'll get down to Gideon's 300 pretty soon, and then we'll be ready to go"—and I think that's a wrong attitude. If somebody

really doesn't belong with us they shouldn't be with us; and if we lose people because they don't stand truly for the cause, praise the Lord. He'll make up the loss some way; but let us not alienate people by our stubbornness, or by our foolishness, and then rejoice that they're being alienated because we're getting down near to Gideon's 300. It's a misuse altogether of the story of Gideon.

God wants us to gather as many as possible for His truth and for His cause. To act in such a way as to win men for the cause and to lead them to stand for the cause. And so we have different lessons we learn from different ones of these judges. And the great lesson from Gideon isn't that it's a good thing to have a little group; not at all. It is that God can use a little group, if he chooses to do it that way. God can work in any such way as he may take a notion to.

Of course in this case he worked in that very unusual, strange way—that clever strategy of having them fight the Midianites till the Midianites got to fighting among themselves; and of course he prepared for that by the spreading of the rumors among them, which Gideon heard when he went down and spied; that these people had the dreams that it was Gideon—they had even used the name—that was going to attack them. He scared them. The Lord caused the rumors to get around, and scared them; they didn't know what was ahead; and then this sudden attack with breaking the pitchers and blowing the trumpets; and there have been battles in history won in very, very similar ways, but it doesn't happen often. If you did it very many times it would completely lose its effectiveness. And so the story of Gideon up to the point of the victory is a story that is filled with very important spiritual lessons, it is but not a story that is really a straight pattern for us.

There's a very interesting thing in this story of Gideon that we ought to note, which is in chapter 8. In chapter 8 it reads that Gideon said, to the princes of Succoth, in verse 5,

"Gideon said unto the men of Succoth, Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto the people that follow me; for they be faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian. And the princes of Succoth said, Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thine army? And Gideon said, Therefore when the Lord hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, then I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers."

And then he went on, and he defeated the Midianites, and captured the people; he had defeated them but now he mopped them up,

And when Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued after them, and took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and discomfited all the host. And Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle before the sun was up, And

caught a young man of the men of Succoth, and enquired of him: and he described unto him the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, even threescore and seventeen men.

How did he catch a young man of Succoth? Well, it was just one young man from the town who had gotten out in this time of danger—outside the wall. He wasn't a man carefully selected. He was a man who just happened to be there. And he caught this young man and we read that Gideon said to him, he enquired of him, and he described unto him the princes of Succoth, and the elders there, even 77 men.

And maybe some of you would find a description of that nature helpful, but I'm sure that I wouldn't. If I was in Gideon's place and I grabbed a young man from Succoth and I said to him, "Describe to me the leaders of Succoth." And this young man said, "Well, there's John Jones; he's a tall fellow. He has a scar on the left side of his head. He is very good in counsel, but he is not too good as a natural fighter." And so he describes 77 men.

When he got through I wouldn't know the one from the other. I don't think there would be much point in it; and I doubt if there would be to Gideon, either. And the fact of the matter is, that the Hebrew word here translated "described," is also translated describe where it tells how they described the borders of the different tribes, The men went out and they described the borders, going from this town and that town and that town of the different tribes; but aside from those cases, in connection with the making of the border, and this one here, that Hebrew word is always translated in a different way, in a way that I trust practically everybody in this room could immediately tell me. The word is *kathav*. What does that mean? "To write", and what the Hebrew says, is "he wrote down." That's what the Hebrew says, and there is some sense to that.

If I were to say to a young man, "You write down these 77 leaders," and I had them written down, I would have something I could use; and that would be of value to me; and that's what the young man did. Why did not the King James version translate it, "wrote down"? The RSV does. It translates it as it stands, "wrote down", because that's what the Hebrew meant. The American Standard Version of 1901 says "described" and then has a footnote that says, "Hebrew, wrote down." Well, if the Hebrew is "wrote down," why do they say "described"? Why don't they say wrote down? And of course, in making the tribal borders, it is writing down. But the only reason it was translated "described" was that the King James translators couldn't quite believe that a young man caught at random outside of Succoth would be able to write the names of these 77 people. Actually it shows the high state of literacy in that day; that just a young man picked at random like this; a man whom he was able to capture; he could say, "write them down," and he could write them down.

This incident shows that all these ideas of a preliterate age, in which everything had to be passed on by word of mouth, are simply not true to the facts. We had literacy in Palestine in that ancient time, probably far superior than what it was 30 years ago in Palestine.¹¹⁸

=====

(Review.) We were noticing Gideon; and we noticed how God gave him the victory in a very wonderful way, from which we learn many extremely important spiritual lessons; but that it is not an example which we can take as always applicable.

And I think that there is a tendency to think that Gideon is a supreme example. Gideon is a man like ourselves, who had his mistakes. He was a man who had his wonderful faith, and was wonderfully used; the tendency to take him as an supreme example is offset by the final account of Gideon, in which we find that Gideon, after the deliverance, that "Gideon made an ephod to put it into his city, and all Israel went a whoring after it, which thing became a snare to Gideon and to his house."

And then we read in verse 30, that he had 70 sons of his body begotten, because he had many wives; and his concubine, in Shechem, also bare him a son, whose name he called Abimelech.

He wasn't satisfied with his many wives. He also had a concubine in Shechem. From her came Abimelech; and our next chapter tells of the misery that came to the land through this Abimelech. The whole chapter is devoted to the account of Abimelech; and it is an interesting story, about Abimelech and Jotham. I don't know what spiritual lessons are derived from it—there are probably some—but it certainly was not a very good thing for Israel.

Gideon was an imperfect man; but he was a man who did allow himself to be used of God to a certain extent, at certain times, in a very real way. And of course that is one of the bad things about this life; and in this imperfect way, Satan does succeed in leading away many very true believers; and the results of their lives are tremendously cut down. And I believe that we should take him as an example, in regards to us, to keep our bodies under control, lest we become a castaway; and especially to watch for the pride of life which can mislead us more easily than anything else. But with others: to be very sympathetic with them when things happen; and to do our best to help them—to remember that we also can easily fall.

¹¹⁸ [dcb] Other examples exist of modern hubris: the discovery of the precise clockwork mechanism of the "Antikythera Mechanism" discovered in the Mediterranean Sea in 1902 and dated to about 150 BC. See Maunder, [The Astronomy of the Bible \(Annotated\)](#) (available as a Kindle ebook) for further discussion on this marvelous discovery.

(Question: "What is this ephod that Gideon made?") Nobody knows. The word "ephod" is a word which is used a good many times for a sort of apron that a man wears. And it is put on, this linen ephod. Now this ephod here was not made of linen, because he made it out of the metals that they gave him. They gave him golden earrings—a thousand seven hundred shekels of gold—besides ornaments and collars and purple raiment, and the chains that were about the camels' necks. "And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah. And all Israel went thither a whoring after it." It sounds as if it was a kind of statue, which some of the people came to worship. It doesn't say that Gideon worshipped it. There is no evidence that Gideon ever fell into idolatry. There is no evidence of that. He began his career with overthrowing the idols. But this which he put up, which doubtless was for his pride, they came a whoring after. What does that mean? That they made it a sort of an emblem of idolatry; that they came to worship it; or does it mean that they revered this symbol of Gideon in a way that they should not, apart from actual idolatry. The expression is not very clear. But it is quite evident that it became a snare to Israel; it was injurious and harmful to the people of Israel. And that is evident; and it sounds as if it was some sort of a statue. But since ephod usually means something more like an apron, this is just a thing that we need more evidence on. There is very little evidence on it, in fact; I don't think we have any on it except the Bible. Just a few references. So that in cases like this, we have to guess from context.

And we have enough guessing from context to do with the best kind of a translation you can get; and therefore, to my mind, it is extremely unfortunate for us to have to use a translation that was made three hundred years ago; in which, I don't care who it is today that reads it, that he has to guess a great many words from context, that are perfectly clear in the original; and were perfectly clear to the people then. And it seems to me that we are making a great mistake, in going through every effort to try to have a version that is really dependable, that is in our present day English, because I don't think we should take something that is uncertain, like the ephod; to translate it "statue" or translate it "apron" would be foolish, because here we have to guess from context; so we'd better keep the word, and then everybody could make a guess. But when it comes to a statement like, "I do you to wit with the grace of God", there is nobody here who would ever say, "I do you to wit." And therefore we just have to guess it from context; and we're guessing from context of a word that we don't know; and you have enough of that to do anyway; and then to add the words that are simply old English, and are perfectly clear if you knew Old English, it is just putting an unnecessary cloud between us and the understanding of the Bible.

You can't expect everybody to learn Greek and Hebrew, to know it in the original; so I think we have a right to an English translation that, where it is not

anywhere near as good as in the original is, at least it is true to the Original as we understand it, and also in a language that is intelligible to the people of today. Of course, it is one thing to say that; it is another thing to get one. To get one is a tough, hard job; and the translators of the RSV spent a tremendous lot of time, effort and study, and work; and what a shame that it wasn't done by men who believed the Bible, instead of by men who were mostly unbelievers; and who, with their study and work, doubtless in case after case give us a good English translation of the original where the King James is obscure, or wherein the English has changed so we don't recognize the meaning today.

But in case after case, you will find verse after verse where they've abandoned the original and given us just what they thought it ought to be, with no reference to what the original said; and unless you know Hebrew, you can't tell which verses are in one category and which are in another. So that it is a snare. It is a snare to those who use it.

(Question:) We are in a better position to know the meaning of words today than they were in the 17th century [when the KJV was translated] because we have gained a certain amount of knowledge since antiquity. But that would not affect more than 2 or 3 percent of the Bible. There was a tremendous lot that was perfectly clear to them; and it is clear to us when we see the original. That they expressed it well is perfectly clear to those who read it. And when they said "ephod" they didn't know exactly what it meant, because this is a Hebrew word put into English letters; and that's the sensible thing to do when you don't know what it means. And anyway, when it is a thing like that, it is good to take the Hebrew word and carry it over. We never called Hitler the leader; we took the German word that they used, and called him the Führer, we called Mussolini the Duce. We took their words and used them; and it is a good thing to do with something that gets its specific meaning in one language and takes the word over.

The word "to wit" was just as clear to them as the word "to know" is to us today. It meant exactly the same thing. "I do you to wit" meant, "I want you to know." And, anybody in that day would not have the slightest question what it meant—I do you to wit. They said "he wot not." Well, we say "he didn't know." It was just the same, it is just as clear to them; but today we use the phrase "to wit" only in legal documents. The word has just dropped out of use. And so today when a man comes to it, there is nothing obscure about it, it is perfectly clear to anybody who knows Elizabethan English; but to a person today reading it, you see "I do you to wit of the grace of God," and you think it has something to do with the grace of God. The average person today has no way of knowing what it means, because it's not something that occurs in the language that he speaks; and "he wot not," you can pretty well guess from context what that is; but he guesses, he doesn't know the word.

Well, if we had time to look at this story of Abimelech—it a very interesting story and would have value for us—this fable that Jotham gave. But all we can take time for now is to see that Gideon was a great hero of faith. And it's interesting that it doesn't, at least in Judges 8, it doesn't say that he judged Israel. It says, and the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon. That's what it says here in verse 28. He did say, in verse 23, when they were asking him to rule over them, he said, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you, the Lord shall rule over you. Of course that's exactly what it should be, the Lord's rule, but how is the Lord going to rule? He's either got to appoint a king to rule; or appoint judges to rule; or the people have to get together and try to determine who they think is the best qualified to interpret the will of God and rule. But in a world of sin, you've got to have somebody to rule—not to direct people and tell them what to do—but to protect them from the violence and crime on the part of those who do not obey God's law. And this would sound as if Gideon prefers not to assume that responsibility. How they were ruled during this time we're not told. But it says that they had quietness forty years; they got rid of the Midianites; and Gideon did a tremendous thing for them, and gave us many, many spiritual lessons. He was a great man of faith, but he is not the example that we should follow in every regard; nor is his battle the example of how we are to win all our battles for the Lord, though it has points given, it's a valuable illustration; and it may be the way in which God would work in any particular case, but not the prescribed way that he's declared to do in every case.

Yes? (Student. "What is the difference between a judge and a king?") Yes. Unfortunately we are not in a position to know a great deal about what the office of a judge was. Our evidence is quite scant, but it would seem to me that probably the difference between a king and a judge was principally this: that a king was established in such a way that there was a hereditary succession. That would seem to me to be the principal difference. The judge was more easily gotten rid of if he proved unworthy; but the king's power would descend to his son. And the descent from father to son of kingly power is something which we have no record that the Lord established; but it being an established thing among men, the Lord did not permit it to work out in Saul's house that day, but allowed David to have a house that would continue; and he gave us the great climax of this house in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But the hereditary method of determining rulership is one which has sprung up spontaneously all over the world; quite naturally, because no matter how good the man is, he is apt to be very anxious that his power descend to his son. And such a system gets established; but it is inherently not a good system. You take almost any line of hereditary rulers, and you find that the bulk of the rulers are not particularly good. It's not very good way of selecting leaders. And you look at the history of ancient Rome, and you find that when they had emperors who

succeeded, they gave their power to their son; and usually it went bad pretty quickly.

The time of the best rule that Rome ever had was in the 2nd century AD. Then they had very good system which they used for a brief time. There were a number of rulers who, each one adopted a man who was an outstanding man, who seemed to be splendidly equipped to be emperor; he adopted him, and then he succeeded him. And there was a series there—Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius—they were five of the best rulers that any nation ever had anywhere; and each of them adopted his successor, picking out a man of prime character and great ability. Until they got to Marcus Aurelius the philosopher, the last one; and he had a son; he couldn't bear to pass over his own son and adopt somebody else for emperor; and so his son became emperor after him; and he was one of the worst emperors ever.

So the hereditary system is a very, very poor system, as far as getting good rulership is concerned. It is a good system for promoting security, simply because when people get in the habit of adoring a person, they can easily pass that over to his son. And in England, in some way, they have managed to keep that part of it without the other; and the average English person is just crazy about the royal family. He almost worships them, and yet wouldn't let them have any power in government whatever. They're nothing but figureheads, they haven't even—50 years ago when Edward VII expressed an opinion about some political thing, he was condemned from one end of England to the other, because he had no right to say anything about government. He was simply a figurehead; but as a figurehead they worship him; and it gives them a unity and a security and a coherence which is a valuable thing to have, very valuable.

But it's the only country I know of—well, almost the only one I know of—where they've gotten that thing about the hereditary ruler, without the evils that come from a descendant line. And they had to go through an awful lot of misery before they got to that point.

Now back to the judge, the Hebrew *shaphat*. There is a difficulty in discussing the meaning of words; words have different meanings in different contexts, and often you can't be sure exactly what the meaning is. You have to learn more about the context; have to, maybe, learn about the people's attitude; because words change their meaning from time to time. I remember 30 years ago—20 years ago—downtown here [Philadelphia], there was a great big building downtown here on Walnut Street which had a sign on it "The Pennsylvania Company for Insurances on Lives and Granting Annuities". It was one of the three largest banks of Philadelphia. It was just an ordinary bank and nothing else, but that was its title.

And at the same time I visited New York; and a man there told me that one of the biggest banks in New York is the Chemical Bank; and he said that was an organization founded for chemical work; and they had a little room down in the basement where they had a man mixing some chemicals together, because they had to be doing chemicals; but 99/100ths of their work was banking; it was just an ordinary bank. But the word changed its meaning as far as that place was concerned. Now one of the big banks here used to be called the Corn Exchange Bank of Philadelphia. I imagine years ago they used to exchange corn there. Today it is just an ordinary bank, but it's still the corn exchange. And words gradually change their meaning. As the thing changes, the situation changes; and instead of saying, "We've got to get a new word," the change comes gradually and we keep the old word.

Now in English a judge is a man before whom cases are tried; and he gives a decision about each case; and that is the specific meaning of judge in modern English. But the Hebrew word *shaphat* we learn from the context: a man who may and probably does judge cases, but that's not his primary activity; his primary activity is, he's a leader of the people in gathering them together; and delivering them from their enemies; and helping them maintain peace and order in the community. That is, he's more like a policeman perhaps; or like an administrator in modern times. He is pretty much like a king, except that he has none of the honors of the king; none of the prestige of a king; none of the hereditary powers of a king.

And not being established so solidly as a king, it's easier to get rid of him if he proves to be unsuitable. Though there are great advantages of having a judge over a king—if you have a godly judge it's a great advantage—but there is a disadvantage; there is not that continuity, that security; and so the time of the judges was a wonderful time when they had judges who were really godly, but a time of confusion and turmoil when they didn't. While under the king, if you got a good godly king to reign; and he followed the Lord; and you got things into pretty decent condition; if he was succeeded by a weakling or by a fellow of small use; the general good situation which he'd established would continue by its own momentum for quite a period. You'd have to get two or three kings in a row to ruin things. If he had a son, unfortunately, who was a very wicked man; or a son who was a man of great ability and was a wicked man; he would change the situation rather quickly. But under kingship you have more stability, more continuity. Of course it works the other way too. You get a wicked king, and he would establish a situation that was pretty much changed the other way.

We have an example of that which we should look at later on, but which is very important just to mention now. The last kings—who before the end of this semester I want you to know the names of—the last kings of Israel were Josiah, and his two sons who were wicked; but Josiah was a very righteous king, a good man who had a great revival; and Josiah established righteous leaders in the

land. He did an excellent piece of work. Josiah died and was succeeded by his son; but the king of Egypt came and seized the son and took him to Egypt, and put a second son in power; and this second son was a wicked man, Jehoiakim. But Jehoiakim had the righteous good principles that had been established by his father when in power; and he could not remove them immediately. That is, I suppose, he had the power to say "All of you get out", but it would have made such a stir in the land that he might have lost his own position; it was too dangerous, so he had to do it gradually.

And the result is that, in the days of Jehoiakim, though he was a wicked man who hated the prophets of God, he was unable to do anything to injure or destroy the prophet Jeremiah; that was because of the good rulers established by his father Josiah; and it's explicitly said in Jeremiah, that the king Jehoiakim wanted to kill Jeremiah, but that the godly princes protected him. But then Jehoiakim gradually changed these princes; and by the end of Jehoiakim's eleven-year reign, he was succeeded by his son who reigned just three months, and then succeeded by Zedekiah, the brother of Jehoiakim,.

Zedekiah was a good man; that is to say, he was a good man in the sense of one who's good, but not good for much. He desired to do right. He is spoken of as a bad king, and he was; but he was a good man who desired to do right; he desired to follow the prophet Jeremiah, to do what Jeremiah said; he protected Jeremiah; he was a man who in ordinary peaceful circumstances might be considered a good man; but the princes and the leaders—the able, efficient, effective men the king had gotten in, during the course of his last years—were evil men; and the result was that Zedekiah was a prisoner of the princes and the nobles; he would call Jeremiah in, and talk with Jeremiah; and then he'd say, "Now Jeremiah don't you tell them what I talked to you about; don't you say anything that they find out what I talked to you about," and he was just afraid of these nobles; and rightly so, because he was not a man of such ability and power that he could overcome them; and they were established; and if he'd had the good nobles that his father had put in, he probably would have been a very good king. But he didn't have the power; he didn't have the determination to step out and to make a change; and he was a prisoner.

And you see, both ways it illustrates the stability that you get with a monarchy, that you can't get with just a judge.

But Gideon refused to be their ruler. It says,

Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you.

In other words, the men of Israel were willing to have Gideon be their ruler. But Gideon refused to rule or to have his son rule. We think of George Washington, who refused to become king. But on the other hand, after George Washington retired, and got a little bit of rest after the terrible labors of the Revolutionary War, and thought he'd settle down, and finish his life in peace, he found the country in considerable confusion, because there was no established settled government; and George Washington got busy corresponding with people; and working; and got a constitutional convention together; and he helped in getting a better system of stable government established; and then they elected him the first President; and he went in, and tried to rule for 8 years—the worst years of his life—because half of the people were reviling him and criticizing him and calling him names; and when he finished, one of the newspapers had a big headline from the Bible, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, because I have seen the end of the evil days." Meaning George Washington as President. There was no president in our history ever reviled more than George Washington. But Washington gave up his peace and his security and his pleasure in order to try to do for his country; so he's rightly called the first in war and the first in peace, that is, up to that time. He was certainly one of the very best we've ever had.

But Gideon here, he refused to do as the men of Israel asked; he refused to accept the call, as George Washington did; but did he go further and fail to take an interest in the well-being of the country? We don't know. But here's what he didn't do, so we're not sure. But in war Gideon was certainly first. He was able, he was helpful, he did a wonderful thing for the land, he as truly one of the heroes of faith.

But then

Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)

Well the ones—that is their prey, the people they had captured, people that had been attacked—had golden earrings because they were Ishmaelites.

Well, now how did the Ishmaelites get in here; this is the Midianites they've been fighting, and now we read all of a sudden they had golden earrings because they were Ishmaelites? Does any one of you think of any time in which the word Ishmaelite and Midianite have been used similarly together? I see one does; there are more than one, two, three, four, five, six, any more than that? Seven, eight—very good.

I want to tell you now—because I don't want to leave it till too late—but every time I give a course in this history, the exam at the end of the second semester

covers both semesters; because I don't believe in teaching a course to be taken like a pill—swallowed and forgotten. I see no advantage in that. Whatever is worthwhile should be gotten firmly; but if Mr. Deshpande was the first to raise his hand, if I had called on him he would have explained; that back in the book of Genesis, the critics say there are two documents; because it says the Midianites passed by, but Joseph's brothers pulled him out of the well and sold him to the Ishmaelites; and the critics say here's two documents: one says it was the Midianites, and one says it was the Ishmaelites, that took him. And they say that's a real problem in the account of Joseph back there in Genesis.

But here we have this verse, in which we're talking about Midianites all through the chapter; and then it says they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites; and this verse here is proof; I appreciate Mr. Welch's calling our attention to it; this verse here is proof that the Ishmaelites and the Midianites are overlapping terms: that these men who were Midianites here could also be called Ishmaelites. That doesn't mean they are the same thing; not at all, but they are overlapping terms. The same man could be both—both an Ishmaelite and a Midianite; it's like if somebody said in Europe, "Oh, here comes a Texan." And somebody else says "Oh, it seems good to see an American." Well he says, "What you talking about? This man's a Texan!" Well, he's both. He's a Texan and he's an American. And someone else would say, "Yes, it's awfully good to see an Indian again. I don't mean the Texan, I mean the Oklahoman; this Oklahoman is an Indian; an American Indian of course; but he's an American; he's an Indian; and he's an Oklahoman; yet it's the same man; and there are different overlapping areas which may apply.

Some people would call me Scotch, because my ancestors are Scotch; but yet I'm American. Other people are American who aren't Scotch; and most who are Scotch are not American. Our terms overlap; and the Ishmaelites and the Midianites are overlapping terms; the exact significance of either one of them we don't know, because we don't have enough evidence. But here's proof they're overlapping terms; and evidently from this we learn that for some reason those who were Ishmaelites particularly rejoiced in having these big golden earrings.

Now Mr. Welch is raising his hand to ask if these were the descendants of Ishmael; but it would seem that most likely that the descendants of Ishmael became leaders among the Bedouins—among the Arab people—and that the term was extended to mean other people of similar type. It is possible these Midianites were descended from Ishmael, but I don't think there's any proof of it.

One might think—here you say Ishmaelites; Ishmael is the uncle of Israel; you're confusing the term Ishmael and Israel; but you see they're quite unrelated here. The Ishmaelites describe the people from the area to which Ishmael went—

people of a certain type. Maybe Ishmael became quite an outstanding leader, and became very vain with his decorations; and those who followed in his footsteps were the same; we just don't know.

That's the trouble with any history. There is much you understand and much you don't, because we don't have sufficient evidence. Well, I would say that this passage here is pretty good proof. The whole chapter is talking about the conquest of the Midianites. They've taken these Midianites. They've killed them. They've taken the plunder from them. Now he says, "Every one of you, give me the earrings from your captives." And it says, for they had golden earrings, for they were Ishmaelites. Well that tells us here that their captives were Ishmaelites, but everything else in the chapter said they were Midianites. Well, either the sentence was inserted by somebody who didn't know anything, or else it means that you understand that they were overlapping terms.

It could be like American and Texan—that "Ishmaelites" refers to the whole group of nomads, and the Midianites were one branch of them—because after all, you say, why should the whole group be named after Ishmael, when only part of them were descended from them? Why should we all be named after Amerigo Vesputius? Only comparatively few of us are Italians, yet we are called Americans.

(Question:) Yes, in Genesis 37, in that passage to which Mr. Deshpande referred to a few minutes ago, there the word Midianite and Ishmaelite are both used several times; they use one and they use the other, and they pass back and forth; and the critics say this is a perfect example of two stories that have been confused; and they take a sentence from one and a sentence from the other.

But anybody with any sense wouldn't do a daft thing like that. That is, if a person combined the two stories; that's awful. Or if he did, he'd make them fit together. He'd take one term and use it, not just take what he found in the book, unless he thought it meant the same thing. So, whether one person wrote it originally, or whether it was two stories combined is not proven by the use of the two terms. Whoever combines them, if they were combined, thought they meant the same thing—not the same thing, but that they could be applied to the same man.

And if you question whether it was possible to pass from one term to another like this, read a Russian novel. I read one once, and I was dizzy before I got through with it; I think the leading character was Peter Alexandrovitch Devitevitch Henrodeze, or something like that. And they'd call him one time by the whole name; one time by the first name; one time by the fourth; and one time by the second; and they might be in the same sentence. "Henry came in the door, and the friends were surprised to see how pale Alexandrovitch's face was." And that would be in the same sentence. It is their custom. They used

different names just for variety. We use different terms, too, but not as much. Say, I'll refer to my wife's father as "your father," "my father in law," "Johnny's grandfather," they're different terms; we'd refer to him by his name. Different terms. And I may use 12 or 15 different terms about him. And you don't think a thing of those, as long as you know who it is, and what it means; but it is strange to one who doesn't know the terms. But as for this Ishmaelites and Midianites, anybody who takes the Bible as true, from Genesis 37, will find proof that they are overlapping terms. Anybody who raises a question about that on the critical theory, will find over here in Judges a similar thing done; which is a proof that we are correct in taking it as overlapping there.

Well, I think that maybe, unless there is some other vital question on Gideon, we should go on to

3. Jephthah.

And I dare not take very long on Jephthah. We could spend a long time on him, but again we are not told much. That's a rather frustrating thing about the book of Judges. We are given glimpses of the situation; we are given glimpses of important events; but we are aren't blessed with much in between, and we just don't know.

Jephthah here was a rather wild sort of man. He had been driven out of his home, and he was sort of an outlaw; but he was a good fighter. And when the Ammonites were fighting against Israel, and Israel needed the help of somebody who was a good fighter, they went to him and asked him to lead them; and unlike Gideon, who refused to be their king, Jephthah said, "Now if I come, and be your captain," he said, "how do I know that you won't use me just as long as I could help you and then get rid of me? I want some guarantee of permanence of our relationship." And he said, "If you bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the Lord delivers them before me, shall I be your head?" And they guaranteed that they would do that. You win the victory for us, and you will be our head.

Gideon won the victory, and he said, "I don't want to rule over you." The two were different in that regard. But of course their background was different. Gideon was a member of a respectable family, well-established and secure. And he risked losing that in order to rescue the people. He wanted to go back to this. Jephthah was an outlaw who was invited by the people that hated him to come and help them. He wanted to be sure that it wasn't just a temporary deliverance. So he came, and he led the people, and he delivered them. But then he made this terrible vow to the Lord. He said,

If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands,
Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to

meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.

And he went over and he fought the children of Ammon, and the Lord delivered them into his hands; and he had a tremendous victory; and he came back to his home,

and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back. And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon. And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows.

Very poor English translation, "I and my fellows." It was perfect in Old English, because in Old English, a fellow means an associate. My associates. The Hebrew word is feminine. "I and my girlfriends," is what it means. But in the English, in Modern English, a fellow, which previously meant an associate, regardless of sex, had come to mean a man, a boy. And so it is a very unfortunate translation. I and my fellows. It is not one of the passages read the most; but if was, it surely would bring confusion, uncertainty and misunderstanding. To translate a Hebrew feminine word, it was perfectly all right in Old English, but it is extremely bad in Modern English. And so she says, "let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my girlfriends."

And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months: and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel, That the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

Here Jephthah made a very, very rash vow, a very foolish vow. Whatever comes out of my house first. Whatever the first thing is—I suppose he thought it might be his favorite dog. Or it might be that cow that he was so fond of. Certainly there was the risk; if it was not a member of his family, it might be a servant, it might be another human being. And it was a very, very foolish vow, to make. And Jephthah is a great hero of faith, but he certainly was not a good model to

follow. The Lord, wants us to keep our vows, but he wants us to be wise in making vows.

The critics would use this to show there was human sacrifice. But the thing is, as far as religion is concerned, that they cannot find enough other examples to support that assertion. Of course when you get on to the Kings, we read about some wicked king who made his sons pass through the fire to Moloch; and that would seem to me that this Israelite king followed the heathen practice of sacrifice.

We find that the king of Moab, when the Israelites were attacking, killed his son as a burnt offering on the wall of the city. And the Israelites were so thoroughly disgusted that they left and went home. But it is not anything that has ever been proven of Moses and the religion of those who gave us the Old Testament. It was a common practice among the wicked idolaters around them, into which they came to fall.

Now the critics will say, that when Abraham offered Isaac, what it means is that is when Abraham learned that human sacrifice was wrong. And they will tell you that. That is an utter misinterpretation of Genesis 22; because the whole story, as it is told, is that Abraham was ready to do whatever the Lord actually wanted him to do; and he understood the Lord wanted him to offer Isaac; but actually what the Lord wanted was for him to show that he was willing to give up even his own son, Isaac. And the Lord intervened, not to say "Abraham, human sacrifice is wrong," not to say that. Human sacrifice was never taught in the religion of Abraham. But to say "I have seen that you hold nothing back, not even your own son." And so their interpretation is a false interpretation, but one can easily see how they arrive at it.

But now in this case, you have a vow made; we have no other instances of such a vow being made. But it was a part of the heathen religion; and this poor man Jephthah had no education; he had been driven out of his home; mistreated by his relatives, by the people of the area, and all that; and now when they were in this difficult spot, and they know he is a good fighter, they want him to help them. And he came; and he seems to be a man who had a real knowledge of the Lord, but a very limited knowledge; and he came, and he wanted to serve the Lord. He wanted to do what was right; and he made this very rash vow, but he is certainly not an example in any way.

And of course that is the difficulty. Many people get the impression that the Bible is the book where everything in it is an example for us. It is nothing of the kind. The Bible is a book that tells how, in a wicked world in which sin is widespread, God brought the knowledge of Christ; and prepared the way for His coming; and in which He showed little by little what we need to know; he couldn't give it to us all at once, because of our sin and our wickedness.

And it is the same situation today. We have to lead people little by little. We know that the human heart is at enmity against God; and even the heart of the converted man is still to some extent, at enmity against God; and even the heart of a man who is fighting for the great doctrines of the faith, he still has an awful lot of wickedness in him; he has to watch out for that; and the rest of us have to look out for it, too. And we should be sympathetic toward him, because we all fall into such a thing; and God has promised that we will get rid of these things; and we want to go forward in sanctification; but we need to know that our character is very imperfect, and our knowledge is imperfect; and you cannot take Gideon or Jephthah, or even David, as a perfect example. Anybody who sets out to do everything that David did, is very, very foolish. David was a man after God's own heart; but that meant that he had an attitude of really repenting of his sins; and looking to the Lord for help; and trying to get over it. And a lot of other people, who don't have sins that, in the eyes of the world, are anywhere near as bad as David's were, are a lot worse in God's sight than David ever was, because of a heart attitude they have, a pride of heart.

And so Jephthah here makes a very serious error, in making this vow which we are told about here. And we are told about the wonderful attitude of the daughter. She says, "Do what you vow." There was no evidence that she even knew what it was. That she was ready to trust that to what her father had vowed to the Lord, he ought to do. Then after, evidently, he tells what it is, she says, "Let me go two months on the mountain and bewail my virginity. I and my companions, my girlfriends." And at the end of two months, she returned to her father, and he did to her, according to his vow which he had vowed.

And if it had stopped there, nobody would have any question but what it meant was, that he did kill her. But then it says, "he did with her according to his vow which he had vowed, and she knew no man." And the simple way of interpreting that is: this girl died, and she was still a virgin. She had never been married. She died a pure virgin; she knew no man. But giving it right after the account here; and not saying he killed her, but he did according to his vow, and she knew no man; some people take this meaning: that as a result of his vow, she knew no man. She had to give up normal life and be shut away like a nun for the rest of her life. And there are those who feel that that is the correct interpretation of it; and it is a rather peculiar way to state it. Maybe they are right. I can't say that they are wrong, I must say this though: that the more natural way of interpretation of the words as they stand seems to be that he killed her as a sacrifice; but I don't think that it is conclusively certain that it is. I would personally reserve judgment on it, as I like to do on anything which is the evidence is not sufficient.

Yes, Mr. Haffly. (Student: "I don't see why it is not clear when it says that he makes a vow and it says he does according to that vow, and the vow is that he'll

sacrifice her.") That is the way many take it, but there are those who take it the other way.

Mr. Tow. (Question "What does it mean that she would 'bewail her virginity'?") Well, in our civilization, where women can get out and be dentists, technicians, and store clerks, and all kinds of things, many women have a successful life apart from marriage; but in many, many lands, there is no such possibility; and particularly anywhere that there is a life of less security, where you have to have more protection, the tendency is for women to get shut off so that the only fulfillment of their life is in marriage; and in such an situation, the fate of a woman in not fulfilling her natural physical function, becomes a thing that she is felt as having been extremely unfortunate. And whether it was that way in this case, I'm not ready to say. But at least there is a possibility.

Well, I think that we could discuss this for three hours. At the end I don't know whether we would know anymore than we do now. So my feeling is, each of you read the passage, and make your own guess; but I don't think it is an article of faith, or a matter to divide churches over. And I personally think that it sounds more as if she was slain, than it is that she was shut away; but I think the arrangement of the phrase is such that it gives at least some possibility to those who take it that way. That is my guess here. But I doubt if we could gain anything by expressing all our opinions on it; I don't think there is any further data to be found on it than what we have. I think that we should be *extremely* careful about making vows—if, that is, we have the depth of integrity to keep them. Be sure they are in the Lord's will when we make them. I think that if we make a vow; and we promise in good faith; and people take it in good faith; and we later find that it is disadvantageous to our ourself, we should go through with it anyway, if we are obligated to it. But I think that if we have without realizing—or even with realizing—vowed something which is contrary to God's moral law, or injurious to His purposes, I think that we should renounce it; but I think such cases are very, very few. And the vow cannot be made an excuse for any violation of God's moral law.

I don't think the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church—in making little children that don't know what they are doing, take a vow of chastity for life, and think they've done a wonderful, noble thing, because they take a vow of chastity, a little girl of 14 or 15, and she shows her wonderful devotion to the Lord, by taking a vow of chastity, for life—I don't think that is a right thing and a proper thing to do; and when Martin Luther told those women to come out of their convents and places that were closed up, and live normal lives, those women did. His own wife was a former nun.

The Roman Catholics said these monks have taken vows of chastity; and it is bad that they left the monasteries to follow Martin Luther. That is bad, but it is excusable; but these nuns—they have vowed chastity for life; and that was

wicked for them to come out. And Martin Luther said that the vow was a wrong vow; they should never have taken those vows. And I think he was right.

(Question: "If a sow had come out of this house to meet Jephthah, or a dog; well now, there's another thing; what altar is it to be offered on? If the place of sacrifice is at one place here? Should men offer sacrifices apart from that? How much did he know about Israel's law? How much would Israel tolerate of this man?") It is true, we don't know. It is possible that everything he did was over there in Gilead, in Transjordan. He never had any connection with the people on the other side of the Jordan. We don't know. It is altogether possible. But he was a hero of faith. Because Hebrews says so. He was a man that had great good qualities that the Lord blessed—but he also had mighty little power in connection with that.

4. Samson.

The story of Samson is a very interesting history, one that is given with much detail, with much narrative; a history which has many interesting incidents in it and a considerable number of important spiritual lessons. It is a history which we cannot add to our understanding of from any external source, because we don't have it. The only source which might add to its understanding would be information about the Philistines. Because Samson is the first of these named Judges who had any relation with the Philistines as far as the Scripture account is concerned.

Now if we had a full detailed history of the Philistines, it would throw a great deal of light on the life and history of Samson. If we had a fair amount of material about the Philistines it would, even if Samson wasn't mentioned, throw a good deal of light on his background. Unfortunately, we know very, very little about the Philistines aside from what was stated in the Bible. The reason we know very little about the Philistines is that they occupied mostly that fertile valley section, next to the Mediterranean—the finest part of Palestine, the part in which the Jews have their best colonies today; the main part of Israel today was Philistine land in Biblical times. And this region was such a fine region that, after the Philistines died out, it continued to be a very important section.

In the time of Christ, Athenians came to Gaza in southern Palestine to study Athenian philosophy, because the best teachers of it, many of them were in Gaza and this area which formerly had been the Philistine land. It was a great center of Hellenistic culture. Well, that means that every one of these Philistine cities now has had other cities above it; and archaeologists are not greatly interested in those later cities. You could learn a great deal about Greek and Hellenistic culture of the time of Christ by careful examination of Philistine cities from that period. But if you want to learn about Greek culture of the time of Christ, most people would rather go to Greece; there's plenty there to study,

where you get it at first hand. And therefore they are not much interested in this; but you can't go in with a steam shovel and dig up that material to get down to the Philistine material. If you're going to excavate the Philistine period, you've got to carefully excavate the periods that are later in the same place; you can't just throw the stuff away.

And nobody has felt enough interest in those later periods to go and make a thorough detailed study of them; to go down inch by inch to get to the Philistine period. So there probably is a great deal in these places of tremendous importance to the history of the ancient Philistines; but it will not be available to us until or unless somebody gives sufficient money to take a few years first to study the later Hellenistic culture that is above that; and I doubt if that will ever happen.

Hellenistic culture was after Alexander the Great's conquest of the east; Greek cities were established all over; and there's Hellenistic culture in many of them; and many of them have been excavated; very interesting, and very important; we've gained so much knowledge here and there. But I question whether anybody would want to examine the upper part of these Philistine cities.

Now that's true of most of the Philistine cities, but not all. There are one or two cases where they were abandoned after a comparatively short time, before there was this great Hellenistic culture. But in these places, it so happens that the people who lived right above them dug a lot of storage pits down into the remains of the Philistine period; and thus they have cut it all up into pieces, and left so much trash in it that attempts to excavate them have just proved not too worthwhile.

A very, very careful excavation of those cities—one or two like that—probably would reveal a great deal, but it would take a tremendous amount of money and careful effort to do it, because of its very unusual difficulty. And so we just don't know much about the Philistine cities; and we know practically nothing about Philistine history, except what we gain from the Bible; and the result is that Samson stands rather isolated. His constant activity was in relation to the Philistines. We learn a great deal about them from his account; but very little—nothing about him—from other sources. So the story of Samson stands rather isolated; there's much in it that we would understand far better if we had other information throwing light on it.

As we read it in the Bible, we do not get a very high idea of Samson's character. God had set him apart for his work from before his birth; and he was ordered that he should be a Nazarite all his life; he should never touch strong drink; and he should never cut his hair. And he was given these particulars: not only strong drink shouldn't be touched; any kind of grape juice; anything that came from the grape; anything from grapes should not be touched. He was to be a

Nazarite from his birth all through his life. Now that's not an ordinary Nazarite; in the book of Numbers, the description of the situation of the Nazarite lays down explicitly how long one is to be a Nazarite; it was a limited thing. Samson's was an unusual situation; a very unusual thing, not a pattern for others. It's not described in Scriptures that people shall make themselves Nazarites for life, and say they'll not cut their hair, never touch a dead body. Of course he touched many dead bodies, so he certainly broke that part of the Nazarite's vow. But it is not prescribed as a vow to be taken for life; and it certainly is not described as something that parents could set aside their children for. But in his case, it was a special revelation from God, that in this particular case God had set him apart for his special work; but to how great an extent did Samson do the work for which he was set apart? I mean how great—it says that he set himself to do a work—but to how great an extent did he simply do what he felt like, and the Lord used him for the purpose that the Lord had in mind?

It's pretty hard to make much of an example for us in Samson. If he avoided strong drink, there were plenty of other things he didn't avoid, that the descriptions suggest are certainly not a pattern for an ideal follower of the Lord. But the Lord used him; and the book of Hebrews lists him with the heroes of faith. And it lists these others—Jephthah and Barak and Gideon, they are all four listed—they were varying characters; they had their weaknesses. Barak had his weakness of faith, Gideon also. Gideon had his strength of character. Jephthah and Samson are characters that seem to be morally far inferior to Barak and Gideon as general examples; but all four are heroes of faith; all four of them our God greatly used for a specific purpose that he had in mind in this period of the judges. I think they are a warning to us, the fact that these four are listed as heroes of faith; it is only God who can see the heart and really judge who really is a hero of faith. And they are very imperfect, as all heroes of faith are, because every human being is very imperfect; and we see the imperfections in other people, and don't realize that we may in ourselves have far worse ones than they have in the Lord's sight.

The Lord judges the heart; the Lord knows who are the heroes of faith. We've got a big job in keeping ourselves in the category of truly following the Lord; avoiding compromise with that which is wrong; that which is sinful, that which is evil, that which is contrary to His will. If others who are truly followers of His will, if they seem to fall, we should leave judgment of them to the Lord. And that, as to our own, the extent to which we work with them or don't, that is a matter which has to be decided in each particular case by the situation and by the knowledge of the case; because all men are imperfect, and there is no one but has his faults.

And these four are the outstanding characters, perhaps, in the book of Judges; at least they are the four of whom more is told than of any others; and they are

the four who were picked for the book of Hebrews to list as heroes of faith; and we have many lessons to learn from all of them. But one lesson we learn from all of them is, that it is only God that is perfect, and of course, his Son Jesus Christ. And we learn from men's weaknesses as well as from their strength.

Now in the light of Samson, I trust you all are familiar with the details of it; I don't think there's need of my going over it in class; but there is value in your own study of it, and in your own meditation on these lessons which you can derive from them. The incident of Samson killing with the jawbone of an ass, some people have tried to make out that it wasn't a real jawbone of an ass; that was the name for something else, it was the name of the place where it occurred. But I don't see what the difficulty is there, because the jawbone of an ass is a pretty large instrument; and it's a pretty strong thing; and especially for a strong man like Samson, even in those days without modern weapons, it could be a very effective weapon.

E. The Closing Chapters of Judges.

These closing chapters of the book of Judges are indeed a sorrowful section. They are a section in which we are given an account of certain events which took place, in which the land sunk into a pretty low state.

In chapter 17 we have Micah's wicked worship, and the Danites taking him and making him their priest. They move north, leaving the territory where they could not conquer, the land of the Canaanites and the Philistines, and moving up to the north into a new territory. That's Judges 17 and 18.

And in 19 we have the story of the Levite and his concubine; and the way in which she was terribly treated; and how all Israel was aroused against the Benjamites, because of the very low standard of morality to which the Benjamites had sunk; and how all the people of the land gathered together against the Benjamites, and fought against them and destroyed a great many of them, destroyed their cities.

And then in chapter 21, we find the Israelites mourning, because they lost one of their tribes. The Benjamite women were all dead; comparatively few of the Benjamite men were left; and they had sworn that not one of them would give his daughter to a Benjamite to wife; and so it looked as if a tribe was to be utterly destroyed. And so they worked a subterfuge in order to give the Benjamites wives. They took women from Jabesh-Gilead; and they had them go out and be available where the Benjamite men could come in and seize them, supposedly without the rest of the Israelites knowing about it. So it was a rather silly subterfuge; but it made it possible to maintain the tribe of Benjamin.

Was the tribe of Benjamin of any great importance in subsequent history? in Israel? How many would say it was not? Would anybody say the tribe of Benjamin was of very great importance comparatively soon after this? Why? (student) In I Kings we have evidence to think of Benjamin as a rather important tribe, as you correctly pointed out; but does anybody think they are of importance earlier than Kings? Right in the very next major book, 1 Samuel, you have the people asking for a king; and God gives them a king; and the king he gives them is from the tribe of Benjamin. So we have the Benjamites being the leading tribe in the land by the middle of the book of 1 Samuel; and in the last two chapters of Judges, we have them almost annihilated; and you do not read far in 1 Samuel before you find Samuel anointing a man from Benjamin as a king over all the nations. What does this suggest about the chronology?

Do you think that the last three chapters of Judges are the last thing that happened in the period covered by Judges and previous to 1 Samuel? Does not that suggest very strongly that after describing various judges—these events, the Danite migration and the Benjamite war—are just, you might say, stuck into it at the end of the book? Now there's nothing wrong with that; there is no history that ever was written—that is a history and not a mere chronicle—that went strictly in chronological order. If it did, it would make mighty uninteresting reading.

If you wrote the history of the last ten years, and you told what happened on a certain day in China and in India and in Africa, and in Tennessee and in Montreal, and then you told what happened the next day in all these areas, and the next day, it would just be confusing if you tried to read it. Instead, we would take one of these areas, and we would trace it through for a month or a year of maybe five years; and then we would take another and trace it through, That is the only way to write intelligently. You have to deal with areas to some extent; and you can't be strictly chronological, because in unrelated areas things are happening at the same time. And so it is quite natural that in Judges, there should be two important events which they want to tell us about, but they don't want to interrupt the story of the individual judges to tell us; and they put them at the end. I doubt if there's a history book ever written that won't have plenty of parallels to that sort of thing.

And that doesn't mean these are *not* the last events of the time of the judges; but it does mean that we can't be sure they are; we have to look for evidence; and the evidence I've just mentioned is pretty strong in the other direction.

(Student "Was Eli a judge?") Was Eli a judge? He was, wasn't he? He judged Israel a good many years. When does Eli become judge? Is he mentioned in the book of Judges? And when 1 Samuel starts, is Eli just beginning his work? He's an old man in 1 Samuel. So we have most of Eli's life, his active life, almost entirely

before the beginning of 1 Samuel. Now did that come contemporaneous with some of these judges, or later? We just don't know. We're just not told.

But Eli is a judge; and yet it's quite incidentally we learn of him in connection with Samuel; this would suggest there may have been other judges who were not even mentioned, besides the ones we have. It suggests that possibility rather definitely. And Samson is a judge; but was Samson a judge in our modern sense, one who settled disputes? Maybe, maybe not. He certainly was a judge in the sense of one who led the people and delivered them from an adversary. He was a judge in that sense.

Yes? (student: "Does the Bible say that Eli was a judge?") Now my recollection is a bit hazy, but it's my impression that it says he judged Israel a certain number of years at the time of his death. Am I wrong? It's always good to get the precise words; and where does it tell about Eli's death? ... It's in the fourth chapter, 1 Sam.4:18: he had judged Israel forty years.

You see how incidentally it's mentioned? He had judged Israel forty years. It's quite incidental; we are not previously told that he was a judge at all. He was an old man at the beginning of the book. His main activity was previous to that time. Well, these closing chapters of Judges then end with the words in verse 25,

In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

And many Bibles that have notes in them have a statement that Judges is the lowest point of Israelite history; that every man did that which was right in his own eyes; there was no king. I think there's a large element of truth in that; and yet I think it's a little exaggerated. Because, after all, if every man will do what's right in his own eyes; if his eyes are trained to see what's right in God's eyes; you could ask nothing better; and there are some pretty low points in the time of the kings too. But Judges is a period of confusion; and this period of confusion, we don't know how long it was. It may have been 200 years; it may have been 600; but it's a period with some high points and some great victories and some great blessings.

And the chronology of it is not clear in the book. These two instances at the end may have overlapped with the activity of two or three chapters; we don't know. But that much of it came all during Eli's time as a judge would seem to be quite unlikely. Both seem to me to be events which may have taken place fairly early in the period of the Judges.

F. Ruth.

I'm just going to say a few words at this point about the book of Ruth. The book of Ruth is a book which gets probably as much attention as the book of Judges. And it is a very interesting story, and a very worthwhile story. They say that Benjamin Franklin, when he was in France—and you know Benjamin Franklin was very popular in France—they had his picture all over; constantly the people were quoting him; he was idolized by the people there. But it was in the period shortly before the French Revolution, which there was a very low point in religious life in France; and nearly all of the brilliant people boasted of being Atheists; and having no use for the Bible, or for anything religious; and the church, which had destroyed the Protestants—wiped them out—was at a pretty low ebb spiritually, and wrong morally.

But Benjamin Franklin used to attend various meetings with French intellectuals, who would occasionally scoff and sneer at the Bible and religion in general, but who were brilliant men; and they had much of value in their discussion; and Franklin enjoyed his association with them. And one day, going to one of these groups, he said, "I've come across an old story which I thought you might be interested in hearing." And he proceeded to read it to them; and the story that he read to them was the book of Ruth, with the names changed. He changed the names so they wouldn't know what country it came from, or have any suggestion that it was from the Bible except what is there—that is, just leaving out the names of the places. And when he finished it they were enraptured and said, "What a wonderfully, beautiful little story; where on earth did you get it?" And then he told them that it was taken from the Bible.

And the book of Ruth is a beautiful idyll; it is an interesting account of events here, which are probably of importance historically, principally because they relate the history of the ancestry of King David; and it was most likely that the book of Ruth was written down after David became king. That would be a good guess. The events in it were remembered, but they were written down at that time because that's what gave them importance, historically, that Ruth was an ancestor of David's.

Of course it was very interesting that, with the great exclusiveness of the Jews, that this woman Ruth, who was a Moabitess, should have become one of the ancestors of David; and not only one of the ancestors of David, but one of the beautiful characters of the scripture; one whose loyalty to the Lord, and whose loyalty to her mother-in-law, and to everything connected with her mother-in-law, led to the events which are described in the book of Ruth.

Now Professor Millar Burrows of Yale University wrote a little pamphlet some 13 or 15 years ago, which he called *The Basis of Israelite Marriage*.¹¹⁹ I have not

¹¹⁹ Millar Burrows, *The Basis of Israelite Marriage* (1938)

read the pamphlet, but I heard Burrows give a paper at the American Oriental Society, describing a little of how he came to write the pamphlet. And the problem was this: that as Burrows studied the book of Ruth, the marriage customs described in it did not seem to him to fit with the regulations about marriage in the Pentateuch; or with the evidences we find of the marriage customs later on in the Bible; and he had various problems that he couldn't understand as to what the situation was in this regard.

If any of you are interested in making a careful study of marriage customs through the Bible anytime, you'd certainly want to study this pamphlet; I don't say it necessarily has the correct answers, but he is a careful scholar and it would have much of real value. I only mention it here with this in mind, that it brings out the fact that the book of Ruth gives us a glimpse of the life of Israel at a time at which doubtless many things were very different from what they were when they were first settled in Palestine; and also from what they became later on, under the rule of the Kings.

And culturally, there are very interesting problems in the study of the book of Ruth. For most of us, it is important along the two lines: first, it shows the ancestry of David; and the place of this Moabitish woman in the ancestry, not only of David, but of the Lord Jesus Christ; a place which is shared by the Canaanite woman, Rahab, the harlot of Jericho, who is an ancestor of the Lord Jesus Christ, on account of her fidelity to the Lord; a woman of questionable character, but a woman of deep desire to join herself to the Israelites. And God marvelously blesses her desire, and saves her life—not only that, but He gave her a place in the Lord's genealogy.

That would be our first item of importance about the book of Ruth. The second, of course, would be the example of her relation to Naomi; and those verses, of course, we often quote, where she refused to leave Naomi, but declared that she would remain with her and stand by her, stand true to everything that Naomi believed. It's not the high level of her reasoning, to worship the Lord, to worship God the creator of the universe—but it brings home to us the great importance of our lives in the Lord's work; of our personality, and of the way in which we show forth the beauty of the Lord in our lives. Ruth did not know much about the Lord God of Israel; but she knew that Naomi was a woman that she'd want to stand by; and if this religion was good enough for Naomi, it was good enough for her. And while we want to point people to the Lord; and have them see the great worthwhile evidences of Christianity; we want to remember that, for every one we reach that way, there probably would be six people who look at our lives; and they are either drawn to the Lord, or repelled from the Lord, from what they see in our lives.

Well, that is all we will say in this course of Old Testament history about the book of Ruth. And we'll go on to

VIII. The Life of Samuel.

How much do we learn about the life of Samuel from the book of 2 Samuel? Which of you say that we learn more about Samuel's life from 2 Samuel than from 1 Samuel? We shouldn't, because it's a shorter book actually. But is anybody here so bold as to say we learn nothing about the life of Samuel from 2 Samuel? Would anybody say such a thing as that? There seems to be one or two, three, four. I wish you would all immediately raise your hand. That 2 Samuel tells us nothing at all about the life of Samuel. Well, 2 Samuel is not called Samuel because it's about Samuel; because it isn't; it tells nothing about Samuel.

Then why is it called Samuel? Is 2 Samuel the 2nd book that Samuel wrote? How many think that Samuel was the author of 2 Samuel? Is anybody here who is quite convinced he was not the author of 2 Samuel? Very few. I wish everybody was, because Samuel died about two-thirds of the way through 1 Samuel; and it would be rather difficult to write 2 Samuel unless he had the gift of prophecy beyond what any of the prophets ever had.

The book of 2 Samuel is entirely about the reign of David. A much better title for the book would be The Reign of David. It begins with David beginning to reign, and it ends shortly before David's death. 2 Samuel is the book about the reign of David. Why then is it called 2 Samuel? Well, it's about the poorest name for a book that you could possibly imagine; and the Septuagint improves on it; it calls this the second book of Kings. In the Septuagint, 1 Samuel is called 1 Kings, 2 Samuel is called 2 Kings, 1 Kings is called 3 Kings, and 2 Kings is called 4 Kings.

Except for the first book of Samuel, these names are very good; and even in the first book, the last half or two-thirds of it is about Saul's reign; so the titles are much better than the way we have them now. But it has not been accepted much outside of the Septuagint. The Hebrews call it Samuel and Kings; and the division of Samuel into first and second is an arbitrary thing; in fact some of our manuscripts differ as to the place where the division comes. Because originally you have one book, the book of Samuel; and you have one book, the book of Kings. And that being the case, there's nothing wrong with the book of Kings starting with Solomon, the third king, and ending with the downfall of the kingdom; and the book of Samuel starts with Samuel. But you take the two parts of Samuel together, and not more than a fourth or a third of it is about Samuel; it just keeps on until it gets nearly to the end of David's reign.

The names were arbitrarily set. But this book of Samuel has been divided into two parts, 1 and 2 Samuel; and the point of division is a very good one, because the death of Saul made a real vital dividing point in the Israelite history.

A. Ancestry and Youth of Samuel.

The book of Samuel starts with a certain man, but it's really his wife it's talking about; a certain man of Mount Ephraim, his name was Elkanah, the son of Jehoram, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. Well an Ephraimite means one of the tribe of Ephraim, doesn't it? And this Mount Ephraim is the land that belongs to the larger of Joseph's tribes, the tribe of Ephraim.

And this man up there from the tribal region had two wives; one was Hannah and the other was Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, and Hannah had no children; and then we read how Hannah prayed, and the Lord gave her a son; and she dedicated this son to the Lord.

Now this boy Samuel, when he grew up, he came to judge; and he was leader of the people for a long time; and he carried on sacrifice at Shiloh; and that place having been destroyed, he carried it on in various parts of the land. And the critics have two big problems about this; that is, I don't think it's a problem to them; they present it as a problem against our view of the inspired and inerrant Scriptures.

One of them is that Samuel had sacrificed in various places. We'll look at that one later, because Deuteronomy says that they had their sacrifice all in one place; and secondly, that Samuel was a man of the tribe of Ephraim; and how could a man of the tribe of Ephraim offer sacrifices, when sacrifice was supposed to be restricted to the Levites? And in fact to the family of Aaron.

Well, it happens that we have references to him in other books; they tell us that his family were Levites, and so we know that in this case; his father was an Ephraimite because he lived in Mount Ephraim, rather than because he was descended from Ephraim. He was a member of the tribe of Levi. That is brought out, I believe, in 1 Chronicles 6:27 and 34, where we have the mention that he was a Levite. There it gives his genealogy and shows that he was a Levite.

Now the story told here of Samuel, it tells about how this godly woman Hannah prayed for a son; and she promised that she would dedicate her son to the Lord, to the Lord's service. There is no example here, in the story of Samuel, for Christians to dedicate their child to be a believer in the Lord; this is the story of a child whose mother gave him up to go and live in the Temple as a very young child, to have his whole life devoted to the Lord's service. This was not a dedication for salvation; it was a dedication for service. And not for partial service; it was a dedication for complete service, for an entire life of devotion to the Lord.

And so Hannah has this son; but she gave him up almost immediately; she brought him to Eli. And then we have Samuel brought up by Eli; but we have Eli's wicked sons, wicked because they were selfish; they were taking from the sacrifice what they were not entitled to; wicked because they were immoral, as described here.

And so Eli, this godly man, this man who had served the Lord and been a judge and example in so many ways; he had neglected the upbringing of his sons; and it is a terrible warning to us. The Lord promises his blessing for our children; but he does not promise those blessings if we simply neglect the children. He promises that, if we do our part; if we endeavor to bring the children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; if we teach the children; we pray for the children; we endeavor to bring the children to know Him; that we as Christian parents can trust Him to fulfill his promise; and to bring the children to the knowledge of the Lord. We have blessings promised; but they are not blessings promised apart from our playing our part in carrying it out.

We do not need to be full of anxiety, and wonder whether the children will be heathen all their lives; or whether sometime they may accept the Lord; we have a right to know that they will be His; but if we do our part, that the Lord will bring them to himself.¹²⁰ But Eli evidently did not do his part; and so there is this godly man who neglected his children. And I've known evangelists—great evangelists—godly men whose children have been neglected; their parents were always so busy serving the Lord they never had any time to teach their children to know about the Lord; and the children have grown up in utter ignorance in regard to God.

But Eli had this little boy Samuel there ministering in the Temple, and evidently he did his best to teach the child; and when the Lord appeared to Samuel, we have Eli dealing with him in a very beautiful fashion. When the Lord speaks to Samuel, and Samuel thinks it's Eli, and he runs to Eli, and Eli says he hadn't called him; and then, when the Lord calls again, and he runs to Eli again, and Eli sees that the Lord is speaking to Samuel; he tells him that if this happens again, say, "Speak Lord for thy servant heareth." And so Samuel did it; and the Lord told Samuel how he was going to punish the house of Eli for the wickedness of Eli's sons.

And then, when Eli made Samuel tell him what the Lord had said, Eli accepts it as from the Lord. And then, of course, you have the outworking of it—that terrible incident in the early life of Samuel. All who lived in Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, came to know that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. We read in chapter 3, verses 19 and 20,

¹²⁰ [dcb] This is Presbyterian doctrine. Many protestant denominations do not take the view that children of Christian parents are predestined to salvation.

And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord.

How many years is involved in this, we don't know. But in chapter 4 we have the Philistines coming to attack them, while Samuel is still a young man; and there you have the fulfillment of the prediction God had made through a nameless prophet in chapter 2; and also through Samuel in chapter 3. We have the battle; and the people pray; the people show their superstition: let us fetch the Ark of the covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it comes it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.

And the finest things—those which are most used in the Lord's service—can become objects of superstition, as the Ark became here. These people, instead of getting on their knees before the Lord, asking what was wrong, and trying to get their hearts right before him, so that he can give them the victory, simply say "Bring the Ark in, and then we will have the victory." And it didn't work that way. The Lord not only let the Philistines defeat them, but also let them take the Ark; he let them come and capture Shiloh and destroy it, though that's not mentioned here at all. We find over in Jeremiah that the destruction of Shiloh was a terrible example of God's wrath.

At any rate, the Israelites were terribly defeated and the people ran; and here was Eli, 98 years old. When did he judge Israel for forty years? When he was 58 to 98? Or had he finished his judgeship sometime before this? He surely must have been retired for some time; because he was 98 years old; and when he died, he could hardly see. We are told he judged Israel forty years.

And, so here is the youth of Samuel ending with a terrible situation: the Ark taken; the people overcome by the Philistines; the land at about as low an ebb as it's ever been; Eli, the beloved leader, is dead; and Samuel has to take a hold.

=====

(Review) We were looking yesterday at the ancestry and youth of Samuel. We noticed something of his ancestry, and his tribal membership, his call of the Lord, his relationship to Eli, the wickedness of Eli's sons, the problem of chronology involved here, and the situation which led to his being recognized as a prophet throughout the land, and lastly the death of Eli.

B. The Return of the Ark.

The return of the Ark is the outstanding miraculous event in the book of 1 Samuel. There is very, very little that would be marked as miraculous in 1 Samuel. There is much of men's relationship with God; there is some of God's

revelation to man; but there is very little of God's doing things in the sphere of the physical world in a way that would be designated as miraculous in the book of 1 Samuel. But here, the return of the Ark, there is more of the miraculous than at any other point.

We have of course first, the matter that the Philistines had captured the Ark; God had let them capture it because the Israelites had been using the Ark in an entirely wrong way. They had been making a thing of magic of it; and God is always grieved when his people change what he has given for religious purposes into an object of magic. And it can be done with anything whatever. The Bible can be made an instrument of magic: we can think that by having the Bible on our table; by putting it out where people can see it; by carrying it around with us; even by reading a certain amount of it a day; that thereby we are winning God's favor.

God is interested in getting the ideas which are in the Bible into our heads, not in our going through a form of reciting certain words; it's excellent to recite words; it is helpful in getting the idea into our heads; but if we think that the reciting of the words, or the spending a certain amount of time on it, is something that in itself secures God's favor, and improves our position in life, we are making it magic rather than religion.

And of course, the extreme instance of this is that when the Ark of the Covenant—which was supposed to be in the tabernacle as a means of teaching the people lessons about God, and showing them how they can approach to God—was used to take it out into battle, with the thought that then they must win the battle, that was making it strictly a thing of magic; and God did just what could be expected under those circumstances: he allowed the Ark to be taken by the Philistines; and he allowed the Israelites to completely lose the battle. So now the Philistines had the Ark; and naturally they took it as a great trophy, and put it into the house of Dagon their fish god; and they set it up there.

Whether Dagon is a fish god or not, we don't know; we don't know much about the Philistines; but does anyone here know of a reason why it might be suggested that he as a fish god? Yes. The name we know for it is from a book in Hebrew which calls him Dagon; and *dag* is the Hebrew word for fish. And so his name in the Hebrew means "fish." Well, it may have been a Philistine name, which this is just the nearest the Hebrews could come to pronounce it; it may have nothing to do with fish; on the other hand, it may be that this is a translation of the name in the Philistine language.

Yes? (Student. "I have a reference that calls it a grain god.") That this Dagon was the grain god? I haven't checked on this particular point. Now it is possible that the Philistines might have taken over a god from the Canaanites; that would

seem not at all impossible, but certainly not far from certain when they came; and likely it would be the other way, they would bring their own gods with them when they came. And we know so little about the Philistines that actually it is pretty hard to be sure. There may be men who make theories about them, some are pretty dogmatic on their theories, but we don't have much evidence on the Philistines.¹²¹ Thank you for that question.

The word "Canaan" includes what we speak of as Palestine, and also the region to the north, Lebanon; they're both called Canaan in ancient times. Now Phoenicia is used only for that northern section. Phoenicia is what is today Lebanon. It is the area north of Palestine, on the coast; the coastal plain, that was called Phoenicia. Now Philistia is entirely different from Phoenicia. The Philistines are a people who occur mainly in the coastal plain, in the southern part of Palestine, not to any great extent the northern part of Palestine; and not at all in what we call Phoenicia, which is present-day Lebanon. The Philistines came there from either Crete or Anatolia, somewhere to the West. They had a culture; they brought the knowledge of the use of iron with them: how to handle it, to make good weapons of it, and good implements; they had a culture very different from that of the Phoenicians.

The Phoenicians were the great traders; they were the great seafaring people of that time. One of the leading Phoenician cities is Byblos; they got papyrus from Egypt by exchanging it for cedars of Lebanon; and then the papyrus they had left over after they had all they wanted, they took to Greece and sold it; and so the Greeks called it after their city, Byblos; so we get our name "Bible" from the Phoenicians, which should be carefully distinguished from Philistines; the two are entirely different.

Well, now these Philistines then put the Ark in the temple of their god. But next morning they found that the statue of their god was fallen on his face to the earth before the Ark of the Lord. Well, that could happen once; a strong wind could cause the statue to fall over. But it happened again the next night; that's pretty hard to explain as pure happenstance. The next morning they found Dagon on his face before the Ark of the Lord, and the head and the palms of his hands were broken off.

In addition to that, we find that I Samuel 5:6 says that they began to get emerods, they began to have a disease, have boils; and they decided that this was an unhealthy thing for them to have—this Ark—and to hold it down there. Their god was broken, and they themselves were diseased; they thought we'd better get rid of it; and so they said, "Let's get rid of this thing; what will we do with it?" And so they took it from Ashdod over to another town, Gath; and there

¹²¹ Wikipedia states that Dagon was a "god of grain (as a symbol of fertility) and fish (as a symbol of multiplying)." Originally an Akkadian and Babylonian fertility god. The Ugaritic root *dgn* means grain. The name appears in the Mari and Ebla texts around 2500–2300 BC.

at Gath, there came a great destruction; they had an epidemic, these boils again. So they sent it to Ekron. In Ekron by this time, people were afraid as soon as they saw it coming; they didn't want it in their place. So it was seven months in this country of the Philistines; and the Philistines called for their priests and diviners, and said, "What shall we do with it?"

Up to this point, there had been wonderfully repeated miracles—the spread of disease also might be a miracle; certainly it was God's providence, whether he acted in a way contrary to normal procedure in nature; whether the epidemic had been prepared long before and right at that time it would come in; whether it even was on the Ark, and God spread it in that way; we don't know. But it brought the epidemic to the people, and caused them to fear its presence. Whether or not the spread of the pestilence would be called a miracle, certainly the falling over of the statue was a miracle, a miraculous intervention of God; and the other was at least the providential action of God to show his displeasure.

And then the Philistines having this impressed on their minds, decided to send it home. Now what is the next miracle? Who knows? (Student. "The oxen leaving their calves and going to Israel.") The oxen going in the right direction. These Philistine diviners were men of considerable intelligence; they said, "Don't just take this Ark and give it back to the Israelites." They said, "Put an offering with it, a certain amount of gold on it, and images of the boils; and then they said, "Take two milch kine, that is a cow which has recently had a calf; take these two milk cows, which had never been tied to anything; had never been used to pull a wagon; take these cows, and tie them to the cart; take their calves away from them, and lock their calves up. And then let go of it and see what happens."

And what is apt to happen to a cow like that, when its calf is taken away? Is it apt to go off in the opposite direction? Two of them going right beside each other, pulling the cart? One time I was in the High Sierras in California, a friend and I; and we rented a burro to carry our packs; we were going over some pretty high mountains. We didn't want to have to carry two weeks' provisions on our backs. So we rented this burro. We had never used a burro before. We had quite a job in learning the trick of how to get on and get all packed up and everything. And when we got everything packed on this burro, then the man said, "Oh," he said, "you won't mind if the colt just follows behind?" The burro had a colt. We started off with this burro, and the colt followed along behind.

But the man didn't give us a very decent pack strap. He didn't have anything to hold it in front, so as we went up the mountain, it would slip back and back and back further, and over its rump until finally it would slip off. And when we could get it half way back, we would get on both sides and try to hold it, but usually you couldn't hold it, the only thing you could do would be to take it off and fasten it again up in front. We found out later that we should have had a thing

in front to hold it, so it wouldn't slip back, just as we had one in back, so it wouldn't slip forward as we went downhill.

But we came to one place where there was a pass we wanted to go over; and the men in the neighborhood said, "You'll never get over that pass with the burro. You'll slide down the side. It is impossible. You just absolutely can't go through." When you hear stories like this, I never take it at face value. I always go up and see what it looks like up close. We got up close and we saw that we could get across it. It wasn't too bad, but we just didn't have any shovel with us. We had to take our pots and use this to dig the snow out, in order to make a path along the side of the slope there, and it was getting along in the afternoon, as we started across this slope. And we had quite a job getting it across. The stuff we had to pick up and carry it, and then half drag the burro. And when we got it across the pass, and got it repacked, one of us remembered the colt, so we went back and we looked for the colt, and there was the colt on the other side of the pass, and we tried to drive it across. It just wouldn't go. And we tried for about 15 or 20 minutes; the sun was getting lower, and we had to get down out of the snow area of the camp, before dark, so we just went on.

So for the next two days we had the experience of what it was to take the burro with its colt taken away from it. That burro which was very easy to lead before, was quite difficult now. And we had quite a job handling the burro and getting it to go where we wanted it to do, with the colt back there behind. The next day we tied the burro up, carefully to a tree, and left it there, as we went back up the pass and we took a rope with us. And there we got the rope around the burro's colt, and the one got behind him and shoved, and the other one pulled in front, and we managed to drag that burro across the pass. And once we got it across, then it was all that we could to hold it back, because it was in a hurry to get to its mother. And we got it down, and we got the two reunited; and then from there on it was much easier to go across.

Well, it was a vivid experience of what it means to have a burro with its colt left behind; and here there wasn't just one problem in that situation, but two. Two cows that had never been yoked together or pulled a cart; and the calves are kept at home, away from them. And the heavy cart with the Ark on it, and with these cows hitched to it, they let it go, to see what would happen. And the Ark went straight up the hill, up to the Israelites.

Professor Olmstead of the University of Chicago wrote a book on the history of Palestine; and in it he said¹²²,

¹²² A. T. Olmstead, *History of Palestine and Syria to the Macedonian Conquest*, (U. Chicago, 1931). Ch. XX, p.295

Lowling as they went, in protest against the divine compulsion which separated them from their young, the cows took the straight path to Beth Shemesh.

Of course, Olmstead doesn't believe a word of it. He is ridiculing the story, although he does it in such a tone that you would never know it, unless you knew his viewpoint, for it was an entirely unbelieving viewpoint. But in this history of Palestine and Syria—a book which is one of the most exasperating books I have ever seen—written 25 years ago; and it was at that time the most up to date thing on Palestinian archaeology, because Olmstead knew the archaeology thoroughly, and knew the material of Palestine, and Assyria. You would find all of the material up to that date that was known in his book, with good pictures, too. It was an excellent production in a way, but a most baffling, disgusting production for this reason: that Olmstead in his book, *History of Palestine and Syria*, when he would deal with something that everybody knew, which is just common knowledge, all archaeologists knew it. If nobody else would know it, he would incidentally mention it, just very briefly and pass on. But when he would mention something on which there were two or three theories about it, he would take the one he preferred; and he would stress it quite strongly; and then he would come to a matter where he had a brand new theory that nobody else had ever heard of; and nobody had ever accepted it; and nobody else would accept it; and he would give that in such a dogmatic tone, making two or three arguments for it, to drive it home in such a way that the person not trained in archaeology would think, "Now here's a thing that is really certain. Look at all the evidence that Olmstead gives for this. Look at how he stresses this."

And you have to know about as much archaeology as Olmstead did in order to evaluate his statements; and to know which to depend on, and which not. Then when he speaks of this, he tells how they went up there, lowling as they went, as if in protest against the Divine compulsion. Anybody knowing nothing about it, would think, "Here's one thing that Olmstead just has no doubt about." Of course, knowing his viewpoint, you know that this is one thing that he thinks is just a pure fiction, it has no basis in it whatever.

But we, who believe the Bible, read that this happened; and we have no reason to doubt that it did; but I think that we can consider it definite here— unquestionably a Divine intervention in human life—causing something to happen which is contrary to the ordinary forces of nature. If a homing pigeon flies back to the place it came from, that is a thing that we are accustomed to. It happens repeatedly. But when these cows go in the opposite direction—pulling the cart, the two working together—with their calves left behind, the only thing that anybody can do, is either to say that this is a story that is a legend and there is no truth to it; or to say this is an instance when the God of the universe is intervening in order to accomplish his purpose in human life.

So we have here one of the very, very few miraculous events that occurs in either First or Second Samuel.

Mr. Mitchell? (Question: "Then a miracle is a thing that happens that is contrary to nature?") Now unfortunately, the word miracle is used in different senses. In a strictly Biblical sense, the word "miracle"—you want to see what does the Hebrew word mean? And the Hebrew word, the two words used, *'oth* and *mopeth*. The word *'oth* means a sign. It means an evidence. It means no more than that. Out of 200 uses, perhaps 40 of them refer to what we call miracles; and the others refer simply to indications or inferences. So that that one word does not mean anything supernatural. The word, *mopeth*, which is only used about 9 or 10 times, usually means something that is very unusual; but even it does not always mean a supernatural event. The idea of miracle, as an event which shows power beyond what God providentially used, is not taught by any specific Biblical word. But it is an idea which has passed into our theological discussion for many centuries; some of the signs which God gave, undoubtedly, were acts which utilized a power beyond, or different from, what God normally uses in the providential control over life. And in common use, the word "miracle" has come to mean one which is clear proof of supernatural intervention.

Some people define it—I think theologically it is usually defined—as a sign in the external world which is beyond the ordinary nature, and which shows the immediate power of God. You see, there is no Hebrew word which designates that particular idea; but of the signs in the Bible—many of which are God's providentially causing things to work in a certain way—there are some that go beyond this, and so I think it is permissible to use the word in the common sense; but it is helpful that you see in which sense you're are using it; so I think Mr. Mitchell's question was a very good question. Very appropriate.

Yes? (Question). The difficulty there: the way the word "miracle" is most commonly used is a supernatural activity. The really Biblical usage is simply an indication of power. Now there is no established terminology for the distinction. Usually when people say, "Is it a miracle?" they mean, did God interfere with the normal processes of the world? But of course, I personally believe that God is always interfering, in the sense that he providentially controls everything; and causes that all work together to accomplish his purposes.¹²³

¹²³ [dcb] The supernatural timing of some events, for example the Advent of Christ, may correlate with certain celestial events. For example see the Larson's website on the [Bethlehem Star](#) and the dvd *The Star of Bethlehem* which notes the convergence of stars in the constellation Leo at Jesus' birth; and later the "blood moon" lunar eclipse exactly timed to the time of his death on April 3, 33AD. These are purely natural events, in that a modern star chart program based entirely on the observed physical motions of the stars and constellations shows these events when projected back to these specific historical times. These events may have

And I also believe that His power is so vast and so varied that no man has any ability to know about the exertion of His power, about his supervening in the normal course of nature. We have no way of knowing. We are constantly discovering more about the possibilities of nature; and it is perfectly easy to imagine that there may be a hundred times as much as we know already about normal nature. This is part of God's normal providential working. Of course, He works in such a way that it is hard for us to tell sometimes. So I don't think we can always distinguish them. But certainly we can say that these two—the falling of the statue, and the going of these cows—is something which is so very unexpected that it is an intervention in a very unusual way.

Now in the case of the stopping up of the Jordan [Joshua 3], that was just as much a wonderful sign of God's activity as anything else. God could have said to the water, "You stand right up," and they could have done that. God could have caused an invisible line of sound waves to be placed right up and down there, that the water can't get through; and the water would have stood right up there. I went to the dentist yesterday, and a woman cleaned my teeth; and she talked about using sound waves to clean your teeth. Now ten years ago, people would have laughed at this. They would think it was a silly idea. She said to me, "Another five years, and people will be washing their dishes with sound waves."

Now I've never seen a dish cleaned with sound waves. I never before saw a tooth cleaned with sound waves. I held the mirror in front of my mouth and it looked to me as if she had succeeded in cleaning them. She said, "It was the sound waves that did it."

But the Scripture doesn't give us the information to think that was the way He did it here. There He caused it to happen up the river by Adam, which is the place where in 1927, an earthquake caused earth to hold the river back rather than sound waves. Now how are we going to distinguish which is a use of God's power: which he exerts with ordinary natural means, and which he uses beyond the power of nature? To me, nature is God's constant exertion of power; and there are no laws that bind God; that God can break any of them.

But there are habitual methods in which God causes forces that things shall work; and they do work that way. God chooses to work in certain ways. As far as I can see in the Bible, in the bulk of cases where He gives a sign, He causes the forces he put here to work in such a way as to give us convincing evidence, rather than necessarily to work in a brand new way at any particular time—a new course which he might only use once in a million years, or something of the kind. A miracle—that is, the central idea of a miracle—our word miracle is taken from the Latin word *miraculum*, which means a sign. It is something

been planned from the origin of the universe, but they are not "miraculous" in the sense of the suspension of natural laws.

which causes the observer to feel that there is the power of God. It is an evidence of something that startles your attention.

Now, of course, too, I think we can say this about it: that God has as much sense as an advertiser of today, probably a lot more. But our advertisers put ads on the television every day, they could put on a lengthy description of the scientific means by which they would undertake to prove that Viceroy cigarettes have a better filter than other kinds of cigarettes; and chances are that everybody would turn off their TV when the explanation starts; but instead of that, they have a man stand up and say, "Now remember, Viceroy has a thinking man's filter."

"See that man? He thinks for himself; he uses Viceroy." And I've probably heard that a thousand times on the TV; I'll probably have to get it to my dying day; but I have never heard any evidence given of any sort; but it probably has sold many more Viceroy cigarettes than the other would.

Now God has given us evidence; he has given evidence which the thinking person can work out, and study, and see the evidence of the existence of the power of his being. But He is working with human beings who are sinful, and who do not want to know about Him; and He is using means to attract their attention, and strike God's truth to their minds; to drive it home to them; and the evidence is there for the person who will bother to look into it and examine it; but for the bulk of people who won't bother, he uses the striking example to drive the thing home to their minds.

So we need not expect these miracles in the Bible to be presented in the manner of carefully worked out logical evidence. That may be there to find; but the way is the way it is presented—to get it to their hearts and minds, and attract their attention.

Well, the Ark then was brought back to Beth Shemesh and in 5:19,

And he smote the men of Beth Shemesh, because they had looked into the Ark of the Lord, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented, because the Lord had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter. And the men of Beth Shemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God? And to whom shall he go up from us? And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-Jearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the Lord; come ye down, and fetch it up to you.

And here's an interesting critical problem. Yes I think I'll take a second for it; in verse 15, of chapter 6, if you look at that in your Bible it would be helpful. We read from verse 14:

And the cart came into the field of Joshua, a Beth Shemite, and stood there, where there was a great stone: and they clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt offering unto the Lord. And the Levites took down the Ark of the Lord, and the coffer that was with it, wherein the jewels of gold were, and put them on the great stone: and the men of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the Lord.

What's the problem there? Mr. Deshpande? (student) Yes. There's an offering made there not in accordance with the specific command of the Lord. But of course this offering is given in an unusual situation; it's not an ordinary offering, so I don't think it should be taken as evidence that the law of God was not known.

But aside from that the problem is the arrangement here, in which there is a logical arrangement rather than a chronological arrangement of events. And one critical book says, "You see here, how ridiculous this is; it says in verse 14 that 'they cut the wood of the cart and offered the cows a burnt offering to the Lord,' and then verse 15 says 'the Levites took down the Ark of the Lord,' it says they took the Ark of the Lord down after the cart had already been torn up and burnt, for a burnt offering to the Lord." And as it is given, the order is not chronological; it first tells about what the men of Beth Shemesh did: took the wood of the cart and then they offered the cows a burnt offering; and then it tells how the Levites took down the Ark of the Lord and the coffer with it, wherein the jewels of gold were, and put them on the great stone; and then it says the men of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day, so that you have here not a chronological arrangement, but a logical arrangement; what the men did, and what the Levites did; and then how the men of Beth Shemesh continued through that day. And of course the critics claim that it's evidence that you have two narratives put together, because they say it doesn't make sense the way it stands.

But if it is as obvious as they say, that it doesn't make sense, it would have been obvious to the man who put the two narratives together. He wouldn't have put them together in that way. He must have thought that it could reasonably be taken as it is, if there was such a man who put it together. And if a man could put it together and think it was reasonable, a man could write it and think that.

So we simply have to take from it that we cannot take everything in the Bible as being in chronological order; it is often in logical order rather than in chronological; and the same is true with our own accounts. We don't always deal with things as definitely in the order in which they happened, but we deal with what one person did; and then what another did; and what another; and confusion can come from that, if we try to insist that it is chronological.

Well, the Ark then was taken up to Kirjath Jearim, and it stayed there 20 years. Why didn't they take it back to Shiloh? 1 Samuel doesn't tell us. It just says here that they took it Kirjath Jearim; they told the men of Kirjath Jearim it was there; come and get it; they came and got it, and it stayed there 20 years.

Why didn't they take it to Shiloh? 1 Samuel doesn't tell us. In the light of Jeremiah, we think we know; in the light of the fact that the earlier part of Samuel tells about the battle which the Israelites lost, and that Shiloh does not again become the place where the Ark is. Jeremiah gives us a hint that actually there was a tremendous destruction of Shiloh by the Philistines at this time. After Eli died, the people fled, because the Philistines didn't just win the battle and go on home; they did as any sensible force did; after they won the battle, they pushed forward in order to win the peace as well as to win the war; and they pushed forward, and they destroyed Shiloh, and they subjected the Israelites to them; and so the Israelites sent the Ark not to Shiloh but to Kirjath Jearim.

A word about "technical words" in the Bible. I know of a man who insists—he's very much against premillennialism, and one of his reasons, the argument he gives—he's a theological professor—he insists that the word "the end," when this phrase is used, that it means the end of the age, and that the return of Christ in glory to rule all people under him is no millennium. He insists "the end" must mean that.

Well, when I refer to "the end" or "the end of the age", he says I mean the end when it's used absolutely, without any modifiers. So then, when we found a case where the word "end" was used absolutely, he said "Oh, in that case it's used figuratively."

And we have to recognize that in all sciences, we try to use words technically; we say this word will have this specific meaning, and we'll only use it in that sense. But the very scientist, once he gets out of his laboratory, is probably using those same words in common language, without that precise technical use; and science moves forward; and it's necessary to change the technical meaning of the words.

We used to use the word "positive" as meaning the place from which electricity comes, and "negative" to mean the place to which it goes. Now we still use the word "positive" only we mean the exact opposite by it; we mean the same end of the battery we meant before, but we have the opposite idea of what happens; because we now know that electricity goes in the opposite direction to what we used to think, when we made up the terms.¹²⁴ We haven't changed the terms;

¹²⁴ [dcb] Current results from the movement of electrons which have "negative" charge. Thus a "positive" pole has an excess of electrons (negatively charged) which then move towards the

we use the terms in a wider sense; they're used to mean the exact opposite of what they say, but all the way through, rather than to try to change the words, we simply use a word to mean the opposite of what the natural word means. It gives an illustration of how the technical meaning changes from time to time. It's most interesting to see what people do when they try to tell what "the last days" are. The last days are a technical term for this particular time. Well, after all, it means after a time, it means later on, that's all it means, it doesn't mean a technical period at all.

People who use the words—pre-millennial, post-millennial, a-millennial, whatever it is—think, insist, it's a technical term; but they take a different sense for it each time; and every one has to say certain things that are not technical or they can't communicate.

Who have their Hebrew Bibles with them? Mr. Rapp what is the word there, 1 Samuel 1:9? The end of the verse. Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord. It is *heykal*, translated "temple". Another warning—very important—another warning against a very easy tendency, to insist that the Bible always uses words in a specific technical sense.

Now these words—it's important for us to have in mind—let's say a word about them. Our English word "tabernacle" to us means a religious place; but in the Hebrew, there is no word "tabernacle." In the Hebrew, there's the word *ohel*, which means a tent; and in the Hebrew, there's a word *mishkan*, which means a dwelling place. Well, any place where they sacrificed to the Lord is simply called a *mishkan*; but ordinarily it wasn't; ordinarily the word *heykal* is designated a rather permanent dwelling place; when the tabernacle was actually set up it, then was translated "temple".

Before that, I don't recall a place where God was worshipped being called the *ohel*. But the word *ohel*, a tent, could be used of the tent where Abraham lived; it could be used of the tent where they had the center of worship previous to the tabernacle; and it is used of the tabernacle a great deal of the time.

We read in Hebrews about how Abraham lived in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob. Of course to us, it gives an idea of a certain amount of religious ceremony. Actually all it means is a tent; much better if it would be translated that way. But the Hebrew is tent or dwelling, either of which could mean any place; but both of them are used, after the erection of the tabernacle, very commonly for the tabernacle. Now the temple of the Lord, *heykal*, is ordinarily called "the house of the Lord," and the word "house of the Lord" could be used of the tabernacle. It could be so used, but it isn't ordinarily; ordinarily it's simply called "the tent."

"negative" pole which has a deficit of electrons—or equivalently has an excess of protons (hence is "positively charged").

Ordinarily you think of a house as a place more fixed; and the word house (*bayith*) of the Lord is commonly used of the temple. But the ordinary word for temple, *heykal*, comes from two Sumerian words: *é* means house in Sumerian, and *gal* means great; so a great house in Sumerian means the biggest house, much more than the ordinary person had; and it means a palace, the palace of the king, called the *ekallu*, and then the palace of the king¹²⁵. In Hebrew it's used not for the palace of the king, but for the palace of the Lord; so our ordinary word for temple is *heykal* which is derived from the Sumerian word for palace.

Well now this derivation then, as you see, comes to be the regular word for temple; and it is used here in I Samuel 1; but it could be used for the great temple of Solomon. From this use here, there are those who think that at Shiloh they had fixed up a permanent thing, rather than just a tent for a tabernacle. It's altogether possible, since they expected to be permanently there in Shiloh for the center of worship; and so that they built a wooden structure around the tabernacle, so that in some way the wilderness tabernacle was encased in wood, something like that. Maybe wood was put in certain places to make it stronger, so that it could be called a temple, because that word "temple" is used for Shiloh.

But we have no evidence—we have very little evidence said about Shiloh—but we have no evidence of any important change in the tabernacle. The Israelites are told in Numbers how to carry all the tabernacle—who's to carry this, who's to carry that, who's to carry the other. All described in Numbers. And then, when the people came across the Jordan they carried the Ark first; but it would be reasonable to take all the rest. It would seem that the tabernacle must have been set up at Shiloh; but here we have no further mention about the tabernacle—just the Ark we read about—until the temple of Solomon was built. Well, what happened in the meantime? Did the Philistines come up to destroy Shiloh, and the tabernacle got destroyed with it, and all of it was lost? Did the Israelites, knowing the Philistines were coming, take the altar, the incense altar and the laver and some of the valuable things out of the tabernacle and flee with them? Did they, perhaps, take the tabernacle itself and flee? Had they put the tabernacle at Kirjath Jearim? Is that why the people of Beth Shemesh sent to

¹²⁵ [dcb] Irene J. Winter, "Seat of Kingship" in [Palaces of the Near East and the Late-Antique Mediterranean World](#) (1993) states: "The word for palace in Sumerian and Akkadian, the languages of ancient Mesopotamia, is composed of the Sumerian sign for 'house' followed by the adjective 'large, great' (*é.gal*). The Akkadian borrowing is not a literal translation (where Akkadian 'house' = *bitu* and 'large' = *rabu*), but rather is formed from the Sumerian (*ekallu*), emphasizing the composite term as its own cognitive category. At base, the underlying adjective denotes scale, but may also be seen to reflect elevated (enlarged) status and function, such that a more accurate translation might be 'the Great House,' as opposed to merely 'the big house'."

Kirjath Jearim and said, "Fetch the ark," because the things of the tabernacle were there? We just don't know.

There's so much we don't know about the history, that it's interesting to conjecture. I think it's important to recognize the boundary between what we know and what we don't know. Yes? (Student: "Did Solomon use the tabernacle in his temple?") Did he reconstruct all of it? I don't know. Certainly the temple he built; the great bulk of the temple was a new construction; and it's built after the general plan of the tabernacle; but are some of the parts of it the same? I would think they would be used if they existed. After all, during David's time they used it; they had it in a tent in Jerusalem, all through David's time. David said, "Shall the Lord dwell in a tent and I dwell in a house of cedar?" It was there; and I don't think they just had the Ark by itself. They must have had something similar to the tabernacle during those 23 years or more under David's reign; but how much of it they had, we just aren't told

Yes? (Student.) Yes, I've mentioned that before. I'll just briefly mention it again. Two Danes went to excavate Shiloh in 1928 or thereabouts. I'm not sure when they started. They were working in 1929 when I visited them. Shiloh, Beiruth of modern day. These two Danes—one of whom was a very godly man and tremendously anxious to get down to the part where the tabernacle had been, and evidence of it—the other was a museum expert, who was tremendously interested in ancient things, not particularly in religion. These two were working together; and every few days of working, they'd get into a big squabble and have to come up to Jerusalem; and Dr. Albright would pacify them, and get them settled so they could continue working together. And I visited them with him in 1929. The work was going nicely; but the trouble was they dug down to the Byzantine period; and there they found a Byzantine church; and this Byzantine church had a most interesting mosaic; and the museum man from Copenhagen was tremendously interested in this Byzantine material, but to take that up bit by bit, bit by bit, would take two or three years; take a lot of time, a lot of effort, a lot of funds; and the other man was not a bit interested in that; but you can't just destroy things of a later period to get to the bottom; so they were frustrated in getting to the bottom by having all this of the Byzantine period to take up first; and then, before long, the museum man died; and a good part of the money, of course, had come through him, the people who had confidence in him; and the work had to stop. So far as know it's never been started since.

So the work at Shiloh was begun, but only carried that far; we just don't know whether, if we were able to carry it on down—take two or three years to get all this Byzantine stuff out of the way and find what's underneath—we would find things of great importance on this, or not; it's hard to say, because the Philistines burnt or destroyed it; they might have taken away everything of

importance, and there might be little. On the other hand there might be a great deal.

Yes? (Student: "Could some small exploratory diggings be made down to the time of Samuel?") Yes, that wouldn't be difficult, except that in the present state of things... That is, the fact that the excavation has been carried down to maybe 500 AD, 400 AD, something like that—in view of that, it would be impossible to say with absolute dogmatism, "It was not occupied before about 300 AD," but it would be possible to say it was perhaps 90% certain, for this reason; that in two or three places, they could dig pits; and in these pits, they would find pottery and material from the different periods; and therefore, if they find pottery and materials from about 1200 BC; and right above it, they find some from about 300 AD, that is proof that, at that spot, there was no settlement between 1200 BC and 300 AD; well, if they look at two or three spots, that's a fairly good evidence.

Now of course, it is not impossible that the section of the city that has not been excavated had a small gap in between, but that's quite unlikely for two or three places. An archaeologist, before they excavate a place, always makes trial pits; they always do that, because they have to have a general idea of what they are apt to find, in order to make their plans as to how to arrange the dig; how to divide their time; and so on. But it's always done; and it's not final, but you can be at least 80% certain. So I would think that a statement like that, that between 1200 and 300 BC it was not occupied, is a statement that we can make, not with absolute certainty but with pretty tolerable certainty, in view of that.

Well the ark, then, is brought back.

C. The Victory of Ebenezer.

I Samuel 7. Now this does not come for some time because we read here that the Philistines gathered against the people; that Samuel called the people to Mizpah; and that the Israelites had a victory over the Philistines at Ebenezer. And we gather from this that the Israelites had a powerful measure of safety during the succeeding years, but they certainly were not independent altogether. They were subject to Philistine raids; they probably had to pay tribute to them; they were in constant danger from them; they were not in a very good situation; but this was the scene of the victory of Ebenezer. And this victory established Samuel as the leader of the people.

D. Samuel's Circuit.

1 Sam. 7:15ff. And we read, Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life; and he went from year to year to Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpah, and judged Israel in all

those places. And his return was to Ramah for there was his house, and there he judged Israel.

That is probably a town which is about twenty miles north of Jerusalem, though we're not sure. And there he judged Israel and there he built an altar unto the Lord. And of course those who say Deuteronomy wasn't written till later, say the fact he built an altar at Ramah proves that Deuteronomy wasn't yet written [since it requires a single place of sacrifice]. But there's no reason to take it that way; this was the period when they were subject to the Philistines; they had to carry on things the best they could; and it was better to have an altar not under the ideal conditions of Deuteronomy [than not to have one at all]. Samuel did the best he could to maintain the life of the people during this time. This is Samuel's Circuit.

We have had no judge yet of which we've been told that he made such a circuit. Here we have the four places named he went to every year, made a regular circuit; he was the leader of the people; he was trying to keep them together and to help them, but they still were not in a very excellent situation; and so it's quite natural that we have,

E. The Selection of a King.

Israel demanded a king. Samuel had become old, and he made his sons judges over Israel; the name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second Abiah, they were judges in Beersheba, but they didn't walk in his ways but turned aside after lucre and took bribes and perverted judgment. Samuel was so busy with this circuit around these four places, and trying to carry on the direction of the whole nation by himself, that he did not give the attention to the upbringing of his children that he should; he did not learn from Eli's unfortunate example, but followed his bad example; and his sons took bribes and perverted judgment; and the Elders of Israel gathered themselves together; and they came to Samuel and they asked him to give them a king to judge them like all the nations. And it displeased Samuel; Samuel wanted them to continue as they were, but the Lord gave them a king; the Lord tried to comfort Samuel; he said, "They haven't rejected you, they've rejected me."

=====

Review) We've noticed the situation in which the people asked for a king. The situation in the days of the judges was not satisfactory, from any viewpoint. Ideally, for God to raise up a man to be his representative in time of crisis would sound like an excellent situation; far better than picking a man by a hereditary basis, which in most countries has resulted in very, very poor selection of leaders, on the whole. The hereditary principle is not a good principle.

But the system in the days of the judges had no continuity; and it had no unity for the nation as a whole; and the judges were sinful men, even as the kings were; and many of them fell into very severe sin; and the people were constantly falling away; and when a few people would influence others into wickedness, there was no strong central authority to try to meet the problems at once; and while the king situation is a very unsatisfactory one, the judge situation was perhaps an even more unsatisfactory one. In both situations, the man's failure and his sin became very evident. It was not God's purpose to raise up an ideal commonwealth of Israel; it was not his purpose to establish the kingdom of God on earth; it was his purpose to keep alive the testimony, and to prepare a way for the coming of his son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And to show—by his dealings with the different individuals—to show us many things we should know about ourselves, about God, about our relationship to Him.

And here we find a rather mixed situation; we find Samuel the great leader, the one who has been such a blessing to the people, feeling that he is rejected. Actually, if he would think about it a bit, he was getting old; and a man can't always be as good after his power has left as when he was younger. And more than that, his sons were proving very inferior. It was more his sons who were rejected than he. Perhaps the very fact that the people needed strong leadership was to some extent a testimony to the value they had received from the strong leadership that Samuel had been able to give them in the past, which he could no longer give, and which his sons were certainly not able to give.

At any rate, Samuel was very much hurt; and you will find some of the finest men—some of the very best men—will have their weak points; will be hurt where there's little reason for them to be; and here God tries to comfort Samuel. And he says, "Samuel, it isn't you that they are turning against, it is me." Of course, people are always turning against the Lord; and God lets Samuel tell the people all the bad side of a kingship. The way that a king is apt to lord it over them; the way he's going to have heavy taxes; he will take away from their good things; and all this, the bad side of a king; but the people were conscious of the danger and of oppression; and anything seemed better than that to them.

1. The Request of the People.

The people said "Nay, but we want a king to rule over us." The Lord said, "Hearken to their voice and make them a king."

2. The Selection of the People.

Samuel was to give them a king, but he looks to the Lord to show the man. And the Lord picked a man whom the people would not have picked; he picked a

man who was not outstanding; he was not well-known; but he was pretty close to the ideal that the people had in mind. He was strong, an able man, an effective leader, a man who would be a good soldier; and he was a man of great humility.

And you find in Saul's character that he refuses the kingship, tells how he's unworthy, tries to run away from it. You see the most wonderful illustration of humility; and what a lesson is this for us; because Saul the man, who was so humble that he could not possibly accept the kingship, was the man who after he became king was carried away by his pride. Carried away to where he looked for his own glory and refused to follow the Lord's will.

How easy it is to be mistaken in people's humility. As long as people haven't much, they're apt to be very, very humble. There are some who have nothing who are very, very proud; but many a person is very humble when he has nothing. But the minute you put him in a position of power, he gets tremendously conceited and tremendously overbearing. You just cannot predict, until a man has been in a situation like that, how he is going to react.

It was Lord Acton, the great English Roman Catholic historian, who was so disgusted when they tried to declare that the Pope was infallible. Acton had been defending Roman Catholicism all his life; he was a great Professor in Great Britain; he made this declaration when he saw the effort to put so much power in the hands of the Pope, that he said, "Power leads to corruption; and absolute power leads to absolute corruption."¹²⁶ And I don't think that Acton left the church afterward; but I think, like most of the Roman Catholics, he swallowed his words—though many of them had opposed this tendency tremendously—the tendency to absolute power.

(Mr. Deshpande). Thank you very much; I couldn't think of the word soon enough: "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Mr. Deshpande comes from a British-speaking country [India], where they would be more familiar with these British sayings than we in the United States. I know that a few years ago here, it was very widely quoted. I imagine it is still there. It was a great statement that he made and very true.

The humblest man—you can't always tell how he will react. Somebody once said to me—when I was in Seminary, I heard this statement made in a class of pastoral theology—"Don't trust when you first go to a new church, the first man that seems to be so friendly and so kindly, and so helpful, don't immediately proceed to give him everything you can and put yourself right into his hands. He's apt to be very disappointing." He said, "I forgot those words when I went into this church; and when I found this humble young man, who was so fine, I

¹²⁶ Full quote: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men." Lord Acton in a letter to Bishop Mandell Creighton, April 5, 1887.

just did everything I could to get him into a position of leadership where he could help me; and then he turned against me violently."

And we ourselves have to be in a position of stress before we can know how we will react to it. We're all weak vessels; and Saul seems to be an ideal man; and judged by every external standard, he was; but when he'd been in this situation awhile, he revealed by his actions what his heart was. God gave the people a man after their own heart—not the man they would have picked—but the man was the type they wanted. And then he proved how wrong they were.

Yes? (Student.) Yes, God blessed David the king, and he promised him that he would always have a son to sit upon the throne; and when we read later in the Bible that that occurred, we can know that it was not contrary to God's will that they have a king; but if you just read this one chapter alone, "God says to Samuel they haven't rejected you, they've rejected me," you would think that he meant the kingship was not his will. The later events prove that that is wrong. We have to interpret scripture by scripture, and compare it together. I would say that, in the end, any kingship is wrong, except the kingship of God himself. That is Jesus Christ, who is God. But we live in an imperfect world, the world of sin, the world of human beings; and in this world, any human being is imperfect. In the situation there, they needed strong leadership; and there was no system known then to give it to them except the system of the kingship.

Yes? (Student. "Did they reject God?") I don't think so. I don't think that God felt they rejected him; I think God was trying to comfort Samuel; I think he was saying to Samuel, "Don't you feel bad about this." Samuel was a great and good man. And Samuel felt hurt that the people wanted a king; but after all, he should have realized that he was too old to be their judge any more, and his sons were not worthy; God is comforting Samuel. God is saying to Samuel, "The people are not satisfied with God being their king, and a human being raised up like Samuel to do it."

Well, that was an excellent system, so long as you have the right man raised up; but there's only been one Samuel in all of their history. You can't compare Eli with him, or Barak with him, or Gideon or Jephthah or any of them. They did a good work in their own place, but not a work like Samuel. And the kings—most of them—were not like Samuel either; but the ideal system would be God ruling directly. The people said, "No, we want an earthly ruler." The people were putting faith in an earthly ruler, which an earthly ruler does not warrant. So that, in a sense, they were rejecting God, but I think we have to compare it with what he says elsewhere: he says, "David is king; the people must obey David, David's son, whom God is putting his support on." God does not change, but God expresses himself partially in situations. I think we have to interpret.

And he tells them what the king will do; these are things which a good king won't do, most of them; some kings are very bad, and most of them have a tendency that way. It's the wickedness in the human heart that gives a man the possibility of doing these things.

So God shows them the evil and the danger of kings; but at the same time, he grants their request and gives them a king, which is what they need in that situation. The people's concern on the whole is not on their relation to God, it's on their deliverance from danger. It is on the political situation. They wanted deliverance from the Philistines. They didn't get it right away; they didn't get it till David, but they did get it. God had given deliverance from other dangers through the judges, but the Philistines were a greater, more difficult danger.

Well, I don't think we can learn a tremendous amount more about this particular matter of God in relation to kingship; but I think we can get a very valuable warning against taking one verse of the scripture and building too much on it. Compare scripture with scripture. When you find one verse, don't try and twist the rest of the Bible to fit it; take all the verses and see what they teach; get the balance of them all. If you take the one statement here—"They've not rejected you, they've rejected me"—from that you could take the whole business of God's blessing on David to be contrary to God's will. You have to fit the two together and balance them to see what God's will really is. God's will is that He be King, but with an earthly representative. And the earthly representative, the hereditary system is a pretty poor system, but perhaps it was as good a system as any that had evolved yet.

3. The Details of the Selection of a King.

The Details of the selection of a king are very interesting and very worth studying.

It's interesting in connection with this to know that, in general, the people seemed to think of Samuel more or less as a "soothsayer". You can go up to him and he'll be able to tell you where your lost asses are. A way of getting help for the ordinary affairs of life. Of course, that wasn't what Samuel was about at all: Samuel was God's leader. But you will find that all through life, people are using God's leadership, and trying to make it just a means of meeting their own immediate needs.

God *is* interested in our needs, but he's more interested in the great problems of the kingdom; and he wants us to be, too.

The story of the selection of Saul, his anointing and all that, is a very beautiful story; and as you read it, you just about feel that now it's perfect; they've got a man who is ideally suited; a man of humility, a man of ability, a man who is just

perfect for the situation. But later on, we find how Saul changes—as so many men change—when they have power. Well, we're not looking at Saul right now; we're looking at Samuel, so we go on to

F. Samuel Rejecting the King.

And Samuel, who had to go against what he wanted in order to give the people a king, now has reconciled himself to it; he rejoices in the king. But now he has to go against the king they've got and tell them it's not the Lord's will that they have it. So poor Samuel is in a position there—he has to, in order to represent the Lord rightfully—he has to change his attitude several times: it is necessary, as situations change.

And Samuel finds here in Chapter 15 that Saul is not serving the Lord right; Saul is putting his own will ahead of God's will; Saul is not obeying the Lord fully. Samuel had to rebuke him and had to tell him that the Lord is going to punish him for it.

If you want to find contradictions in the Bible, chapter 15 here is a very interesting example. Because here in chapter 15 we find that Samuel said in verse 29, he said to Saul, "The Strength of Israel [God] will not lie nor repent, for he is not a man that he should repent." That's what it says in verse 29. But right back in verse 11 we find, the word of the Lord came to Samuel, saying "I have repented." Now there's a verbal contradiction if there ever was one. The Lord says "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king." Samuel gives the message to Saul, he says "The Lord has rent the kingdom from thee and the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent." Here we have verbally a flat contradiction.

In actuality of course, we don't. Because the first means God is grieved at what Saul has done. In view of the changed circumstances, it is necessary that God change his attitude toward Saul. God has not changed, but Saul has changed. In the second case, Samuel says to Saul, "God is going to remove you from being king." Now, he says, "No sacrifice or presents or bribe or anything you can do is going to make a change; God is not a man that he can be moved in that fashion; not man that he should repent, the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent."

You have to take the implications of these things. In view of the implication of them, there's no contradiction; but the flat verbal statements certainly seem like a contradiction. God says, "I have repented." Samuel says, "He is not a man that he should repent." He won't repent. There's no contradiction, but there appears to be.

Here's another warning against grabbing three words out of a verse and building a whole theology on it. We're all too ready to do that; we must compare scripture with scripture and see what it's really talking about. Well, the message is given by Samuel; God has rejected Saul; as he says in verse 28, the Lord has rent from thee this day and given it to a neighbour of thine; he has done it this day, but it was years later before it actually worked out; but in principle he had done it that day.

So, in chapter 16 then, we have the nucleus which is part of this rejection. Samuel represented the Lord and the rejection of Saul as king. The Lord said to Samuel, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel?" Here we see the character of Samuel. Samuel was against having a king. But when they got one and the Lord enabled him to pick him, Samuel was thoroughly loyal to Saul.

And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

So now we have him going down to Bethlehem in order to anoint the new king. And then it's interesting here, from the viewpoint of prophecy, to see how God reveals himself. Here was Samuel, if there ever was a man that knew the Lord, that lived close to him, that followed the Lord and did His will, it surely was Samuel.

But look at Samuel here; in verse 6, they bring Jesse's oldest son,

And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the Lord chosen this.

And he called the next one; and Samuel did not know who the one was. Each one he saw, he thought, "Surely this is the one." God said it will be a son of Jesse. Now which one will it be? It shows us that the prophet does not have the mind of God. He was not omniscient. He didn't know everything. He knew what God gave him; and then he tried to figure out what it meant.

And here God says, "It's a son of Jesse." All right, let's see the sons of Jesse; here's the oldest one, this must be him; look what a wonderful looking fellow he is. God says, "No, that's not the one." So he tries the second; no it's not. And

when the Lord said to Samuel, "It's going to be a son of Jesse." And then all the sons of Jesse have come; and of every one of them, the Lord said no, so Samuel is in a quandary. How can it be? The Lord says it's a son of Jesse, and yet every one that comes the Lord says no. So Samuel has to find an answer,

And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

And so he anointed David to be the future king. The Lord thus enabled Samuel to anoint the first two kings. The first one, the one that represented the ideal the people wanted; the second, the one who didn't seem so much; but yet, when you got to know him better, it was found that he was every bit as much the ideal the people wanted as Saul was; and in addition to that, he had a heart that was tender toward God. Though he made great mistakes and fell into serious sin, he repented sincerely from the heart and sought to do better; he sought to follow the Lord instead of becoming hardened in sin and in his pride as Saul did.

Well of course we look more at David later; we are now looking at Samuel, so we go on to,

G. Samuel's Death and Appearance to Saul.

And for this, we have to skip clear over to chapter 25 which tells of his death; and the beginning of 25 is his death.

Many years have passed, during which Samuel has been there with his little group of followers serving the Lord, but having little influence in the nation. Now in chapter 5, Samuel dies; and all the Israelites gather together; they lament him, and bury him at Ramah. And then in chapter 28, we find that the Philistine power has become so great; yet Saul has gone on in his pride; though Saul has been very zealous in carrying out the Lord's will, and in tearing down everything that was clearly contrary to the Lord's will, he has, in his pride and in his own desire for his own power, turned against David; he has hated him and tried to kill him; and now Saul inquires of the Lord; and the Lord doesn't answer, either by dreams or by Urim or by prophets.

And he sees the hosts of the Philistines, in verse 5 of chapter 28; and he's afraid, and his heart trembles. Verse 3 tells us that Saul had put all those that had familiar spirits, and wizards, out of the land. Saul had enforced God's command that they should not be tolerated; but now Saul gets no answer from

the Lord; and instead of humbling himself before the Lord, and seeking to find what's wrong with him so the Lord will answer him, he turns to the forces of iniquity for his answer to the problem. Instead of humbling himself before God, he goes back to that which he himself had forbidden, in order to seek an answer to his problem.

Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.

When my aunt was in Los Angeles, and her brother was living in Montana, she was taken ill—very ill—with a cancer in her breast, from which it spread from there into the lung and eventually killed her. And when she was in a very serious situation with that—but far from the end—her brother in Montana had wandered from his parental state; and he and his wife had been looking into all kinds of interim fantasies; they went to a spiritualist; and as soon as they came into the room, the spiritist put a hand right on the spot where my aunt had the cancer. And said, "Oh the pain, the pain, the pain!" And they said, "Well, what is going to happen?" He said, "Oh terrible; but I don't see any death." His sister was going to recover. He went down to Los Angeles and saw her; then as a result of her testimony and her death, eventually he himself turned to the Lord

But it is interesting that this medium, way up there in Montana, as soon as he came into the room, pointed to the place where his sister, who was on his mind so much, was suffering. Now one of two things is proven: either they had the speed of finding out information about the people who were going to come, in order to palm it off on them and make them think they had some supernatural power, which certainly often is the case; there's a terrible lot of fraud in that sort of thing. Either that, or the demon, or whatever it was that was speaking through this spirit medium, was able to read his mind, and to see that thing that was burdening him and to express it. But certainly they had no power to predict death. So while they pointed out exactly what the present situation was, the prediction of the future was entirely wrong.

Now in this case, was this woman of Endor a fraud who worked tricks as many people of that kind do today? Or was she in some relation with a familiar spirit? Was there a demon who was speaking through her and using her? I heard Sir Oliver Rod the great physicist in 1919 or 1920—about then—who was the head of a spiritist group in Great Britain. His son died in the first World War; and he thought his son would come back through one of these mediums and talk to him; and I heard him speak; and he spoke many things that were very difficult to explain on the ground simply of fraud

He told one thing, I remember, which I thought was very amusing; he told how the people in his spiritist organization—the men—in order to prove that it was

their spirit after death, they would write a message; and they would put it on a piece of paper and seal it up; and no other human being knew what it was. Then he said, "If they get a message through a medium, in some part of the world, and the message is that message, they know that's from that spirit. They know the person who is dead is actually communicating with them. Of course it doesn't prove anything of the kind; if they actually were demons, they certainly can read what's being written, or what's hidden in the paper. He said he hadn't written any such message; but he was sure if he did, he would forget it and wouldn't be able to give it after he died.

But he told how one time the president of their organization at that time was off on a vacation; and he came back from his vacation; and he came to the headquarters in London, and they said "We've got a message which came in through a medium." I think the medium was in India—I'm not sure—somewhere a long distance away, this message came in; and it was sent there; and they couldn't figure what it meant; they tried to figure out what the message meant, but they couldn't make any sense of it; and when he saw it, he said, "Why that's my secret message," he said, "that's what I've written and put in an envelope, so that after I die when it comes in it proves I'm communicating."

But here he was, still living, off on a vacation; and the message had come in. I think the demon overreached himself and proved the exact opposite of what they wanted him to in that case. But he gave that; he was a man of honor; he gave that as a true incident, which he said had happened.

While there is a tremendous lot of fraud in it—there's no question of that—there are those events which certainly seem to go beyond that; and it might be the actual spirit world—the world of the demons that is trying to injure us through it—and the Lord has said we are not to tamper with it; and he commanded that this should not be permitted in Israel; and Saul forbade it; and yet Saul himself, in his extremity, looked for one.

A lesson for us: to watch out that our lives keep up to our testimony, instead of falling short of it, as we so easily can.

And so Saul looks for this woman; and he put on a disguise, so she wouldn't know who he was. And he came to her at night in this disguise and he said, "I pray you, bring to me your familiar spirit, and have him bring whom I will name to you."

And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? And Saul sware to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing. Then said the woman, Whom shall

I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.

The woman evidently was tremendously surprised; and most interpreters—most Christian interpreters, I believe—think that God chose in this situation to cause that Samuel should come back and speak; otherwise that spirit, that lying spirit, would have pretended to be whoever they wanted it to be; pretended to be, and given such information that he would know; it might be more than a human being might know; he might see things that happen; he might read things that were secret; he might be able to give information that we wouldn't have access to; but he would have no way of predicting the future except guessing. He might even have pretended to be Samuel; but the woman was amazed when she realized that it wasn't her spirit trying to make a pretense; it really was Samuel, and she knew this was King Saul.

And she described Samuel as she saw him; and Saul bowed before Samuel; and Samuel did just what you might expect him to do under the circumstances. If he wouldn't get right with God and get a real message from the Lord, how can he expect that God will send his holy prophet Samuel to give him a good message?

Samuel told him that the Lord had departed from him; taken the kingdom from him; given it to David; and that he himself would die in the battle.

So Saul got his answer; he didn't profit by the experience, but he acted just the way the average person will do. Even Christians, when they get into such situations, instead of turning to the Lord, will possibly turn to all sorts of folly that doesn't really bring them anything.

So this is the way it's told in the scripture. I don't think we can dogmatically say that Samuel actually came back and talked with Saul; but don't know of any interpretation that looks to me half as good. It's my inclination to think that this is the correct interpretation of it. I certainly don't think that a lying spirit was pretending to be Samuel, and saying the true things that Samuel said in this situation.

It reminds me a little of what John Wesley said about the Bible. Somebody asked John Wesley who wrote the Bible, and John Wesley said, "Well, there are five possibilities." He said, "It might have been written by good men or by angels, by bad men or by devils, or by God himself. Now." he said, "Let's look at the first two possibilities. If good men or angels wrote the Bible, they couldn't write a book which was full of lies. And for them to say thus saith the Lord, God says this, this is God's word, when it wasn't God's word, it was their word, it would be lies that good men and angels couldn't stoop to." "So," he said, "good men and angels can't have written the Bible." "Now," he said, "if bad men or demons

wrote the Bible, they couldn't hold all the high ethics and the fine principles that the Bible contains. So it can't be bad men or demons that wrote it." So he says, "the only possibility left is that God himself wrote it. Because God can truly say God was writing it and God could uphold all the high standards."

Well, in this case, it seems to me the only explanation that appears to me reasonable here is that it actually was Samuel; otherwise it would be an angel representing him and that doesn't seem at all likely. Certainly it was not a demon.

So that's the end of the account of Samuel in the book of I Samuel; and we move on then to a major heading,

IX. The United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom we divide into three parts, according to the three kings.

A. Saul.

Saul is described in 1 Samuel. He appears in 2 Samuel only in the lament over him in the first chapter and in Chronicles only in a statement of his genealogy and a record of his death. He is dead before the beginning of 2 Samuel as is Samuel himself. But the whole last half or two-thirds of 1 Samuel has Saul as its main character, or as a character who is very prominent.

1 Samuel has more to say about Saul, actually, than it does about Samuel. And Saul is seen here as a man who made a wonderful start, a man who gave every promise of being just what Israel needed, and yet a man who was terribly disappointing. And Saul was the first king; but from a historical viewpoint it's interesting to note that the kingdom was a comparatively weak thing under Saul. Saul became king; he bravely led in rescuing Jabesh-Gilead, which is over at the opposite side of the Jordan from where the Philistines were. Then he and his son had victories over the Philistines; they did some excellent work, but in the end they were destroyed by the Philistines.

And they did not win a complete independence at any time, as far as any real peace is concerned. Israel was always under the shadow of the Philistine danger, always threatened by them, always inferior to them; and of course a big reason for this was the iron weapons that the Philistines had. Saul was a king of a petty kingdom, struggling to maintain its existence, struggling valiantly and to quite an extent successfully. But he is altogether different historically from David. David is a character of far greater power than Saul, as far as human power is concerned.

The character of Saul is an important thing for our study, and for our application to ourselves. The rejection of Saul was a rejection—as we have seen—for incomplete obedience. A rejection for putting himself, his intelligence, ahead of God's commands; putting his will ahead of God's; and then trying to rationalize. He tried to represent how he would make wonderful sacrifices, and so on. But Samuel said, "To obey is better than sacrifice."

It's easy for us to rationalize. There's much humor made—a rather mean kind of humor—about ministers who work and wangle and scheme and plan to get a call to a bigger church. And then, when they get it, they talk about how it's the Lord's will; and there's nothing they can do but accept it. Well, there is much hypocrisy of that sort; but there certainly are many of whom that's not true at all; they are anxious to find the best possible opportunity of serving the Lord, regardless of whether it is a large church or not.

It's very hard for us to guess the real motive of an individual. In Saul's case the Lord knew the heart of Saul. Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart. If our heart isn't right, we can't accomplish anything for God. But we should remember that men don't see our heart, they see the outward appearance; so it's worth our giving some thought to the outward appearance too, in order that we may accomplish for the Lord. The outward appearance is important in our testimony; the inward reality is important in our acceptance with God and his blessing. Both have their place. But Saul was rejected of the Lord; and eventually he was killed in this great battle.

There is a problem that the critics raise about how Saul was killed. How did he die? They say there's a contradiction in the Bible. You read the end of 1 Samuel [31:4-5]:

Saul said unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.

That is the account we have here at the end of the book of 1 Samuel. In 2 Samuel we have an Amalekite who comes to David; and he says to David that he saw Saul; and Saul was not yet dead, and Saul said to him,

Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.

Now there's a contradiction in the Bible isn't it? Chapter 31 says that Saul killed himself, but Chapter 1 of 2 Samuel says the Amalekite killed him. It's a contradiction. Well, what is it a contradiction between? It's a contradiction between what the armor-bearer thought he saw and what the Amalekite said. And which of the two is true? I don't think the Bible tells us. The Amalekite may have lied, thinking that he would win favor from David; He may have seen Saul dead and taken his things and brought them to David, thinking he'd get a reward from David; and he said he had killed him thinking he would surely get a reward, when he had taken them off Saul's dead body.

And on the other hand, Saul jumped on his sword, and the armor-bearer thought he was dead and the armor-bearer killed himself. I don't think the armor-bearer stopped to make a clinical inspection, to feel for his pulse, to make a real check; I think the armor-bearer sincerely thought he was dead, but

that doesn't prove he was. He could very conceivably have appeared dead to the armor-bearer, yet have been scared of his life, that the Philistines would get him and torture him. So which of the two is true, I don't think the Bible has told us; but in either case there's no contradiction in the Bible. The Bible says the Amalekite says one thing; it says the armor-bearer thought another thing. Then of course it tells how the armor-bearer was killed; it says, so Saul died and his three sons, in the next verse; but that doesn't necessarily mean that he was dead at that instant; it means that on that occasion he died, and the three sons died, in that battle. So I don't think that that says that the armor-bearer necessarily was correct in his interpretation. Perhaps the better guess of the two was that the armor-bearer was correct rather than the Amalekite, but we just don't know.

But I'm absolutely sure that the Amalekite thought he'd gain favor with David; and that's where he was mistaken. David killed him. But the Amalekite thought he would gain favor by it, and he may have made up the whole story entirely.

(Student: "Was it fair of David to do what he did?") That would be a matter for the Lord; I don't think we're in a position to say. My own personal guess is that David was very shrewd. My guess is that David felt that he was the next king, that for him to kill the killer of the previous king, even though he [David] was an enemy, made him all the safer. That's my guess. It may be doing an injustice to David. I don't know.

(Student: "Should David be criticized for what he did?") There are pastors who feel that they are the supreme authority, and nobody should say a word against them, and I think that this is true; that the pastor who is presenting the Word of God, and truly seeking to follow that Word and standing by it, people should hold up his hands, rather than to criticize him; but I think if they see ways in which they think that he's done wrong, they'd do him a kindness to come to him privately and mention it to him; and if he's the man he ought to be, he'll take their private criticism and be grateful for it.

Unfortunately most men aren't what they ought to be. But if he is, he will be grateful for the criticism. But in any event, when a man is serving the Lord—truly seeking to serve Him, and standing by His Word—it is a sad thing that other people, who believe in what he believes, will let themselves notice petty little things, and criticize him in such a way that they injure his influence, and hurt his effectiveness—it's usually thoughtlessness, but it hurts the cause of Christ. But I don't think we can take it to an extreme. I don't think that the minister is a god by any means; he makes his mistakes, and he shouldn't be able to get away with them too easily—if they're bad mistakes. But in general, I think we should hold up his hands, rather than criticize him. But that's not what this is talking about, this is talking about the king.

And so then

B. David.

1. His Character.

And his character is certainly not at all like the character of Joseph. Joseph is the suffering one who suffered patiently; who stands adversity; and who in prosperity also is free from blemish; there is absolutely no blemish recorded of Joseph in the Old Testament. Some people try to make out that there was a blemish in thinking he is conceited on account of his dream. It is not impossible that this is right, but remember he was only an immature youth; and it certainly is going beyond the evidence to say that it is a blemish. The evidence would seem to be that God gave Joseph the dreams, and they predicted something that was going to happen in the future; and it isn't fair to blame Joseph for that. So I don't think that we have any evidence that Joseph was conceited, though there are those who think that psychologically the dream proves it. But that is the only attempt I've ever heard of to find a flaw in Joseph. He is about as near a perfect man that you find in the Bible outside of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But David is a very different kind of a man than Joseph. No one can read very much about David without finding that he has plenty of flaws. He is a man who would be cast out of the synagogue in most groups, if they only knew the outward aspect of his character. He was a bloody warrior; he was a man who, at the end of his life, took revenge on people who had done their best to help him through his life, but who had failed him in one point perhaps; and he took revenge on them and had them killed. He committed adultery; and caused that the injured husband should be murdered by having him put in the forefront of the battle. He is a man of very great faults and very great sins.

And yet he is known in the Bible as the man after God's own heart; the man who was true to the Lord; the man who followed him faithfully. And the fact of the matter is that David's wickedness—while it was very, very great—was wickedness in matters that are easily observed; and in those of us who are pure from the particular vices of which David was guilty, there are sins of the spirit very often—selfishness and meanness and spiritual pride and other matters—which in God's sight may be just as bad, or almost as bad, as the sins that David was guilty of. So from the viewpoint of the judgment of his character in its external features, he probably was in external appearance far worse than most Christians; but in God's sight, who sees the inner character, he may not have been much worse than a great many who seem very, very fine.

But there's another aspect of character which is perhaps even more important than this one—though this one is very important—and this other aspect of character is the sincerity of the repentance from the sins into which he fell. And

the sincerity of his desire to be as the Lord wanted him to be. While he showed his pride and his arrogance and his selfishness, yet in great crises very often there was revealed a real inner humility of character. His refusal to injure Saul when he was right in his hands; when to most people it would look like an ideal opportunity to get a kingdom that had been promised to them; and they would feel plenty of excuse for injuring Saul, after what Saul had done to them... He said, "Saul is the one whom the Lord has put into this position; the Lord can take him out if he choose, but I'm not going to take the thing into my hands."

And when Saul died, David—knowing God had promised to make him king—left it in God's hands to do it; he did not himself endeavor to bring it about. He did not try to advance himself in this particular way, where the Lord had promised that the Lord would do it; and he left the matter for the Lord to bring him the glory that the Lord would give him. He's a wonderful example to us; when we get deeper into his character; and when we see his behavior in crises; and when we see his attitude toward the Lord in particular; it just shows that you have to look deeper in order to see what one's real character is.

Of course, in the days of Christ, the Pharisees were the religious people, the pious people, the people who were looked up to and esteemed by everybody; these were people who wouldn't even step into the room with people of low moral character, they were considered so excellent in their character; yet Jesus poured out his denunciation upon the Pharisees; and he showed how others whom the Pharisees looked down upon often had a spiritual attitude which was far superior to that of the Pharisees.

And it's the same lesson that we find here in relation to David. And of course along with that, David was a man of accomplishment; he was a man of energy and a man of ability; he was a man who used his ability to accomplish something. He wasn't just somebody who happened to be picked up from a life of lazing around, who found Goliath challenging the armies of Israel, and just stepped out in faith and overcame him.

He did step out in faith on God, but it was when nobody else would dare to do it. Doubtless, he had been practicing a very great deal with that slingshot, as he took care of the sheep. In fact, as he told Saul that he would go, he told him how he'd met a lion and a bear, and had destroyed them in order to protect the sheep. And that took courage for a young fellow, with the type of weapons they had then—no guns or anything—not to run from the lion and the bear, but just stand and try and protect the sheep, to step out and fight them deliberately in that way. It showed that he was a man of character and of ability, and of practice; and he took the ability that he had developed, and put it in the Lord's hands when he stepped out with his slingshot. Later on, of course, you never read of him fighting another battle with his slingshot. He used the armor after he had practiced with the armor. He had to learn how to use it; but rather than

take Saul's armor when he had not practiced with it, he took a little instrument that he was well-practiced with; and he used the things that he had already used; and used them for the Lord.

But as to his character then—in addition to the spiritual matters we've been mentioning—he was a man of real ability and of real accomplishment. In fact, you read how, when he went down to the Philistines, he tried to make himself appear to be an insane person, in order to save his life. He was thinking things through, studying what to do; and after he spent this time with the Philistines, when he came back he understood their secrets about iron; and it wasn't long after he became king, before the Israelites had just as much use of the iron as the Philistines had. And in addition to that, of course, there were many more Israelites than Philistines; and so the Philistines rather soon disappear as a source of danger.

It was not the bravery and courage of Samuel and Saul that freed them from the Philistine menace; it was the technological knowledge which David acquired and made available; of course, combined with his good military leadership. It made the Philistine menace, that for at least 70 years had been almost insuperable, become largely a thing of the past.

Well, so much now for the first matter of David's character. Then

2. The Summary of his Early Career.

You of course, most of you, are quite familiar with most of the details of David's career; this is one of the points where a good deal of attention is paid in our Sunday Schools. There are so many interesting stories and illustrations of spiritual facts contained in it, that while some elements in it are neglected, most of it we are fairly familiar with.

The critics of course find a great problem in Chapter 16; after you have, in the first part of the chapter, you have David anointed; then in the second part you have Saul asking them to bring him somebody who could play well, and they find David; and when he needs music, they bring him; and David plays with his hands, and Saul is refreshed, and the evil spirit departs from him; and then, in the very next chapter, it tells about the defiance of Israel by Goliath; and David comes from feeding his father's sheep in Bethlehem; and Saul asks who he is; and the critics say that this doesn't fit together, and that one of the other stories belong there. But it's not necessary to reach that conclusion.

Some try to get around it, when Saul meets David just before the battle with Goliath, in saying that when Saul said, "Who is your father?" that he remembered David, but just had forgotten his father's name. That's possible; but in a society where so much stress is placed on a father's name, as there was

there, it does not seem extremely likely. However, it doesn't seem to me that it is necessary to consider that the two stories cannot both be true. It is necessary to consider the question of whether chronologically they go in this order; whether they are necessarily told in the order in which the things happened. Very often we have events told in a different order than the order in which they occur. Very often the order is logical rather than chronological.

And it's not at all impossible that it was after the fight with Goliath that he became the musician who played for Saul. We don't know; I don't think that difficulty is one sufficient to make a serious obstacle to accepting all of the scriptures in the Bible here as true. But if it said that, after he worked with Saul he went back to his home, and then he came up to the army, that would be one thing. But it doesn't say that; and we are reading into the scripture to insist on chronological order where there is not a clear statement that the chronological order is there.¹²⁷

Well, in David's early life, then, there is his anointing; his playing before Saul; his fight with Goliath; of course, after he had fought with Goliath he becomes a man of prominence in the land; there's no reason he couldn't still play the music for the king; that was a very prominent position anyway. But in chapter 18 we find how David and Jonathan become such close friends.

But now Saul becomes jealous, because he hears people saying Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. Which of course shows the smallness of the man. A great man is interested in developing his subordinates, and he is happy when people speak highly of them. But Saul was displeased, and became jealous. And how much of that there is in Christian work! People who wouldn't think of falling into the baser sins of the flesh, will show the utmost jealousy time after time. We're all still in the flesh; we're all far from being completely sanctified; and again I implore you to take these as warnings to ourselves.

But as far as others are concerned, help them if you can; but when you find them not to be everything you would desire—I've known people whose faith has almost been shattered when, after receiving great spiritual blessing from some great evangelist or Bible teacher, they are put into a situation where they have a little more intimate contact with him; and they have heard him speaking of some other person in a jealous way; or showing what seemed to them a mercenary attitude ... It might be they are simply relieving their feelings without meaning it quite like it sounds.

All too often, I've known people who have almost lost their faith because of the

¹²⁷ [dcb] Or, perhaps Saul didn't particularly note the identity of the minister to his miseries. However in the case of Goliath's slaying, the identity of David would certainly be well-known because of his astounding achievement. He wasn't in this case just another therapist.

people who have been such great spiritual blessings to them and then have proven to be human and sinned. It is very important that we rest our faith in the Lord, not in other human beings. If we rest it in other human beings, we are bound to fail. If we rest it in the Lord, we cannot fail.

Well, this friendship of David and Jonathan of course is a very beautiful picture; and it is unfortunately sometimes taken simply as a humanistic thing, and that's all we get as far as David is concerned. I have a friend who was president of a large Christian organization; and he had another friend, who had brought him originally into this fellowship; and he told me just recently how this other friend had brought him into this fellowship years ago, and led him to take the position and the viewpoints that he has now taken. This other man had been working in different circles; and he heard he was in the area, and he thought, "How wonderful it would be to have him come and speak to the students," and so he invited him.

And he said the other man came there; and he gave him a wonderful build up, and told how it was through him he came to his position and his outlook; and how much blessing he received him, and all that. And then he said, the other man simply started in and gave a message on the friendship of Saul and of David and of Jonathan and what friendship can mean in our lives. Purely a secular humanistic thing based on David and Jonathan. Evidently the other man had so changed that he did not want to be known as a believer.

But it is sad to see one who in his early life is presenting the word of God so truly and faithfully, now giving beautiful little talks on the glory of friendship such as the friendship of David and Jonathan. It is a beautiful story; but it certainly is one of the lesser lessons given, rather than one of the greatest. God wants us to have a friendly attitude, and love toward all believers, and desire to help them; but he wants us also to realize that, even though someone seems most friendly to us, he may prove to have sin in such a way that it will cause them to turn against us; and so the story of David and Jonathan is well worth knowing, but it certainly is not one of the major lessons of the Bible.

Then we have a long series of accounts of various incidents, as Saul gradually turns more and more against David, until finally he is going to kill David; but David escapes, partly through Jonathan's help; and then we have that long account of David's wandering; where he is hiding in the wilderness, with a band of outlaws about him; and Saul is hunting with an army to get him; and time after time, he nearly gets him; and eventually the danger becomes so great that David gives up that sort of effort to avoid Saul; he goes right down to the Philistines, the enemies of Israel; and spends his time down there, where he would at least be safe from Saul, though perhaps he is in some ways in greater danger.

In order to avoid those other dangers he had to pretend things that he wasn't; and do things which we certainly cannot take for examples. Well then, we find the death of Saul; and one of the great battles between the Israelites and the Philistines; and David not even being able to be there to help, because of the situation. There's much in these events that is helpful for study but we will look on to

3. The Summary of His Career as King.

This covers the book of II Samuel. This is, in some ways, one of the greatest books in the Bible—the book of II Samuel. A book that is filled with the most interesting spiritual lessons. I commend it to any of you for devotional studies. Take it and go through it chapter by chapter; and in each chapter, notice the examples to follow, and notice the errors to avoid. You will find plenty of both.

I don't recall anything that we would call miraculous, in the strict sense, in the book of II Samuel. It is an account of the reign of the king, with his relations with other kings around, and relations to his family. But it is a section in which you learn much about Saul's successes and his failures—his good points and his bad points, his relation to the Lord. And it is well worth careful study. From the viewpoint of the history of Israel, it was not the highest point of glory in the history of the nation, but it is that which produces its highest point.

It was the highest point of success in the history of the nation when David took Israel, a little group of downtrodden people subject to the Philistines, and under constant danger of destruction by the Philistines, and he built them into a people that were now entirely independent, and that ruled over an empire which included three or four times the area that they themselves lived in. He developed it from a little group of tribes, that was hardly heard of more than a few miles from where they were, into an empire that for a brief time was to rank beside the great empires of the world.

It so happened that at this time the empire of Egypt was at a low ebb; and the empire of Assyria was at a low ebb. David's power was certainly not at all comparable to either of these empires at their high points; but at the low ebb at which they were then, his power may even have been superior to their power for a brief time. And so a good part of the account of David's reign as king is made up of how he conquered one nation after another around about; he established this empire, and made the independence and safety of his people clear and definite and strong. And that's the theme for a good many chapters through the book.

We have practically nothing of archaeological background that helps us in our understanding or corroboration of the career of David. I spent a whole morning once in Palestine, just a few years ago, looking for the place where Absalom

kept his sheep shearers; and I found the place, mentioned in II Samuel, where Absalom kept his sheep shearers. And the fact that it would be so interesting to find a place like that—of so comparatively little importance—shows how little evidence we have on the big things of the time of David. The relationship with the big empires was not yet established to any great extent, and we have no evidence from other countries referring to David or to his empire. And as far as archaeological remains are concerned, nothing has been found that throws light on David's reign, David was too busy fighting to put up many monuments to celebrate what he was doing; and the Israelites weren't so much for putting up monuments anyway, as the Egyptians and the Babylonians. These spent a long time putting up great monuments. The Israelites were a little more practical, as a rule. They were interested in doing what they could; and when they put up a monument, they would just put some cement on the front of a rock, and make an inscription on it; but it soon disappeared. It would look very nice for a while, but pretty soon it disintegrated; and it certainly would not stand until today, so we don't have archaeological evidence on David's reign.

But in the Bible, historically, it is not so important as to what happened then as to what it built up—the empire which Solomon received from David. The interest of most Christians in the book of II Samuel was not so much in David's political experiences, and his relations to other nations, and his conquests of them, as it is in the religious life of Israel; of this we have comparatively little in the book, but we have a little. And more particularly, in the relation of David to his family and the great rebellions which came against him when Absalom tried to make himself king.

In the religious life here, the outstanding event is the bringing of the ark up to Jerusalem. Before mentioning that, we should notice the political event which precedes this. That is, the establishment of Jerusalem as the capital. David originally became king just of one tribe, just of Judah, and a little area around Judah. David was from the tribe of Judah; and after Saul's death the people of Judah received him as king, but the other 11 tribes made Saul's son king over them. So David for 8 years was simply king over one tribe—but the strongest of all the tribes. It was about a fourth, or a third, of the whole of Israel.

And David reigned there in Hebron; and Ishbosheth reigned in the North. But then, after Ishbosheth is murdered, the people begin coming over to David; then they make him king over all Israel. Then he, in statesman-like fashion, looks around for a better capital; and he saw that Jebusite fortress which had stood in the midst of the land ever since the conquest. It's told in chapter 5 verse 5,

In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.

This of course is a summary statement; it is not chronological; it summarizes the whole thing. Verse 6 goes back to the time when he had just become king over the whole land and says,

And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither.

Of course this means, "Our city is so strong that the rest of us can just stand back and let the blind and the lame protect us; you can't get in." I don't think the average reader gets that is what it means; but it is obvious with a little thought. It means, "David cannot come in hither," an explanation which in the English translation doesn't add much to the understanding. Continuing with verse 7:

Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David. And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind that are hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.

This is a rather cryptic statement; but with a little examination, you find that what it means is that "the gutter" was a place through which they got water, the water supply. A small, narrow place which nobody thought of anybody climbing up. And the walls were so great and so strong; and there were the sides of hills. They never thought anybody could get up there; just a few blind and lame men on the top could throw rocks down if anybody tried to get up there.

But here was this narrow gutter; a man could crawl up it in the middle of the night, and nobody would suspect it or know it. And Joab and a few men went up the gutter, and got into the city; and once they were in, they were able to open the gates and make it possible for the others to come in; and it was taken quite easily by this expedient of entering in a way that the Jebusites never dreamed that they would be able to enter.

I read, maybe 20 years ago, a story which somebody wrote, showing what he considered the backwardness of the Chinese. He said that when the British took Hong Kong, that the Chinese had had strong bases and fortifications at the southern end of it, but the British had come around and entered from the north; and some of the Chinese had yelled at them, "You are coming from the wrong way. It is the other way that you are supposed to come in." I was interested when I read that story about 20 years ago.

And then a little bit later, I read that the British fortified Singapore, spending a hundred million dollars on it in order to make it absolutely safe from attack; and then World War II came; and we find that the British had repeated the same mistake that some of them had been laughing at the Chinese about; that in Singapore they had made such fortifications from the sea side, that it was almost impregnable; but the Japanese, instead of attacking from the sea side, they came down from the north; they came down through Malaya, and attacked Singapore that way and took it over. They laughed at other people for making a mistake, and then made exactly the same mistake themselves!

The people of the Jebusites here, they thought it was absolutely safe. There wasn't any chance of them coming that way. They came in a different way. And we, in our spiritual life, will find that the place where we never dreamed Satan can attack is the very place where he attacks. It is good for us to study these stories of David and these others and see where the Devil got ahold of them and see if we aren't in danger in the same places ourselves. So the Jebusite city was over-confident.

But I think it would have been taken anyway. David was a very capable soldier; he now had abundant forces, and could have seized it, if nothing else; but he took them in this way, through their over-confidence.

(Student: "Isn't it possible that they are suggesting here that David's own forces are both blind and lame?") It would be, by inference at least, that you wouldn't use blind and lame men against blind and lame men. (Student: "The American Standard Version says here in the note, blind and the lame men shall not come into this house.") Yes, well that is the last part of the verse. "Wherefore they said, the blind and the lame shall not come into the house." It may be that that is what they said, or it may have had some other interpretation; I don't know. But the first part says "Whoever gets up to the gutter and smites the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind that are hated of David's soul, that one shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, except thou take away the blind and the lame you shall not come in hither."

(Student: "blind and lame with blind and lame. It would be an insult. The inference would be that we are not opposing anyone but blind and lame men so we didn't put blind and lame men on our buttresses.") I know. I don't know how anybody could think of the forces of David as blind and lame, because they were pretty capable soldiers.

(Student: Well then, why would they put blind and lame men up there?) I think what they meant was "we wouldn't need a strong force. We've got such a strong wall and, such a splendid fortification that we don't need to, even if all of our other men would take sick and die and be unable to fight: simply just the blind and the lame would be enough to keep you out. Except you take away the blind

and the lame you can't come into the city. We don't need our strong men. Our blind and lame are quite sufficient to protect us." It was their boast of the strength that they probably had.

And how easy it is for us to make similar statements. "Oh, we are perfectly able." I've talked with people making constitutions for organizations. I'd try to get them to put something in, in the case of some misunderstanding or some dispute or some division. They would say, "Oh, we don't need anything here. Why, we all love each other so much that such a thing couldn't possibly come here." Well, the thing is, you never know what might happen. It is just unthinkable. And four years later I've seen the same people at each other's throats; and in a situation where each one of them was just looking for statements in the constitution, things that they could take ahold of. But when they were making their plans, it just never entered into their heads that such a thing could ever happen.

As long as you have human beings, Satan is going to look for a chance to get ahold, and to get them to fighting over non-essentials, and opposing each other on personal matters; and we've just got to recognize the fact and not let Satan enter the matter; but recognize he will use others—even some times he'll probably use us too if we don't watch.

I think that they were taunting. They were saying, "We don't need to worry about your soldiers." Of course, they've been at least a couple of hundred of years with the Israelites around them, with probably ten times as many Israelites within a few miles as they were then; but they'd been all these years and they had never had any real danger from them; and of course, the reason was their walls were so strong and the situation was so evident that nobody thought of the possibility of taking it.

When somebody said, "Well now, David is looking for a good capital for his land. He is not satisfied with this little place of Gibeah that Saul had as his capital and he is thinking that this would be a nice place to take and make his capital." "Oh, don't worry about that," they said, "Our blind and lame people alone are enough to keep him out, with our strong fortifications." It didn't mean that he didn't have a good army.

Now it is just possible that they did not even bother in putting their best force there. They might have left the fortifications unprotected. They ordinarily would have particular people for it. But I don't think they would purposely put incapable people there. (Question). The Hebrew translated "gutter" here is *tsinnor*, which would seem to be a way up inside where they had water; and nobody ever thought of anybody coming through there. It would probably be quite easy to defend, but it would be very difficult to go up. So difficult that

they never thought of the possibility, and Joab and a few men made their way through the gutter. David probably saw the possibility.

David had probably been thinking of this even years before, when he was going back and forth to Saul—one of Saul's men. He was looking at that place and thinking, "If I was ever king, that would make a wonderful place for a capital; but how would you ever take it?" and he looked at it all around, and was constantly on the watch. So that he was aware of this. And David said, whoever will go up the gutter and smite the Jebusites... (Question) Well, no, that's not what gutter means here. It is not a gutter in that sense. It is a gutter that goes up and down. Shaft would be better, a water shaft. They have found a place they think is probably it—it corresponds. It could be it; and they think that is where it is; but of course, the city was used for so long afterward; and so many changes were made, that it would be hard to be dogmatic, but it fits with the statement, that they went up the gutter.¹²⁸

Well, that was the first great statesman-like act of David—to seize the city of Jerusalem and make it his capital. It is very interesting how, in later history, Jerusalem is the great center of Israel. "Oh, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning, if I forget thee." All this tremendous attachment to Jerusalem. Here they were in the land all through the period of the Judges, and Jerusalem was a foreign city. Jerusalem was in the hands of the Jebusites. It became the great Israelite center later, and was one of the last cities that they took.

It was a foreign city all through that period of the Judges. I was talking with a German last summer over in southern Germany. "Ah," he said to me, "Bonn, that's no place for a capital for a country." He said, "Berlin ought to be the capital." I said, "Why? Because the Hohenzollerns lived there?" "Oh," he said, "we don't care anything about the Hohenzollerns. Berlin is the sort of a place for a capital."

Well, Berlin is because the Hohenzollerns made it such; and they happened to live there, and they made it the great capital. It is probably more centrally located than Bonn, but the attachment comes to the place from its use. And Jerusalem was nothing up to this time of David, after all the years of the Judges and the reign of Saul. But it became the great center. Today when you speak of Palestine, you think of Israel; and you automatically think of Jerusalem.

¹²⁸ [dcb] This "gutter" is possibly identified as "Warren's Shaft" discovered in 1867. According to Wikipedia, the shaft has four sections: • a stepped tunnel; • a horizontal curved tunnel; • a 14m (45 ft.) vertical shaft; and • a feeding tunnel. "In 1998, while a visitor centre was being constructed, builders discovered that there was an additional passageway, about 2 metres higher and starting from the horizontal curved tunnel, that skirted the 14 metre vertical shaft, and continued to a pool much nearer the Gihon spring. ... Ceramics found in the tunnels by these more recent archaeological excavations firmly date the Warren's shaft system, and the tower defences, to at least the 18th century BC. This expressly places it as having been developed in the time when Canaanites controlled Jerusalem."

When the arrangement was made for the establishment of Israel [in 1948] they weren't supposed to have Jerusalem; they were supposed to have their capital down on the plains somewhere; and it would have been much more sensible; but they moved up and took it—just outside the wall of the old city—they made their new settlement there. They established their capital there; not because it is the ideal place now, with the arrangement of Israel now, including the old Philistine land, that fine plain; but because of the tradition, because of the name that was attached to it.¹²⁹

Names come to be attached that way; Jerusalem is this late in the history, that it becomes an Israelite city; but it becomes a great city. David had a good eye in picking it out, and seeing its importance, and establishing it. Then of course, the very fact that it was the city of David gave it standing. He is the great hero of Israelite history.

So he establishes Jerusalem as the capital. Then he fights with the Philistines and puts them down as a vital force; and then he says, "Now we've got to have Jerusalem, which is the political center of the country, also be the religious center of the country." And so David proceeds to get the ark moved up there to Jerusalem. And he has a great ceremony, a great celebration, in which they bring the ark up to Jerusalem.

And here we read, in II Samuel 6, that David rose, and went down to the house of Abinadab, where the ark was, and his sons, Uzzah and Ahio, his sons drove a new cart; and they put the ark on it; and they started to bring it to Jerusalem; and as they came along on the cart, there, with the cart carrying the ark, the ark began to topple over; and Uzzah put forth his hand, and took ahold of it, to keep it from falling over; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah and God smote him for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.

Some people will say right away, "How unjust and unfair to take this man, who was simply trying to do a good thing, to keep the ark from falling, and kill him. How wicked, how unfair a thing."

An Englishman said to me, he said, "The God of the Old Testament is not my God. The God who would do the things that are recorded in the Old Testament is not my God. Well, if you want to set up an ideal of what you think God should be, it would be easy to say the God of the New Testament isn't your God either; it isn't a question of what we think God ought to be, but what He is. In finding out what He is, we have to interpret the Scripture as a whole; not just let one verse or one statement tell us, drive us into a conclusion.

¹²⁹ [dcb] in the 1967 war Israel gained control of all of Jerusalem and the area west of the Jordan river. At the time of these lectures Palestine surrounded Jerusalem.

God was angry because Uzzah tried to hold the ark and he smote him. What kind of a wild, thunder God of Sinai is this? You've just got to watch everything you do; if you try to put out your hand to try to keep the ark from falling, He may smite you dead. What a treacherous sort of a being are you dealing with? Well, you can get all that in this verse; but take it in the context, and see what it means, and it is a different thing altogether. Uzzah may have been a wicked man who deserved to die. Uzzah may have been a righteous man who deserved nothing but good at God's hands. God said, "I would like to have him up in heaven, and He took him."

I don't think we are told whether Uzzah was a good man or a bad man. We've all got to die sometime. Suppose Uzzah died of sudden heart difficulty at this instance, instead of ten years later after having three years of agony with cancer. Well, he would be much better off, than he would have been to live ten years longer. There is no great punishment of Uzzah involved here; but there is a lesson given to the people as a whole; that God wants His regulations observed, and the ark moved the way that He said it should be moved; and He intervenes in this violent way at this point, which is not a punishment upon Uzzah; but it is a rebuke to David and the people as a whole; that is, to see what way God wants it done, instead of simply going ahead as it just seems to them the right way to do it.

It wasn't Uzzah's error—he was trying to keep the ark from falling off the cart; the fault was on putting it on the cart in the first place; because God had given clear instructions in the Pentateuch that the ark was to be carried on staves with Levites bearing it; and the people who deserved the punishment were David, for not taking care to see that it was done right; and the officials to whom David had committed this task, who simply had them take a cart and put it on that way.

But this isn't a matter of punishing individuals; this is a matter of giving an object lesson to the people that, right at the start of the establishment of Jerusalem as the ecclesiastical center, it was important they go back to the regulations in the law and see exactly how God wants things done. They've been through a period of what you might call a religious interruption. They've been through this time when, with the Philistine bands going over the land, they couldn't have one established center of worship; they couldn't follow their regulations minutely.

It was God's will that Samuel should go from place to place; the word of God should be proclaimed; the sacrifice should be carried on; the religious life of the people should be kept alive. But now they are established; they're settled; the time of interruption is over; now they should look into how things should be done exactly right.

And men could have gotten up and given speeches about that; they might have discussed it for years to no effect; but the one act of the Lord, in causing that Uzzah should suddenly die at this point—of course he was doing the only thing he could do in the circumstances, he couldn't let the ark fall over. But he was doing what should never have been necessary for him to do, because the ark should have been carried in a different way. It drove the lesson home to the people of the importance of doing things in the way that God had prescribed.

Yes? (Student. "Don't you think he did this innocently?") Well, he was still breaking the commandment of God by touching it; and God said if anybody would do that they would die; and God had to bring that out; he had to do it. It was an object lesson, that they should follow the regulations. It was an object lesson given for that purpose. Now Uzzah may have been a very wicked man who deserved death at this point. On the other hand he may have been a very righteous man; we just don't know. But the important thing here wasn't the effect on Uzzah; we can be sure that God in his mercy deals justly with Uzzah as he does with everyone of us individually, but not necessarily in this life.

The best of us may suffer in this life and go to an early grave; and the worst of us may have a happy, healthy, prosperous life, and die wealthy and full of years in this life; but we can be sure that in the perspective of eternity, each one of us will get what we deserve. And in the perspective of eternity, Uzzah got what he deserved. And in that, the matter of his dying at this moment was a matter of very, very small importance of God's dealing with Uzzah, but it was a big part of God's dealings with the nation here, to drive home to them the lessons that he wanted them to have.

There were doubtless many others who had done far worse things than Uzzah, whom God did not strike dead; just as in the wilderness, there was the one bad case of the man who was gathering sticks on the Sabbath; there were doubtless many others who had done far worse in the way of Sabbath breaking; but this was an object lesson to drive home the importance of the matter.

In the New Testament, there are Ananias and Sapphira in the beginning of Christian history, at this vital point in getting the church started right. They lied to the whole church, and God struck them both dead immediately, at that point. It was not altogether for the effect on Ananias and Sapphira, but for its effect on the church. There have been many, many since that time who have lied regarding church affairs; many, many who have not been struck dead. And God deals with Ananias and Sapphira in eternity; the fact that they died at this particular time is a comparatively small part of it. But it was done to impress upon the church, at the beginning, the importance of sincerity and uprightness and truth in dealings in the church; and doubtless, it had a great deal to do with Satan not getting such a foothold in the church in the very beginning that he might have destroyed it.

Yes? (Student. "Was this a miraculous event?") This is a definite part of God's plan for a specific purpose; but whether he did it by causing that the thin wall of one of the sections of Uzzah's body should at this point break through; or whether he caused it by taking a part which was strong and had absolutely no weakness in it and suddenly broke through there by forces which are not otherwise in use in the world; we are not in a position to say. I personally would just not know whether it was a supernatural act of God or whether it was a providential act of God. I do know it was a sign; in that sense, in the true sense of the word miracle, it certainly was a sign; a sign to the people of God's displeasure, and of God's direct control of the affairs of men. So in the true meaning of miracle it was a sign; but in the meaning of miracle as a supernatural event by the direct interposition of God, whether we can say that, I don't know.

Well before we finish, I asked the question [in an assignment], "How much material in Kings is paralleled in Chronicles?" What material is parallel? Nobody found all the material parallel. One found 90%, I think, and one only 10%; but I think we all agree there is material here in Kings that is not parallel in Chronicles. And some of the parallels are very very close. Some of them are almost word for word.

Now why does Chronicles parallel some material and not others? (Student.) Well, there is a special interest in Chronicles in the Temple and the altar and the worship service. Though I doubt if that enters particularly into this section; that would enter more into other sections. The fact of the matter is, that you will find that nearly every chapter in Kings that deals with the history of the kings of Judah is paralleled in Chronicles. And I don't think you'll find any chapter in Kings that deals with the history of the kings of Israel that is paralleled in Chronicles, unless it also is extremely vitally concerned with the kingdom of Judah. That is to say, the vital difference in this section is that the book of Kings tells you about one king; and it tells you about the other king; it goes back to Israel; it goes back to Judah. But Chronicles takes the one kingdom of Judah and goes right straight through. And ignores the other kingdom except as it relates to this one.

Now it would be interesting to see how many of you noticed that principle—it was not required for the preparation today; it simply was an interesting matter to see how many noticed that principle? Yes? It would seem to be likely that about 40%, that would be nearly right.

A large part of this material in Kings is about Elijah; and Chronicles says nothing about Elijah except where it is specifically connected with the southern kingdom; and there isn't much as it is.

Yes? (Student. "Does Chronicles say it is about the Kings of Judah?") I didn't bring my Hebrew Bible with me; one of the few days in this class I haven't; but I came directly here from the dentist, and I didn't stop along the way; I forget whether there is a statement like that at the beginning of the book or not. Most of the books really don't have any title. I would say "The chronicles of the kings of Judah" would probably be an excellent title, but if by "properly" you mean what is the divine title—the original title—I don't think that's mentioned; but it may be that it is and I haven't recollected what it is.

Of course, when we just say "Chronicles" and "Kings", it doesn't give any idea of the contents. But actually it's really a chronicle of the kings of Judah. In Kings, it's the kings of Judah and the kings of Israel. So the word "chronicles" applies to both, the word "kings" applies to both. They're very, very poor titles, but the fact of the matter is one is about the two kingdoms; the other is about the one kingdom. And it is true, as it was pointed out here by someone, that there is a great interest in God's word, in the temple. There's much material given about that, that's not given in Kings. But that doesn't come into this particular subject more than other subjects.

=====

So I'm going to speak about David. We had already discussed his call, and his early experiences during the reign of Saul, and of Samuel.

We noticed last time something of the character of David, and that's very important—to understand the character of David and to see the very, very vital Bible teaching, that this world is not made up of two kinds of people—moral people and immoral people. It's not made up of two kinds of people—righteous people and wicked people. But it is made up of two kinds of people—justified people and those people who have rejected Christ. Both are sinners; both are wicked; and sometimes your lost are much better people than some of your saved. The important thing is not where they are, but what direction are they moving in.

And your lost person may be a better moral man than your saved man. He may be a man with a fine Christian background, which has saved him from much of the temptation that others have. He may be a man who has been raised in a fine ethical environment. He may be a man who realized that honesty is the best policy, and knows he'll be happier if he is honest. He may be any of those things; but his life is built around the principle of self; and is in general focused on self rather than on God, though that may not be obvious.

Those are the two kinds of people in this world: the justified and the lost; and if there's anything that God hates, it's the Pharisaic attitude that I am holier and better than thou. Now the Christians are better than the non-Christians; they

are better on the average; but there are many individuals among them who are inferior to many individuals who are non-Christians. But the justified are moving in one direction, the others are moving in another direction.

And David is not an example of a moral man or of a naturally good man; he is not a passive, easy-going character who finds it very, very simple to keep from stepping on other people's toes. He's an aggressive, vigorous sort of a man, who does everything that he does wholeheartedly and energetically; and therefore his sin expressed itself more flagrantly, and becomes more obvious than the sins of many another person who doesn't have the backbone, the push that David had. And David was in many ways a very wicked man, but he was a man who was on the whole seeking to do God's will. He was often repentant of the sin into which he fell—not doing it insincerely, doing it in full sincerity. And he was a man who therefore, in his attitude and in his progress, a man after God's own heart, and is so called in scripture.

And then from a historical viewpoint it is very important that we realize that in the history of Israel, David made a tremendous change in this history; because while Saul was one who was resisting the Philistine oppression, and doing it on the whole quite well; David was one who stepped out and overcame the Philistines, and reduced them to practically a nullity; and then proceeded to conquer all the nations around. And instead of Israel being a few tribes oppressed, and constantly under danger from their enemy, you now have a real empire with David's reign, with the territory two or three times as large as that of Israel, and the people therefore living on an economic basis far above what they were before David became king.

He made a tremendous difference in the economic, political, and social life of Israel. He was very, very important as a historical figure. But we have no other historical evidence on it than that in the Bible; because we have no references in any of the materials from the great empires of antiquity; and we have no archaeological material of the written kind that can definitely identify him.

We should also note about David his trouble with his family, where he gave about the ultimate example of how not to take care of children that anybody could possibly give, in his treatment of Absalom. His treatment of Absalom which varied, like that of so many parents, from extreme giving in to anything they want; to extreme sternness about some particular matter. And he oscillated from one extreme to the other, which had about the worst possible effect on Absalom that he possibly could have.

And in the end, when Absalom rebelled against him, and the great part of Israel went out with Absalom; when the loyal people who stood by David defeated the others; and David was again able to come back and become king; he was so filled with his sorrow that Absalom had died that he almost threw aside the

whole situation; and Joab had to speak to him pretty harshly about it—about recognizing that the welfare of the millions of people in the kingdom was more important than his own personal sorrow over his son.

And then David saw that, and proceeded to act in a reasonable way; but there we have him giving way to this error over Absalom, but he had not shown reasonable common sense in dealing with Absalom in the years before. It's not an example for us to follow, but an example to avoid, if you can see and study exactly where the errors came in, and what the results were. And you can see, on a far smaller scale, many of the same errors made in just about any parents you want to look at. And it's very helpful to learn something from mistakes we can avoid. You can often learn more from that than from simple instructions in how to do things right. And so that is a valuable thing for us.

And then of course in connection with David, there is the covenant with David, which is a very important thing, perhaps more from the viewpoint of prophecy than from history. But we find it brought out in 2 Samuel 7. There we read

[W]hen the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies; That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee.

And Nathan being a prophet, anything Nathan said must be right, mustn't it? And therefore he speaks as a prophet, as the inspired authority of God and this is God's will that David shall build. If so, then the Bible has contradictions in it, because Nathan proceeds to say the opposite thing a few verses later.

Which simply shows that there's no such thing in the Bible as a prophet or an apostle who has an indelible character that everything he says is right. The prophets and the apostles were sinful men like we are, and they make mistakes; but God led them in that which they were to write as part of His Word, to keep it from error; and God gave them messages, gave revelations to the prophets and to the apostles; and these revelations were directly from God; but in addition to the revelations, most of them said many things that were their own ideas.

And here Nathan, as a human being, and seeing what a fine attitude David has; and how right he is to think of the fact that God's house should be as well taken care of as his own; and that he should have this interest, it was a fine attitude on David's part; and Nathan drew the reasonable human conclusion from it. And when we don't have the Word of God, we have to draw a reasonable human conclusion; and that's what Nathan did. But his reasonable human conclusion was not what God's will was in this particular case; and God gave him a revelation, to tell him that this wasn't what God wanted him to do.

And so here we have Nathan the prophet speaking; but he wasn't speaking as a prophet; and no one was a prophet all the time; he was a prophet when God gives him a message. God does not give messages all the time to his prophets. Because Nathan speaks out of his own heart—his own wisdom, and it's good wisdom—but just in this particular case, God's will is something else. And, so

the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.

Why, he says, "I've lived in a tent all this time;" that is, His headquarters has been there. "When did I command that I should have a temple built? Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David," and God goes ahead and tells how he dealt with David; and he gives David a wonderful promise of what he is going to do for David. And he says, David has been thinking of God's house. That is wonderful. The whole line of David is described and also the one who is to climax the end of the line.

We have that about the prophets there; we have it here about David; and so God gave these predictions often. As time went on, it became clearer what it meant. Not that anything they said was wrong; but that it could be better understood and fit together with other parts; and they saw that there was to come a great prophet, and a great king. But they didn't know, till the time came, that these two were the same man.

Yes? (Student. "Was John that great prophet Elijah prophesied in Malachi?") Well, that would be, you see, that there would be a forerunner before each coming. That would be the same sort of thing, only two comings, two forerunners. This would be the two very closely related things: the forerunner for Christ at his first coming; a forerunner for Christ at his second coming; neither of them, perhaps, actually Elijah, but they both might be represented symbolically by Elijah because of their similarity in character and actions.

Yea? (Student: "The Muslims call Mohammed the prophet.") Yes. Malachi promises a prophet and they say that this prophet is Mohammed. Well, we have to examine what is given and see if Mohammed fits it. I remember Dr. [Samuel] Zwemer saying he thought that it was the promise, the prediction of a false prophet, rather than this one, that referred to Mohammed there, but at any rate, which it is we have to study the life of Mohammed; study the statements here, and draw our conclusions. Mohammed certainly had a right to say the Bible has predicted that God will send prophets; and that he will send a very

great prophet; but whether he was the one or not, is a matter which needs investigation. You can't come to a conclusion on it without deep study.

The Mohammedans of course recognize that Christ was a great prophet. They say Christ was one of the greatest of all the prophets; but they deny his death; they deny his saviorhood; they deny his resurrection; and they hold that Mohammed, coming later, was a still greater Prophet; and some of them feel that Christ will come back again, and then be even greater than Mohammed because he was still later in the line. I don't know how widespread this is, but I do understand there are some who believe that.

Yes? (Student.) Hebrews is justified in quoting this as referring to Christ, because it is referring to this line of David's, and especially to the one who is ultimately the climax of the line. We have the same principle back in Deuteronomy, where there's a passage which deals with the matter of how are the children of Israel going to know God's will after Moses is gone? And that promise back there in Deuteronomy, Moses gives them the answer as to how they are to find out. It is Deuteronomy 18:15.

And there we have the statement that when they go into these countries, verses 9-15, say,

When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch. Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee. Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God. For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.

They are not to go to charmers, or consulters of familiar spirits, wizards, necromancers; all these are an abomination to the Lord. Verse 16 says,

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

So there is promised a line of prophets, that there will be prophets like Moses, able to tell the people what God's will is. But in verse 18, he repeats it; he says

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall

command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

This is a promise of a line of prophets who succeed Moses, to come and give the Lord's will. He continues in verses 20 to 22 to tell them how to recognize false prophets. But as time went on the people came more and more to realize that this was a promise not merely of the line of prophets but that there was to be the one who was to be the great climax of the line.

And so in John 1 we find the Pharisees sending representatives to the wilderness to ask John the Baptist, "Are you that prophet?" They asked are you that prophet that Moses promised, who was the climax of the line of prophets, the great ultimate goal of the line of prophets, the one great prophet? Of course that was the Lord Jesus Christ.

We do not ever have in the Bible a prediction which means two unrelated things.¹³⁰ Such a double prediction as that; you could make anything mean anything if such a principle were followed, and it's never followed in the Bible. But you have predictions of a line of progress which has various elements in the line; and there's often a tendency in Chronicles to enlarge a little on Kings; but in this case there is not an enlargement, there is a decrease. Because in the passage in Chronicles, 1 Chron. 17, that tells about this; much of this is repeated word for word; but the statement that when he commits iniquity, I will punish him, is not repeated. Nathan says [17:12-14]:

He shall build me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee: But I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.

Now Chronicles is written later than Kings. Kings here tells us about Solomon and describes a continuing line. Chronicles tells us a little about Solomon but it's interested more in the continuing line because it is written later than Kings, and the interest is naturally shifting farther to the future.

And then the 89th Psalm contains a somewhat enlarged presentation of God's covenant with David. Psalm 89, verse 3:

¹³⁰ [dcb] Dr. MacRae expresses here a view that is broadly accepted by many students of prophecy. A prominent example where this view impacts interpretation is in Isaiah's prophecy in Isa. 7:14, "a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." By this view, Isaiah prophesies about the coming Messiah, and so the prophecy cannot refer to the birth of Isaiah's son in the next chapter (Isa. 8:3). For a discussion of this point see MacRae, [*Studies in Isaiah*](#), p.25 "The Sign of Immanuel". See also [Allan MacRae, Isaiah 40-56, Lecture 2](#) on double fulfillment.

I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant,
Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations.

This is doubtless written by David sometime later in his life, giving the fullest statement of the covenant as made with David. And he says in it, over in verse 29 and following:

His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven.

And so we have these three passages to show us, first a promise to David of a son who will build God's house. Then the promise that his line is to continue there as a continuing line. And as time goes on that this continuing line is to have a climax...

Well, now, "it's not my will David should build a house," but he says "it is my will that his son should build it." And, since David has shown this interest in God's house, "I'm going to build David a house." He says, in 2 Samuel 7:12-16:

And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

Who was he talking about: was it the Lord Jesus Christ he was talking about here? Is this a prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Mr. Despande? (Student.) Yes. You find it quoted in the book of Hebrews as referring to Christ, but here you have it given as describing the man who is going to build a temple for the Lord, and you have it said that when he commits iniquity he will be chastened with the rod of men but God's mercy will not depart from him as he took it away from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

So I think we have to see that in this case we have a prophecy to David that he is to be succeeded by a son who is his own natural son; and this son of David's, who is his own natural son, this son is going to build a house for the Lord; and if this son commits iniquity, God will not take his mercy from him as he did from Saul; but he will punish him but not remove his mercy.

But then we have it carried a bit further; we are told not merely that he will have a son, but that his house will be established forever; that there will always be someone to sit on his throne. Thy throne shall be established forever, and this doesn't mean that Solomon is going to live forever; it doesn't mean that. So we have here a prediction of a continuing line. Of Solomon we're told these things; but then we're told there is a continuing line; his throne is to be established forever. And then we find over in Chronicles, in the parallel to this, 1 Chron.17:13, which I read a minute ago, "I will be his father, he shall be my son, and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee."

In 2 Samuel, what it says is, "I will be his father and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity I will chasten him with a rod of men and with the stripes of the children of men, but my mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul." You see that statement about his committing iniquity fits with Saul, it does not fit Christ. And Chronicles does not repeat it, because the interest has shifted forward further by the time Chronicles is written. It was true of Saul, but of course it's not true of Christ; because he did not and could not commit iniquity.

Well, this promise to David is something that people came more and more to realize the significance of. We find this referred to very specifically in Isaiah 55, where the great gospel call of Isaiah 55, one of the clearest presentations of the gospel anywhere in the Bible, includes in it these words, in verses 3 and 4:

Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

And here of course it's referring not to the king, the great king who lived in the past, but to the son of David, who is the fulfillment of the promise to David, who is yet to come. But it shows that at Isaiah's time the idea of the coming son of David was well realized, and people were looking forward to it even though not knowing a great deal about it.

Well this matter then of the covenant of David is quite important. There are many historical details about David that we're not going to take time for in this course; there are many spiritual lessons also we're not going to have time for;

they are very important, but you can get them yourself; you don't need the class for them. But we want to move on to Solomon.

Just one more thing I have to say about David. To me one of the most disappointing things in the life of David is that, at the very end of his life, when he commands Solomon to have vengeance on these people, that he didn't feel like doing this himself, so he called on Solomon to do it. I think that was a very unfortunate thing that should be attached to David's reputation right at the end.

And I think it's very unfortunate—especially Joab who stood by David so truly, helped him time after time, did everything for him. He had his faults, but no more than David had. And in the end, David led Solomon to have Joab killed. That was very unfortunate; but again it simply reminds us of the fact that David was a very imperfect character; but he was a man after God's own heart. It is the heart that is the vital thing; and the direction in which we are moving rather than the stage which we have attained. Many a man seems to have a beautiful character, but it's a matter of environment; it's a matter of what he's been brought up to; he's never been subjected, perhaps, to the temptations of power and leadership; and therefore he feels much better than those who have been, but who knows what he would have been if subjected to similar temptations?

Well, then the next is

C. Solomon.

And Solomon would be absolutely impossible without David. That is to say, Solomon inherited what David produced. If Saul had died and Solomon had become king, what he would have done nobody knows. His situation was entirely different from the situation which either Saul or David found. Each of them took a struggling people under constant oppression and difficulty, needing a strong military ruler.

Solomon took a people which had been established into a great empire; and their leader had been so very effective in a military way, that everybody round was cowed, and was afraid to attack or to make any difficulty for him. And so Solomon was the heir of plenty of prosperity; of a well-established situation; which would normally keep going almost of itself for a period of time. It didn't have to be built up.

So Solomon succeeds to something very different from what David or Saul had. He comes into an entirely different situation. Maybe he was a much better king for that sort of a period than David was. We have no way of knowing. But David's talents and abilities were of a different type. Solomon takes over a well-established kingdom; and taking over this well-established kingdom, he

proceeded to take the income which came in, and to utilize it in order to make his capital glorious; to make his city beautiful; to enrich himself and his friends. And we have great accounts of how the land was divided up, to pay the heavy taxes that take care of Solomon's very expensive household. He lives on a very high scale; and for forty years, he put a tremendous burden on the people, which they willingly and gladly bore, because of their adoration for his father David who had freed them from oppression and given them this situation.

So that's the situation into which Solomon comes. When Solomon becomes king, he is quite a young man. He is one of the later of David's sons. I think the worst method of determining who will run a country is to take the oldest son. That is making a pure matter of accident of birth the determination, apart altogether from qualities and abilities of who shall be the leader. And you can take almost any country I know of that's had hereditary rulers; you find that most of them are pretty poor folks to be ruling over their country. I don't know of any country that's an exception to that rule.

But in this case, it wasn't quite that bad; because the king, from his many sons, designates a son to reign, and that of course is far better than would have been the case if it was just a man who happened to be the oldest. And this was a comparatively young son of David's that David designated. He designated him because his mother was a special favorite. And so he designated Solomon for the king.

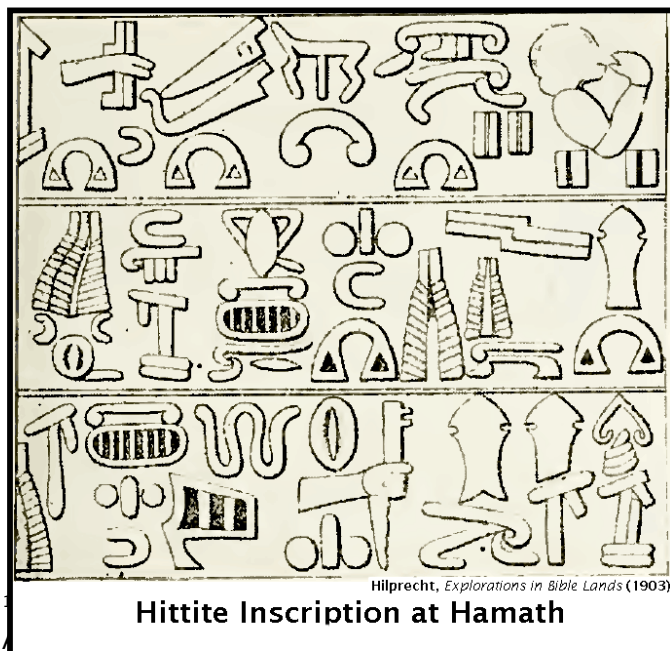
And Solomon, in the early part of his reign, displays a wonderful character in his humility. I fear it didn't last very long; but in the early part of the reign, he has such a wonderful humility and a feeling of insufficiency. So we have his praying to the Lord; the Lord promising him a gift; and God is so pleased that what he asks for is wisdom to rule the people wisely. And then we have the account of Solomon's wisdom in dealing with the people; the wonderful account which is often brought out in Sunday School lessons. He was a master of psychology, in handling the problems that came before him in his judging of the people. God does not promise to give him revelation; but God gave him wisdom in order that he would make wise decisions. That was the fine situation with Solomon at the beginning of his reign.

Now the Bible presents this picture of Solomon as a great emperor, a great ruler; and naturally there are many who question whether there is anything to it at all. The statement was made in the *Current History Magazine*, in 1928; an article was there which one of my students brought to me; and I was much interested to see it. It quoted from an English magazine in which H. G. Wells, a noted English publisher, author of *The Outline of History*, had written an article on English education.

And he said in this article that he regretted greatly that, in England, they spent so much time dealing with Palestine; because, he said, nothing of any importance ever happened in Palestine; and then he went on to say, there is only one period of greatness of Palestine; and that was the period of Solomon—and that even that is tremendously exaggerated. He says, the pride of King Solomon in the little temple that Hiram built for him, would be comparable to the pride of a negro chauffeur on the Gold Coast of Chicago in the new car that his employer had purchased.

That's H. G. Wells' statement about Solomon; and it's interesting to know that there is nothing that is from written material from ancient times [outside the Bible] to disprove this statement. We have no monument that has the name of Solomon on it. We have no monument that tells of his greatness. Over in the southern shores of Lake Van in Armenia, we have many a monument that has been found saying "I am so-and-so the great king, the king of kings, I have conquered many nations, I established my power over them"—and as you read it you think he's one of the greatest kings in the world's history.¹³¹

Archaeologists believe that these are copies from the inscriptions of the Assyrian kings; and actually, they were very petty kings that put them up; and they don't mean anything at all. And of course, if Solomon had put up inscriptions like that, there would be those today who would say the same thing about Solomon.



But we don't have any such inscriptions of King Solomon as that. Of course he doubtless put inscriptions up; as we have some references in the Bible to the putting up of the cement on the rock, and writing on the cement, an easy way to make a monument. And we know that was done in some cases; and archaeologists guess that Solomon may have done it. And if so, the cement wears off, and the inscription is gone. The Assyrians and the Egyptians chiseled their

royal Asiatic Society xiv. 4, 1882. Included in *Translations of the Ancient Monuments of Egypt and Western Asia* (Complete) Published by the Library of Alexandria (available as an Amazon ebook) "... a race of kings who ruled on the shores of Lake Van in Armenia, from the ninth to the seventh centuries before our era. The founder of the dynasty, Sarduris I, the son of Lutipris, who reigned in BC 833, introduced the cuneiform system of writing as well as other elements of Assyrian culture into the country over which he was king."

inscriptions into solid rock; and those inscriptions, many of them, have stood for thousands of years. But we have no such inscriptions in Palestine. In fact we haven't found any that fits in with the idea that that's the way they put them up.

We have in Syria—just north of Palestine, at Hamath on the Orontes River—we have inscriptions put up by the Egyptians there, just a few miles north of Palestine, on the solid rock, chiseled in, which can be read now, 2500 years after they were put up.¹³²

Some of them, as much as 3500 years after—though those as old as that are beginning to deteriorate quite a bit—but you can still make out most of it. We have at Beth-Shan, just west of the Jordan, a few inscriptions which are about 3500 years old. And they have worn away pretty badly, but you can still read most of them.

But the Israelite kings, I don't know of a single inscription like that that we have put up in the solid rock to celebrate their victory. The Armenian kings did it, and of course the Assyrians and Egyptians, but the Israelites seem not to have gone in for that sort of thing.

Now to find something like that, of course, would be immediately hailed as a wonderful evidence of Solomon's greatness; but nothing like that has been found. The Assyrian writings would be just practically wedge-shaped characters, they would not be pictures. The Egyptian, of course, were pictures, but the Assyrian would not be. I don't know of any reference to Solomon's military activities in the Bible.

(Student) There are many unbelievers today who think that much of the monotheism in the Bible is taken from Zoroastrianism; but the Zoroastrianism is much later than the Biblical material; and of course the only way they can say it is to say the Biblical material is late; that it isn't from the time it claims to be. But if you take the Biblical material at the time it claims to be—and that cannot be disproved—it's only conjecture that Biblical monotheism was copied from another pagan source. Both Zoroaster and Buddha are much later. Now it's possible for such things to arise independently, even at about the same time. The similarity of the monotheistic religions of this time is not great enough to prove one has to get it from the other. We discussed this back when we mentioned the monotheism of the pharaoh Akhenaten [OT History III: Exodus]. Things can arise, very striking things can arise independently and almost at the same time.

I just was at the dentist; and while, just as I was going to leave, talking to the secretary about another appointment, she answered the phone, so I had to wait. Then she said to me, "That was a very easy phone call to answer!" She said a

¹³² Hermann Vollrat Hilprecht, [*Explorations in Bible Lands During the 19th Century*](#) (pdf) (1903).

woman phoned and asked if she could have an appointment on May 3; and she said, "I had just this morning written a card, which I hadn't yet mailed to her, telling her that it was six months since she had had a previous appointment, and that I was making an appointment on May 3 at such a time, and if she didn't want it let me know. And she phoned and asked for May 3," and she said "Why sure, she had it already!"

Others beside Solomon could have had this knowledge; but at the same time, it's altogether possible that it made its way from Israel over to India. Not at all impossible that Buddha got it from Solomon—indirectly of course—and the same is true of Zoroastrianism. But you'd have to have more similarity to prove it.

=====

(Review) We were speaking yesterday about King Solomon. And we noted, that according to the Biblical account, Solomon was a very great ruler, a man with a large empire which his father David had won by two things: first, by having learned the Philistine secret of iron weapons and thus having an adequate supply for his far greater force; second, by forming a very excellent army and leading them very skillfully. And so David had built this large empire and established his reputation so strongly that Solomon didn't have to fight to hold it.

It's a wonderful thing if you can do things for those who come after you. You can make it easy or you can make it difficult. After I graduated from college and my sister followed me, she never had to do any studying for the first two years, because I'd made a reputation as a student. She could get good marks without it. I don't think her marks were near so good the last two years as they were the first. But it's true in life, that you do establish good or bad for the future. On the other hand if she'd gone first, I think I'd have been a much greater social success than I ever was, because she would have established a reputation in that direction. So David not only conquered, but established a reputation; and the reputation holds for a while. And so we have Solomon, according to the scripture, having all this empire, and not having to fight for it. He's got it; he's got this empire; he's got this wonderful establishment; and a person could take that and could just bungle it; or the person could handle it ably; and the Bible says he handled it ably; it says he was a man of wisdom.

But that picture of Solomon in the Bible is one which H. G. Wells and others have scoffed at; they say there's no evidence of it, it simply stands alone. The Bible says it. You can expect the Jews to want to glorify some of their kings. Here's one they picked, but what evidence is there? Certainly we've got great monuments in Egypt, in Mesopotamia that their great kings built; there's

nothing like that in Palestine. How do we know there ever was a powerful ruler at this period in Palestine?

Well, in 1929, when I was on my way from Berlin to Palestine—in January 1929—the report went out over the radio, that there had been discovered the tomb of Solomon's favorite wife, the daughter of Pharaoh; that in it there were writings telling about the greatness of Solomon, and showing what a mighty ruler and a wise ruler he had been. This went out over the radio all over Europe; and then it soon was proven, that some correspondent, getting his calendar mixed, made an April Fool's joke three months ahead of time. That it was just a made-up story by some correspondent, out for a joke, and others took it seriously and it was radioed all over Europe.

Nothing of that kind has yet been discovered. We have no writing with Solomon's name on it, from this time, no monument with specific references to him, no contemporary descriptions of his greatness other than the descriptions in the Bible. And consequently, naturally, H. G. Wells was one who had a sufficient reputation to speak out and say what many others thought, that this was just a Biblical superstition and myth; that there was no evidence for it at all.

But then evidence came from a most unexpected source. Instead of the evidence coming from a monument put up by Solomon; or a contemporary account, this came from a direction that nobody ever would have dreamed of. And to show where it came from, it's good to go back and look at an excavation that took place at about 1906.

At that time, for a brief period, there were some German excavators who excavated the town of Megiddo. Now you are familiar of course with the location of Megiddo. It is on the edge of the hill country that separates the central plain, the Plain of Esdraelon, from the coastal plain, up at the north, if you are going from Egypt to Mesopotamia. It is wide and fertile down at the bottom. Going up from the south, the coastal plain gets narrower and narrower and narrower, until Mount Carmel comes right practically to the edge of the sea. And so an army coming up that plain, has got to cross over into the central plain before they can go on to Mesopotamia, or to Asia Minor. And the same is true of an army coming from Asia Minor or from Mesopotamia. They may get from the Jordan Valley up to the Coastal Plain, there's another important strategic place going from the Jordan Valley to the Coastal Plain, or they may come down from the North, down the central plain. But they have to get over to the coastal plain somewhere, if they're going to get down to Egypt.

And so Megiddo occupies a very strategic point. Sosthenes III, the great Egyptian Pharaoh, in one of his accounts, tells of his great battle at Megiddo at about 1400 or 1500 BC A great attack there at Megiddo, a great conflict which he had there; and it shows the importance of that city, and of course Theodore

Roosevelt made Megiddo widely known. In one of his great political addresses, he said we are marching to Armageddon; and Armageddon became known to the general American public in a way it had not been before; and it continued to be used in political speeches for quite a while at the time after he did that.



But Armageddon of course is the Greek for the hill of Megiddo. Megiddo was often Armageddon or the hill of Megiddo because of its strategic position on the hill there, guarding one of the main approach passes across from the central valley to the coast.

Well, back in the early part of this century, the German excavators realized the importance of Megiddo as a place from which something about ancient times might well be learned. And so they raised some money in Germany and went in to excavate Megiddo. But they did not have any very large sum of money; nor was the science of archaeology advanced very far, as far as excavation of the tells in Palestine was concerned. Their efforts helped to advance it; we owe much to the various expeditions of those years for learning things that we use later on; but they did not have the information available to make their excavations yield anything like the information we can get today. And so coming to Megiddo here, they rented the right to excavate for a season or two there; and they began to dig trenches.

Now that is a very poor method of excavation; it has now been given up almost completely; but at that time, it seemed to be a very cheap method of getting some good quick results. That was to make a trench, because you don't just learn about one period; you get various periods you can compare; and make your trench, and go clear down quite deep; and then you see a little from the different areas; you see the walls and the foundations from different areas.

In 1929, when I visited Megiddo, it had recently rained and washed away the dust from the side of these trenches; and I looked down into one of these trenches; and you see the foundations of 18 cities, one above the other. And that shows what an important place Megiddo was; and they saw 18 different cities in this trench, one above the other. And another very fine thing about

Megiddo is that the top one of these cities is before the time of Christ. There is nothing after that, but just a little fortification on the top. And so you don't have to dig through a lot of material in the Christian era, or in the Hellenistic era; you get right down to Biblical times quickly. Its another thing that makes Megiddo far superior to the Philistine area as a place for excavation.

But the great difficulty with a trench is that you get too little of any one period to really make satisfactory judgments about it. And from the top of the hill, you don't know what the lines are; you don't how to dig so as to get anything completed. Now suppose somebody dug a trench 8 or 10 feet wide, through a hill that covered this building [here at the seminary]. You would dig down—say the roof was broken pretty badly—but the walls were here, and the tables and chairs, at least some parts of them. You wouldn't know to dig straight back this way; or across, whatever you happened to do. You might come across like this; get a little edge of this; you get a part of that wall; a part of this wall; a part of different things; and you don't have its relation to other things; and it's pretty much hit and miss whether you hit things that are important or not. And so it's a very, very unsatisfactory method of excavation; and it has now pretty well been given up.

Today in making an excavation, you always begin with digging deep; but you start not with a trench, but with more like a square section. You start with an area, definitely not expecting to learn a lot about any particular period, but to see how many periods there are in that section; and to see something of the pottery in them; see what you can do about dating; and see their relative advancement in construction; and get a general idea of the period; you start with that.

But then, for your knowledge of each period, you take an area rather than a trench. Take an area perhaps nearly as wide as it is long; and you uncover that area for each section. Well, they dug a trench method at that early time; and in it they found the third city from the top to be superior in its culture to the cities above and below; and they decided that period was from about 1000 BC, about the time of Solomon. And they doubtless were correct in that reasoning. But they didn't find much to tell much about that period; but one thing they did find of real interest there, was a column, a square column; and this square column stood about 8 feet high; and it was about a foot and a half wide, and square; not a rounded column; and this square column standing there, they thought it was a symbol of some sort of ancient worship.

These men went on to make the excavation. They weren't theological men; they were men whose idea was the gradual development of the religion of Israel, according to the critical theory; and eventually about the time of Amos, it gets to be monotheism. So at the time of Solomon, you would have all sorts of

practices and beliefs. And they thought that this column there represented something to do with ancient worship.

Now that was the custom at that time—whenever you found a column it was the symbol of ancient worship. Now there are columns which have been used for worship; no question of it; there are individual ones which were put up for that purpose; they were so designated. But they're comparatively few; but any book on archaeology written before 1928, or '29, will contain quite a few pictures of columns representing ancient worship.

In 1928, the University of Berlin—one of our greatest modern authorities on material archaeology; that is, on the actual types of buildings and that sort of thing—proved that most of these columns found in excavations in Palestine are there to hold up the second story of the house, or whatever sort of building it is. Most of the buildings had two stories, and the second story had disappeared. We have the first story—a good bit of the first story in many of them—and the columns that were to hold up the second story. Like you remember the story of Samson, how he tore down the columns on which the whole second story primarily rested, and that caused that the thing should collapse.

Well, that was true of the great bulk of the homes—though not all by any means—in different places in Palestine. But they thought this column from Megiddo was a symbol of ancient worship; but one thing about it was a puzzle to them; and that was that, about three feet from the ground, there was a hole going obliquely across, from one side of the column to the other—a hole about an inch square going obliquely across; and what does this have to do with an ancient worship?

Well, of course the immediate idea occurs, if you have an altar it might be a channel to carry off the blood. But this wasn't an altar; it was too high for an altar. And in addition to that, the hole didn't reach to the top of it at all; it was [nearly] horizontal, so it wouldn't carry anything off to flow through it that way. What was the meaning of this oblique hole there? Well, they didn't have any explanation for it; there were no satisfactory theories. Various theories were suggested, but there was no satisfactory explanation for this hole there in this column.

And there the matter stood for about twenty years. About 1925, or along in there, Professor William Henry Breasted, the founder of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, made a great impression on John D. Rockefeller Jr.; so Rockefeller gave him 12 million dollars—not all at once, but in the course of maybe 15 years—he gave him 12 million dollars for excavation and archaeological study; and the scholars working with Breasted in Chicago went on a wild spree with all that money in hand; they spent it as if there was no end

to it; and of course, they did a lot of good things; but we all know now they could have accomplished nearly twice as much, if they had realized that even if you got a million instead of a thousand, you want to handle it carefully and make it last as long as you can.

Some of them there think now that, when Rockefeller stopped giving them large sums of money, they were better off than before; because they had to stop and plan more carefully; and they crystallized the work and worked afterwards more carefully on the whole than before. But they were able to do much more before than since, because they had all this money; and they proceeded to excavate in Mesopotamia, and in Egypt, and in Palestine, and in Syria; and they built a great beautiful museum and center for study at the University of Chicago, which is the finest single building established for archaeological study in the world today.

I just love to work in the library there, because they've got all the books together in the one room; and there are about 50 scholars in the building who have their special offices, but no books may go out of the building; and one can keep a book in his office for years; but the card is there in the library, available to everybody else to see where the book is. You can always go and get it; you don't have to wait a week for any book. If somebody's got it in his office you can always go and get it from him, so that the books are available on any subject you want to study in that field. The most wonderful place to study.

Unfortunately, when they first planned the place, and they got it half up, they found they'd forgotten to leave a space for a staircase; so they had to tear down a good bit of it, rebuild, put in a staircase, which was rather necessary. But it is today a very, very fine building, and it is a wonderful center for archaeological work.

When the money stopped coming in the quantity it had been, they had to sell off a lot of their things. Some of these sites that they had built, they had to sell to other universities for a tenth of what they had spent on them. But the greater part of the money is really helping archaeological matters. Now one place they decided on—they looked over Palestine, and they decided one excellent place to dig in Palestine would be Megiddo; and so they went there, and instead of renting they bought the whole hill on which it was; which meant they wouldn't have to be constantly dickering with the owners. In other places, they excavate and then they're away the other part of the year and they're always dickering for rentals and so on.

They bought the hill, and they put up permanent buildings, instead of living in tents and getting along as well as they could. When I visited it in 1929, I felt more as if I was in a modern mining town than any other thing I could imagine; it was like a place you might see out in the mountains in Colorado, or perhaps

in Peru. There, you come to a fine mining town where there are excellent establishments for the headquarters, evidently handled very well; it's the way it was there.

There was a special building for their photography; and for their glass things; and for the library, such as they used for the work there, and so on. And all the materials to do an excellent job; not to dig principally, but to examine everything that was there. They started out with Clarence Fisher as the director, who had started most of the great excavations in Palestine.¹³³ He only directed it for a brief time, but he got them well started; an excellent archaeologist. And then they had other directors after him; and it's not like a small excavation, where a brilliant man can make brilliant deductions from a little material; which often proves to be right, but sometimes wrong. It is the sort of thing where you get a tremendous amount of material; but no one mind can fully understand it. But it's printed up in fine fashion, and is available to people to study in all the various parts in Palestine; and thus is helpful to everyone.

But there at Megiddo they began digging; and they took one half of the mound and examined everything on it from the latest period; and they mapped it, and they charted it. They studied, they photographed everything they could, from the latest city there at Megiddo. And then they removed everything from it, from this half of the mound, and opened the next one. When they had all the half of the city visible before them, then they charted it; and they photographed, and they made quite thorough studies, and wrote them up in extensive publications; and then they went on down further.



And then they got to the fourth city. What they called the fourth city was so tremendous, and so remarkable, that they decided before going on with this city, to start at the beginning again, and do the other half of the first four. And the result was that the fourth city remained for a couple of years visible; this was an excellent thing, because it was the part of the city which interested us the most, the part from the time of Solomon. And when I got there

¹³³ The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago began excavations at Megiddo in 1925 with Clarence Fisher as director. This continued under Rockefeller funding until World War II. In the 1960s Yigael Yadin continued excavations for the Hebrew University. Most of the remains are now in the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem and in the Oriental Institute of Chicago.

in 1929, they were just then about to start the season's work. But the skilled Egyptian foremen, thoroughly trained in the practical end of archaeology in Egypt, who were to arrive to direct the local people in the work, were due the next day, and all arrangements had been made for their coming.

Dr. P. L. O. Guy,¹³⁴ who was in charge of the expedition, had nothing to do that day except to wait; plenty of leisure for our party, which consisted of four scholars from four different continents, to take us over the mound and explain everything to us in pretty full detail. And it just was the ideal opportunity to learn the exact situation of Megiddo in the time of Solomon.

And as we walked across the mounds with Dr. Guy, he said, "You remember that column that they found back in 1906 there? Well, look here," he says, "you can see hundreds of other columns just like it." And there they were—hundreds of columns just like that one—and here would be a long row of columns, with maybe six or seven feet between each of them, one column after the other; and then out from this row of columns, maybe 7 feet over, there was another row of columns, and then back of these columns, about 12 feet there was a wall after the row of columns; and then back of that wall, another 12 feet there was another row of columns, And then about 7 feet another row of columns, and then about 12 feet another wall. And so on, on this tremendous area of the mound, these rows of columns and walls arranged this way; and you see the layout would be a wall, and then about 12 feet, 12 or 15 feet, another row of columns, and then about 7 feet a row of columns and then about 12 or 15 feet another wall. The same over again. Covering a tremendous section of this great mound.

And Dr. Guy said, "As you look at them, it's perfectly obvious that these have nothing to do with worship." He said that these are stalls for horses; and that the holes through the columns are to put the rope through to tie the horse; and then he showed us how, by the sides of the columns, in some places there were ancient mangers still remaining. And they had even found bits of grain that had been preserved all through 2500 years, having been well buried and kept from the air; they had been sufficiently well preserved that they could be examined, and see just what kind of grain they were. And so here was a great, a large extensive layout of stables.

And, you remember how it tells in Deuteronomy [17:16] that kings shall not get horses from Egypt. He is not supposed to do this; but they say, as Samuel told them [1 Samuel 8:11ff], this will be the manner of a king you'll have. He will take your children for servants, to work for him, to build up his great establishment, He'll have all the great horses and everything.

¹³⁴ Philip Langstaffe Ord Guy (1885–1952) director of Megiddo 1927–1934.

And then Dr. Guy said, "Look particularly at I Kings, where you have the account of the great king Solomon; and there," he said, "in I Kings 9, you read in verse 15:

And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the Lord, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer."

We read of all the different places that Solomon was carrying on building operations, either building cities anew or reconstructing them, making them in line with his ideas; and one of these names is the city of Megiddo, the one which they were working on.

And then he said, "You look on a little further and you come to verse 19, you have a general summary,"

And all the cities of store that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

And that word for horseman, *parash*. There is some discussion whether it actually means a horseman or the horse the men used. It is, you might say, his cavalry work, his horse arrangement, including both men and horses. Whole cities for the horses and horsemen of Solomon. Well, that's a fantastic idea for the ancient orient, whole cities for the horses of Solomon. Nobody but a very great ruler could give whole cities over to his horses. This is one of these things that has been scoffed at by those who say that the Bible was a book of superstition, a book of mythology, magnifying so petty a king to make him a very powerful ruler. But this extreme statement here in the Bible, whole cities for his horses, is proven not to be an exaggeration; because there is Megiddo, one of the greatest cities in Palestine, and the greater part of the city is given over to the arrangement for horses and horsemen of King Solomon. No one but a very powerful king, a very powerful ruler, could possibly have been able to give over whole cities to his horses. And as a matter of fact, similar layouts have been discovered in other cities since that time.



But the proof here, then, was found in a direction that we would never have expected. Not in monuments then; not some writing by somebody telling what wonderful things he'd seen; but the actual things themselves; the actual layout such as had not been found in any ancient cities from other periods. But from this period, showing there was a very powerful centralized government there in Palestine at that time, just as described in the book of Kings and Chronicles. And so it is fairly well established that there was nothing exaggerated; that Palestine was at a high level physically, commercially, economically, during the reign of King Solomon. Well, the knowledge about Solomon has gone on

beyond that point since then.

The realm included the land of the twelve Israelite tribes. It extended northward covering most of what is now Lebanon, and it extended from that eastwards, covering the area that is now Syria. David had conquered Damascus, we're told, and even Palmyra in the wilderness. And then, further south, across the Jordan, it included the kingdoms of Moab and Edom. It goes to the Euphrates, to the furthest western part of the Euphrates—not to the Tigris.

Now I'm not saying that the empire of Solomon was the greatest empire of ancient times by any means. The Mesopotamian empires were far greater, and the Egyptian was far greater, but those were both of them at this period in a time of decline. They probably covered a much larger area, each of them, at this time than the area of Solomon, but they were at a time of decline, and Solomon was at a time of greatness. And his area was an area which ordinarily was broken up into a lot of little kingdoms. David had gathered it all together into one large area. Solomon's empire was the high point of the greatness of Israel.

It was far greater politically and economically than at any other point that Israel ever attained, at any other time in its history. And it was greater than any other kingdom in this area attained at any other time.

But this area, from a viewpoint of world wealth, is a more or less insignificant area; that is from the viewpoint of Rome at the time of Christ. The events in Judea were off in a little backwoods corner of the empire. The political center of the Roman empire was Rome; the center of knowledge and science was Athens. This area of Solomon's kingdom was way off in a corner, up in the backwoods.

And the greatness of the area, from the political and material viewpoint ordinarily, was that it was on the roads between the great empires of Egypt and Mesopotamia. It never was in a class with them; but at this period, the whole area there was gathered together into one realm; it was quite strong—extremely strong—compared to anything that it had been before.

Yes, I think these questions Mr. Welch has asked are extremely important; and we should all have a clear idea of them. As far as trading is concerned, it always was an important area, even in the time of Joseph. We find [Genesis 37:25–28] that they saw Midianites, merchantmen going by on their way to Egypt. The caravans between the great centers of Mesopotamia and of Egypt passed through Palestine, going between Asia Minor and Egypt. And there was always extensive trade passing through the area, and a certain amount of it done with the people in that area. Though the trade between the two great empires was far greater and more important than their relationship to this area. To compare it with Rome under Caesar—or say better under Alexander—would be more like comparing Guatemala with the United States. Perhaps not quite as great as that; but here we have in Central America these little countries, constantly squabbling and not amounting to a great deal. Now if Guatemala was to get all those central American countries together into one organization under their direction, it could be quite an important center. But it would be no more than that.

The queen of Sheba. Let's get that in mind too. The Queen of Sheba comes from South Arabia. Now whether she was in South Arabia then, or whether Sheba was further north than Arabia—is a matter of which there is discussion—but even on the assumption that it was South Arabia it would be much nearer to Palestine than to either Egypt or Mesopotamia. And as, doubtless, there would have been trade between South Arabia and both Mesopotamia and Egypt at all periods, but Palestine would be comparatively little heard of down there; and now they hear how this region has come forward; and they hear how strong it has become; and above all, about the remarkable wisdom of its ruler; and it was particularly for the wisdom that she came, though doubtless she established trade relations.

And it comes right in this period here that you mention; a few years ago, we knew nothing about the region of South Arabia; many people thought the whole story of the Queen of Sheba was another fictional tale. But South Arabia is very difficult to examine, because it is today an absolute monarchy. In Yemen, the Sheik of Yemen just cuts a head off when he takes a notion. He is the most absolute monarch in the world today. And he allows no foreigners in whatever; and there have been very few who have gotten in there. There's very little examination of it; but there has been enough examination in the last four years to find thousands of inscriptions—mostly just brief inscriptions on tombs—but enough of them to give a good idea of the general background of South Arabia; and there have been found some of the greatest of irrigation arrangements in the Orient anywhere there in South Arabia, in that area. And so this was a region of real civilization. Not comparable to Egypt or Mesopotamia. Not like that, but a region of a very high culture; much greater than North Arabia at this time. And that, of course, would corroborate the Biblical story from that region, that the queen felt that the establishment of commercial relationships, etc., with Solomon; and the personal knowledge of his wisdom, and all that, would work. That is an interesting corroboration of the Biblical account of the Queen of Sheba. But that doesn't mean that Solomon's accomplishment was comparable with the great power of the Pharaoh of Egypt.

But the Pharaoh at this time is a comparatively weak one. This was not at one of the high points of Egypt's history, but one of the lower points. Perhaps Solomon, in all of his greatness, would perhaps be able to be on equal terms with the depressed Pharaoh and the depressed rulers of Assyria at this period. But at other periods, the rulers of Palestine haven't a fifth the power of Solomon; while the rulers of Egypt and Mesopotamia have double the power that they had at this period.

Well, the fact that in Palestine there was a ruler of such great wealth and power, that is comparable to anything in Palestine before or since, that was established by the discoveries at Megiddo. And that was 1929, when I was in Megiddo; and at that time, one of our party of four was professor Albright, who has just [1958] retired as professor of archaeology in Johns Hopkins University. Well, he had just received his call [to Hopkins] at that time, and he was planning to leave. That was his last year as director of the American School of Oriental Research. He had been there nine years. And they had one or two men for a brief time succeeding him; and then they had a man who was there a number of years, directing the American School for Oriental Research. He was Nelson Glueck. Professor Glueck was for nearly ten years director of the American School for Oriental Research in Palestine. He was then called to be president of the Hebrew Union College of Cincinnati, and he's been there as president ever since. A College of Reformed Jews—that is very liberal Jews, very modernistic. Glueck's predecessor was an extreme modernist there.

This predecessor wrote some of the most fantastic writings I've ever seen. In fact, most of the modernists think he was much too extreme to pay much attention to. But it was a school of very great standing in Judaism; and the Reformed Jews, by no means the largest group, are probably the wealthiest group; and it has great importance in Judaism. Glueck was called to be president of it; and Glueck is a good excavator, an excellent scholar, and a very different sort of man in many ways from his predecessors. Well, before that, in the '30s, he was director of the American School for Oriental Research in Jerusalem.

Glueck had made studies in Transjordan, and was very familiar with the pottery over there; and had studied the material quite thoroughly over there. He was a very good scholar, and he was intrigued by this ninth chapter of Kings. And in the chapter here, he was greatly interested in the last part of the chapter, where he read some most amazing statements when he stopped to think about it. Particularly amazing when you remember they are told about Solomon, who is supposed to be a very wise man. Well, verse 26,

And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom.

Well, by a navy of ships that doesn't mean necessarily—maybe our old English is deceptive there; in modern English, a navy is a fighting force; but here in the Bible it means a squadron of ships. Solomon made a lot of ships. It doesn't mean they were warships. He made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber; and we are told there Ezion-geber is beside Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.

And we have Ezion-geber mentioned in the Exodus [Numbers 33; Deuteronomy 2], and here in this account. And so, between that mention and this, it is easy to tell the approximate location of Ezion-geber. Now old maps, made more than 20 years ago, usually showed Ezion-geber about ten miles inland, up on the hill. It was a German investigating in Palestine about 1900, who found an Arab who was able to show him where two or three things were that he was anxious to find; and so he got great confidence in the Arab; and the Arab found he got a pretty good reward for showing where these places were; so his imagination began to work, and this German said, "Can you show me where Ezion-Geber was?" "Sure," the Arab said; so he led him up into the mountain; and he got up into a high place in the mountain, where they found a little flat area; and he said, "That's Ezion-Geber." And so he put it on the map. It was on all of the maps until this time.

Well, it was completely wrong. It was just a means to get some money; but it was in the general area. It is down there, near the northern end of the Red Sea. As you look on the map, which you are doubtless familiar with—most of you, I

hope—you know that the Red Sea, which comes up between Arabia and Ethiopia and then between North Arabia and Egypt; it divides into two parts, and one of them goes west towards Suez, and the other one goes straight north.

And this modern town, Aqaba, is at the northern end of this eastern branch of the Red Sea; and today, it is often called the Sea of Aqaba because it goes to Aqaba. The Jews have built extensive harbor facilities near Aqaba, and they are shipping a great deal of material from there now.



Well, this place of Aqaba is the general area where it says Solomon built his ships. And so Glueck asked, "Why did Solomon build a navy of ships there?" Now suppose you look at your map and imagine you're at Jerusalem; and imagine that, at Jerusalem, you want to get down to Ophir; because we read in [1 Kings 9] verse 28 that they came to Ophir and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to King Solomon. Well, Ophir is well known to be the southern end of Arabia—south Arabia—there; and the area across from it is Ethiopia; that section is the section of

Ophir. It's also called Sheba in ancient times; and there was a queen of Egypt about 1400 BC, Queen Hatshepsut, who sent an expedition to the land of Punt; and she built a great monument to celebrate; you can see it today there, with the pictures of her and her young husband, Sosthenes III, receiving the incense and the gold and the other things from Punt and measuring them out. It was a great thing for Egypt, to send an expedition to Punt, which is the same general area as Ophir. It was not done often, that she put up such a tremendous celebration of having done it once.

Well, now, here was Solomon, who sent to Ophir and got 420 talents of gold and brought it back. Now how did he get all this gold? Did he make an attack and seize it? It hardly seems likely. How did he get it? Well, you find that most of the gold of the world today [1958] is buried in Kentucky¹³⁵. How did we get it? Well, it was given to us by nearly all the nations of the world, who gave the United States most of their gold. Did they do it because they loved the United States so much they wanted to give us their gold? No, I don't think so. They gave it because they received manufactured goods which they paid for with this gold. And American people worked hard in manufacturing these goods, shipped them off to countries all over the world, in order that they could get gold for

¹³⁵ The official records have 147 million ounces of gold at Fort Knox, about 2.5% of the world supply, but there has been no audit to verify this number since 1986.

them which they could take and bury in Kentucky. There we have it buried. There it is; and there it will remain, I suppose, unless enough of us get toothaches and use it to fill our teeth with.

Thomas Edison said once, "It's very strange that the economic foundation of the world rests on something that was actually good for nothing except for filling teeth and gilding picture frames." But we have the gold; it has been recognized for 3000 years as of tremendous importance. Gold is a measure of exchange. But now, it's no more good for exchange because nearly all of it is in Kentucky. But there it is buried in Kentucky, and we have to send goods for it. Well now, how much goods would you have to send to get a little gold? You'd have to send quite a lot. Not so much now as you would 40 years ago, before you had all this inflation; you'd have to send perhaps four times as much now as you did then, but at that time, or an earlier period, a little bit of gold would buy an awful lot of goods.

And so the question was, if Solomon was so wise, why did Solomon build a navy of ships down in Ezion-Geber in order to go to Ophir and get gold? Well, suppose his folks go to Ophir and get gold; and they bring the gold back up to Ezion-Geber. There in Ezion-Geber, you've got the gold. Well, it's very valuable; you can put it on donkeys and camels, and you can carry it 13 days across the desert; up through the rough mountains; through that disagreeable, difficult country, up to Jerusalem. You can do that; it's worth it, for the value of that gold. But how about what you send to get the gold? If you send fine textile products to purchase gold, it will take many, many times the number of camels and donkeys to carry the textile products down to Ezion-Geber than it takes to bring the gold back. It just wouldn't pay.

I remember hearing, 30 years ago, about a copper mining company, which had used up all its copper sources in this country; and the stock which, when I was a little boy, was worth about \$20 a share, had gotten down to where it was about 50¢ a share, because practically all of the copper was taken out of the mines. And then all of a sudden, that copper stock, which had been 50¢ a share, went up to \$4 a share, in just no time at all. And I asked, "Why is it? What made that company worth so much more?" And I was told this. One time, some years ago, realizing their copper would run out, they purchased a copper mine in Canada; and this copper mine in Canada, which they purchased, had a fine supply of copper. They could go on digging the copper and selling it; but they found that, by the time they transported the copper out from the copper mine to a railroad, it would cost much more than they could get for the copper; so it was worth nothing to them.

So when they used up their copper here, they got down to 50¢ a share; and then somebody discovered gold there in Canada; and that was worth building a railroad for; and they built the special branch of the railroad to go to the gold

mine; and it went within 4 miles of where this copper mine was. So all they had to do was build a little spur; and then they had access to this railroad to bring this copper out; and their stock jumped from 50¢ to \$4 a share immediately. It made the copper worth something to have a means of getting it there.

Now anybody with any sense would say, if Solomon wanted to take his textile goods from Jerusalem to Ophir, it's perfectly simple what to do. You take them down to the coast, down to Joppa, as you see on your map. And there at Joppa you put them in boats and you go down the Mediterranean. It's very cheap to travel by boat—that is, it was before we got inflation—and now our palatial steamers; but ordinary shipment is very cheap. You get into your boats, you ship down to Suez and there at Suez you take it off and just a little portage overland—over Suez, where we now have a canal—and there put it in boats and carry them down to Ophir. And there you could sell them.

But to carry them 13 days with camels and donkeys through that disagreeable difficult country south of the Dead Sea—a very hot and miserable and rough country—hard to go through, and much of it full of poisonous snakes. We read in Numbers about what happened when the Israelites went through that area, how many died from the poisonous snakes. Lawrence of Arabia tells in his account [*Seven Pillars of Wisdom*], how going through there, when he and his men would camp at night, the snakes would come and lie up right next to them for the warmth. He said that in the morning, the first that got out of bed would have to get up very, very easily to keep from touching the snakes; and then, when he'd get out if he got out carefully, without exciting any one to where it would bite him... if he was killed, another one would have to get up. Then when he'd get out, then he'd go and get a big stick; and he'd come and he'd pull the snakes away from the other men, so they could get up. Well, you had to go down through this area to get to Ezion-Geber, it's much easier to take the boat to Suez.

Boat travel—I was in debating some when I was in college and saw how much cheaper boat travel is than land travel. I remember reading that, before the Panama Canal was built, to ship stuff from New York by railroad to Nevada, cost two and a half times as much as to ship it from New York to San Francisco—500 miles further and going through Nevada—on the way. And the reason was that, if you shipped to San Francisco you had to compete with water transportation; and a boat could take your stuff in New York, carry it clear around South America—around the very southern tip of South America—clear up to San Francisco; and it cost so much less that, in order to compete with it, the railroad had to charge only 30% as much to go clear to San Francisco, as it was necessary to charge in order to pay expenses, and get a small cargo to ship just as far as Nevada, 500 miles less distance.

Water transportation is so much simpler than land transportation. I remember reading that they would take things in China that were thousands of miles up the Yangtze River, bring them down the river, clear across the Pacific, get them to San Pedro, California, take them off and ship them overland to Los Angeles, 20 miles away; and it cost just as much to ship the 20 miles overland as it did all that distance by water.

Well, why on earth, then, did Solomon build his ships up this end of the Red Sea, at Ezion-Geber, instead of the other end, by Suez, where he could ship his goods so much more cheaply to Ophir? But was Solomon a wise king, or not, when he would do such a fool stunt as this appeared to be?

For that area of Ezion-Geber, Solomon's kingdom was a very substantial power; and that's what the Bible represents, a power so great that the queen of Sheba came to hear his wisdom. As we are told again over in the book of Luke, we read in Luke the 11th chapter, we read there that our Lord Jesus Christ says, in chapter 11, verse 31,

The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

But if Solomon didn't have any more sense than to build his navy of ships at a place where he would have to carry all his material overland down there, at many times the expense it would have been to build the navy—in a place where you could go directly to just that little port of Suez—it doesn't sound as if he was a very wise man. And as a matter of fact, back in 1928, when I had this article brought to me from the *Current History* magazine, I looked up in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia—the edition I have is the first edition [1915], I think the second edition is out since [1939], but I looked in mine—I looked up Solomon, and I found substantially this statement, "The wisdom of Solomon was of a rather droll order, consisting mostly of stories about animals."

And that was a statement in the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, which was our most conservative Bible encyclopedia of recent date, of any length. Now the *Hastings* is much more liberal; occasionally you find an excellent, conservative article in the *Hastings Bible Dictionary*, but in general it's much more liberal than the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. While the *Encyclopedia Biblica* is a very radical one. But in the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* I was rather surprised to find this statement—whether it's in the second edition I've never looked. But that's what is in the first.

And the author of that article I am sure would not have been a bit surprised if he noticed, which he probably didn't, that Ezion-Geber is so poorly situated for the purpose for which it is designated.

=====

After class this morning, Mr. Ruud came to me and gave me a more up-to-date illustration than the one that I gave you from the days before the Panama Canal was built. He said that when he came east this fall, he had 300 pounds of material to ship; which he did ship, instead of sending by train. He found that he could ship it for \$35 from Seattle to Philadelphia by water, while it would have been \$150 to ship it by land. That's another good illustration of the point I was making this morning, a very recent illustration of the point that land transportation is always much more expensive than water transportation.

And of course in that case it was still more expensive because it would mean going from Jerusalem down through those difficult ravines, down there to the Dead Sea, around the Dead Sea, and then down to that wilderness—that hot, difficult wilderness country—all the way to that end of the Red Sea by land, as compared with just going down to Joppa and getting into a boat and floating down the Mediterranean to Suez.

It makes you wonder whether Solomon's wisdom was very present in putting his navy of ships, in building them there in Ezion-Geber.

Yes? (Mr. Welch: "Where would he get the lumber for the ships?") Lumber for the ships? Either they would find sufficient wood in the hills near Aqaba or else he'd have to float it in. Now if it were up in Syria, that would be different. Up in Syria, north of Jerusalem, you find the cedars of Lebanon, which have been a great source of lumber from back before 3000 BC; and they used to come from Egypt to get cedars of Lebanon and take them down. But that's north of Jerusalem, that's not this area.

But I think Mr. Welch's question is on the track of the answer. And the answer was discovered by Professor Glueck, of whom I spoke this morning. Professor Glueck, shortly after he became Director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, decided to make an exploration of this area. I heard him tell how he went and how it took over 13 days on camel and donkey to make that long trip down there; then after going down, exploring and surveying all the way down he came back again. He'd been gone as you see for several weeks, a long tedious and tiresome trip.

And he said when he got back to Jerusalem—this was in the days of the British Mandate, before the nation of Israel—the high commissioner invited him to his home to dinner and asked him to tell about his trip, what he'd seen and so on,

and he was greatly interested and he said to him, "Say, would you like to see this country from the air?" "Oh," he said, "that would add greatly to my survey." So the high commissioner said to him, "You be at the military airport in the morning at 7 o'clock, and we will have a plane go and make a reconnaissance down in that direction; and you can see it from the air." So, he said, it was quite a thrill, after spending all that time going through that rough country, to get in a plane and within a very few hours, to see it all. He went by air down there and back again in time for lunch. So it was quite a thrill.

But better yet, the personnel of the plane said to him before he got in, "Now are there some scenes you'd like to see—like to have photographed?" He said, "Oh yes."

There are many very valuable views from the air; because often, when you see an archaeological site, the ruins will be buried; and it's very hard to find it unless you dig them all up; but where the ruins are fairly close to the surface, the grass doesn't grow; and from the air you can see the outline and it's very helpful, and to take pictures of that.

"Well," the pilot said, "As we go down, any picture you see, I don't care how many, you just say and we'll take a picture of it." And so he took maybe a hundred pictures, and then they got back. He said "Now, you keep a list of these," he says, "and you write to the military headquarters in about three weeks; and say, 'I wonder if, by any chance, you would have pictures of any of the following.'" And so he did; and he got all the pictures that they had gotten for the archives at his suggestion.

But the thing that particularly interested Glueck in the trip was this, that as he headed down there to see if he could find Ezion-Geber ... Well, before I mention the thing he was particularly interested in, I'll mention a matter that was almost as important, not quite; he found, at the southern end of this depression, in the land which reached from the Jordan River and then the Dead Sea, and then there's a depression found there—originally started by an earthquake—fall from the hills on both sides; down at the lower end of that he could see a mound, from the shape of which it was obvious it was a tell, an artificial mound, where there had been an ancient city.

And so the German who had on his map put Ezion-Geber way up in the hills was clearly wrong. You wouldn't build a navy up in the hills anyway; but this is the general area. But there was a city right near the water, which would be the appropriate place in which to build ships.

But before he got there—when he was less than a day's trip away from Ezion-Geber—he found something which answered the problem about Solomon's wisdom, and answered it in a most remarkable way. Going down through that

depression here, he saw on the sides in the cliff at various places, holes going into the side of the cliff. Artificial holes, tunnels.

And he went into those; and he found that there had been digging into them; and there had been fires out in the valley in the front of them; and it was easy, upon examination, to find what they were—mines. They were ancient; and there were bits of broken pottery and other things which could easily be dated, and show that they came from the time of king Solomon. It was from that period that these mines had been worked; and these mines were copper, principally, and here were valuable copper mines, less than a day's journey from the northern end of the Red Sea.

Now this, of course, Glueck was very interested in, for two reasons. One was because it immediately reminded him of that verse in Deuteronomy, Deuteronomy 8:9 where Moses said of the land of Palestine, it is

A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

Now of course as you know the word *n'chosheth*, translated "brass" can just as well, or perhaps better, be translated "copper." It is the Hebrew word for copper. Brass of course is an alloy of copper; and copper is rarely found in that particular state; so perhaps brass is a reasonable translation for it. But it doesn't suggest to us the value and the strength that copper does. And this would be copper—probably it could be used, and made into brass, or bronze, or used as pure as you might get it. A very important instrument for all sorts of building; all sorts of purposes for copper, even though they did not use it then, as we use it principally today, for carrying electricity. There are plenty of other uses for copper.

And here were these copper mines down there, from which they could do one of three things: they could take the copper out of the mines, (1) they could bring it up overland on this long trip to Jerusalem, but by the time they went to all that effort, it probably wouldn't be worth the effort; or (2) they could take the copper put it in a boat, take it down the Red Sea away and then up the other arm of the Red Sea, carry the portage over the Suez and then bring it up to Jerusalem, and that way they could get it to Jerusalem. But Israel had access to ancient copper mines, which would give them all the copper they needed at a good deal less expense, and only take one shipment instead of two.

And so here at hand was material of great value, but difficult to get to Jerusalem to use. But by (3) building the ships there, you could put it in the ships and float it down to Ophir, where it would command a very large price in gold; and bring the gold back up, and that would be well worth the expense of

the navy. And so this shows that Solomon, in building his navy of ships at Ezion-Geber, built them there for a purpose, which the Bible does not explain. But a very wise purpose; a very excellent purpose; and as far as building his navy of ships at Ezion-Geber is concerned, he was wise instead of foolish in so doing.

Well, Glueck found this tell down there; and he wanted to find additional evidence of the wisdom of Solomon, if he could, and also of the power of Solomon; so he was anxious to excavate; he came back to the United States; told about his experiences; raised a certain amount of money; and the next year went back to excavate at Ezion-Geber. And there at Ezion-Geber, he began the next year excavating; and when he began to excavate at Ezion-Geber—perhaps I should say after he had excavated quite a bit at Ezion-Geber—he found that he had there renewed evidence of the power of king Solomon.

The power of king Solomon, we notice, has been greatly questioned by H. G. Wells and others; but here at Ezion-Geber he found, on examination, there was a city which was very different from Jerusalem, or from most cities in the world. It was a city like Washington, D. C., rather than a city like Boston. Boston, they say, is built along the old cow paths. I've always enjoyed visiting Boston; because I like to go for a walk, and I don't have to bother where I'm going. In Boston, I've found, you can just start walking; and just walk straight ahead; and the next thing you know you're back where you started from. The streets are all twisted around so. I remember one night, I went for a walk; and for two hours walking in Boston, I passed the same church three times. Most of our cities have grown up like that. Philadelphia here, to quite an very large extent, has grown up like that, except for center city, which is on a regular grid.

I found when I first came here—in the area south of here—it was very easy to get lost; and if you were driving and you didn't notice where you were going, it was very easy to get on the three one-way streets we have down there. We have people here spend an hour hunting for this seminary, when they were within half a mile of it, during, the first year before we put our signs up.

It's very easy to get lost in most cities, because they just sort of grow up; but Washington, D.C. was not built that way. The United States hired one of the finest French architects to lay out Washington, D.C. It was built at one time according to a plan; and you have a definite plan there, with circles at certain definite places, and roads connecting each circle to the other one; and all laid out according to a definite plan, a perfectly ideal plan for the days when they used horses and buggies.

Of course it's a very, very poor plan for today; because it doesn't meet the needs of auto traffic at all; those circles are just in the way; and you'd rather drive an extra half mile than have to go round one of those circles. But with a

horse and buggy, it enabled you to get to most any point from most any other point, by the shortest possible route; it saved a great deal of time; and it was a definite excellent plan, easy to find your way around. And it means that Washington wasn't a city that just grew up any way; but your 13 colonies, united into one nation, and the power of the nation was behind the building of the city for its capital.

Well, now Ezion-Geber is like that. The city is built hundreds of miles from Jerusalem; far from the main centers of Judah; all the labor practically would have to be imported for a long distance; and much of the material would have to be carried in. Here's what Nelson Glueck says about it.

One can easily visualize the conditions existing about three millennia ago, when the idea of building Ezion-geber was first conceived and then translated into reality. Hundreds of laborers had to be assembled, housed, fed and guarded at the chosen building site. Perhaps they came over each morning from the more salubrious location of the equivalent of modern Aqabah, about four miles to the east, with its good water and kindly breezes and palm tree groves. Skilled technicians of all kinds had to be recruited. And then, when construction was completed, an effective business organization had to be called into existence to regulate the profitable flow of raw materials and finished or semi-finished products.

There was, so far as we know, only one person in Israel who possessed the wealth and wisdom capable of initiating and carrying out such a highly complex and specialized undertaking. He was King Solomon. He alone in his day had the ability, vision and power to establish an important industrial center and seaport such a long distance from the capital city of Jerusalem. His far-flung net of activities extended from Egypt and Arabia to Syria and Phoenicia and Asia Minor.¹³⁶

So here you have this city built at one time according to one definite plan, not a city that just sort of grew up. You have far greater cities that grew up over a period of time. It's like what you find up in Alaska somewhere; a layout that the United States Air Force or the Navy has made; where a great amount of material has been brought and laid down according to a definite plan.

You know there's a strong force, there's power, there's resource back of it. Here you find that at Ezion-Geber. But as Glueck began to dig at Ezion-Geber, renewed doubts of Solomon's wisdom began to occur. Of Solomon's power there was no question: to build a city according to a definite plan like this, so far away from the other principal cities. No question of his power; but renewed doubts of his wisdom began to come.

¹³⁶ Glueck, [*River in the Desert: A History of the Negev*](#) (1959) p. 161.

As he saw exactly where this place was built, he began to wonder. They found, naturally, if you are going to have a place to live, you have to have water supply. If you're going to have a place to work, you have to have water supply; and his men, who were digging, had to have a water supply; so they dug a well, and found they struck salt water. They weren't very far from the sea though, from the Red Sea. So they went a few yards over here, and they dug again, and they struck salt water; and they went further, and they struck salt water; and further and they struck salt water. And they had to go a mile and a half to get to a place where they could get fresh water; and they went over this way, and they dug; and they had to go a mile over there to get fresh water.

And in those days, without the pipes we have today, it would be an awful lot easier to build your place right by a good water supply, than to have to haul all your water to it; and it would have been a lot nicer for Glueck's excavators too, if they had had it right by a water supply instead of having to take their donkeys, camels, and haul all the water there that they drank. Well, why did he build it right here, instead of where the water supply was more accessible?

But in addition to that, when they began to dig there, they found that they hadn't much more than begun to dig when they began to realize the discomfort of the particular situation. They were just at the southern end of this draw [canyon] that comes all those many miles down from the southern end of the Dead Sea. And this draw comes down through the mountains. Of course it's half buried in different places; there's no stream in it or anything like that; but through this draw, they found that a heavy wind usually came; a heavy hot wind was normally coming down there; and that wind would strike them as they began to dig, and it would cast the dirt into their faces, their ears; it got in their mouths, their nostrils; it was extremely disagreeable. And Glueck said, they began to dig; and they got a little of the sand out from the top of the soil, which had become hardened; and they began to lift it up; the wind came and lifted that sand and soil up; and it went up into the air and out to sea; and as they saw that stuff going out to sea, they said the only thing they could think of was the pillar of cloud that directed the Israelites, as they came up out of Egypt. But here, they didn't need to be directed anywhere; they wanted to stay here, but it made working very difficult.

As you'd go a hundred yards to one side, you'd be out of the end of the draw; away from the end of the draw, and there'd be no such wind; and you'd go a hundred and fifty yards the other way, and you'd be out of the end of the draw; and there'd be no such wind. But right here, where the town was, that was where this wind came and made it so disagreeable and unpleasant...

Well, as I heard Dr. Glueck tell, when he first got back, about his experience with that, I couldn't help thinking of a story I heard when I went to Occidental College. And over there, I remember hearing the story told about Andrew

Carnegie. They said that Andrew Carnegie had given money to a good many colleges; and to Occidental College, which I attended in Los Angeles, Carnegie had given them a very substantial sum of money. And they said that the President of Pomona College, which was about 50 miles inland, went to see Carnegie and asked him for money for Pomona College.

So Carnegie turned to the President of Pomona College and he looked at the big map up there on the wall, and he said, "Look here, I've given money to various colleges. Now here I gave money to Occidental College, and it was about 15 or 20 miles from the Pacific Ocean," and on that big map of the United States, Pomona about 50 miles inland looked as if it almost touched Occidental; he said, "Why did you want to build a college here?" He said, "why didn't you put it out here, where there is no other college near?" And he put his finger right in the middle of the Mohave Desert, where you could go a hundred miles without ever meeting a soul. And though he was a great steel-maker, he was not a great educational sort; and he looked at the map; he had the power; he had the money; he says, "Here; put your college here."

Well, now did Solomon sit in a swivel chair in Jerusalem and point to a map of the area, and say, "Here is where I want the city built?" And so the men go down; they take all these resources, all this equipment, all these architects and specialists; they build it at the place where he points. It shows the power of Solomon, but does it show a lack of wisdom to build the city where he did?

Well, Glueck said their doubts of Solomon's wisdom were soon resolved. Because they found that, as they dug, not only did they find the city built according to a definite plan, but it was a plan different from that of any other place that ever had been excavated from antiquity. They found that the principal thing in Ezion-Geber was a group of factories, a group of buildings which were so arranged that the one wall of them was facing toward the north, where this wind came from; and there were wooden windows in it, which could be lifted and lowered to allow the wind to enter or to keep it out; and there were holes in the wall, so that the northern wall could receive the wind that blew down there and could direct it; so you could direct as much as you wanted to the first room; other ports through the walls into the second room, and to the third, and so on.

There were flues in the walls; and all arranged, so that that wind could be directed at the very spot where you wanted it in the room. And there on the floor of the room, they found the charcoal, and the evidence that they had there the refinery for the copper. The copper would be taken out from the tunnels—from the mines—and would be roughly smelted near the mines, so as to get rid of as much of the slag as they could; and then the rock would be brought down to Ezion-Geber—not such a long trip—but there they would get a far greater heat with the use of this forced draft. And they would be able to adjust it in

such a way as to refine the copper; and get rid of all the slag; and to melt the copper; and to mold it into such shapes as were convenient for shipment and for sale.

It was the principle of the modern blast furnace, the principle which I understand was only discovered about the middle of the last century and became the foundation of our modern steel mills; and we have no evidence of its being known previous to that time at all, certainly not from ancient times, except this one case where we find Solomon utilizing it.

Yes? (student.) Well, how extensive I don't know. I mean I'm not in that field at all myself; but the statements I make in it have been made by others in it who are specialists in the field; and what there is of similar types, somewhat similar types, I don't know; but there's certainly nothing anywhere on so large a scale. But on a smaller scale, the general principle may have been known to some. But it wasn't used on an extensive scale, I understand, anywhere in ancient times, anything like this. And it was quite amazing to them to find it here; and Glueck makes the statement in his book here,

Never, however, were [the mineral deposits of the Wadi Arabah] worked as intensively and in as coordinated a fashion as from Solomon's time on... [N]ot only was he a great ruler of legendary wisdom, and a highly successful merchant prince and shipping magnate, but he was also a copper king of first rank, who transformed Israel into an industrial power. The elaborate copper smelter and manufacturing center constructed by him at Ezion-geber is the largest that has thus far been discovered.¹³⁷

Through his manifold activities, Solomon became at once the blessing and the curse of his country. And then he goes on and speaks about the utilization of this wind here; he says here the entire town in its first and second periods was a phenomenal industrial works. A forced draft system for the furnaces was employed and later abandoned and forgotten to be rediscovered only in modern times. Ezion-Geber was the Pittsburgh of Palestine, in addition to being Israel's most important resource. The factory rooms were "air-conditioned" for heat. And to make use of the available wind in this way, evidently hadn't been thought of by anybody at any other site that we know of.

But the idea of Solomon thus, in the last 20 years, among archaeologists and historians has undergone quite a change. This book of Glueck's, *The Other Side of the Jordan*,¹³⁸ in which he tells the detail of his discovery, published by the American School of Oriental Research, in 1940, is not considered by anyone as the book of a propagandist or a theorist, but as a very dependable study of the actual material found.

¹³⁷ Glueck, *ibid.* p. 157

¹³⁸ Glueck, *The Other Side of the Jordan* (1940, reprinted 1957).

Now I read in one of our best Christian magazines, about the time these discoveries were made, I read the statement there by their then archaeological editor; he's not now, the man who then was, about the discovery of this; and it said that, of course, this is in the land of Edom, and the wisdom is from the Edomites. It was interesting.

But Glueck went back and made a further exploration there so that the whole city was examined right to the bottom. There were two layers above this from later periods which tried to utilize some of what was already there but they're much inferior to the first. Most cities start primitively and become stronger and better. This starts with the best right at the foundation. And there, at the foundation there, examining the pottery and other materials, the evidence was found that the material is exactly like that—the material of daily life—exactly like that which you find in Jerusalem and other parts of Palestine at this period. And entirely different from what you find in Edomite towns, a little distance away but much nearer than the main Judean towns. So that Glueck felt justified in saying, as he says in his book here, there's not the slightest evidence of any Edomite influence here.¹³⁹ It is strictly Judean and he feels we are justified in attributing it to Solomon.

Now we read in Matthew that our Lord speaks of the lilies of the field, and he said that the glory of Solomon, he said, (Matthew 6:28,29)

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

The glory of Solomon was not a mythical matter, not an imaginary matter; not somebody simply glorifying the man. It is not, of course, a power like that of the great empires of antiquity: Rome or Mesopotamia or Egypt. Perhaps it's as great or superior to what any of the cities of ancient Greece ever succeeded in achieving, as far as power; but the glory of Solomon is not an imaginary thing, but a very real thing which Jesus is using here as a comparison. Glueck stated,

The wise ruler was a copper king, a shipping magnate, a merchant prince, and a great builder. [*ibid.*].

Regarding Solomon's glory, Luke 11:31 says:

¹³⁹ In regard to the date of the Exodus, Glueck, *op. cit. Rivers*, states, (p.118) in remarking on the archaeological findings of this region, "The Exodus through easternmost Transjordan could thus not have taken place before the thirteenth century B.C. If it had occurred earlier, the wanderers would have found neither Edomites nor Moabites with sufficient strength to say them yea or nay with regard to anything."

The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

Solomon's wisdom was not wisdom of a low order, but wisdom that would surpass most anything that we have evidence of from ancient times. And here there is a greater than Solomon, a far greater son of David, to whom we have access today, who can do far greater things than Solomon ever dreamed of doing!

It's interesting that in the Bible, as Glueck points out, we have no evidence of his being a copper king or a merchant prince. We have no evidence of that. We are told that the navy was built, not told why it was built; we're not told about the copper mines. It simply illustrates the fact that the Bible is not given to be an economic, military or social history, or even a political history. The Bible is given to show God's relations with his people; and to show how He prepared the way for the coming of His Son.

And therefore, what we learn in these other fields is incidental to the Bible. We learn a great deal about them; they are vital as background to the main purpose of the Bible; but it is not the purpose of the Bible to give a complete picture, a complete presentation of these matters. And so when we find hints—like this one—of the building the ships there; well, it either was a very foolish thing to do; or a very wise thing to do; and if it's a wise thing, it means there are other facts about him that the Bible doesn't give. Now we find those other facts, and we see how they fit in with the other.

And it's that way with the Bible, even in the spiritual realm. The Bible doesn't undertake to give us a complete account of everything in the spiritual realm—that would take many encyclopedias. It does not explain the full nature of God to us, the full character of God. It gives us what it is vital for our spiritual lives; and not merely for us, but vital for the various ages throughout history. And consequently, when there are things we don't understand, because we don't see how they fit together; we can know there are other facts that haven't been given, which if we had we would see perfectly how they fit together.

But now, Glueck goes on now in this paragraph and he says,

Through his manifold activities, he became at once the blessing and the curse of his country. With increased power and wealth, came a centralization of authority and a ruthless dictatorship, that ignored the democratic traditions of his own people. There resulted a counter-development of forces of reaction and revolt, which were immediately after Solomon's death to rend his kingdom asunder. During his lifetime, however, Solomon reigned

supreme. The evil he did lived after him. His far-flung net of activities extended from Egypt to Phoenicia, and from Arabia to Syria. Ezion-Geber represents one of his greatest, if indeed up to the present time, his least-known accomplishments. [*ibid.*]

That's what he said in 1940. Ezion-Geber is much better known now than that. There have been articles by Glueck himself in the *Reader's Digest* and by others who tell us, not only about some of this material, but telling how Israel today is coming to reactivate some of these copper mines; and Aqaba (Modern Eliat¹⁴⁰), which is right by Ezion-Geber, today is one of the principal shipping outlets of Israel; and they say that there is a great amount of shipping going from there, just within the last few months; since the Suez situation two years ago. Since then, it is possible for Israel to use that, as it wasn't before. Before that, they were hemmed in there. That's the one thing they gained there, the right to use the Aqaba port freely.

But Solomon was the most powerful of the three kings of the united kingdom, though his power came from his father's exploits; and Solomon's empire continued with no physical sign of difficulty until his death.

Yes? (Student. "You mention the source of water supply. Could it not be possible that in those days the water was more plentiful than it is today?") Well, there's plenty of water but it wasn't right there—but no more than a few miles away. You mean that the water there might have been better back then? That's entirely possible. But of course this wind would be a far more important factor than water. If you didn't have the matter of the wind to contend with, you would be very foolish not to find a place that had a good access to water; but the great advantage of that wind, would more than make up for the disadvantage of having to haul the water.¹⁴¹

Yes? (Student. "Did archaeologists find copper objects in Aqaba?") No, the copper would seem to have been shipped to Ophir. I don't think they have found finished copper at the place. They find refuse; enough to show clearly what they did; but as far as I know, no finished copper has been found.

Yes? (Student.) The Bible doesn't even tell us they shipped from here, it just says they built the ships. It does say they brought the gold back, which is what they were more interested in. Copper was a means of getting the gold; and

¹⁴⁰ Eliat, Israel and Aqaba, Jordan are neighboring cities.

¹⁴¹ Glueck *The Other Side, op. cit.* On the siting of the city: "We believe it possible that Ezion-geber:Elath may be buried under the modern Jordanian port-city of Aqabah, with a fortress protecting it located on one of the hilltops above it to the north. The deepest anchorage, a plentitude of fine drinking water, fertile soil along the seashore sustaining large date-palm groves, and protection from sandstorm under the lee of the hills make Aqabah the natural site for ancient settlements... At last the long-sought-for site, or its surrogate, had been found, approximately near the location where one would logically imagine it to have been." p. 110.

whether they shipped the copper in shape of ingots or of sheets or of finished articles we are not told. I don't know whether they were able to decide from the remains or not.

Yes? (Student.) Well, Ophir is a rather large area. The term is considered to cover both sides of the southern end of the Red Sea. There's quite a large area there; there probably would be very considerable trade.

Well, lets go on to

X. The Divided Kingdom before Jehu.

This is a period of about 90 years, from 931 to 842 BC. Now a history of this period will naturally start with

A. The Disruption.

In I Kings 11 [verses 4–6] we read

It came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father.

That happens to many a man when he is old, and to some when they are young. But they turned his heart after other gods. And so we read in verse 9 [–14],

And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the Lord commanded. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen. And the Lord stirred up an adversary unto Solomon....

You notice that the Lord God had appeared unto him twice. It says the Lord said unto Solomon, and it doesn't say how He said it. Did the Lord appear to Solomon again after Solomon had fallen into wickedness? Did the Lord give a direct message to Solomon here? Or did the Lord send Ahijah or some other prophet to Solomon to say these words to him? I don't think anybody can say on the basis of this passage, except that we are told that God in some way gave a specific, definite message to Solomon.

There is revelation here, revelation from God to Solomon; and that, of course is one of the outstanding features of the Bible, that we have revelation of God in words to people. There are those who say it never occurs in this present age; and there are those who say it rarely occurs in this present age. We must agree that it does not occur frequently in this present age. In this day we have God's Word that He's given us; we have this whole Book. When He's got all that

message for us, there is little if any need of His speaking directly to one of us today.

But in the times before the revelation was complete, we have abundant evidence in the Scripture that God did speak in this way to individuals. Of course, the modern mind would object to anything of that kind, on the basis that we do not have it today; and therefore it never existed. That is not really an argument. We have airplanes and skyscrapers today which never existed through all the ages up to this century. You can say they never had them and therefore we never will, but we have them today. You can't say, because we have something today, we have always had it; you can't say, because we don't have something today, we've never had it. God can change His method if He chooses, as much as a man can change his methods if he chooses. But it is not at all unnatural to think God would have spoken directly to human beings, if you believe in a personal God.

1. The Background of the Disruption.

a. The Gibeonite Wedge. The disruption goes back to Joshua's foolish action in making the agreement with the Gibeonites. God had told them to make no agreement with any of the Canaanites but to wipe them all out. Joshua acted hastily in doing what seemed wise to him, instead of considering very, very carefully to make sure he was not breaking the prescription God had given him. God insisted—having made the agreement—it be kept; and faithfully kept right on through the centuries; but it meant a group of aliens, a group of people out of sympathy with their traditions and outlook, right in the midst; a closely knit group in the middle of the land which naturally made a division in the land. That in itself alone didn't force a wedge, but it contributed; so Joshua's mistake contributed to the disruption of the kingdom.

b. The Two Leading Tribes. Now the second thing that contributed is the fact that we had two leading tribes: one south of the Gibeonites and one north of them. Of course you have your 12 tribes; but some of them are very feeble, some are very weak; but two are very strong. Judah is the very large and influential tribe south of the Gibeonites; and Ephraim is the very large and influential tribe north of the Gibeonites; and right by Ephraim you have the very large tribe of Manasseh, the two together being the descendants of Joseph; and so you have two distinct groups; and even back in Judges, you find a certain amount of division comes between the people of Judah and the people of Joseph.

c. Previous Divisive Tendencies. This is not something which simply comes all of a sudden, with no background for it whatever. We find certain fights between the south and the north in the book of Judges. There's not a great deal told about them there, but there is a little.

You remember the story of the shibboleth. There were two Israelite groups, one of them fighting against the other, and trying to catch the refugees by the way they could pronounce the word "shibboleth". There was a sound in it that wasn't in their dialect. They could immediately recognize the enemy.

It seems strange how these dialects spring up, but they do. Here we are and the people of Canada. A great part of the people of Canada are people who used to live here, in New York and New Jersey and Pennsylvania; but many of the people who were well-to-do, prosperous and educated in these colonies here, did not agree with breaking with England; they left, or were deported; and we know, in our history, there were many individuals of low character who were Tories, but there were individuals of that type on both sides. But there were also many fine, respectable citizens who were Tories; and when the end of the war came and the colonies had independence from England, thousands of these people migrated north and made the foundations of the province of Ontario.

What I mean by that is, they're the same people. The fundamental center of the people of Canada and the people of the United States are the same people: the same background, the language, everything the same; but they have been living with the Great Lakes between them now for a period of a century and a half; and a distinct dialect has sprung up, to such an extent that the United States immigration officials don't bother a great deal on the border about demanding passports. But when we came down from Canada, they asked us where my wife and I were born; where we come from, and so on; and my little boy was there; he was then 8 years old; and we started telling them about him; no, they turned to him, they said, "Son, where were you born?" They had to hear him talk; because once they heard him talk, and they heard us talk, there was no question; we were United States citizens; it was absolutely no question: we didn't come from Canada. And a person brought up in Canada would have a mighty hard job talking in such a way that an American immigration official would let him through without a pretty thorough examination and some papers. They come down here and they are naturalized, they have just the same rights as anyone else in this country, but if they go up to Canada again, they better take their papers with them, as proof, because immediately they'll be recognized.

Well, here we have the growing up of distinct dialects, north and south of the Gibeonites, recognized in the book of Joshua. And so you have the beginning of a division there.

Then you have—after Saul's death—David becomes king in Hebron; and he ruled over Judah for 8 years; and the northern section was subject to the followers of Saul, subject to Saul's son Ishbosheth. You have the division there already. Then, after the death of Ishbosheth, the two were united together;

David ruled over the whole realm; but you remember when Absalom revolted, that after the revolt of Absalom the people from the north said [2 Samuel 20], "To your tents, O Israel; what have we got to do with the son of Jesse?" And they went back; and there was a brief time when there was a division against David. But David's name and standing, and their loyalty was great enough to overcome it in a fairly short time.

Well, now, as long as Solomon lived there was no division, there was no difficulty; but underneath the surface, there was beginning to be dissatisfaction, with the tremendous taxes that 1 Kings 12 tells us; and the tremendous amount of forced labor for his building. And so when his son came into power, it was natural that they would want to know what the situation was going to be.

2. Solomon's Defection From God.

Solomon was a very fine young man; but his power went to his head, and in later days he was not the fine man he'd been before. The Bible tells us that his foreign wives turned his heart away from God. He had wives from the many other countries with which he had alliance. That was customary in those days; to cement an alliance, the rulers would marry someone from the other country. It was very common until comparatively recent years; it was common among the great powers of Europe to marry to make a friendship between the two lands.

Well, Solomon had these foreign wives; and naturally each of them had a right to carry out her own worship; and we read that his wives led Solomon astray, and Solomon's heart was turned away from God.

And so we find that even during Solomon's lifetime, a prophet told the man Jeroboam that God was going to give him a part of Solomon's kingdom; and when Solomon heard about it, Jeroboam had to flee to Egypt, because it wouldn't have been safe for him any longer in the land of Israel.

But here we have Solomon's defection from God, which of course is the immediate occasion of the division, or next to the immediate occasion. Solomon's defection from God. And we read about it in I Kings 11, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite came and we read, you'll find this a very interesting thing, that in chapter 11, verse 29,

And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment;

Who had clad himself with a new garment? The Bible doesn't say. Which one had? Where did the Scripture say Jeroboam? It does not state. In Kings here it

does not say whether it was Jeroboam or Ahijah. One of the two had on a new garment. It doesn't say which.

Three-fourths of the controversies that rend Christendom are based upon the fact that people think they can know what is not stated in the Scriptures. Then of course, others think they know something different when the Scripture doesn't state it either way.

I have never heard of a church being split over whether it was Ahijah or Jeroboam who had the garment upon him; but I have heard of them being split, or almost split, on positions with no more evidence than that in certain cases. I heard of one church that practically split over the question of whether the Crucifixion was on Wednesday or on Friday. Of course, that is a much more important question than this; but hardly one on which a church should split, especially when that also is not stated in Scripture, but is purely a matter of inference. But in this case it does not say. And we have to try to imagine which fits the picture best. One may prefer one, and one the other. But in any event,

And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces: And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee:

Well, if he took ten how many would Solomon's son have left? Read verse 32,

(But he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:)

How do you divide it into 12 parts and have one have ten and the other have one? How's that? It says he divided it into 12 parts. And he gave him ten and then he says the other is going to have one tribe.

And, of course, what it means is that the case of Simeon is one, Dan is another, and Benjamin was divided sort of between the two. We speak of the southern kingdom as being Judah and Benjamin, but actually it probably was only part of Benjamin; Benjamin was probably divided between the two. After all they were the feeblest. So we have the division with ten tribes in the north and one main tribe in the south, and probably some sections between. It probably wasn't an absolute tribal line, but in general it gives the principle.

=====

The tribal line of Judah goes right through Jerusalem, half in Judah and half in Benjamin. So that this was the promise given to Jeroboam; and when Solomon heard, Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam; and Jeroboam fled into Egypt, to Shishak

king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon. Quite a change in the attitude of Egypt. Early in Solomon's reign the Egyptians made friendship with him; Pharaoh gave one of his daughters to be the wife of Solomon; and Pharaoh took populous cities from the Canaanites and gave them to him, for a wedding present.

Now we find that various ones who are refugees from Solomon have fled to Egypt, and are living there with Pharaoh; and one of them of course is Jeroboam. And so we have then

3. Rehoboam's Foolish Attitude.

We find this told in 1 Kings 12 and in 2 Chronicles 10. And many of the verses are almost word for word. Rehoboam went to Shechem, because all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king. Is Shechem in the northern part or in the southern part? Actually Shechem is just about in the middle of the land.

As you know, the word "Shechem" means shoulder; and the name Shechem comes from the shoulder of the mountain there. It is just about the central part of Canaan, this place Shechem; it is where the Samaritans live today; right at Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, where the blessings and the curses were given. It is the place where the sons of Jacob had that trick, by which they conquered the people; and for it Jacob cursed Simeon and Levi, because of what they designed, killing the men of Shechem.

We have no account of any conquest of Shechem in Joshua; and so many scholars think that when Jacob conquered Shechem, that the people just held it; and that through the time in Egypt the Israelites were holding Shechem. We have no proof of that whatever. There are things that look slightly in that direction. But at any rate, Shechem was an important place for a central point; and so it was to Shechem that Rehoboam went, to be crowned king. Jerusalem was the capital, but Jerusalem was not so centrally located. And Jeroboam heard of Solomon's death, and he was down there in Egypt; and some of the people who were dissatisfied sent and got him. And they brought him back; and Jeroboam became the spokesman of the people in speaking to Rehoboam.

A bit of time had elapsed, getting him all the way out of Egypt, and the people knew as long as Solomon lived there was no point in making insurrection, but now Solomon was dead, there was a possibility and so

Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee. And he said unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the people departed. And king Rehoboam

consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people? And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

I heard of a man just recently who became pastor of an independent Baptist church—I forget the name of the town, but it was in the eastern part of the United States; and he started in there, and he did an excellent piece of work; and he won souls, enlarging the church; and the people were enthused about him; and as he went ahead with various innovations he made, and they willingly came along; and then he said, "Now we've got to build a new building here for our Sunday School, and for the extension of our work as it should be." And they said, "What'll it cost?" And he said, "We can do it for about 300,000 dollars."

"Oh," they said, "we don't have that money." He said, "We can save and we can get it." Well, they said, "That's more than we can pay on." Well, he preached a big sermon, "My whole ministry depends on this; it's got to be done; I can't work here if we don't." He said, "If you don't do it, I'll resign."

He'd been there about six or seven months in the church; the people were enthused about him; he was doing an excellent piece of work. But he got the impression that he was in a position to give the orders, and say what he wanted done, and you had to go ahead and do it. Now maybe if he'd been there six years, and everybody loved him, he could have done that. But it is a mistake that many a man makes.

Now of course this is nothing like as bad as what Rehoboam did, but the same principle is involved. The old men advised Rehoboam, "When you are getting established, don't try to run things. Gradually introduce your ideas; don't do what's wrong, but don't think that it's got to be done your way. Fit in, and make people happy, and win their affection and their interest; and then when you have it, then you are in a position, if there are things that are important, to speak more positively."

That was the old men's advice to Rehoboam. And it's mighty good advice too. Anyone that starts a work for the Lord—this case I mentioned because I just happened to hear of it last week. But I have known of a dozen cases in the past where the same sort of thing has been true. A person has started in, and immediately everybody's got to do things the way he wants; and maybe his ideas are better than the others; maybe they aren't; but he is not in a position to try to insist on his own way.

Even take a group of people that is as devoted to their pastor as the Collingswood Presbyterian Church—that fine Christian church—is to Dr. [Carl]

McIntire; it seems as if many of the people there, just about anything in the world he asked they would do; and yet two years ago, he spoke to my church government class; and he said to them, "To make any change in the Collingswood Church usually takes about three years." He said, "If there's something that seems a good improvement in general arrangement, or in almost any point of more than minor importance, I discuss it with the elders; and I discuss it with the deacons, and I discuss it with the Trustees; they discuss it with their friends; it goes down through the church, and in the course of about three years the people come to feel it's a vital thing and do it."

But that is in his judgment, after 25 years as a pastor to which the people are just utterly devoted. And yet I've known graduates of this seminary, who have gone into a church; and immediately they're going to change everything around to make it what they think is better. Now of course, a lot of their ideas are immature; they haven't had much experience. Maybe a lot of things—after they see how things are going—they'll find what they had there is better. But many may think the change may be just right.

But you can't take people and just drive them like that. If you could, you wouldn't have any continuity in your church; because your people would get dissatisfied one week, and the next week there'd be nobody in church. But people are conservative; they tend to go on the way they are; and if you have them there, they're apt to keep coming, unless things get pretty bad. But they tend to want to go on as they were; and it's a good thing, or you wouldn't have any continuity.

That being the case, it's good to remember not to try to be in control until you're in a position where people have reason to have confidence in your judgment.

So the advice the old men gave to Rehoboam is advice which all of us could well have in mind, if our lives are to be effective. And Solomon had been too severe with them by far; but Rehoboam couldn't possibly expect them to be loyal to himself until they had confidence in him. Rehoboam had a most wonderful opportunity here to win the people by making concessions. Solomon had been so extreme, Rehoboam could have made tremendous concessions and still had plenty.

Henry VIII set a very bad example in most things he did; but he certainly showed cleverness at this point when he became king of England. One reason that Henry VIII was able to have a very successful rule was that the physical condition of the country was first class; his father, Henry VII, had taken a disorganized country at the end of the Civil War; and he had gotten things organized and settled and established; he raised the taxes, and got the government so that it was solvent and thoroughly in good shape. But Henry VIII

took the two leaders of the tax administration, and hung the two; which of course made the people think that he was blaming these men for all these actions of his father, and he was going to be very kind to them. There was nothing kind about him; but he made the people think he was kind.

Now the old men's advice to Rehoboam here might not have saved the situation because the thing had gone on for a long time, and people had gotten pretty disgusted; but it would have been much more apt to than what Rehoboam did. Well then he listened to the old men; but then he said, "These musty old conservatives here, they are out of touch with life today." He then asked the young fellows, who had been his associates; and maybe if he had gotten some progressive young men, representing the country as a whole, he might have gotten good advice; perhaps even better than the advice of the old men; but he had gotten young men here who had grown up with him.

The young men will tempt him to enjoy the fruits of what Solomon was doing; and to feel as if they were entitled to it; as if it belonged to them; and he asks these young men,

And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter? And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

And in other words they said, "Give it to them hard. Ride straight ahead, and make them do what you want." And there are times when that is the wise policy. There are situations where it is necessary to push forward, vigorously and overcome resistance; but those situations among a group of associates are comparatively few. And as a rule the other policies are much more apt to get what you want.

It is the tendency of young men. I remember one fellow ten years ago, who became pastor of a little church; and he wasn't satisfied with the superintendent of the Sunday School, so he got him removed; and somebody else was put in that he wanted there. He wasn't satisfied with something in the order of the service, so he changed that. He wasn't satisfied with something else, so he changed that; and one day, he didn't like the way the person was playing the hymn, so he said "Here, I'm going to play," so he jumped down and played; and he got up and he said, "Now, you've got to change that pianist, or I won't preach here anymore. I resign." So they accepted his resignation.

He just pushed ahead, and they took it for quite a while. Next I knew he was out working on a railroad; a seminary graduate, a man that loved the Lord and wanted to serve him; but he just didn't have common sense in dealing with people.

Now a man like Rehoboam, it's natural that he shouldn't have that kind of common sense. He was raised in a sheltered environment, and he considered himself the coming king. Everybody better kowtow to him and try to please him. He had little contact with people in general. But a Seminary graduate should learn something of human nature; should learn how to deal with people; and how to plan things right, but to arrive at them in a way that will win people, instead of driving them away.

Now there are occasional cases where you have to deal with laziness; or you have to deal with indifference; or you have to deal with an attitude which represents a small minority, and you have the large majority with you; where a strong, firm attitude will not only override opposition but sometimes bring their support.

I know a man in California who had a big clothes store—it wasn't very big I guess, but fairly good size in a small town—and there was a man there who came and bought a suit from him; and a month went by and the man never paid for it; and every time he'd see him he'd ask when he'd pay; and the man said "Oh, one of these days I'll be around." Finally one day he went downtown, and he saw this man with a big suitcase; and he said "Where are you going?" And he said, "I'm leaving town." "Well," he said, "You haven't paid for that suit. You come in here and pay for that suit, or I'll see to it you don't leave town. You pay for that!" He went after him good and hard. And he said, the man came back and paid for that suit; and he turned around and bought a lot of other things. He hadn't bought anything from him for eight months, because he was ashamed to buy anything, because he was a deadbeat in not paying for it. But when he forced him to pay, he turned around and bought a lot of other things and became a good customer.

There are times when the young men's advice is good, but be mighty sure that it's one of those times. Because if it isn't good it may have an effect like it had with Rehoboam.

And so Rehoboam came back and answered the people roughly and said as the young men said; and all the time they had Jeroboam there urging them not to follow this fellow, who was going to have all of Solomon's bad points without any of his good points,

So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem. So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

And of course all this had been predicted, when Ahijah the Shilonite had come to Jeroboam, and told him that God was going to give him ten tribes and leave only one tribe for the house of David—one tribe to fulfill the promise that there would always be a son of David to sit on the throne. But the bulk of the tribes were given to Jeroboam. So we come to

B. The First Three Kings of Judah.

And the first of them of course is

1. Rehoboam.

And we have in 1 Kings here, after telling about the division here [chapter 12], then we have a little about Rehoboam and then we go on with Jeroboam. We will look here at what it says about Rehoboam.

Rehoboam became king; and immediately he assembled the people to fight against Jeroboam of Israel, to bring the kingdom back.

But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying, Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the Lord, and returned to depart, according to the word of the Lord.

A very sensible thing to do. One tribe couldn't fight against ten tribes and accomplish anything to amount to anything. Under Rehoboam, then

a. His attempt to reconquer Israel. He wanted the people to attack Israel; he wanted to take Israel, but his power was insufficient for it. He'd had a chance to keep them and he lost it. Many a man loses a wonderful opportunity, and then spends the rest of his life fighting to regain it. And perhaps failing to

accomplish anything else; because he's always fighting to regain the opportunity that he has lost at some earlier time. Better to recognize facts.

Rehoboam was forced to recognize fact; but he was so interested in trying to get the rest of the kingdom back that he didn't bother to try hard to rule very well where he was. We have it stated in verse 30 of chapter 14, there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days. And that contradicts a statement, which we had back in chapter 12, that the people hearkened to the word of God and returned to depart according to the word of the Lord. Contradicts, if you take either one of these statements and carry it to the extreme; the fact is, you have to put the two together to know what happened.

What happened was that Rehoboam was constantly trying to win. He tried to get the crowd to support him, that it was God's will to reconquer the land; and they refused to do it, because God had said Jeroboam was to have the ten tribes. They refused to do it, but there were many people who stood with him. He made effort after effort to get Israel back. There was constant hostility, no all-out war. In any all-out war, Rehoboam would've been utterly vanquished; because Jeroboam had three times the strength that Rehoboam had. He had most of the land, Rehoboam just had one tribe.

b. Relations with Egypt. Now we have had our account of the victory in relation to archaeology; we noticed that in the time of Abraham, we have Babylonians records which throw considerable light. Likewise, in the time of Moses we have Egyptian records which throw considerable light, though in neither case are these direct and complete corroboration.

But through the Exodus up to this time, we have practically nothing in the way of written material from archaeology relating to what is in the Bible. We have remains in Palestine, but without writing. In many cases, the remains are very important; but written records from archaeology relating to it are lacking through this long period.

But now, we begin again to come to them. We have an account here [1 Kings] of Shishak; and it says that in the fifth year of Rehoboam that king Shishak came up against Jerusalem, verse 25, chapter 14. Now you take that verse just as it stands, and try to make sense of it. King Shishak came up against Jerusalem. You could go on; you could build a whole treatise on it. Shishak was against Rehoboam; Shishak decided to help his friend Jeroboam up in the north; Shishak came to attack Jerusalem, he came against Jerusalem. But that isn't what the verse *has* to mean; the verse *can* mean that in the course of a campaign which Shishak made, he attacked Jerusalem.

The greatest error in Bible interpretation is taking one verse and squeezing it, to get more meaning from it than you can. What you can do is get possibilities

from it, and then compare them with other passages. If other passages give the answer, fine; if they don't, say you don't know. Well, at any rate, in the course of his campaign, he attacked Jerusalem, whether that was the purpose of his campaign or not. And evidently Shishak got into Jerusalem, because he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord; the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. And King Rehoboam made in their stead brasen shields, copper shields. This old English "brasen" here would mean brass; but what alloy of copper it was, we don't know; "copper" would perhaps be a safer rendering for the general term. Copper shields, and committed them into the hands of the chief of the guard.

Now this is very little said about Shishak's campaign; just these couple of sentences here. But I saw a paper—a newspaper 25 years ago—which had a heading: "Theories of Fundamentalists Disproved." Underneath that was a subheading: "Bible shown not to be free from error." Well that's a great heading for an article in a paper; it makes you wonder just what it's about. So I read underneath it, and it said, "The Bible is not free from error and never can be proven to be free from error."¹⁴²

These words were stated by Professor James Henry Breasted of the University of Chicago; they were spoken in connection with his giving to the world the news of a discovery by one of his archaeological expeditions in Egypt—a monument telling how Shishak conquered Jerusalem in the reign of Rehoboam as described in the book of 1 Kings.¹⁴³ So the discovery was something which exactly fit in with, and corroborated, the book of Kings. Breasted was afraid people would draw the natural conclusion from it; so he made the exact opposite statement of what the facts proved; and his statement got the headlines, and you had to read the article to find out what the true facts were.

Unfortunately many, many people get their news from headlines instead of reading underneath. If you have any connection with newspapers, you soon learn that the headlines are often made by someone who hasn't even read the article; but this person has special facility in getting words of the right length to exactly fill the space that's available for the headline; and it may have very little to do with what's in the article. But most people don't know that, and they get their news from headlines; and I confess I myself read all the headlines and very few of the articles.

¹⁴² [dcb] This is only a statement of the universal fact of logic that a negative cannot be proved to be true, but it can be proved to be false by a single counter-example. So the statement "the Bible can never be proven to be free from error" is just a statement of this logical fact, and has no information content.

¹⁴³ [dcb] I believe this refers to the Bubastite Portal in Karnak (Thebes), Egypt. The figure below shows Gibeon listed as a captured city.



Shishak Monument
Field of Abraham - Hebron

But here, as the announcement shows, is a point where again we begin to get written materials, throwing light on the Bible. Now this does not throw a great deal of light on the Bible. I had you last semester read this statement of Shishak. Shishak tells in it how he made a great conquest; and he mentions the cities he conquered; and he has these things like round sort of oval things [cartouches], to represent the city, with the name of the city in it. Then he names a few hundred cities that he says he conquered.¹⁴⁴

People said that Shishak was just a minor Egyptian kinglet, in the days of Egyptian degeneracy; and that he went right around the corner there at Luxor, to the monument that Sosthenes III put up a few hundred years earlier, telling of his great exploits in Palestine; and he just copies there the names of the cities. Of course they don't say the king did that; his scribes put up a monument to celebrate him.

And there are places where the names follow verbatim. Maybe the scribe did copy from it. But one thing that shows we can't believe Shishak's inscription is the fact that it includes not only cities in Judah, but cities in the northern kingdom. And after all, if Shishak went up there to help his ally Jeroboam, who lived at his court before he became king of the northern kingdom, he would go up and help them by attacking the southern kingdom, but not attacking the northern kingdom. So they said Shishak's inscriptions are not dependable.

And then there was found in Megiddo—way up in the northern kingdom—there was found a stele, a monument there, put up by Shishak, celebrating his victory there. So it just shows how we must not jump to conclusions. Shishak conquered just as much in the northern kingdom as he did in the south. It was not a conquest in the sense that he conquered and then took it. It was more like a raid; but he came with a strong force, and raided, and plundered; and the people probably were not expecting him; they weren't prepared to put up vigorous resistance; and in addition to that, some of them realized it was just a raid, not a real conquest. And he made this raid, made this conquest, to win glory for himself, and to get plunder. But it corroborates the statement in Kings. These statements we discover there in Kings have been passed on, copied and copied and recopied. The name of Shishak was unknown all through these thousands of years of copying his name, except for this mention in the Bible. Of course the way they spell it it's more like Shishonk; but you can't expect a thing to be spelled the same in two different languages that use different types of writing. They can't be spelled exactly the same. That's about as close that you would expect the similarity to be, with two such utterly

¹⁴⁴ See [high-resolution image of this monument](#) with identification of captured cities.

different types of writing. When you try to get exact comparison between two languages...

It reminds me of the time in Berlin when I went to a Bible conference. There were two men having a big argument; and they said, "Here comes an American, We'll ask him to solve it for us." They said "What is the correct pronunciation of the name of the Falls—of course they, in German, they said "Felle" for "Falls". "Is it Niagara or Niagara? Which is it?" Then I told them it was neither one, it was Niagara; my "Niagara" sounded to them just like a mouthful of jelly in German, so utterly unlike any German sound. Their argument was meaningless, because they did not know the sound. When you translate from one language to another, and particularly those with utterly different styles of writing, you have to look at a good many different things to see how the correspondence is apt to be made. And here, Shishonk and Shishak—nobody raises a question about its being an exact representation under the limits of that representation.

I remember one time in Germany, when a man told me he had relatives in North America; and I asked, "What state are they from?" He says, "I-yo-ho. Fort Doge, I-yo-ho," And that's very different from the way I'd ever before heard anybody pronounce Fort Dodge, Iowa. But English and German are very similar languages. Think what it is when you get two such different languages as Egyptian and English.

Well, this matter of Shishak was a real loss to Rehoboam, taking so much of the treasures out of the king's house and out of the temple, but it was just a passing raid. Its principal interest for us is that it is a corroboration; and also it helps in dating, by an exact fitting together of Egyptian history here and the history of the Bible.

2. Abijah.

And then we have chapter 15 of 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles 13; we are told in Kings that Abijam reigned over Judah; and in Chronicles we are told that Abijah was the next king. One says that it was Abijah and the other says that it was Abijam. And you read on further, and you find that after his death, the king was his son Asa; and that you read in both. So this man was the son of Rehoboam and the father of Asa; and that would be pretty good proof that he was the one man. You might have two different men who had the same father, but hardly two different ones who had the same son. And so it proves that he is right there in the kingly line; but one book calls him Abijah and the other Abijam. And that is an evidence of the care of the transmitters of the Old Testament in their copying. Those copyists knew the Bible; some of them knew the whole Old Testament by heart. They were fairly familiar with the material in it; they knew that Kings called him Abijam and that Chronicles called him Abijah.

Well, why didn't they make it one way or the other then? Because they found their manuscripts one way, and they kept copying it the way they found it. And that is an evidence for trusting the Bible, rather than the contrary. When we find obvious differences retained carefully, it shows, not that error hasn't come in, because it has, at very, very few places; there *are* errors in transmission; but it shows that the scribes copied what they found and didn't try to correct it. Because when you start correcting it, you're apt to correct the wrong way; and make it much worse than it was, unless you have clear and absolute evidence.

Well now, I didn't mean to say that in this case it was an error; it may be an error, but we are not in a position to know. Was his name Abijah or was it Abijam? Well, you will find that people often abbreviate their names. In our language, they often abbreviate, and use various forms for their names; not so much now with printing, which tends to crystallize forms; but there are often various forms which people use of their names. And it's altogether possible that in some way not known to us, Abijah and Abijam are forms of the same name. Maybe the end might be some kind of an ending, such as comes on our names too.

You will find that there was a man called William Sutton; and a book was written about him recently, called *I Willie Sutton*. He became known to the police, and known to people in general, as Willie Sutton. And yet I read a statement that his associates never called him Willie; they always called him Bill. And there, the book doesn't call him William Sutton, it calls him Willie Sutton, takes the form which he was so generally referred to as.

And it may be that there was a reason why Abijah and Abijam were two forms of the same name. On the other hand it may be that there's an error, that in the early writing of one of these books or the other, the letters got changed in a very early copy and the change was retained. But who was the second king, was it Abijah or was it Abijam? It was the man who was called by both of these names, and I don't know of any way we can prove which was the correct name—if one was the correct one; they may have been equally correct.

Another interesting case of this is later on, where we find in Jeremiah that he speaks of King Nebuchadrezzar; and he speaks repeatedly of Nebuchadrezzar. And then when you get into Daniel, he talks about Nebuchadnezzar; and the things told are such that it's perfectly obvious that it's the same man—Nebuchadrezzar or Nebuchadnezzar. Which was he? Well, in Babylonian, he is Nabucheduro-Utsure, which would certainly sound more like Nebuchadrezzar than Nebuchadnezzar. It means "Nabu protects the firstborn son." That is the Babylonian name.

Well, what about the Nebuchadnezzar? Well, we find in other sources which have reference to the king, that he is quite generally called Nebuchadnezzar or

Nabuchodonosser or some such form; but it had the "n," and so in that case we feel quite sure we have the answer. That his official name is Nabucheduro-Utsure; and putting that into Hebrew, it was naturally contracted to Nebuchadrezzar; and that is what people would say, like Jeremiah, who lived in Palestine and read about King Nebuchadnezzar. They would take the official name and tend to use it. But the people like Daniel, who were at his court and heard the way it was commonly spoken, became accustomed to the way that it was usually pronounced, in which the "r" was changed to an "n" for facility in pronunciation; and Nebuchadnezzar was almost certainly the way that his associates called the name which would be written Nabucheduro-Utsure. So both forms are right, Nebuchadrezzar and Nebuchadnezzar; but Nebuchadrezzar is the official form it takes; Nebuchadnezzar the way that everybody spoke it orally, instead of just reading about it.

But in this case of Abijah, since he was king of the southern kingdom only, and his realm did not extend over the northern kingdom, my guess would be that it wouldn't apply to this particular case; in this case he was known in the southern kingdom, and not a prominent enough figure in the northern kingdom to have a special form there. That'd be my guess, but we can't be sure.

On the other hand, it is very easy for errors to come in; because a copyist would be copying those, and get used to one or the other; and it's very easy to have a thing in your mind and write it down, even when you have something else. I've found myself sometimes thinking a number and writing a different one down; it's very easy to do. I want to write down page 18, but I write down page 17. I don't know why, but the mind plays tricks that way. And it's probably because I have the zone 17 or something else in mind. And people having the one name in mind would very easily make the shift.

Yes? (Mr. Keng: "Kings and Chronicles give different names for Abijah's (if that's his name!) mother.") Yes. There is a difference, as Mr. Keng points out, in the mother's name as given. However, there is also some similarity, that is nearly so decisive. But now we look at those. We have it in 1 Kings 15:3:

Three years reigned he in Jerusalem, and his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

The other says in II Chronicles 13:2:

He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.

Well now this difference between Maachah and Michaiah.

The first part of it is simply a matter of the vowel. The vowels weren't written down until points were added to the Hebrew text, much later. In a common name naturally, it would be easily preserved and passed down; but in something like this, that occurs once in the Bible, the "Ma" and the "Mi", we often have a variation in the same name. So I wouldn't worry about that part.

Now the last part. Many names end in "aiah" which are often shortened to "ah", the shortened form. We have that a good many times. And so the mother's name I'd say was the same.

But look at her father. One says the daughter of Abishalom, and the other says the daughter of Uriel of Gibeon. I don't think there's any question that the mother's name is the same; but her father is given differently in the two places. And that course that immediately raises the question, is this a different Maachah?

Well, the mother could be referred to by her father or by her grandfather. That's very often found in the Bible: "the daughter of"—you speak of a person relating to her immediate father and mother, immediate parents, or you may speak to the group they belong to. And one might be the father and one the grandfather, so I wouldn't think that that... It does not prove it's the same man, because the mother's patrimony is different; but it doesn't prove it's a different man, because it could easily be explained—we have various other cases where they are used in that way.

Well, the question of the name is a minor question, on which I would not take time except that it is similar to many, many other similar problems; and therefore we ought to have it in mind for the many cases rather than just for the one. But this is perhaps a particular outstanding case of it.

A greater problem than that is the question, "Was Abijah a good man or bad man?" If you read Kings, all you read is (I Kings 15:3):

And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father. Nevertheless for David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem: Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

So you turn over to Chronicles to find the other things he did; and over there you find that there's much more told about Abijah; and there you have an account of a war between him and Jeroboam; and in the course of that war, you have him standing up and rebuking Jeroboam for his disloyalty to the Lord; and you have the Lord giving him a marvelous deliverance in it; and you certainly would get the picture of a successful, effective, God-fearing king in Chronicles. But in Kings you have a brief statement that he was a bad man.

So if you say he's a bad king, I think you read Kings and didn't look at Chronicles. If you say he's a good king, I think you read Chronicles and didn't look at Kings.

But that doesn't mean there is a contradiction between the two books. It does not mean that; it means that he, like most human beings, was a complex personality, who had his good points and his bad points. And the general summation is bad that Kings gives; but there were his points of real loyalty to the Lord, and real blessing from the Lord, which Chronicles tells us.

And that is true of most of us. There is hardly any of us that is found to be all white or all black. We have our good points, and we have our bad points. But when we are mixed like Abijah was, we're apt to deserve just about as little attention as he got in the book of Kings. He did not follow the Lord with his whole heart. He had an occasional real example of loyalty to the Lord that deserves credit; but on the whole, the record he makes is rather spotty. So it just shows again how important it is to get all of that before reaching a dogmatic conclusion.

You can get a conclusion from Kings, and a diametrically opposite one from Chronicles. Now suppose that we were on him like we are on the kings of Israel; that we only had the book of Kings and we didn't have the Chronicles for the kings of Israel. Suppose you were in that situation. Well, that doesn't mean that what you read isn't true; but don't read into it more than is there. And don't try to make it give you more information than it does. Recognize the possibility of other facts that we do not have. Well, then,

3. Asa.

Abijah only reigned three years. He is a minor king; he didn't live long enough to be a major king. But he had a son who is a major king, Asa. And Asa is a major king because he reigned 41 years. That is a long time for any king to reign; comparatively few reign that long. It is longer than Saul, David, or Solomon—any one of the three first kings, reigned—but not a great deal longer.

I hope you all know how long each of those three reigned. Each of them was 40. Asa reigned 41 years, and there are comparatively few kings who reign anywhere near as long as 40, either in Israel or anywhere else.

But Asa we read, quite in contrast to Abijah... now here's an interesting thing. Look at [1 Kings] 15:10:

And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

Notice that? And then you look back at chapter 15, verse 2, and what was the name of the mother of Abijah? His mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom.

Well then, does Maachah marry Rehoboam, and then after his death marry—no it couldn't be after his death, because Asa became king after the other had reigned three years. He must have been born while his grandfather was still living. And the mother has the same name. Is the mother of the son also the mother the grandson? It would be extremely unlikely. I don't say it's absolutely impossible, but it's so unlikely I think it is almost certainly not the case.

Then, do we have two Maachahs who were the daughter of Abishalom? That seems very unlikely. If that was the case, being right next to each other here, you'd think they would attach some designation to show what the facts were. So it would seem to me most likely that here we have a case where a scribal error has come in. That would seem to me extremely likely, that a scribal error has come in here. That in one case the father's name is different, the mother's name may be the same in both cases; that's very frequent, to have two women of the same name. But it's likely that the father's name was different and a very early scribe made an error in copying.

What does Chronicles give for the name of the mother of Abijah? Do you remember? Micaiah the daughter of whom? And the mother of Asa? We read about this woman over in 2 Chronicles 15:16. There we read,

And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove:

So we have Asa's mother called Maachah over here in Chronicles; and earlier we have Abijah's mother called Micaiah. When we have these slight differences, these slight contradictions, it is very likely that there has been a scribal error.

Yes? (Student: "Why?") Because ordinarily you designate, especially in a polygamous society, you designate the man by his father and his mother. Here you have a man designated, the son of the king, and his mother was so—and—

so. Well, now if you have thirty other cases where it gives his mother's name, and in this one case, it is not giving his mother's name nor his mother's father's name, but giving the name of the father who has already been king and already been discussed, it would be a contradiction to the custom in all the other cases. It just wouldn't fit. His mother could very well be Maachah, but it still would be the mother's name, not the father's mother's name.

See what I mean, it's the way of designating a man: giving his two parents. Well, now if you give only one parent, and then that parent's parent, you wouldn't say that you were the son of your father and your father's mother. You would say your father and your mother. Now if your mother's parents were of greater importance, you might mention them instead of her; but it's to mention your two lines, not just to mention one of your two lines; it wouldn't fit. You think it over.

Now Asa, then, is designated in Kings and Chronicles as a good king. And we'll learn a little more about him next Monday afternoon.

=====

We are in the section of the history in which you have far more detail. There's much detail we don't have about these kings, a tremendous lot we don't know. But the author of this section of Chronicles was interested not in giving us the precise interrelation of the kings. Now that was natural, because of their coming successively in two different parts of the land. There was more of a consecutive interrelationship. For that reason we have much more information, though we still are lacking with a great deal of information that would be very helpful to us if we had it.

Now of course that is true in any field of history. History is written by people; and if you wrote everything, you would fill dozens and dozens of encyclopedias. You can't do it. You take what you think is important; and later much of what you gave proves to be unimportant. And later ages are greatly interested in many things you knew perfectly well and didn't bother to put down. That's always true in history.

And so here we have this particular area written by one who was interested in the interrelationship, and yet not so interested as to give us precise details. He tells us in this year of this king that one reigned; and this year of that king this one reigned, and so on; and it's very interesting; but when you fit them together, they just don't fit; and it has been said by scholars that the interrelation of the numbers of the kings is certainly the most difficult thing to accept in the Bible. That there were so many places where they just couldn't possibly fit together. That was said until recently by all liberal scholars and many conservative scholars.

Now this book, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, published by the University of Chicago Press, written by Dr. Edwin R. Thiele,¹⁴⁵ represents the result of a doctoral dissertation which he wrote for the University of Chicago. He took his doctor's degree studying the chronology of the Hebrew kings. The book has an introduction to it by William A. Irwin, for a long time the professor of Old Testament in the University of Chicago. He was a man who stood 100% for a higher critical view of the Old Testament. He was absolutely convinced of it; he is yet, I believe. He is a strong supporter of the higher critical view of the Old Testament.

Now Professor Irwin, I believe, has been retired from the University of Chicago, and is now teaching at some southern university. But Irwin was at Chicago when this book came out in 1951. And he wrote an introduction for it.

It's interesting that 20 years ago, I was at the University of Chicago doing some work in the Oriental Institute there; and Professor Heidel who spoke on Genesis—on the flood story—not the creation story, is a Missouri Lutheran; a very orthodox man. When he first wrote his book on the Genesis story of creation, he was trying to get it published. And he wrote a great many publishers; and he got this same professor Irwin to write him a letter of introduction; and he showed me a letter which he was just about to mail to the *Sunday School Times*, signed by Professor Irwin. He got Irwin to write, recommending his book which he was sending to various publishers. And as I read, it Irwin said of the book that this is a book which will appeal to all students of the Old Testament. Its careful accurate scholarship will appeal to liberal thinkers, while its warm emotional glow will appeal to conservatives.

And I recommended him not to send that letter to the *Sunday School Times* because I didn't think it would predispose them in favor of the book. And it certainly wouldn't me, if I didn't know more about Heidel than what I get from that letter. But it shows you what Irwin's attitude was toward conservatives.

And therefore it makes it particularly interesting to me that he would write such a glowing praise of Thiele's book as he does. In his introduction to Thiele's book here, he points out the many, many cases of apparent contradiction in the chronology of the kings. And then he says that it seemed to be the very most difficult problem in the Old Testament; and now in view of Professor Thiele's study, it becomes one of the simplest problems rather than one of the most difficult.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ [dcb] An update to this is Edwin R. Thiele, *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings*, (1977). He remarks (p. 72) "The pattern then set forth was subjected to many tests throughout the world and it continued to stand." A revised edition of the original book was published in 1984.

¹⁴⁶ [dcb] Excerpts from the *Introduction* by Prof. William A. Irwin dated 2 January 1950: "The astonishing fact is that he demonstrates conclusively the precise and dependable accuracy of

And that is pretty strong commendation to be given from one who is not looking to find the Bible accurate, but looking to find it inaccurate. Now, personally, I'm not ready to say that Thiele is necessarily correct in all his conclusions. To me what his book proves is not that these are the correct statements that he gives—what it proves is that it is possible to construct a system using the biblical material and explain it in such a way that you can take the figures as they stand and fit them together in a perfectly reasonable way—a way which will seem reasonable, even to a man like Irwin who is so pre-disposed against it. For the present I am going to use Thiele's dates; I know of no better dates to use; but I'm not going to dogmatically say they're right. I think he has worked out a possible system, it may be the correct one. The departures from it will not be great, though there may be some place where he's wrong.

But it is interesting that Thiele's interpretation rests upon this assumption, that the chronology of the kings in one kingdom began a new reign as soon as the old king died. And in the other kingdom it began a new reign at the next new year's date. And in the other kingdom they used the first as the system and then the time came when it was reversed.

And that is the principal thing that Thiele holds; and it explains a great number of the apparent contradictions. Now I don't know whether that's absolutely clear—I've given it before in earlier times, rather briefly. But the point of it is, as

Hebrew chronology of the times of the kingdoms. This, it is true, is no more than has long been claimed by students of the Bible who incline to traditional views...The unique feature of Professor Thiele's work is that he has attained his results by the most rigid application of scholarly facts and methods.... Having done so, he has shown that the seeming inconsistencies and mathematical contradictions no more than hinted at above really are nothing of the sort but are integral elements in a sound and accurate chronological system. He does admit, it is true, that something has happened to confuse the chronology through much of the latter half of the eighth century. What is one to do, for example, when the accession of Hezekiah is dated both in the sixth year before the fall of Samaria in 723/722 (2 Kings 18:10) and in the fourteenth before Sennacherib's invasion of Judah in 701 BC (2 Kings 18:13)? It is, too, a mark of his precision that he notes a seeming discrepancy in a matter of days between the accounts of 2 Kings and the Book of Jeremiah (2 Kings 25:8, cf. Jer. 52:12; 2 Kings 25:27, cf. Jer. 52:31), for which he is unable to offer a solution. Apart from these matters, the records are uncannily precise. The trouble has been that we did not know how to use them! ... His fair interpretations along with the incisiveness of his criticisms—always reinforced with ascertained facts—will suffice to show the inadequacy of all other treatments of Israel's chronology. But then the validity of his own findings rests on the simple fact that they work! They take account of all the data provided by the biblical record and organize them in a system that is rational, consistent, and precise. His findings harmonize with all that is known of relevant chronology of the entire world of the Bible. Let us repeat for emphasis: the striking feature of Professor Thiele's illumination of this once insoluble riddle is its high scholarship and appeal only to scholarly considerations.... except for the small strand of contradictory dates spoken of above, builds them, even the most inconsistent, into a unity that is convincing by virtue of its utter simplicity and reasonableness."

I was mentioning about history in general, this would be a thing that everybody would know, and yet the author of Kings didn't bother to mention it. It's perfectly obvious; that's true of history. Things that are perfectly obvious we don't bother to mention; but later ages have forgotten it. We mention things that we think are important, and we put down those we don't think are perfectly obvious. Now this theory of Thiele's is a very good theory. We know that both systems were in use; we have evidence in other countries of their being in use; and on that assumption, the greater part of the apparent discrepancies disappear.

Now everybody understands what the main point is of Thiele's assumption. Let's state it once more; let's be sure; I mean it's not so obvious. I would think there might be many of you who, unless you listened very closely when I gave it before—last fall—would not realize what it is, and I think it's very good to be sure you have it in mind.

Here is a man who dies on the 25th of December; he dies. His son becomes king then on the 25th of December. Well are the remaining six days of the year the first year of his reign? Then on the 2nd of January, do we say this is the second year of this man's reign? Or do we say he finished out the last year of his father's reign, and this is the first year of his reign which begins on New Year's Day?

Which method are we going to use? Neither one stands to reason; both of them have their disadvantages. In the case I just gave, the king died the 25th of December, anybody'd say "Why it's perfectly silly to call the remaining six days the first year of the next king's reign. Naturally we'll start his reign the first of January." But suppose then he died on the 10th of January. What are we going to do this time? Are we going to say his first year is from the 10th of January and extends to the rest of the year? Or are we going to say that the next king's reign doesn't start until the end of the year? You see, either one of them is unworkable in many cases. It all depends when the man happened to die. And so it's very easy to start using one, depending on conditions, the time a king happens to die; and once you get started, you're apt to use it until something happens to make you change.

And Thiele's theory is that they used two different systems. Now we know that in Assyria, for instance, they used the system of starting the first year with New Year's Day. There a king would die; his son would take over. Then when you make a contract, you would say this contract was made in the accession year of King Ashurbanipal. The accession year—that might be five days, it might be 300 days—but it was the accession year; the year in which he became king. Then we'd say this other contract was made in the first year; that's the first year after the first. While in another country they'd do it the opposite way.

Well, now this is Thiele's theory; and it's a good theory, a very simple theory, when you get the point of it in mind. A very simple theory, but the author of Kings didn't bother to explain to us which it was that was done. And so when he says, in the third year of king so-and-so, the king so-and-so in the other country began to reign, we don't know which system he was using. Everybody knew then; it was taken for granted; nobody bothered to explain. Now we need to find it out; and that's our big problem in any kind of history—to figure out the obvious things that the author of the history didn't bother to put down.

Well, we are, however, even with this difficulty, in a period which in many ways is much more satisfactory to us than the Judges period. For instance, because we can fit these together to such an extent, even before Thiele's theory. We can fit them together; we are told, this man was king in Judah; this man was king in Israel; this man died, and was succeeded by his son; we have a continuous history for a period of about 200 years. With certain problems—certain things we're not sure of—but in general it fits together with many of the details that we don't have, for instance, for the period of Judges.

Now we were looking at the first 3 kings of Judah: 1. Rehoboam; 2. Abijah, or Abijam, whichever his name was. But then Abijam was succeeded by his son, 3. Asa. We did not say a great deal about him. There is a good deal that is of interest and importance regarding Asa.

Asa is described in the Bible as a very good king. He's a very important king, because he reigned 41 years. That's enough to make anyone important. It's a long period to be king. Every Bible student ought to be familiar with King Asa. He is a good king, the Bible says he did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord as did David his father. And he is well spoken of in the Bible; he is a good king. I Kings 15: 14 says

But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the Lord all his days.

That's pretty strong praise. If that's all we knew, Asa's heart was perfect with the Lord all his days, we would think this man was about as near to a perfect man as ever lived.

And yet over in II Chronicles we find him very strongly criticized at one point.

So we know that, when any man's heart was perfect with the Lord all his days, that is giving a very fine judgment of a fallible human being; and it should be taken with that understanding, that it's a fallible human being; and therefore the words are not to be taken in the extreme sense.

Well, Asa was a good man who reigned for 41 years and did much that was good And one of the first things we're told he did that was good is in I Kings 15:13,

And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron.

Well, a man who would not let even his mother stand between him and the Lord, but would remove her from being queen; and would break down the wicked things she had done; that is something which a great many very good fellows will not do. A great many good fellows are misled by bad mothers; and a far greater number, probably, of bad fellows have their badness ameliorated; or perhaps are won to the Lord by good mothers. But Asa here stood against his mother when his mother was wrong in the situation.

It would seem to me that it might very well be that Maachah was the queen-mother; she was actually his grandmother; she was removed because of her idolatry; and that made her prominent; and for that reason it came about that when they mentioned him, instead of listing his own mother, that his father's mother was mentioned. Now that's a possibility. Whether his mother or grandmother, we can't say which. Now it's not tremendously important which it is; but it is important that we recognize the fact that belief in verbal inspiration does not mean that we know all the details of ancient history; it does not mean that; it does mean that there is much that we're absolutely positive about, we can stand upon; but that there are other matters that we simply do not know; and in this case, I, at the present moment, I see no way to interpret it without there being a scribal error, unless it be that it is giving his father's mother for this reason of her being so important in having been the one removed. Now maybe that's the case, and in that case you can take it that the text is preserved as it originally was; maybe so.

There are copying errors in the Bible. There's no question about it; but the errors are not in the original, they are in the transmission. But the number of them is often greatly exaggerated; and it is very good suggestion that this is not an error, but simply a different use, a very strange use, to mention his father's mother instead. It's a very strange use, one I know of no parallel to, and yet one that due to her prominence, might very well be. I think there is a good possibility that it is.

Well Asa's act here is part of the history of his righteousness. He followed the Lord.

There is in Chronicles an account of an act in Asa's early life that is not even mentioned in Kings. It says in II Chronicles 14[:9-12] that

And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah. Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let no man prevail against thee. So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.

An account of a great victory which Asa had over vastly superior forces, simply through his trust in the Lord, which is in Chronicles and not in Kings at all, a great story of Asa's goodness in Chronicles not in Kings. Most of the critics take the attitude that Kings is fairly reliable history, but that Chronicles is late and unreliable. We, of course, do not take that attitude; we say, here, there is additional information about Asa, which the author of Kings did not include in his book, but which the Chronicler gives us. It fits in, though, here with the good character of Asa designated in Kings. Not like what Chronicles tells us about his father, which doesn't at first sight fit with what Kings tells us.

Yes? (Student: "Who were the authors of Kings and Chronicles?") The authorship of both is unknown. Clearly neither of the books was written entirely by one man, because they cover a much bigger period than one man's life. In both of them, the author(s) had to have sources. But the critics say that Kings is written from the viewpoint of the prophet, and Chronicles from the viewpoint of the priest. That's what the critics say. I don't think they could prove their point, but this we can all agree on: Kings is an early book and Chronicles is a much later one.

(Student: "Is it after the exile?") It is quite generally assumed in this case, I'm not sure we can dogmatically say that it is, but I certainly would not feel that we're in a position to disprove it. The bulk of the material in Chronicles is put in the book of Chronicles long after the events described, unquestionably, and so is Kings. But whether it was actually after the exile, I don't know.

Most of the critics would say Chronicles was long after the exile. I think Dr. Albright thinks it was the author of the book of Ezra that wrote it; I think he feels it's the same author. Well, it doesn't make a great deal of difference who wrote it, if it's God's Word and it's true. But I don't see any reason to doubt but what they were written at different times, with probably Chronicles much later.

Yes? (Student. "What about the references in Kings to the 'Chronicles of the kings of Israel' and the 'Chronicles of the kings of Judah'?") I don't think that those are references to our Biblical book of Chronicles. The word in Hebrew

that's translated Chronicles is literally "book of days". And I think that the reference is to an official record kept, giving the events; and that the authors of (probably) both books had access to it, and utilized it in their writings. But the author of Kings assumes that that was available, because he says many times, "Are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?" or "of Israel?" This question appears over 30 times in Kings, but never in Chronicles. "You want to know more about this king? Why it's in the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah (or Israel)." And that of course looks like an early date; because after the destruction of the kingdoms it wouldn't be available, I would think. At least there wouldn't be an official source like that available for inspection.

Well, Chronicles then gives this extra additional material in favor of Asa. Now, both Chronicles and Kings tell of events that happened very late in the life of Asa. We find at the beginning of the 16th chapter of Chronicles where it says

In the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.



Bir-Hadad Stele

Then we have the account given us in both Kings and Chronicles of how Asa wrote to the king of Damascus, Ben-Hadad; he sent him silver and gold, and asked him to help him against Baasha. And then we find that Ben-Hadad attacks Baasha from the other side; and Ben-Hadad had to take his forces to defend himself against the great attack of the king of Syria; and in so doing he left his southern end unprotected and then Asa the king took all Judah; and they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was building; and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah.

We have that told in both Kings and Chronicles; that is, he took the material from the fortifications on the Israel side, that were being built against him, and built fortifications on his side. Kings has one feature at this point, which is not in Chronicles. Chronicles says he sent to Ben-Hadad, King of Syria, but 1 Kings 15:18 says that

King Asa sent them to Benhadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus.

In other words, it gives the father and grandfather of this man. Now in the *Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research*, about 8 years ago, there came out an article about a monument which had been discovered in north

Syria, a stele set up by Bar-Hadad. And Bar-Hadad is the Aramaic which would be translated into Hebrew as Ben-Hadad. There's no doubt the man's name was not Ben-Hadad; it was Bar-Hadad. Ben-Hadad is a Hebrew translation; that is, it keeps the name of the god, Hadad, but it puts the son into Hebrew, "ben", instead of in Aramaic, "bar". Well, this says a stele set up by Bar-Hadad, the son of, and then it is broken. It is broken. But there are some tracings of the name of the father and grandfather. And Dr. Albright, who was then the editor of the *Bulletin*, on the basis of 1 Kings 15:18, says that this name of the father of Ben-Hadad which has only traces of certain letters, that that could be interpreted as being Tabrimon, and the next one which has only one or two letters in it, could be filled out as being Ezion.

And thus you have a monument found which has a broken part with certain letters that you can read, but not enough to tell what it is, that is, the names of the father and grandfather. You have a clear statement in the Bible on the basis of which you can reconstruct the stele. And then the stele in turn corroborates the Biblical statement.

You see the situation? It is not a complete corroboration of the Biblical statement, because we do not have a full record. But we have the stele, which we don't have any other suggestion for. And this fits perfectly, so it is a very interesting instance of the inter-relation of the archaeological evidence and the Biblical statement. It is a helpful corroboration but not a full corroboration of the Biblical statement.

Now that stele [see figure] is copied in your book *The Ancient Near East*.¹⁴⁷ Pritchard says,

the stele with this inscription was discovered, apparently in 1939, in an ancient cemetery about four miles north of Aleppo, probably not *in situ*. It may, however, have originally been set up somewhere in the neighborhood of Aleppo, its date from about 860 BC.

I read you the first part of it:

A stele set up by Barhadad, the son of T[abrimmon, the son of Hezion], king of Aram, for his Lord Melqart, which he vowed to him and he (then) heard his voice. [*ibid.* p. 319]

Aram, which we translate "Syria" in our English Bibles; but the Hebrew is Aram, king of Aram.

Now this stele is very interesting for the corroboration of this detail in connection with the life of Asa. It is also interesting to us for another reason,

¹⁴⁷ Figure 139 from James B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East*, Volume I (1958).

which is of great importance; not with the reign of Asa, but with the period of a few years later in Israel. And that is this: that Barhadad is the king of Aram, which is the modern Syria, with its capital in Damascus. But this stele, which is found near the Mediterranean in what we now call Lebanon, is put up by the king of Syria; but it is for a god, not of Syria but of Tyre—this Lord Melqart. The word Melqart is Melech-aret, the king of the Tyre. And the king of the Tyre, Melqart, is named that for the god of Tyre—that's not his name, I mean; it's a designation, the Lord of the city. We have other evidence of the name of the king of Tyre.

Now to have a king of Syria putting up a monument in honor of the god of Tyre is a very interesting thing. What does it show about the god of Tyre? It shows he was a god, a proselytizing god; it is very interesting in relation to our next event in the history; so keep it in mind, that this stele throws light and corroboration upon that feature, an extremely important thing—its full implications not yet visible; we'll come to that. I don't want to give it now because I give it again later.

Yes? (Student: "Was the monument to the honor of the king of Tyre or the god of Tyre?") The god of Tyre. The words mean "king of the city".

Now Asa made this great victory there—not as a victory—it was a matter of diplomacy; but a diplomacy which he followed up quickly, with going and seizing this material and moving and building these fortifications; it was a very wise thing to do, it would seem, and we find it in Kings.

But in Chronicles, after it tells about this, it proceeds to tell us something else that wasn't in Kings. We've noticed how Chronicles tells us good things about Asa that aren't in Kings. Now it tells a bad thing. It says that (16:7) after he did that

And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand. Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thine hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars. Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time.

Kings says, Asa's heart was right with the Lord all his days. Chronicles says, the Lord's prophet rebuked him, and he was angry with the prophet and threw him in prison.

And then Chronicles goes on and says

And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians. And Asa slept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign.

Kings tells us that also: it says in chapter 15,

the rest of the acts of Asa and all his might and all that he did, and all the cities he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.

That's all Kings says. So you have Chronicles, telling us good things about Asa's father that Kings doesn't tell us; and telling you bad things about Asa that Kings doesn't tell us. And to get the full picture you need to put the two together.

Asa was a good king, a king after the Lord's own heart; he did the good deeds of David his father; but like David, he had his bad features; not nearly as bad as David, but he had his bad features; he came into conflict with this particular prophet; he put him in prison, because the prophet rebuked him for his scheming there instead of trusting the Lord. And then Chronicles says that when he had this disease of his feet, he looked to the physicians instead of to the Lord.

Now does that mean that when we get a disease, we should never go to any physician? We should go to the Lord for it? Well if our physicians were no better today than they were in those days, perhaps we would be very foolish to go to them for much help. I'm sure that the physicians didn't know very much in those days; they knew a little, but they have been gaining constantly in knowledge; yet there still is a tremendous lot that the physicians don't know. And if you put your trust in physicians, instead of putting your trust in the Lord, you are making a very, very great mistake. But that doesn't mean that you should not avail yourself of the best information that physicians have. There's many, many a thing can be wrong with you that a physician can immediately tell what you need; and you're very foolish not to avail yourself of it. And there are many other things that could be wrong that the physician has not the slightest idea of what to do. Of course, in such a case if he's a very, very honest man he'll tell you so; but if he's a good business man, as most of them are, he'll look

very, very wise and give you a pill that is perfectly harmless—at least we hope it's harmless—and know that nature will cure you three chances out of four.

The Lord wants us to utilize the best that physicians or scientists of any type have available; and it would be perfectly silly and wrong for a Christian to fail to avail himself of what people have learned of God's handiwork; but we should not put our trust in physicians, or in fact in any kind of scientist. Our trust must be in the Lord; because with the best that human men can do, there is a tremendous lot they don't know; and there are many points where things can go completely wrong, despite the best they can do; or can work out right, in spite of the worst they can do. And our trust must be in the Lord.

So the rebuke of Asa here is a correct rebuke; and a rebuke which any of us need, if we put our trust in the physician; but it must not be taken to lead us to think that we should not avail ourselves of whatever the physicians know.

(Student.) Well, it seems to me that it means here that he completely ignored the Lord. In other words, a Christian would go to a doctor, even if it were incurable cancer. And if there's nothing a doctor could do, he'd still probably go to a doctor to alleviate any pain. But at the same time, he'd put his trust in the Lord. So this could mean that he just completely ignored the Lord—it looks to me that it must mean that. It's a bit hard to believe, because he is listed as such a godly man all through.

(Student. "Do you feel that he was wrong that he did not seek the Lord in helping him?") Well, the Lord sent a prophet to say so; I think it must have been.

(Student. "We're not told, though—could it not be possible that he sought help from his allies in the case of his enemy, but at the same time...") Well, it wasn't really an ally. He asked this man to break his alliance with Baasha; and he sent him a lot of gold & silver to do it; and I would think that here, since the prophet rebuked him here, the Lord would have worked it in another way. I would think that was a mistake here. I would definitely think so in that case, because we have the rebuke given.

Well now, we've touched on a number of things about Asa, Probably some of you would get them better if I had numbered them, a, b, c, d, e, f, g, and h. And you could give me the 8 different things about Asa that we have discussed; but in this case I did not write them down, but I hope that you will remember all of them, because they are all important.

Asa was succeeded by a godly son. Asa and his son Jehoshaphat are two of the best men in the whole history of Judah. No question of that. They are two of the very best men in the Bible. Asa and Jehoshaphat. And they both had long reigns.

Now we are not now dealing with Jehoshaphat. We will look at him later, but I want you to have it in mind, that Asa was succeeded by a very godly, good man; he made errors as Asa did, but he was a good man, a godly man; at least so the Bible says here. I shouldn't say "at least so," I should say that's what the Bible says. It's not I who am saying it. I'm not drawing a judgment. I'm repeating to you the judgment the Bible gives.

C. The First Two Dynasties of Israel.

We have covered a period of 90 years in Judah. How many dynasties have we dealt with in Judah? We've dealt with one dynasty; we have dealt with three kings of the same dynasty. But during the same period in Israel, there were two dynasties.

Now what is a dynasty? A dynasty is a rather loose term, but in general it means a group of related kings. That's the general meaning. A group of kings who succeed one another; who as a rule are father to son or close relationship; so there is no sharp break between them. It is pretty unlikely that you'd call two the same dynasty if they were not related. But certainly you wouldn't if one of them killed the other, and started a new line. I don't think you'd ordinarily call one king a dynasty. I believe it takes two kings, as a rule, to use the term dynasty.

Well, here is 90 years and you've still got the same dynasty in Judah. But in Israel you already have two dynasties. And the first of these is the dynasty of Jeroboam.

1. The Dynasty of Jeroboam.

Under him I have divided into a,b,c,d

a. Jeroboam Becomes King. We've already noticed how Ahijah of Shiloh went to Jeroboam and told him he was to be king; and then Jeroboam had to flee to Egypt. We've noticed that. Then we have noticed how when Solomon died, they brought Jeroboam back from Egypt to head up the opposition to Rehoboam; and how he became king.

b. Jeroboam Forsakes the Lord. Jeroboam, we read in I Kings here, turns against the Lord. He was anxious; his interest seems to have been primarily political. He was anxious to be a strong king; and he knew that if all his people kept going down to Jerusalem to worship, it would be easy for Rehoboam to win a great many of them back. And so he said, "We don't want you to go to Jerusalem to worship," and he put up golden calves: one up at Dan in the extreme north the kingdom, to draw the people northward instead of

southward, down to Jerusalem. The other one he put at Bethel, in the extreme south of his kingdom, to stop the people on their way to Jerusalem. And he said "These are your gods, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt." Yes?

(Student 1: "I was just wondering, did he have in his possession a copy of the law? I mean, think how that was condemned, when it was done by Aaron; how would they do it again?") Yes, he had that in his possession, but he probably was like most people are; they read the parts of the Bible they like, and the others they more or less ignore. It's an amazing thing how you can go through the New Testament, and note the references to the second coming of Christ; it's just over and over and over and over. I challenge anybody to go through the New Testament with a pencil and mark all references to the return of Christ; and not be amazed at the number that you will find. And yet the number of godly Christian ministers who have preached the true gospel, month after month, and year after year, and never once given a sermon on the return of Christ, is tremendous. It's there; they read it, but they don't notice it; they pass over it; it's very, very easy to do.

Jeroboam did much worse than that; because this is not a matter of many individual references, but of one very extremely stressed reference. And then of course you have the ten commandments; the second is they are not to make any graven image. And he broke the second commandment. Well, there's nobody living that hasn't broken one of the commandments. Jeroboam broke the second; but did Jeroboam think of himself as breaking the first? That question might be raised, whether he did or not.

He certainly believed in the exodus from Egypt; he said, "These are your gods that brought you out of Egypt." An argument can be made that he did not think he was breaking the first commandment. Dr. Albright suggests, on the basis of some monuments we have in northern Syria, where we have statues of animals with a god standing on top, of them, that what Jeroboam meant was that these golden calves were the foundation, the pedestal on which the invisible God of Israel stood.

Now that is a theory that Dr. Albright advances on the basis of statues which we have in northern Syria, showing animals with a god standing on their backs. It is not a proven theory, but it is at least worth noting as a possibility. Now these chapters here speak in very strong condemnatory terms of Jeroboam. What was the greatest condemnation? Was it that he set the worship up there instead of in Jerusalem? Was it that he made the statues? Was it his turning away from many parts of the law? What was the outstanding feature of the condemnation? We are left with a certain amount of ignorance on it.

But that he was an evil man, who turned away from God, is clearly taught in the Bible; and we read at the end of chapter 13 that

Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places. And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.

c. The Prophet from Judah. And he is called the prophet from Judah because he is not named in the Bible. It just says, I Kings 13,

And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord unto Bethel

You all know where Bethel is. It is the southernmost important place in the northern kingdom. And Bethel, you also of course recall, is the place where Jacob had his vision of God; where he saw the ladder stretched up to heaven; a very appropriate place, then, for Jeroboam to put up his false worship. A place which was holy, because of the fact that God had revealed himself there. The very name Bethel means "House of God."

But this place is polluted by the fact that Jeroboam puts up his wicked altar there. Worship is supposed to all be in Jerusalem; and here he puts up the golden calf. But this man of God came up to Bethel; and he got there when Jeroboam was there, standing by the altar to burn incense.

And we read in [1 Kings 13] verse 2 that the man of God cried against the altar in the word of the Lord. God gave this man a message to give; and the man gave it in the rhetorical form of addressing the altar.

And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

This is a terrible thing that is declared here by the prophet against this altar. This altar which is the center of worship for the northern kingdom is going to be polluted; men's bones are going to be burned upon it; and this is going to be done by order of a child born to the house of David named Josiah. The man of God does not tell us when this will be fulfilled. We know of course that Josiah came about 200 years after this time, that there's a long period in between.

Now suppose that, instead of saying a child shall be born unto the house of David, he said a child shall be born unto the house of Jeroboam? What would the implication of that be? The implication that Jeroboam's house would still be important when this time came. But he doesn't say when it will come; we know it's 200 years later. But the most important part of this prophecy is the fact that these things will be done by the order of a man who belongs to the house of David. He gives it in the reign of Jeroboam; 200 years pass by; the house of David is still reigning in the land of Judah. In the land of Israel, when that happens, there have already been four dynasties, plus a number of kings unrelated to any one of them. One dynasty continuing all that time in the southern kingdom; four dynasties one after the other, and then various unrelated kings, before the time when this happens.

And thus, this comparatively simple prediction which he makes, which seems to be simply a prediction of pollution of the altar, is actually a carrying forward of God's promises to David, that David will have a son to sit upon his throne. Four dynasties in the northern kingdom; one continuous dynasty all this time in the southern kingdom.

Now he says what the name of this man is going to be. It is going to be Josiah. He gives a man's name 200 years in advance. The critics say that it is impossible that the second part of Isaiah be written by Isaiah, because it gives the name of King Cyrus; twice it names Cyrus the king of the Persians. And they say that you couldn't have a king's name given 200 years in advance. And we say, "Yes, if you believe in God." God could declare anything as long in advance as he wanted; he certainly knows the future from the past. He knows everything and he can do it.

And then, they become very pious, and say, "Oh, of course, we believe that God knows everything in advance." But they say, "It's contrary to the analogy of the prophecy. Prophecy does not give names in advance." And when they say that, they say it with such a great air of tremendous knowledge and scholarship, the average conservative is simply overawed and says, "Oh, that's right, that's right; it can't be by the first Isaiah," instead of looking back into the scripture and saying, "Well look here, Josiah's name is predicted 200 years in advance."

It is not alone in prophecy to have Cyrus's name given 200 years in advance. Josiah's name is given 200 years in advance. Not merely that God could do that if he chose, God does do it in this case.

Now of course some of the conservatives will go on beyond that; they'll say, "Yes and Christ is given in advance; it says in Isaiah that she shall bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel." Well, that sort of argument just beclouds the issue; because it is a wonderful prediction of Christ given there, but the name Immanuel is a descriptive name; it was not a personal name which he bore on

earth here. And it is not an argument in this connection, though it is used by most conservatives in this connection.

I think there are the two errors we need to avoid: one is of accepting the statements of the liberal without investigating the facts. Because time and time again, when they make their unbelieving statements, you look into the facts and you find that the answer is right there; that when you get all the facts, their arguments simply don't stand up.

It's an error for us to avoid, thinking that simply by talk and by discussion we can answer them, or by appeal to emotions. We must get the facts and give the facts; and in most cases, the facts are there.

But the second error, into which many of us fall, is that we don't make a few clear, strong facts that give the answer; but we add to it a lot of other arguments, which confuse the issue. If you will give against an opponent six excellent arguments, and one very, very shaky one; if he's a good debater, he'll take the shaky one and pay no attention to your six good ones; and when he gets through making fun of your shaky one, people decide that your intelligence is no good whatever. Much better to leave out your shaky arguments; stick to the solid ones, and make them strong and clear. And so Immanuel is a wonderful prediction of Christ, but it's not in a category with this. It describes his character, while Josiah is a specific name which this king of the house of David has. Now this is a prediction here of what's going to happen to that altar; and the prediction that the man of God gave was fulfilled 200 years later.

And when it was fulfilled, somebody might say, "Well look here, here is the proof this man of God was a true follower of the Lord; the Lord spoke through him; he was God's prophet, because God enabled him to give this prediction, and God fulfilled it." But somebody may answer and say, "No, look here; here's a man named Josiah; how do we know that his father didn't read this prediction and just give him the name Josiah in order to fulfill the prediction? How do we know that?"

"And then Josiah commanded them to take and burn men's bones on this altar; well, he's read the prediction; he knew about it; he just purposely fulfilled it. What's the good, as far as evidence is concerned, of a prediction that a man just purposely fulfills? How does that prediction prove anything?"

Well, I hope the answer is obvious to most of us. Suppose that he had said, "Altar, altar, King Rehoboam of the house of David is going to burn men's bones on you." What do you think Jeroboam would have said? Jeroboam would have said, "I'd like to see him do it." Jeroboam had three-fourths of Israel in his kingdom. He had ten tribes. Rehoboam only had one, though that one was a big

strong one. He had not over a third the force Jeroboam had his power; Rehoboam fought and could not overcome him Jeroboam, because his force was much too small.

This was in Jeroboam's kingdom; and to say that Rehoboam of the house of David is going to do this would have been utter nonsense. That is, unless the Lord intervened with remarkable power, in a way that he did not do in the attacks of Rehoboam.

The prediction is made that, when there is a king of the house of David named Josiah, at that time it will be possible for him to come up here and do this. And so the fact is, that the northern kingdom is destroyed by the mighty power of Assyria in 722 B C. And some years after that, when Josiah is king, it is possible for him to get in there because the land has been destroyed. The Assyrians aren't guarding it very closely. Their center of power is far away. And so the prediction is fulfilled by the Assyrian conquest of Israel, which nobody ever would have dreamed of reading into the prophecy; but when it takes place you see how it happened. And then a child will be born of the house of David; and that means that, through these 200 years, the house of David continues to be the ruling force in Judah, rather than all these different dynasties.

No human being could know that would have happened. And no man could make that happen; that was God's providence that worked that out over 200 years. So that those two elements of the prophecy are the divine prediction that no man could have brought to pass. And then, of course, in addition to that, how would somebody know that Josiah this many years later, would be a man who'd want to fulfill the prediction? He might be like Julian the apostate, the Roman emperor who desired to make prophecy prove false. He might be an indifferent fellow, who didn't want to bother. The fact the prophecy says Josiah's going to do it, even if Josiah purposely did it, it still is a proof of the divine knowledge.

Well, now as far as Jeroboam and the northern kingdom was concerned, this prophecy is not much of an evidence that their worship was false. Because after all, they have to believe in God's Word to have faith it's going to happen; it happens 200 years later, it is no evidence now, just what a man says. Unless they believe in God; and then they don't need this evidence. If they don't believe in Him, they don't accept it. The value of this evidence is 200 years later, when it happened. And you look back and see what happened, and that God was in it.

But that's not all that happened. This man of God, we read in verse 3, gave a sign the same day, saying this is the sign the Lord has spoken. Behold the altar shall be rent and the ashes upon it shall be poured out. He has given one sign that will be fulfilled 200 years later. Now he gives a second sign. The second sign is that the altar will be broken and the ashes on it will be poured out. Well,

that could happen to any altar. If you have ever camped out—like I like to do—and if you had done like I used to do—take some stones and build up sort of a little fireplace with the stones—and put your fire right in the middle of it; and put your kettle across two big stones, so that the fire comes up between and heats your dinner, why you've had the experience, I'm sure; because I used to have it occasionally, that when your fire is good and hot, and the stuff is nearly cooked and you're looking forward to a good meal pretty soon, all of a sudden you hear the explosion of a gun, it sounds like.

You hear a terrible explosion, and one of the rocks just splits in two. The fire there heats up the outside of the rock; the temperature becomes so different from that of the inside that the strain is too great; and the rock holds on as long as it can; and when it can't hold any longer, it just breaks with a bang; and your kettles and everything turn over and dump your food on the ashes; and you eventually, if you're like me, decide to give up that sort of arrangement for cooking your food. I put my kettle directly on the wood now, even though it does dirty the pans a lot worse. But for an altar, with a fire under it, constantly to break like that is nothing that requires the supernatural power of God. It's just something which probably happened every now and then. But in this case, it happened right away. The supernatural element here is the timing. Now the prophet doesn't say it's going to happen right away; but the prophet, when he's given a prediction for 200 years later and it isn't going to be fulfilled quickly, now he gives a short-term prediction; and Jeroboam immediately is frightened, because he knows that this might happen to any stone altar when the prediction is made.

Now suppose it breaks. Everybody will think this prophet here is right, and Jeroboam is wrong. And he doesn't like this and so we read in verse 4 [1 Kings 13]:

And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord.

Here was a supernatural act of God: the Lord touched the little nerve in his brain in that instant so that it couldn't operate; and his hand that was sticking out there couldn't come in again. It was obvious to everybody that Jeroboam was in a bad plight. And just as that happened, the altar was torn; the ashes poured out from the altar according to the sign the man of God had given.

So we find in verse 6 that the king shows his penitence. The king in the face of the divine power repents; but as you read on about Jeroboam, you find he didn't

repent; he merely pretended to. He thought here was a power we must submit to, or risk disaster. He's also like many a man who does not have true repentance in his heart, but who tried to use religion for his own end.

The Bolshevik government did its best to destroy religion in Russia. They made it a crime to even tell your own children that there's a God. And it is today a crime to do so. It is counter-revolutionary to tell your own children that there's a God. The Constitution of Russia guarantees religious freedom to perform religious ceremonies. It does not guarantee freedom of religious propaganda. It guarantees freedom to perform religious ceremonies, and freedom for anti-religious propaganda, but no freedom for religious propaganda. That is considered counter-revolution.

So a man may be thrown into torture because he tells his own children that there's a God. And the Communists did their best to destroy religion in Russia. But they found they could not destroy it; it was too deeply rooted in the minds of the people; how much of it is real religion, how much of it is superstition, I don't know; I can't tell; but the belief there is held by a great number of people, who have a thorough-going superstition, and certainly held by many true believers in Russia. Being unable to root it out, they decided to use it; so they infiltrated the religious offices with their secret police, putting them in the top positions of the church; and they use it for their ends, for their purposes.

Jeroboam, faced with this thing, knowing that he will go down before it, prefers to try to compromise with it. And it is a mighty good thing for us to figure out in each case, is this true repentance, or is it an attempt to use religion? And even if there is an attempt to use religion, it is good for us to use for the glory of God such advantages as we can get through that; but certainly not to trust those who are guilty of that attitude. And so in verse 6,

And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the Lord, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.

And this had a twofold effect, as far as Jeroboam was concerned. It had a good effect, He had the full use of his hand again; but as far as the people at large were concerned, it was another evidence that the prophet spoke from God.

And so the king, in verse 7, sees that now the thing to do, if you can't destroy them, it's good to join them. If you can't destroy the religion that this man from Judah represents, then he should make the man a buttress for his own force. And so

And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward.

Isn't that wonderful? A man who has been a shepherd; a man who has never had much promise, or much luxury; here he has a chance to eat at the king's table; to get a reward from the king; to tell his friends all the rest of his life he actually ate with the king of Israel; had great honors given to him; what a wonderful privilege for the man of Judah!

But in this case, it is a privilege given for Jeroboam's purpose. And the man of Judah refuses to let himself be used that way:

And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: For so was it charged me by the word of the Lord, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel.

The great leader of the forces of evil used his efforts to lead the man astray, and he failed. So Satan, unable to use a bad man for the purpose, decided to use a good man for the purpose; and he succeeded in his effort. The man of God then went another way, and started back for home. And now we read how Satan, failing to succeed in using a bad man for his purpose, proceeds to use a good man for his purpose.

Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel. Some people say this is a false prophet—what right do we have to read that into the Scripture? If we have evidence somewhere that he's a false prophet, yes; but what evidence do we have that he is a false prophet? Well, he told a lie. Yes, he told a lie; but if everybody who ever told a lie is a false person—if everybody who ever told a lie is not a Christian, then there's not a Christian in the world. Every man has his sin; every man has his faults; we should avoid them; we should flee from them; we should pray God to deliver us from them; but we should recognize that other people are fallible and weak as we are; and that God has to use pretty weak instruments for his purpose, or He wouldn't have any to use.

The important difference is not that this one is perfect, but this person has sin. Because we all have sin. The important difference is that like David, when they fall, they repent sincerely and try to go forward and serve the Lord; while other men, who were twice as good as David, as the Lord considers goodness, were proud of their own goodness; and they go forward doing what they consider to be right; but don't have that tenderness of heart in seeking the Lord's will that David had.

And so here we have an old prophet who did lie; but over against that, we have that God spoke through him; God gave him a message which was fulfilled; and I think that quite overshadows the other as far as proof he's a true prophet. Personally, my opinion is that the old prophet of Bethel was a fine old man, who had stood up for the Lord and done a wonderful work in his day; but now he was old, and crippled with arthritis, and he couldn't get out to see the things that were happening; he only heard them from his sons; and there in the quiet of his home, where nobody would hear what he'd say, he was always saying to his sons, "Well now, if I was young; if I had my strength I used to have; I'd stand up and tell Jeroboam what to do." And they'd look at him, and they'd say to themselves, "Well it's good that he is kind of weak; because I don't think he'd have the courage, if he actually had the physical strength. He talks about that now that he is in this condition." But they didn't say that to his face.

But the old prophet is there; and the sons came in and told what the Lord had done through the man of God that day. The sons came in and said "Dad, you're always talking about the good old days, when there were prophets who were ready to face the king and stand for the truth; you should have been down there in the main square today and seen what happened. You should have seen this man from Judah who came up here, who actually faced the king and told him the truth; and the king invited him to have dinner with him, and he wouldn't do it. You would have seen a great example of loyalty to the Lord." And the father immediately thought, "Oh I've got to have some Christian fellowship with that man; I've got to."

And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah. And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon, And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak:

He'd gotten away from town a little ways; he was tired; it was a heavy strain he'd gone through; so when he got away from the town, he sat down under an oak. There he was resting.

And the worst time in the life of a Christian worker—the time of greatest danger—is right after he had done a great service to the Lord. Right after he has given a wonderful evangelistic message; right after he has made a remarkable testimony; right after he's faced the forces of evil and stood true. Then he's tired, and there's a reaction. There may be loneliness, and there may be weakness. And that's the time the devil may get ahold of him, as he did with Elijah later on. And so the man was now just sitting and resting, which is perfectly all right.

But in that condition the prophet comes up to him

And he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am. Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread. And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place: For it was said to me by the word of the Lord, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest. He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him.

The old prophet said to himself, "Well now, what's the harm in just a little white lie? He said, of course he shouldn't eat with the king; that was wonderful of him, to refuse to compromise with this leader of the forces of iniquity; that was wonderful. But now I'm a prophet too. Standing for the Lord the way he is. Of course, I'm in a different organization than he is; I'm in an organization that's loyal to the king; but I don't really feel like the organization does. There's no reason he shouldn't have fellowship with me now. And I'll just tell him that an angel spoke to me; and I think an angel probably would say this, if he did come and speak to me. I'm not really telling a lie, but just leading a man to give me some Christian fellowship that I need so badly."

So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.

And so he tells what he thinks is a white lie, but it means the death of the other man. It leads to his death, the fact that this man told him what he thought; and there's a mighty strong warning for us there, that what seems to us perfectly harmless, can lead to death, if we don't watch out. We should obey the word of the Lord, and follow it; seek His objectives. And even though it would be wonderful to have some good fellowship; if the Lord's work is not helped by it, let's abide in our room rather than lead someone astray.

So he tells him that; and of course, as soon as the man of God heard that the angel had told him, then of course he knew it was all right. How many people there are, who take anybody else's word for anything, just so they say that they've gotten it from the Lord. "Why I read it in the Bible; look here, the Bible says so-and-so." Well, look it up and read it for yourself. Don't take somebody's word for it; they may be taking it out of context. They may be grabbing one verse and building a whole system on it. Study it for yourself.

Anyway he was touched; and so he went back with him. And what a relief to relax; sit back in a chair; no king to face; no wicked opponent to challenge. He doesn't have to sit out under a tree; he sits in a comfortable chair; and they bring him some ice water to drink; and he relaxes, feels comfortable; and then they bring in a nice lunch,

And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the Lord came unto the prophet that brought him back: And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee, But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.

You're going to die before you ever get home. And the prophet sits there, and he hears this man rebuking him; and it's the very man who has prevailed on him to come back. He now gives him the word of the Lord. And when somebody persuades you to do what's wrong; persuades you to compromise with your conscience; and do what is contrary to the Lord's command; that's the very person that's apt to turn round and criticize you afterwards, when you suffer the results of what you've done. It's the very person who will. Don't trust any human being; trust the Lord only. Follow His word; human beings are often ready to change sides when it's to their advantage. Now of course in this case, it wasn't that; he really got the word of the Lord, and gave it to him.

So after eating he started back; and before he'd gone very long, a lion met him in the way and slew him. Well, we don't need to take time perhaps on the rest of the story. We all know it, I believe.

Verse 27 is worth noting, for the point about italics that's in it.

And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled *him*.

The "him" is in italics. And anybody not familiar with the use of italics in the Bible—in all other books, we make italics to mean emphasis, but here we put italics to mean it's not in the original. The exact opposite purpose. Once you know it, the italics are a tremendous help in the Bible; but the person who is not familiar with it can get an utterly false idea of the Bible from his reading of italics. A warning to us, that whatever we read, learn the principles of it, which make it different from the principles of other things.

But here, the italics mean it is not in the original. They might well have translated it, "and they saddled up." That was good old English, whether we still use it or not, I'm not sure. At least they did the saddling. But in modern English we say, what did they saddle? They saddled the ass. And so the King James translators put in the word in order to fill out the sentence.

Well, the old prophet went and found the dead prophet; and they brought him back and buried him in the old prophet's sepulcher; they gave him all kinds of

honors, but that didn't do him any good; he was just as dead as if they'd left him there for the lion's lunch.

And so we have here the prophet from Judah giving his denunciation of Jeroboam's action; and giving this prediction that the house of David will continue; even while in the northern kingdom, the dynasties will follow one after the other in succession; and then the prophet, having done his great work, he fails in what seems to us a little point; and is cast on the scrapheap.

And when you get a little older, you will all of you know cases where men have started out wonderfully; and have represented the Lord and stood true to him; and then they've been taken in by some representative of the ecumenical movement or some other form of Modernism; and led astray to where they become a tool in its hand, and no longer an effective instrument for God. The world is strewn with individuals who have done a fine work for the Lord up to a point, and then have fallen astray over some comparatively minor point.

I spoke in a university to a group of students just last week; and before I did, they had one of the students give a testimony. And this young fellow told how he had not wanted to know about the Lord; but he'd heard about Him and he had rejected it; but the Lord had kept after him, and the testimony had come; and he told how he had finally cast aside all his ambitions and desires for life; reached the conclusion the Lord was calling him to his ministry; had forsaken the work he had looked forward to, and all his ambitions; and decided that he was going into the Christian ministry.

And so now he was graduating this year from that university; and next year was going to enter Princeton Seminary. And as I heard him tell that, I thought of the many others I had known—few who had quite as bright and shining a testimony as he seemed then to have, but many who had very fine testimonies of the way the Lord had led them—who'd gone to Princeton Seminary; and gotten that mixture of a little truth, and a lot of unbelief, given there today; until when they come out—if they say they believe the word of God, you've got to believe in Christ to be saved—their mind is all full of doubts and questions; and things running around inside that they're trying to squelch and hold down, and not doing so very effectively. And sometimes they go on one year, two years, ten years, twenty years, preaching what sounds like a true gospel, perhaps winning souls, when all of a sudden they just turn over into rank modernism.

And you wonder how they could turn so suddenly. They didn't turn suddenly; their mind was full of doubt and unbelief, which they were trying to hold down; and you can't do it.

Or others turn right in the midst of their course; and it's just tragic to me to see a man, with such a wonderful start, going off in the direction which, if he

continues in it, will mean the utter loss of his testimony and of his stand for the Lord. Here was this prophet who did such a wonderful work here; and then his life is just taken and wrecked because he failed to follow the Lord all the way. So let's not throw stones at others, because we are all weak. But let's resolve to guard ourselves, so that we don't make the error that this prophet made.

d. Ahijah's Warning. I Kings 14. We find that the very prophet who had told Jeroboam he would have the kingdom now tells him that God is going to utterly destroy him.

I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone. Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the Lord hath spoken it.

The Lord says, "I'll take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam as a man takes away dung until it be gone." A terrible prediction about the house of Jeroboam. No matter what wickedness the house of Judah did, they were never given a prophecy like this; because God had promised that for David that he would keep the line; even though individuals in it became very degenerate, God had promised to keep the line in Judah. And thus the promises of God are not just for us, but are for our children; and the Lord's mercy is with the children of those who believe in Him. And so Ahijah gives this warning against Jeroboam. We won't go into detail about it, that I trust you all have it thoroughly in mind.

e. Nadab's Reign. I Kings 15. Nadab the son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel two years and did evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the way of his father. A very unimportant king. He only lived two years, and yet there are very few of these kings who are unimportant. I might say "I'd like you to learn 90% of the kings of Judah and Israel; and don't bother with Nadab and Elah and two or three others who are very unimportant." However, there are so few that are unimportant that I don't say that. I want you to know all the kings of Judah and Israel in order.

And last semester, I asked you to learn all the historical books. That is, you are not learning for this course the names of the poetic or the prophetic books; but the 17 first books of the Old Testament are the historical books, and they should be known in order. And I want also the names of the kings of Israel and Judah to be known in order. If half the reigns were as unimportant as this one, I would not insist on your learning the names of all those kings. But there were very few that were unimportant.

2. The Dynasty of Baasha

a. His accession. I Kings 15: 27–30. Baasha brought the conspiracy and killed Nadab and established himself as king, and we read:

he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the Lord, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite: Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger.

He seized the power, and he became king, and he reigned 2 years. He was just as powerful a king as was Jeroboam. And so we are told that he is becoming king in the end of chapter 15, while in the earlier part of chapter 15, we're told some of the things that he did as king.

Does that sound reasonable? The fact, of course, is that the book of Kings tells about the kings of Judah; then it comes back and tells about the kings of Israel. And when telling about the king of Judah, the author tells about what the king of Israel did even before he told about this man becoming king. And then he goes back to the king of Israel, and then he tells about his accession. If anybody says that the things in the book of Kings are in chronological order, he is simply going contrary to the facts. The order is a combination of logic and chronology. There are logical sections taking one king and then the other king; within the logical it is chronological.

But there is an intermixture of purpose; and that is very important when it comes to understand the prophetic books of the Old Testament; because many a person looks at prophecy and thinks it has got to be right straight through in chronological order. And that if two things are mentioned one after the other, that means the second one must be later; but it is not that way in history, so why should it be in prophecy? Well,

b. Wars against Judah. I Kings 15:16,

And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

This whole period of 90 years is a period of more or less constant warfare between the two. They are like Israel today and the various Arab states around it. They are constantly at war. There is only an army. There has been no peace. The Arab nations do not admit the right of Israel to exist. Well, that was the situation for 90 years between Judah and Israel. We call the Northern Kingdom Israel, because it is the larger part of Israel, though Judah is just as much Israel as the Northern Kingdom.

c. Jehu's Prophecy. Now do not confuse this Jehu with the Jehu who is named in the head of our section "The Divided Kingdom to Jehu." That is a different Jehu. This is Jehu the son of Hanani. This is a prophet unrelated to the king. So if I ask you to discuss Jehu the son of Hanani, don't tell me anything about Jehu the king. The same name is used of two different men.

I've been amazed in America how often it is that, when a man comes in one line, there'll be another man of the same name comes in another line. And, you'll see the two names in headlines at the same time. Sometimes they are very unusual names.

I remember once in the seminary here, in our entering class we had two fellows named Bragen. I don't think we had any Smiths or Jones or Browns that year. But we had two fellows named Bragan. One from the West coast, one from the East; no relation as far as I know. But they both came to us the same year to the seminary. Those things happen. Life is full of them. And so don't be surprised if in the scripture we have a prophet, Jehu the son of Hanani, and 40 years later a king named Jehu. They are unrelated, so let's keep them straight.

But Jehu's prophecy here is that because of Baasha's wickedness, God says, (I Kings 16:3):

I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat.

Most of the events of Baasha's reign that interest us particularly we looked at under Asa. So we don't need to look at them again here. And then

d. Elah's reign. Elah, the son of Baasha reigned two years, and then

e. Zimri's Usurpation. His servant Zimri, captain of half of his chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah. Nobody knows where Tirzah is. But Tirzah is the capital of these two dynasties. Jeroboam began his kingdom in Shechem; after awhile we read, he went back to Tirzah.

Well, had he moved his capital, Tirzah? When? We are not particularly told. But Baasha had Tirzah as his capital. We have not yet found it. Some archaeologists have theories, but they are not proven. We don't know just where Tirzah was, but that is the capital of the first two dynasties.

And his servant Zimri, captain of half his chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza steward of his house in Tirzah. And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him.

So Zimri's usurpation is told, I Kings 16:9–13. And Zimri slew all the house of Baasha, left him not a single individual, of all of his descendents or of his kinsfolk, nor of his friends. And so the prophecy against Baasha's house was fulfilled And then

f. The Inter-regnum. Most people don't realize there is an inter-regnum here. Some people trying to fit the chronology together, made an inter-regnum of 20 years here. Well, as the chronology is stated, it seems to be only about 3 years; but we do read here that in the 27th year of Asa, Zimri reigned 7 days in Tirzah. We read that in verse 15, and here then in verse 23 we read,

In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.

So the next king according to these statements began to reign 4 years after Zimri, so there is a time of 4 years of inter-regnum.

Omri, one of the leading generals of the army,

went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died... Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri. But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned. In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.

Evidently it took them four years to fight, of which details are not given here in the Scripture, before the followers of Omri prevailed. Four years of inter-regnum.

D. The Dynasty of Omri.

And after these four years, Omri had succeeded in becoming king, in some ways the most important king in the whole history of the divided kingdom. From a political viewpoint, perhaps one of the greatest rulers that the near-East has ever seen.

Mr. Vannoy would you translate II Kings 8:26 for us please?

And a son of two and twenty year was Ahaziah when he began to reign and he reigned one year in Jerusalem.

The word "year" in Hebrew is used in the plural with small numbers and in the singular with large numbers. If it is 65 of year, we would translate it 65 years. That's the regular Hebrew usage. It is five years, but it is 65 of year. But in English you say 65 Years or 5 years.

And "a son of", there is nothing here about a son involved in it. It is the idiom that means that's how old he is. He is a son of so many years, so the correct translation of this would be, "Ahaziah was 22 years old." Reigned, *b'maleko*. Yes, that's literal. What it means is when he began to reign. At the beginning of his reign. When he began to reign he was 22 years old.

"He reigned one year in Jerusalem." Well, suppose the "one" wasn't there, what would you say? "And he reigned a year in Jerusalem." But this makes it explicit. He reigned one year in Jerusalem. He reigned a year. He reigned one year in Jerusalem. Yes.

(Mr. Vannoy: What exactly is this word *b'maleko*? Isn't it just a noun?) No, that is the infinitive construct. The infinitive construct "in his reigning", "when he began to reign."

Mr. Mosher. (Question: Couldn't it be infinite absolute?) No, because the infinitive absolute always has the form *maleek*; it never changes in the absolute. And this is *maleko*. It is not the form used in the absolute. Secondly, the infinite absolute is absolute. That is, it never takes a suffix of any kind. And thirdly, it never takes a preposition. The infinitive absolute is an unusual form. I don't know of any language that really has it except Hebrew. And it is absolute. It never takes an ending; it never takes a preposition; it stands by itself. But this is the infinitive construct.

Yes? The word means "to begin to reign," but it has a meaning "to continue to reign" also; but the fundamental meaning is "to begin to reign."

Yes? (Mr. Mosher: If the infinitive absolute is always used alone, what is the translation?) By alone, I mean that nothing is connected with it tightly. It is usually used with another form of the same verb, which it strengthens. It is as if you say, "he will kill"; if you use the infinitive absolute in addition, it is as if you stress that kill, he will *kill*! We often translate it, he will *surely* kill.

Yes? I translated it in his reigning. I compared this with the King James,

Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem.

And I said, well now the King James says: he was 22 at the beginning of his reign. And I thought that, coming from the Hebrew, I would have gone to say that the King James Version did not have a basis from the Hebrew to translate it this way. But the King James gives the correct translation; the Hebrew gives: "in his reigning" which means "when he began to reign". In his reigning in English means nothing.

(Mr. Mosher: Well, the way I thought it was, in other words, he was 22 years old in his reigning, or at this period of his reign, he was 22 years old.) If anybody got over these 15 or 20 verses, every single one of them is translated "when he began to reign", because every one of them tells how old he was. The word means to begin to reign, but then it is used for continuing to reign also. The fundamental thing is to take over the meaning, to begin to reign.

Well, we must move along, we have much ground to cover. Let's look at the next verse I gave you. I Samuel 13:1, Mr. Rapp? Instead of "Saul reigned one year" it would be a year. "He was a year old when he began to reign."

Yes? (Mr. Rapp: And Saul was a year old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years over Israel.) Yes. that's what the verse says. It is an exact parallel to all these other verses I gave you, the exact idiom. The exact form. He was a year when he began to reign and he reigned 2 years over Israel. Now of course, as Mr. Rapp noticed, the word "a year" is not common. It is usual to have another word before it telling how many years. He was 25 years old when he began to reign; he was 15 years old; he was 30 years old; whatever it is. But there is no such figure in Mr. Rapp's Bible. It just says a year.

Now it is a reasonable conjecture to think that there may have been such a figure there at one time, but I've never seen a Bible that contains such a thing.

Yes? (Student: "The *Biblica Hebraica* suggests *esrim* [twenty] preceeds *shanah* [a year]") Well, that's somebody's guess; and he put a footnote in. Don't just trust the footnote. You have to see what the footnote says. Saul was so old when he began to reign, but it doesn't say how old. The footnote to 13:1 has an "L FRT" before it. If you look up in the back, it will say that "L" means "read" and "FRT" means "perhaps". In other words, in this case they are giving a guess.

Now they may give what the Greek gives, what the Syriac gives, what some of the versions give; but in this case, they give a guess. They say, we think it would be good to assume that it means he was 20 years old. And maybe their guess is right. And on the other hand, maybe you or I could make just as good a guess. It is only a guess, not in the original. It is interesting to know their guess; but the Bible itself does not say. Now if they said three manuscripts or something like that, that would mean that there is some evidence.

Yes? (Student: "Well then the King James here is different than the Hebrew text?") In this particular case, the King James has a translation which has no warrant in the original:

Saul reigned one year; and when he had reigned two years over Israel.

In this particular case: "He was a year old when he began to reign and he reigned 2 years." That is what the verse says.

Now the King James version translates it, "Saul reigned one year," but that is not what it says. It says, "Saul was a year old when he began to reign." And then the English goes on, "and when he had reigned two years over Israel," and there is no "when" here, whatever; it just says he reigned two years, and then it goes on, Saul chose him 3000 men, and the Hebrew says, "and Saul chose".

In other words, the translators here simply tried to get some kind of sense out of this, for their reader who didn't know Hebrew; and so they said, Saul reigned a year, and he reigned 2 years, and he chose some men. Well, why say that? Why say he reigned a year, and then he reigned 2 years and chose some men. Why say that? If you want to say that after he reigned 2 years he chose men, why put in one year? There's no point. The translators here had a problem; they must have known what the Hebrew meant; but they were preparing a version for people that didn't know the Hebrew; and they didn't want to stop and spend a long time over the problem; and they simply took the words, and made something that would give a fairly good idea of what the words were that were there; but it doesn't convey any sense at all. Saul reigned one year and then he reigned two years; he did that. It is a summary statement of Saul's reign, at the beginning of his reign, such as you have at the beginning of all these other reigns.

And the only thing that is needed to make sense in it, is to insert two figures; and the Kittel Bible here [*Biblica Hebraica*], which has some footnotes that are very excellent—because it gives us sometimes what the Greek, or Syriac, or what some other version has, or what some extra manuscripts have to say—in other cases it simply gives a guess, which may be worth a tremendous lot, or may be absolutely worthless. In this case, they guessed that he was 20 years old, and they may be right. We don't have any proof so far as I know. But the fact is, that the Hebrew verse as it stands, says he was a year old when he began to reign, and he reigned 2 years.

And the probabilities are, that there was a very early manuscript written which said he was years so many old when he began to reign, and he reigned two and so many. And then that the corner of the page got torn, and the result was that the next copyist did not have the figures to copy and so he copied what was left, upon the page. And it is an error—and an obvious error, I would say—of

transmission. It is a case where a scribe has made an error; where the error was made very, very early; and it is a wonderful truth of the care with which our manuscripts have been copied; that all through thousands of years, something that made absolutely no sense, that Saul was a year old when he began to reign, and he reigned 2 years, was copied exactly as it is, because the scribe didn't make a guess to put it in. They copied what was there. And it is very easy for us to think we find a mistake in something, and fill it in, and fill it in wrong. They didn't fill it in. Everybody knew it was a mistake, but they did not try to fill it in. Now of course the New Testament says he reigned 40 years. Now that 40 may be a round number. It may have been "2 and 40" and the 40 is gone. It may have been. We don't know.

And how old he was—maybe there was a 20 there that was dropped—but it is one of the obvious cases of a scribal error. There are not many scribal errors in the Bible. The Bible is wonderfully well preserved. The copies of it have been done more accurately than any other book from ancient times by far; and yet there are errors that have come in. And this is one of the obvious ones. We have at least 25 cases, others I did not give you, where this formula is used at the beginning of a reign. It is a common formula, but in this case, the figure got torn off. Or at least they are not copied in any of our copies. So the error must have taken place in copying at an extremely early time.

(Question.) No, because it has a *ben*, "a son of a year." It is their way of saying how old: He was one year old. He was a son of a year in his reign. No the word does not mean reigning. The word means becoming king. The infinitive of *malak* means to become king. To take the throne. To be enthroned as king. We have all these other cases, where it means that. There are perhaps a hundred cases in the Bible where the word means to become king. And we have a formula at the beginning of most of the kings' reigns using precisely this formula which is used here.

(Question). The "when" in the King James is not in the first part of the verse, it is in a later part of the verse, where there is no *ben*. The King James says he reigned one year. The Hebrew says he was a year old when he began to reign. Then the King James says, "and when he had reigned two years." The Hebrew says, "and he reigned." The *ben* of the first part has nothing to do with the "when" in the second part. There is no relationship. They are different parts altogether.

(Question). There are two scribal errors in this one verse, and therefore my guess is that what happened is that the side of the page got torn. (Both of them could be on the side of the page there.) Why, of course they could have said he was 20 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned 42 years. And this little section of the corner gets torn off. It is very, very easy to happen. That little corner gets torn off, cutting off the two figures. It could very, very easily

happen. Now there could be two scribal errors in one verse, when a man gets sleepy and makes mistakes in copying. That's the very time when he is very apt to make more than one. When a man is real careful, he is not apt to make any. When he gets tired, when he keeps at the job too long, and he should stop and rest; but he is supposed to do this much today, and he didn't start as early as he ought to, and he has got to get it finished; that's when he is apt to make mistakes. If he makes one mistake in a verse, he could very well make a second in that verse, He is much more apt to, than in some other verse the next day. But this is a guess; only a guess, but I think a very good guess, that a corner of the page gets torn, and the two figures are lost.

Mr. Soong? Well, I think that corner could get torn off as well. Well, let's assume that he was a year old and reigned 2 years. Maybe that is something that is easier. And with all these 25 or so statements that you find, the usual form states, a man was so old when he became king, and he reigned so many years, and after that introduction, they go on to tell the first thing he did after he was king, which might be in the first year, the second year, or the third, so it is just natural that next comes something early in his reign. But to say that he reigned one year, and then he reigned two years, I don't know of any parallel to that in Hebrew. It is not the way they say things.

Mr. Tow? Everyone of these statements I assigned you to look at, all of these verses are at the beginning of the reign, every single one of them. They could have put it at the end, but it also is the natural thing to adopt the form that is given at the beginning. It is a matter of which is their custom, but every verse I gave you for today, is at the beginning of a man's reign, it tells us at the beginning of the reign how old he was, and how long he reigned. Every single one of them.

Mr. Mosher? Oh, you mean, if it was written in Hebrew it would go this way, and this would be the corner that would be torn instead of that one. Mr. Cohen? It could have been in the middle and someone dropped some acid, and it cut off the two words, the one was above the other.

Yes? No, I would say this. The question is, what it affects. That is, what we are interested in here now. Now it is easy to build a theory. Here's a nice theory which some people build. I know of a fellow, not so awfully far from here, who has written a book on New Testament criticism.¹⁴⁸ He says this, "If God gave us a Bible that was free from error in the original, it stands to reason he would keep it free from error; and therefore, he says, we can know that the Greek-speaking church, which had the charge of the Bible, kept it from error; and therefore the *Textus Receptus* is free from error. But you point out that, in the

¹⁴⁸ [rcn] This is, presumably, Edward F. Hills, *The King James Version Defended!* (Christian Research Press, 1956).

Textus Receptus, there are all kinds of variations in the Greek manuscripts. Well, it is the majority, then. The simple majority gets it. But then towards the end of his book, however, he says, the *Textus Receptus* differs from the Byzantine Text; there are a number of places that are different; and he says, in each of these places, I can give an argument to show that the reading of the *Textus Receptus* probably is in the original. But when you get around to it, the only thing that I can figure, is that he thinks that the Lord inspired Erasmus to give us a text that was free from error; but we have no evidence anywhere that the Lord did that.

Now I think that the Textual Criticism goes much too far: that on the basis of the Aleph (*Sinaiticus*) and Beta (*Vaticanus*) codices—throwing aside all the things that are in all the other manuscripts. I think that goes much too far.

But I don't think that we can go in the other direction and say, "What we have in the *Textus Receptus* is free from error," unless we have a divine word that says it. Now if God said it, I would accept it instantly; but I find no place in the Scripture the statement that the Bible will be preserved free from error; and the fact of the matter is, that we have variations in our manuscripts, thousands of variations; but it also is a fact that we have so many thousands of manuscripts, that we have material for checking most of the variations; and it also is true that none of the variations affects any of the important doctrines. It is not going to make the slightest bit of difference in your salvation or mine, whether Saul was one year old, when he became king, or whether he was 20 years old when he became king. It is not going to make the slightest difference to our salvation. And, it is not going to make the slightest difference to our salvation whether he was crowned king in April or in May. Now if the Bible said one of them, we would know. But if it doesn't say it, we don't know it. Here's a case where I think it did say, but it has gotten lost. Now we are ignorant on that point.

The Lord has not seen fit to preserve that evidence for it, on this very minor point; and I personally believe that the Lord did it, because he wants us to know that while the Bible is free from error in the original; that it is written in human words which men can easily misunderstand; and therefore the important doctrines he has repeated and expressed in different ways. So that we compare scripture with scripture, and see what it says. And when somebody builds a whole doctrine on one verse, or two verses, watch out! It is very easy to misinterpret it. And in order to give us an extra guard against misinterpreting, he has caused just enough mistakes to come in, to lead us to know that when you have only one verse, there is the possibility of a mistake having come in—in transmission—in that verse. And so I think, it is helpful for me to bring out, in the course of this class, just a few cases where there is absolutely no question that an error has come in. Just a few cases, so that we will understand that that is the fact.

Now it is a far more important fact that the Bible has been preserved better than any other book; and that when we compare scripture with scripture, we can depend upon what it says; that we can believe that it is inspired and free from error in the original writing. We can believe that. It is a far more important fact. And I think it would be very silly to go out this summer, into a church somewhere, and start in giving them a series of talks on errors in transmission of the Bible. You would just confuse the Bible for them. There is nothing gained by it.

But if people are going to be Christian leaders, it is advisable for them to know the facts; to know that God has given us a Bible, preserved as no other book from ancient time has been preserved; but not a book that has been preserved so that every vital detail is just like in the original; because there are a few cases that are absolutely certain that there are minor errors that have crept in, in transmission; and one of them is this case; and whether there was a tear on the side of a scroll; or whether it was an ink blot in the middle of a scroll; or whether a little insect ate it off there; or what happened, we just don't know. But it is a case where with all these other parallels, there is no question that that is the correct translation. He was one year old when he became king, and he reigned two years. But of course that is not what it said originally, All that is necessary is to assume that two figures have been lost. And what these figures were—the second one, in view of the New Testament, we can guess should have been 40, because the New Testament has said he reigned 40 years; so we can guess that he reigned 40 years.

And the first one, how old he was, the account describes him as a young man. If you want to give 20, there's no harm in that, but I don't think we have any proof.

I got a letter from a person once, and he said, "Don't you realize that every paragraph in the Greek New Testament has a number of letters divisible by 7; and a number of words divisible by 7; and a number of verbs divisible by 7?" "This," he said, "it is the greatest proof of inspiration that there is." Well of course, the paragraphs are inserted nowadays. They are not in the original anyway; but just for fun, I opened my Greek New Testament, and at random picked out the first paragraph I came to; I counted the number of words, and it was divisible by 7. I opened it again at random, and counted the number of letters, and it wasn't divisible by 7. I opened it again at random, and counted the number of verbs, and, it was not divisible by 7. But this poor fellow was told, you can believe the Bible is inspired, because every paragraph in the New Testament—the Greek New Testament—has a number of letters divisible by 7, a number of words divisible by 7, and a number of verbs divisible by 7. The Lord could have done it that way if He wanted to; but He didn't do it; and when poor people are given to believe that it is a certain way that it is not, then sometimes

one of them gets energetic; he opens the Greek New Testament, and finds out that it isn't; he is apt to lose his faith in the things that are so.

If the Lord had made all the manuscripts of the Bible so that once you hold them up in front of a certain kind of electric light, they would glow with a blue tinge; and that would be proof that they were inspired; He could have done that if He chose. And you could go out, and you could tell poor, ignorant people that we know that the Bible is inspired, because the original manuscripts all glow with a blue tinge. But once anybody tried it, and found out it wasn't so, he might decide that, not only was that a fairy story, but all the rest of the things he was saying were fairy stories.

And when we have to take a verse of the Scripture and twist it around, to mean something different from what the plain meaning of it is, a verse that is parallel with 25 other similar cases, why it is much better to simply frankly admit there is a mistake in transmission. I think we hold the faith of intelligent people far better than when we try to invent some kind of involved system to show that this one is altogether different from the other 25.

Well, I hadn't figured on spending nearly this long on this particular matter. I'd rather take a little time with a few other similar cases; but I would rather still get on with our history, because we have a lot of important matters to cover. But right at this point, I did want you to see all these parallels and to note this case where, to my mind, a very simple explanation is to tear off the end of the page; but maybe some other explanation would do it much better.

Now we were speaking this morning about the dynasty of Omri; and Omri is probably one of the least known of the kings of Israel to the general Christian public; but his son Ahab is one of the best known kings of Israel after the kings of the United Kingdom.

And yet his son Ahab—it is a reasonable conjecture that, in the main, the son Ahab followed along the lines put down by the father. Now that is not absolute proof, but it is a reasonable conjecture that he did. And so in what I say about Omri—since there is not a great deal stated in the Scripture about him—there is a certain amount of inference; but it is inference that I believe is very well founded. Now under the dynasty of Omri,

1. The reign of Omri

a. His Accession. Now this we already mentioned this morning: how he was the general of the army; and when Zimri killed Elah, Omri came in and besieged him; and Zimri was burned up; and then Omri gathered a lot of people to make him king; and after 4 years of fighting, Omri prevailed. The Bible doesn't say 4 years, but it says this began in the 28th year—I forget the exact number—of

Asa's reign; but it ended 4 years later, so that the Bible shows that there were 4 years involved between the time of Zimri's death and the time when Omri became undisputed king.

b. His New Capital. Now here there is no conjecture. It is a fact. Omri immediately did a very statesmanlike thing. He established a new capital. There he was similar to David. When David became king, he looked for a new capital. A capital that would be centrally located; it would have a strategic location; easy to defend. Omri did the same thing. This town Tirzah—which was the capital of the first two dynasties—we don't know just where it is, so we cannot judge it. It may have been a very good place for a capital. It may not. We don't know.

But this we know: that the new place that Omri chose to build a capital, was ideally located for a capital; and the capital city which he built there was soon three times as big as Jerusalem. It was one of the great cities of Palestine for many years; although eventually, when it was destroyed, it ceased to be a great city. It did not come back again, but during these years, it was a very great city.

Most of these other cities go way back into early days. This city seems to be, probably, not a city at all before Omri's time. Why then would Omri have been able to build a fine new capital on a place where there was no city before? Because of the advance in technology. Most previous cities were built on a hill which was easy to defend. This hill is also. But an important point in defending a city is a supply of water. If you get on a hill, with an enemy around you, and you don't have water, then they don't have to worry much. You won't stay there long. So the early cities of Palestine are all on hills that have a great spring.

Now this city is on a hill that has a very small and unimportant spring; it not situated in a good place for an early city because of lack of water. But by this time, a new technique had been discovered—the technique upon which Jerusalem today relies for its water supply—the technique of digging, building cisterns. Any home in Jerusalem in recent years has on the roof an arrangement to catch the rain water; and inside or under the house, you have a large reservoir, a cistern; and the rainy water is gathered in the rainy season, and preserved for use in the dry season. Now this technique seems not to have been used in the earlier days; but in Samaria, with the technique of building cisterns, they could take this place and make a very big city out of it. And it was on a hill, with a fine slope on all sides; easy to defend; centrally located in the land not far from Shechem; and one of the most beautiful locations for a city that I have seen.

And Samaria was important even in Roman days. There was a fine Roman gateway there at Samaria. This city of Samaria was founded by Omri and it was the capital of the northern kingdom for the rest of Israel's history.

c. His Diplomacy. Omri did not merely think of having authority over people, and of getting luxury for himself. He seems to have planned to make his dynasty last and establish his power. One thing that Omri does was this. Through the reigns of Baasha and of Jeroboam there was almost constant war between Israel and Judah. "What's the good of that? Constantly fighting?" He reasoned, we don't want to conquer Judah, and subject them to ourselves; but they cannot possibly conquer us. They are much too small. What is the use of this constant fighting? So he made friendship with Judah. He said, "Let's cut out this constant fighting between our kingdoms. Let's become friends."

Now we have no record that he said that. But we have the record that there was constant fighting in the reign of Jeroboam and Baasha between Judah and Israel. We have the record, in the succeeding years, that there was no fighting during the whole of the time of his dynasty, but friendship between the two. So that would seem almost certainly to be the product of the statesmanship of Omri. At least it was the plan of either Omri or his son Ahab. And it certainly was one or the other; and I think we are justified in saying it was the plan of both.

Secondly, he looked to the other kingdoms around; and he said, "Let's make friendship with them, too," and he utilized the method that Solomon had followed. Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh of Egypt, and made friends with Egypt; and he married many strange women from foreign lands; these were doubtless members of the royal families, in order to establish friendship with those lands. Omri married his son Ahab to the daughter of the king of Tyre. And she came down from Tyre there to live here as queen in Samaria.

And from the viewpoint of the secular statesmanship, that was an able plan: to make friendship with this powerful ruler to the north. He thus changed from the policy of Baasha and Jeroboam—constantly fighting—to try to establish a stable relationship with his neighbors.

d. His Importance. The importance of Omri is not brought out in the Bible. We have more about his son than about any other king of the northern kingdom; and that would lead us to think that one or the other of the two did things of great importance; and actually, I believe that the son's importance was due to what the father established. And as an evidence of that, there is the fact that in far-away Assyria, from which we begin soon after this time to get archaeological records which refer to this area, we find that the land of Israel is called—even after all this dynasty has died—is called the land of Omri.

So the name of Omri penetrated to far-away Assyria, the land of Omri. And we find that after four kings of the dynasty of Omri reigned, then a usurper named Jehu killed the last of them, and established himself in power. When the Assyrians referred to Jehu, they called him Jehu the son of Omri. Now he was

actually the man who killed all the descendents of Omri; but he was a successor on the throne of Omri. But there were three kings in between, so you see how the importance of Omri spread as far as distant Assyria.

But Omri, in his planning, one thing he did was to bring the daughter of the king of Tyre down there to be the wife of his son; and Olmstead of the University of Chicago in the *History of Palestine and Assyria* wrote that Jezebel, coming down from Tyre to Israel, must have felt like a Christian woman in the early days from Rome; a Christian woman from Rome marrying the chieftain from some distant backward tribe and trying to bring the knowledge of her more advanced and sophisticated thought to these backward people.¹⁴⁹

Well, that is what Olmstead said; and while the fact of it is utterly different from that, I think that the impression which Jezebel had was probably exactly the way that Olmstead described it: that she came from the great metropolis of Tyre; with its merchandise all over the seas; and the great god Melqart; and she wanted to get these Israelites to turn away from their backward notions about Jehovah, and to worship her god; and she tried to introduce it.

But we have no evidence that Ahab himself adopted the religion of his wife.

2. The Accession of Ahab.

a. His character. The character of Ahab is not generally understood. Ahab is probably the best known of the kings of Israel. But he is not well-known. He is known to the average Christian as simply the one very wicked ruler. And that's all that they know about him. And that is natural, because he is not the central figure in the Sunday School lessons we have that deal with him. The central figure is Elijah; and Ahab is the wicked king against whom Elijah carries on his ministry. And Ahab was indeed a very wicked king.

But if you read the whole story; if you read all the chapters that deal with Ahab; most of which, not all of them, perhaps 3/4 of them, have Elijah in them; others have other prophets in them; but if you read all of them; and if you study the situation carefully; you will find that the idea of Ahab as simply a man just of determinate wickedness—ready to do anything evil that he can—that is a caricature rather than an accurate picture.

Ahab was a wicked man; but I believe that, as far as religion and morality are concerned, he would be more characterized by the word "weak", or the word

¹⁴⁹ Olmstead, *Op. cit.* p.380, "Jezebel is an early example of a woman missionary in high places. In her youth she had worshipped Baal Melkart, the 'Lord, King of the City' of Tyre. He was lord of a wealthy merchant city... How could she condescend to worship a deity adored only by rude back-countrymen... So like many a Roman Christian lady married to a Germanic pagan, Jezebel persuaded her husband to build a temple to her more civilised god."

"indifferent", than by the word "wicked" as far as an aggressive positive force is concerned. It would seem likely that as a statesman, as a general, as a leader in political things, he may have been a strong character. He may have been a man who did good for his land, from the purely secular viewpoint. However, we find weakness in his character; not only morally, but in regard to his readiness to advance himself in wickedness. You remember, in the case of Naboth, he wanted Naboth's vineyard. What did he do? He lay on his bed and sulked. And his wife said, "What's the matter with you? Are you a man or a mouse? Why don't you step up and do something about this?" And she took his seal, and she wrote letters with it; and she hired people to go as false witnesses, and get Naboth assassinated, that is, judicial murder—accused of a thing that he wasn't guilty of by false witnesses—and he was killed. And she said to Ahab, "Now go take your vineyard; it is yours now. Naboth is dead." It was Jezebel who did this; and Ahab in that situation simply did nothing. Now that is not the act of one whom we think as simply an example of aggression or wickedness; nor is it the act that you would ordinarily associate with one who is a strong leader. You would either expect him to say, "This is wrong; I won't do it." Or to say, "I'm going to do it anyway," and then proceed to do it, than to take the attitude that he did there. It seems to give the impression that Ahab was a rather weak man; and it strengthens me in my impression, that it was Omri who was the strong character; that Omri laid the foundation of the system; and Ahab carried on the system as Omri laid it out. At any rate, it was carried on. From a secular viewpoint, Ahab was an able king. From a moral and a spiritual viewpoint, he was a weak king. A king who had plenty of wicked impulses, as every unregenerate man does; but being in the position of king, he had more opportunities to satisfy them than most men have.

b. His Leadership of Israel. I've covered this pretty well. The Assyrian records tell how the king of Assyria came, and met a coalition of forces, including Syria and Israel, and most of the nations of this area; and they fought him to a standstill. Of course, the Assyrian king said he utterly defeated them; annihilated them; tore them to pieces; and filled the rivers with their blood. But he doesn't say he went any further; and so historians take it as meaning that the Assyrian was not successful in his campaign, when he didn't go any further, and he didn't actually take over any of them.

He merely defeated, annihilated, destroyed, wrecked them and filled the rivers with their blood; then he turned around and went home again. Which means—and historians agree—that they fought to a standstill; and that meant that for nearly a hundred years more, they didn't have much to fear from Assyria. And Ahab is mentioned by the Assyrian king as one of the kings in the coalition. I believe he's the first Israelite king to be mentioned specifically in a contemporary document. And so, as a leader in Israel, from a secular viewpoint, he was successful; but his weakness in the situation regarding Naboth leads me

to think that he was mostly carrying on his father's feats, rather than showing his own leadership.

c. His Wife Jezebel. I'm not sure that Ahab is altogether to blame for his wife. My guess is that it was Omri who made the match. And Omri made the match, I believe, not in order to get Ahab a good wife, but in order to make friendly relations with the strong maritime powers of the north, the powers of Sidonia. The two leading cities of this region were Tyre and Sidon; and they seem to have been united at this time; but the whole people are called the Sidonians, after the other of the two large cities, Sidon. This is the area which is today called Lebanon. It is an area which is shut in by the high mountain wall of the Lebanon mountains, so that there's a fairly narrow area, rather barren, next to the sea. But on the shore there, you have little bays, inlets, islands; and it's tempting to learn to go out to sea.

It was the headquarters of the Phoenicians, the great seafaring people of ancient times. Israel has a rocky coast, and a straight coast with hardly any decent harbors; and the Israelites were always a land people, they never went to sea much; the sea is little mentioned with them; but the Phoenicians were a seafaring people; whether the nature of the land forced them to it, or whether it's in their blood, I don't know; but I believe they're still the same way today. Because I went on horseback up through Palestine, and came to that area; and we crossed the border of Palestine into Phoenicia.

I think my first day there, I met more travelers than I met in Palestine in two weeks. I think the first day there, I ran onto a man. I said "How do you come to speak English with such a good American accent?" He said, "Oh, I spent twenty years in Denver, Colorado." Next man I met, and he spoke English; and I said, "Where did you learn English like that?" "Oh," he says, "I lived twenty years in Lansing, Michigan." He said, "My name's Mohammed; but over there they called me Sam Gillis." And just person after person I met there had lived even more in South America than in North America.

But in most sections, many a person in that area had gone away, and worked hard, and saved, and then come home to spend the last part of their life here. And as in these days, so even 3000 years ago, it was a great seafaring area; and at those times, it was a very wealthy area; and Omri, from the political viewpoint, did a very fine thing when he made a marriage relationship, a friendship with the people of Sidon. But it brought in Jezebel, who was a determined character; a woman whose background was one of ruthlessness in seeking to get what she wanted; and as the daughter of the king there, she was accustomed to having just about anything she wanted; not accustomed to the moral scruples of the Israelite people; but doubtless thinking of them as a backwoods people. And from a viewpoint of culture and sophistication, they doubtless were very much behind the wealthy, progressive and sophisticated

people of Tyre and Sidon. And she especially thought that this very strait-laced religion that they had, worshipping a god that you couldn't even see, was a fantastic thing; and she was anxious to bring them to knowledge of her more enlightened deity, Melqart, the god of Tyre, whom the Israelites simply called Baal, which means master.

The gods of the heathen in Israel were generally called by the name Baal. It's not a name; it's just the title for "master." God himself is occasionally in certain parts of the Bible referred to as Baal [e.g., Hosea 2:16]. But when they got to referring so much to this particular heathen deity as Baal, they quit altogether and apply the term to the Lord. You see, it's not a name, it's a title, like master.

But through Jezebel, there came in her ideas of morality to some extent; but particularly came in her zealous missionary interest in spreading the knowledge of her god. There is no evidence that Ahab ever actually was a Baal worshipper. He gave in to his wife; he permitted her to have her deity there; to have her worship of Baal there; to favor it in many ways, and those who went along with her and associated themselves with the worship of Baal. But his two sons were both given names which include the name Jehovah. His sons were Jehoram, which "Jehovah is exalted", and Ahaziah, which means "Jehovah takes hold."

Well now, why would a worshipper of Baal—a worshipper of Melqart—give Jehovah names to his two sons, who became kings after him? It does not show that Ahab was a zealous worshipper of the Lord at all; but it certainly does show that he was not a zealous supporter of Baal. My impression is that he gave in to his wife to quite an extent, and permitted her to push the Baal worship without interfering with it; perhaps even gracing some of the functions with his presence; but not giving any indication of himself going over to them.

3. The Menace of the Baal Worshipers.

This is one of the greatest crises in the history of Israel. And it is interesting to note that Jeroboam put up the golden calf; he was rebuked for it, and the prophets criticized him; Baasha went on worshipping the golden calf and was further rebuked for it. But that the Lord did not bring in his strong opposition, religiously, until the Baal-worship came in; and then He sent the prophets Elijah and Elisha, perhaps the two greatest, and certainly the two greatest prophets of whom we have much told in the historical books.

The great activities of Elijah and Elisha were directed, not against the compromising worship of the golden calf, but against the heathen worship of Baal from Tyre. And it was against that that Elijah and Elisha came. Other than the works of these prophets, the Lord has ordinarily done comparatively few of what we would call supernatural works. Ordinarily, he works through the

influences of moral suasion; of the presentation of the word; through acts of providence.

But as we noticed, there are a few occasions on which there was a great outpouring of miracles. One of those, of course, was the bringing of the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, and bringing them into the promised land. A third is around the life of Daniel in the exile, when there was danger of the worship of God being wiped out from the people in exile. The fourth one is the work of Christ in the early times of the disciples. But the second of these great outpourings of miraculous works was in connection with the work of Elijah and Elisha. It was because of this great crisis of the incursion of Baal worship—the greatest crisis religiously in the history of Israel, between the entrance into Palestine and the time of Christ. The menace of the Baal worship. The golden calves were bad. They were wrong. The Lord opposed them, and in the end he destroyed them. But they are not to be mentioned in the same category with the Baal-worship. The Lord opposed them, but he did not bring his strong opposition against them to the extent that he did here; and in fact during the period of Elijah and Elisha, they are mentioned because of this far greater menace that was facing them. And after the Baal worship was rooted out and destroyed, we find the golden calf still there in the northern kingdom.

The northern kingdom was degenerate compared to the southern kingdom. But the idea that some people have, that God paid all his attention to the southern kingdom; and the northern kingdom was simply apostate and outside; and God wasn't interested in it, is utterly disproved by the fact that two of his very greatest prophets did 98% of their work in the northern kingdom; that Elijah and Elisha came to the northern kingdom; and that there were more miracles done in connection with their work than with that of any other prophet. Aside, of course, from Moses who was more a leader than a prophet.

So it's important for Old Testament History that we realize what the Baal worship is; where it came from; how it came; what a tremendous menace it was; and that it was on account of this that God did one of the greatest works in the whole history of his dealings with Israel. Now when we get into how God destroyed the Baal worship, there we're getting to the lives of two of the greatest prophets of all. And I wish that we could take a semester on it, because there is so much of tremendous interest, of great importance, in connection with the work of Elijah and Elisha. But we have the Old Testament History to finish this semester, so we'll have to barely mention them. But I would like to mention a number of the salient points of both, which are not well understood. We'll put the general discussion of it under

4. Elijah the Prophet.

a. The Work of Elijah and Elisha. This will just be a brief general discussion. The work of Elijah and Elisha. When Elijah came, the Baal-worship was beginning through Jezebel's influence to spread over the land. We have no evidence Ahab helped her, but neither did he do anything actively to oppose her. But she was spreading it; and she had a good deal of influence in advancing people in the land; and they knew that, politically, they'd get ahead if the queen liked them.

And the people, seeing a chance of advancement by supporting the Baal worship; and you hear enough about it; and some of them would become very enthusiastic and fanatical about it; some of them would like to break away from the strait-laced regulations of the Jehovah worship; and they found this more pleasing to them.

And the movement was underway; and the land would have gone—humanly speaking—as many another land has gone, in the face of a thing like this; completely away from the true religion, if it had not been that God was determined to keep alive the knowledge of God in this land; in order that he would keep the word there as a center where the Lord Jesus would come; and from it the word to go out to all the earth.

And consequently, the Lord here intervenes in a way that he ordinarily does not. He intervened with this miraculous work of Elijah and Elisha. But as for Elijah and Elisha, it is important for us to note the difference between the two of them. If there ever were two men who were temperamentally—and as far as their general activity was concerned—thoroughly different, it is Elijah and Elisha. You all doubtless have some general idea about the two of them.

Elijah, you might say, is a wild man from the desert.¹⁵⁰ The man who wears the goat's shirt. The man who suddenly appears in the king's palace and says, "As the Lord lives before whom I stand, it will not rain these years, except according to my word," and goes out; and they think some old fool, some crazy crank, has come in here; and they think nothing more about it until they find that it doesn't rain. The rainy season comes, and it doesn't rain. And another year, and it doesn't rain; and it gets to where the cattle are beginning to die for lack of water; and the crops are beginning to go to pieces; and pretty soon, they'll all be in very dire straits; and then everybody remembers that which this crazy man from the desert had spoken; and they say, "Let's find him; he's responsible for this; let's find him, and find out how to get over this thing."

¹⁵⁰ [dcb] This description of Elijah comes from 2 Kings 1:8 "He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite."

Well, of course, that's a very unusual sort of a thing. And Elijah was that sort of a man. He was a gruff sort of a fellow. He was a wild sort of a fellow. When he called Elisha, what did he do? He walked by there; and he took his coat, and threw it over Elisha's shoulders; and he walked on. And Elisha ran after him and he said, "Elijah", for everybody knew who he was by this time; they'd all heard about him, and it had been described what this crazy fellow had done; and then it actually hadn't rained. And it continued this long, and so on; and then of course they'd heard about what happened up on Mount Carmel, and so on.

So Elisha doubtless had been thinking about it; wishing he could be with a man like that; thinking how he'd like to serve the Lord; and then, all of a sudden, this wild fellow comes walking by and throws his coat over him. And Elisha runs after him and says, "Just a minute; will you wait till I say goodbye to my parents, and then I'll come and go with you?" Elijah says, "What have I got to do with you?" Answered him abruptly. But Elisha goes ahead, and has a feast for his parents; says goodbye; and Elijah, I suppose, sat out in the barn somewhere waiting till he was through. No, he walked off without him.

And then for the next couple of years—we don't know how long it was—Elisha simply poured water over the hands of Elijah; in other words, he did the lower, menial tasks; and he picked up what knowledge he could. And you remember the last day of Elijah's life, Elijah says to Elisha, "I've got to go to Bethel"; and Elisha says "I'm going with you." He says, "You stay here." Elisha says "I'm going with you." "Well," Elijah says, "You better stay here." "No", he says, "I'm going with you." So he goes. He gets to Bethel, and Elijah says "I've got to go into Shechem." Elisha says "I'm going with you." "Oh you better stay here." "No, I'm going with you."

And he kept right after him; and finally, when they were down by the Jordan, Elijah said to Elisha, "This is the day I'm going to be taken up." He said "Ask whatever you want. What present do you want?" Elisha, instead of asking for some nice thing for himself, he says "I'd like to be a copy of you. I'd like a double portion of your strength." Now people do the crazy thing of interpreting that as meaning Elisha said to Elijah, "I'd like to be twice as great a man as you are; I'd like to be double what you are." Of course that's fantastic. Elisha had more sense than to ever say a thing like that; and it would be ridiculous anyway. Elijah is a great prophet, Elisha is probably equally as great, but certainly not greater. Some people count up, and say Elijah had seven miracles, Elisha had fourteen, so he had double. I don't think we honor the Lord with that sort of thing. But anyway, this shows the gruffness of Elijah. He says "Well, have you asked? But if you see me as I'm taken up..."

Elijah was this sort of a wild fellow, that would attract attention, and stimulate interest; and he stood up and he fought valiantly for the name of the Lord; and when he finished, if he had disappeared, and there had been no Elisha, his work

would have been like a flash in the pan; a brilliant thing for people to remember, but to have no effect on their lives or their thoughts, on their activities.

On the other hand, Elisha was the exact opposite. Elisha was the kindly gracious fellow, who was ready to do the menial tasks for Elijah. He was ready to go with him, and to help him, and to learn all he could from him; and Elisha, after Elijah's death, had a course of itinerating tours he made; up and down through the land; gathering little groups together; presenting the Word to them; explaining to them God's will for them; dealing with them; helping the people who were sick; dealing with their problems. He was a wonderful pastor; he was a fine, kindly man who did so much for people.

And if Elisha had come, and there had been no Elijah, he would have started out doing these kind things for the people; and they'd have received his kindness and gone on worshipping Baal just the same; paying no attention to him. Elisha without Elijah would have practically no influence in this life. Elijah without Elisha would have made a great pyrotechnic display, which would be forgotten in a brief time and would accomplish nothing. If Elisha had come first, his work would have accomplished practically nothing; and if Elijah had come second, the work of Elisha would have made no preparation to amount to anything for Elijah.

But God sent them in the order in which they could be effective. Elijah was the battering ram, that pushed the way through into people's consciousness; that showed the wrongness of Baal; that called everybody's attention, throughout the land, to the great problems and issues. And then Elisha followed with a gracious, kindly presentation of the word of God; which came to the people who had already been reached and stirred and moved by the activity of Elijah.

And the work of Elijah and Elisha together was a work which was sufficient, to not only break the back of the Baal worship, but to destroy it out of the land, and make it no longer a great threat to the true worship of the Lord. And it's most wonderful, the way the two work together there; and in the providence of God, sometimes a person fulfills one of these functions, sometimes the other one.

Most of us are neither of them; not as either of these two great men are; and we have to, to some extent, fulfill both functions. But it's good to have an idea of how the functions relate to each other; and to see that there are times when the one function is what is vitally needed; and times when the other is vitally needed. But unless you have some kind of a foundation, the work of Elisha doesn't do a great deal. The work of Elijah may lay the foundations, but the foundations disappear if you don't have Elisha's work to follow.

Well, so much then for the general summary; perhaps one more thing we should say on the general summary. When Elijah died, Elisha said, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." And it's very unfortunate for our interpretation that he made this remark right after Elijah had gone up in chariots of fire; because it leads people superficially to think he's talking about the chariots of fire. The chariots of fire may have something to do with the presentation of the idea, but that is not what he is referring to. When he says, "My father, my father, the chariots and the horsemen thereof," what he is saying is, "Oh, Elijah, you are the bulwark of the nation. If it weren't for you, this Baal worship would've spread over the nation to the extent that God would've had, in disgust, to remove his favor completely from the nation. You are the great bulwark of Israel."

But Elisha said that to Elijah when the two of them were alone in the desert. And then when Elisha came to die, it was the king of Israel who came to his place and who said, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." And there were no chariots there; there was nothing like that to be the occasion of the remark of the king of Israel. He meant exactly what Elisha had meant; he meant that Elisha was the greatest bulwark of the nation.

I don't know how sincere the king was in saying it, but he at least represented what the people of the nation as a whole recognized as the fact. But Elijah began the work; and the work would've accomplished little apart from what Elisha did following.

Now another thing, though—still under the general summary—there's one other fact that I think ought to be brought out, that is very hard, I find, for people to realize. I find in class that there's much resistance to this point; and that is this, that they—Ahab, Elijah and Elisha—were human beings. The average Christian seems to have gotten the idea from his Sunday School—some way—that these are not human beings, but they're figures; they're representatives of qualities. And Ahab represents simply wickedness; he's just black. Well, now Elijah represents good; so he's just white. And everything Elijah does is right. And therefore to criticize anything Elijah does is like criticizing the Lord Jesus Christ; that's the attitude, I have found, of the average seminary student.

But I think it is wise we understand that is a false attitude; that even the prophets were human beings. And that the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ made mistakes; the only man who ever lived who never made a mistake and never did anything wrong was the Lord Jesus Christ. I think, that in saying this about the apostles, it is worthwhile to guard it by this. That the apostles had permitted to them a very vital task of beginning the work of Christianity; beginning the spreading of it; establishing the foundation; and therefore, I believe we are justified in assuming that when the Lord tells us of their work, he

is giving us an example, except when he labels it or makes it clear that it's not an example.

And therefore, we recognize that the apostles made their mistakes; we know Peter and Paul quarreled publicly; certainly they couldn't both be right. We know that the apostles made their mistakes. But that when the Bible says that Paul presented a sermon in Athens, it is an example for us unless it is definitely labeled. I know there are people who say Paul made a great mistake in his sermon at Athens. When he got to Corinth, he resolved to know Jesus only; to preach Jesus crucified, and him only. Well, I think that interpretation is wrong. I think he always preached Christ crucified and him only; but I think at Athens he used an approach to reach the sophisticated, intelligent Athenian; in Corinth, he used one to commercial-minded Corinthians. And probably he made mistakes in both places. But I don't think the Bible gives us his mistakes, unless it labels them.

But in the case of Elijah and Elisha, we are not dealing with the founding of the Christian religion; we are not dealing with those who laid the foundation of our church, and who spread the word; we are dealing with the two men who fought the Baal-worship; and most of that they said was undoubtedly right; but this is not to say they could not make mistakes, nor even to assume they did not make mistakes.

And I'm convinced that Elijah made a very, very glaring one, which we will look at eventually. But first,

b. Elijah's First Appearance. And we've noticed how he suddenly comes out of the desert, appears in Ahab's court, says (I Kings 17:1)

As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

Of course the Lord is here is Jehovah, it's the proper name of God; and before the sophisticated, well-dressed, people sitting around in state there, in Ahab's court, got over their amazement of how this wild fellow ever got in there in the first place, to make this remark so publicly, he has disappeared from among them.

And somebody said, "Well, let's put him in the asylum; we don't want a fellow like that walking around; you can't tell what he might get people stirred up to do"; so they sent for the jailer and said, "Go on, get ahold of that fellow; better lock him up for a few days, till he cools off." But the bailiff couldn't find him. And God cared for him down by the river there. He went down to a desolate place in the desert; and there he drank the water from the river; and the Lord had the ravens bring him food.

I know a fellow who went to Wooster College; a fine Christian fellow he was: earnest, desiring to serve the Lord. He went to Wooster College, and gradually got his faith torn into, and torn into; but still he was clinging to all he could of it; and then he went to McCormick Seminary; and there at McCormick Seminary, he was the sort of a fellow who didn't make a sudden turnover, like some of his close friends did; he just gradually changed, instead of a sudden turning.

And he was at McCormick Seminary; and he was telling how the Professor of Old Testament said one day—he told me the Professor said that, in the story of Elijah there, by simply changing the vowels, you could have it that, not that the ravens brought him food every day, but the Arabs. And he said he was just grabbing for that as a straw to keep his faith in the Bible, without believing what they were ridiculing as these fantastic myths and legends. And he said, "Oh that's great!" And he said the professor didn't hear him say that, though. He said, "Yes, but if any of you think that's a correct interpretation, I have absolutely no regard for your intelligence whatever." He just pushed the fellows back; and it was a blow to them. And he is today a modernist leader in a big Presbyterian church, the largest in one of our states. Very, very nice fellow, fine Christian; but through his education just gradually turning against everything.

Well, now it seems to me that the approach the professor had toward this was wrong. It could be ravens; it could be Arabs; the vowels would simply make the difference. And the vowels, of course, are not in the original Hebrew text. But the picture of Elijah is one of God interposing with supernatural ways at point after point in his life; I don't think we have any way to be sure which of the two it is. His life has been preserved; God did many other things in Elijah's life more unusual even than having the ravens feed him. I think it is just as well to take it as ravens as to consider the possibility that it is Arabs. I'm not even sure there were Arabs in that area.

But at any rate, God cared for him marvelously; when the water dried up there, he went up north into the land of Phoenicia; and he went to a little town of Phoenicia there; and there, he came to a widow who—they were just ready to die from the famine, practically no food left—and you remember, he went in with her; and he promised her that the wheat and the oil would last till the famine was over. He stayed with her there; and the Lord caused that their food was marvelously multiplied, and so it lasted.

And then after three years, remember, the famine got so bad that it was all through that area; and by this time, Ahab was tremendously interested in getting ahold of this fellow Elijah; and he sent to all the countries around, asking if anybody had seen him. He was hiding in this little town in this northern area there. There's a time to suffer martyrdom and there's a time to hide.

And God did not order Elijah to go up there, and to face Ahab and be killed. He didn't order him to do that; He had him hide until the time was ripe for his work to accomplish something; and when the time was ripe then Elijah appeared, and when he appeared, you remember, I Kings 18:7ff:

And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou that my lord Elijah? And he answered him, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.

Obadiah was terrified. Obadiah and Ahab were hunting for water, just some little bit of water, that he might give the animals; and he said to Elijah,

And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the Lord shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth. Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord, how I hid an hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here: and he shall slay me. And Elijah said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to day.

Elijah promised to be there.

Then you remember, he had this conflict up on Mount Carmel. Now if Elijah had appeared in the first place there, and he had said to the king, "King, I want to challenge you and your Baal-worshippers. Let's have a contest on Mount Carmel and find out who is God, Jehovah or Baal," Ahab would say, "What's this foolish fellow talking about?" He'd say, "Get out of the palace here; you're making a nuisance of yourself." He wouldn't have paid any attention to him. But it was the prediction of the famine which made people have an evidence he was the Lord's messenger. And then it was the famine which brought difficulty and trouble to people.

And as a rule, when people are prosperous and happy, they're not interested in the Lord. And they will pay no attention, and they go on, and they ignore it, and they're not interested. But if you give them a testimony, and it's in their mind when trouble comes, they may think of the word you've given them; and the Lord may use that word to lead them to Himself. And if they don't have the

testimony, there's nothing to lead them to the Lord, no matter how bad the trouble is. But it's in time of trouble that people come to the Lord.

Now you can't tell, of course, when you meet them, what trouble they may now be enduring, which you don't know anything about; and your testimony may have an immediate effect. But as a rule, it is only in times of trouble that people are even interested in the Lord. But the testimony given before is available and ready and can be used.

Well, now the people were in trouble with the famine. They were ready to face the problem; and in that situation, now Elijah challenges them to the contest. I've known young fellows to go out, and they're going to prove to the world that the Bible is true; and they go up to some great Modernist, and challenge him to a debate or something; and the fellow laughs at them and ignores them; and they just make fools of themselves. There's no preparation for it, there's no foundation for it.

They may accomplish something sometime, as far as that goes; but as a rule, that sort of an approach needs a preparation such as there was here. The preparation was there. The whole nation was filled with the interest. Elijah was the evangelist type, Elisha was the pastor type. We need them both.

Well, they met on Mount Carmel; and you remember, up there, how the prophets of Baal called out to Baal to set fire to the sacrifice; and Elijah hounded them, and laughed at them, and said "He's probably on a journey; maybe he's asleep; call a little louder, and see if you can wake him up"; all that kind of talk, which of course made them all the angrier; and they yelled all the louder; and then you remember that Elijah, after a whole day of that sort of thing; with a great host of people around him; then Elijah's turn came; and he took and built again the altar of God that was fallen down and he put the sacrifice on and poured water on and then he prayed, calling for fire, prayed to the Lord to send the fire and to light it, and the fire came down and it lit and the people yelled "The Lord is God, the Lord is God," and then he took the prophets of Baal and killed them.

But then you remember there was the matter of the drought. You can do this, but if the drought continues what has it accomplished? The people may look to the Lord for a brief time, but you need a removal of the great sign the Lord has given; and Elijah sent his servant up to the top of the mountain seven times, looking, but no sign of rain. And finally on the seventh time, they saw a little cloud way in the distance. And Elijah said to Ahab, "Get started; I hear the sound of an abundance of rain; get started." And he'd done his day's work; he'd made a great display; the nervous energy that man had poured out on that day is tremendous; the tension, the excitement, the thrill of it all is tremendous; and he felt just exactly as you and I feel after you give a great evangelistic

message or do some tremendous work; we just feel like, "I've just got to work this energy off"; we feel like running, jumping, talking, any fool thing to get it out of our system; but what we need is to learn to relax, and to get rested, and over it, and ready for the next day's work.

And that's what Elijah needed. There were caves in the mountain, where you'd be dry from the rain and sheltered. Elijah could have gone into one of those caves, and slept a month. Elijah could've gotten a good rest, and been ready to utilize that; because that great scene on Mount Carmel is followed up by an itinerating campaign: talking to the people, driving it home to them, would have done the work. You wouldn't need Elisha. If Elijah could've gone on right after that, with his itinerating pastoral work, following up that. But instead of that, he girt up his loins and ran 30 miles before the chariot of Ahab. And this wild, hairy man from the desert running in front of the chariot of the king; and people looked and said, "Well, he sure is a wild fellow isn't he?" They said, "That's wonderful, the testimony he gave to God up there; but look what he's doing now." And Elijah, after running and working off the nervous tension that he'd gotten up in that wonderful work he'd done up there on that day—getting that nervous tension up—he got to the town where Ahab went to his palace. Elijah probably went to a flop house somewhere, and spent the night; we have no reason to think he had friends in that town—but he stayed somewhere there—but he spent the night; and he woke up in the morning, half dead with tiredness and the strain of what he'd gone through the day before; added to it all this silly, senseless exertion of running that way before the chariot of Ahab.

It says that he ran in the spirit of the Lord. It just seemed as if nothing could stop him; it was that outflow, that nervous energy, that we have when we're in a situation like that; if we throw it away and waste it, as he did there. He woke up in the morning in that situation and Ahab of course was saying "What can we do, what can we do? The people have all yelled 'Jehovah is the God;' they've killed the prophets of Baal, the people are all ready now to stand behind Elijah; why, if Elijah gives the word, they'll topple me from my throne and put somebody else in. What can we do?"

Jezebel was made of sterner stuff. Jezebel sent a messenger, the messenger said "Elijah, if you're still here 24 hours from now, you'll be just like these prophets of Baal you've killed." And Jezebel hadn't the least power to fulfill that foolish threat that she gave to Elijah. The people would've torn her limb from limb if she'd begun to touch him. If she sent soldiers to try to hurt him, the people wouldn't have let them touch him. Ahab wouldn't have dared do anything against Elijah in this situation. The whole country knew how Elijah had faced the prophets of Baal. If they had tried to do something vigorous at this point against Elijah, Ahab and Jezebel both would've had to flee for their lives.

But Jezebel puts on a bold-looking front and sends the message to Elijah; and he's just too tired out to think sensibly; and so he gets up and he starts walking; and she says "We'll give you 24 hours to get out of the country." Lucky for her, he got up; because if he'd stayed she certainly couldn't have touched him. He rushed southward fast as he could walk; and he could walk fast. He headed south through the southern part of Israel; south into Judah; through Judah; down into the desert; and he lay down and went to sleep; and he woke up, and the Lord's angel said, "Elijah what are you doing here? Your work is up there in Israel; taking the work you've done on Carmel; bringing it home to the people; teaching them the message of God; utilizing the work that you've done; not just letting it peter out and throwing everything away." Poor Elijah says, "They've killed the prophets; they've broken down the Lord's altar; now they seek my life." He says, "Lord, let me die, I'm no better than my fathers." And the Lord in his mercy gave him some food, and let him sleep again for a few more days; he was just worn out; and he slept there, and then the angel touched him, and said, "Elijah, It's time to start moving." So Elijah got up and started; and he walked 40 days, south into Sinai.

And the idea of saying, "Well, now the Bible is just a group of puppets pulled on a string; here's what Elijah did; he did this great work upon Carmel; now he makes this wonderful trip down to Sinai. It's not interpreting what you've got there; it is not realizing that Elijah, the great godly man, did not sin in this, but he made a mistake. He made an unfortunate mistake. He made a mistake which should be a warning to us. When we do our great work, then to stop and relax; and get in shape for the next stage of our work for the Lord; and think, "What is the next thing that will advance the Lord's cause best next?" Instead of just being so wrought up with the emotion of this thing, that we can't think about the next stage; and work it out reasonably; and in such a way as to be effective. The work had to wait; we don't know how long. Was it five years? Was it twenty years? Was it twenty-five years, before Elisha's great work commenced? God had to take another man altogether, and start in and train him; and get him ready to carry on the work; and the work could have been carried on twice as well, and twice as effectively, right after Carmel as a few years later when Elisha was prepared.

Elijah was wonderful for the work he did; but he proved himself incapable of the work that was needed to succeed, by his flight before the silly bluff of the clever queen in this situation. And so Elijah gets down there to Sinai; and then we read how God deals in tenderness with his overwrought prophet.

Elijah was not sinning; he was erring; he was making mistakes in not thinking things through sensibly, and understanding. And—God help us—we all make mistakes; but we should learn to avoid them; and learn to do things in such a way as to be effective; and so he's down there at Sinai; and the Lord lets him get rested; lets him get filled with the spirit of the desert again down there; lets

him get the feeling of great distances, and the high mountains and all that; and to forget the little queens with their big bluffs.

And then the Lord says to Elijah, "What are you doing here Elijah?" Elijah says, "Oh," he says, "I'm no better than my fathers." He says, "They've killed the prophets of God and broken down his altars, now they're seeking me to kill me." Well, why didn't he talk this way when he faced Ahab before? When all the people were with Ahab; and Ahab had all the power; and Elijah was nothing? No, then he faced him boldly. But then he faced him; he killed the prophets of Baal; he made his wonderful exhibit on Mount Carmel; now he was giving way to senseless weakness.

And it got into his mind, and gripped him, that there was nothing he could do; and the Lord, in tenderness and in gentleness, caused him to see a great fire, and the Lord wasn't in the fire; and hear a tremendous wind, and the Lord wasn't in the wind; and then, at the end, a still small voice; showing that God could work, not merely in the great tempestuous things, but in the little quiet movements of thought, and of reason, and of intelligent consideration.

And the Lord spoke to him in a still small voice, and the Lord said, "What are you doing here?" And Elijah repeated that they were trying to kill him; they'd killed all the others. And God said, "No, Elijah, you're not the only one left. I've got 7000 men up there that have never bowed the knee to Baal." There are lots of people in Israel still that stand for the Lord; but they need leadership; they need someone to give them the truth, and to lead them; not simply to denounce them for their errors. They make errors; you make errors; we all make errors; but to lead them, to teach them, to bring them over to the attitude that they ought to take. The 7000 of them are nothing without a leader; you should be there to lead them, instead of running off.

And then the Lord shows Elijah his power. The Lord said, "Elijah you go off, and you anoint a new king for Israel. You go anoint a new king; you're afraid of the threats of this petty foreign queen, who hasn't the power to do a thing, except with her husband's permission; and he hasn't got the power to go beyond a certain point with the people. You notice what he did when it came to Naboth's vineyard? Ahab didn't dare take that. They had to make up a whole lot of lies and things to convince people. Jezebel couldn't possibly have hurt him."

God said, "So far from Jezebel hurting you, I'm going to permit you to name a man who will replace Ahab as king. Not only that, but the kingdom of Syria—twice as big as this one—I'm going to permit you to name a man to replace that king." And he said "Elijah, it's too bad you failed. You did a wonderful work up to this point, but we'll have to put somebody else in to carry on now. You go and anoint Elisha, the son of Shaphat, to take your place." Poor Elijah had to go

and spend the rest of his time training Elisha to do the work that he should've been doing.

=====

(Review) Now we were speaking about Elijah's First Appearance—one of the most dramatic things in the whole Bible. Suddenly this man from the desert appears before Ahab; makes his great declaration: "It will not rain; there'll be no rain nor dew except according to my word." And then he disappears.

And many a person since has followed his example; and he's suddenly stood up before people and given a great denunciation and a terrible prediction; but in most cases, the prediction has not been fulfilled. And they have been proven to be people following their own imagination, instead of those whom God has raised up for a specific purpose, as He did Elijah. Elijah's making this declaration, and carrying it out the way he did, is not an example for us in precise detail, unless God speaks to us as he did to Elijah. But in the principle involved, it is an example to us; that God used means to draw attention to Elijah; to put him in a position where he would be heard, before the great contest on Mount Carmel. Most people look on it as a fairy tale. It would have little effect on the land; it would have some, but it was preceded by preparation which attracted people's attention and interest to this man Elijah and what he could do.

And while we cannot ordinarily make the preparation like that, with the miraculous work that was there, we can find other ways of preparing for the great contest and declaration of this day. In this case, God worked it supernaturally because of the tremendous menace. In lesser situations, we have to use our brain power to work it out. But I have known of very wonderful meetings—with very splendid messages given—but given to just a handful of people, because there had not been proper preparation made, to attract attention and to find the means of reaching a larger group.

Dr. [Carl] McIntire has a very particular gift of finding ways of reaching out and getting attention; and it gets his excellent messages far greater hearing than they would ever have if he did not combine this other gift with them. Now

c. Elijah's Great Work at Carmel. We spoke about this at some length under the work of Elijah and Elisha. It was a vital stage in the work of Elijah and Elisha. It would have been just a flash in the night and left little effect, if it were not followed by the great work of Elisha afterward. These things are very, very important and very valuable; but the follow-up is also tremendously important.

I remember hearing 30 years ago—or a little more than that—when I was a student in seminary, I heard about Nathan Alexander, the pastor of a great

Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh; and they said that Billy Sunday had been holding great campaigns in different parts of the United States; and some of the ministers in Pittsburgh wanted to have Billy Sunday come to Pittsburgh for a campaign; and others said it would be very silly to have him. You just get people stirred up and there's nothing comes of it. And they said, "Look at this town where Billy Sunday went, and they had a great campaign, and hundreds of people went forward, but nothing was accomplished." Two years later, the converts had all disappeared. "Well," Nathan Alexander said, "I don't think that was Billy Sunday's fault; I think that was the fault of the ministers participating in the campaign." And he threw the weight of his influence in favor of getting Billy Sunday.

And for nearly a year before the campaign, he was having classes with his people in personal work; how to deal with inquirers, and so on; and he had his people all ready; and when Billy Sunday came, and they had the campaign, the people of the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh were ready to reach them when they were stirred by Billy Sunday; and to help them, and to give them an understanding, and to get them to his church. And he found that a year later, out of about 300, I believe, new members his church had as a result of that campaign, out of that 300 they found that a year later about 295 of them were still in the church, and over 200 of them were very active in the church.

And other churches who participated in the campaign might have hardly any. And I'm speaking of good sound churches, as his was then. The difference would be in the follow-up and in the preparation.

And so this thing at Carmel was absolutely essential; it is vital, that sort of thing must be done; but the follow-up and the preparation are absolutely necessary to its having its real effectiveness. One man can stand as Elijah did; and hound the prophets of Baal; and can attract the attention of the whole nation to his great stand; and without him not one-tenth of that which he accomplished could be done. But others, who in a quiet way are following up and carrying on, may be just as important, and perhaps some times even more important, in the Lord's recognition, of what is actually accomplished. Well,

d. Elijah's Flight. We noticed last time how Elijah made his great mistake here. I don't call it a sin on Elijah's part, except in the sense that we're all sinners. Every human being falls very far short of the ideal; and I think we should be very careful in accusing others where they fall short of the ideal; but it doesn't mean that we should imitate them when they fall short, because we fall short in plenty of places where the other people didn't. But in this case, it certainly is important for our understanding of our own Christian work to notice that this great man of God; one of the most effective workers in the world's history; and one whom God used in a most remarkable way; fell so utterly short here that, if

it were not for God's further supernatural intervention, the results of the work would practically have disappeared.

He killed the prophets of Baal; for a brief time the people were turned against Baal. But Jezebel's influence continued constantly, with nothing to offset it that would have amounted to much; right at that point, if Elijah could have gone, and hid in one of those caves; and slept for a month; and gotten himself in first-class condition; and then come back, and gone about through the land; talking to the people here and there, and driving home the meaning of the work at Carmel; what was accomplished could have been many times what actually was accomplished through Elijah. But what was accomplished, as a result of divine intervention, was enough to destroy the Baal worship out of the land in that particular message.

But it was God's intervention which prevented Elijah's flight from utterly destroying the whole thing. So in Elijah's flight, we have him fleeing from the bluff of a woman who could have done nothing to hurt him; fleeing from her bluff and running for his life. And God mercifully followed him, even though he was out of the will of God, going where he never should have gone, God was along the way, feeding, caring for him, protecting him, and helping him; and preparing to bring him back to the place of service. And then

e. Elijah at Horeb. And there we have the story which, in some ways, is even more dramatic than the occurrences on Mount Carmel. On Mount Carmel, we have the great thing that was before the whole nation; down here, we just have one man. But God shows his wonders in order to reach the heart of this one man; and in order to lead him, and show him His will. And so down here at Horeb—the mount of God, Mount Sinai where God had given the ten commandments—here he saw a tremendous wind; but (we read) the Lord was not in the wind. Well, the Lord directed the wind, he directs everything.

What does that mean: the Lord was not in the wind? It means that God, in some way, showed to the heart of Elijah, as he saw this tremendous wind that was breaking the rocks in pieces; God some way impressed it on his mind, that this was merely God's fingerprint, God's activity; that he wasn't actually coming face to face with God in it, but merely with his working. And then he sent a great earthquake, and the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire. The Lord is in all these; and when it says, he was not in them, it means that in the sense of deep knowledge of God, He saw God's power in this, but he didn't see God's person.

...and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of

hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

And so right after these, Elijah wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entering of the cave; and a voice came to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

Remember when Elijah said? "What can I do here? The people of Israel had strayed against the Lord and even I alone am left?"

The Lord said, "How foolish to think that you are the only one left." For when you have got God with you, that's more power than all the people of Israel put together. And so the Lord didn't just say that which might be just words, he put it into action.

And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria:

When did Elijah anoint Hazael to be king of Syria? Can anybody tell me what chapter of the Bible tells how Elijah anointed Hazael to be king of Syria? How many think there is such a chapter? How many think there is not such a chapter? A number think there is not. I had intended to give a certain time to find out. Maybe we better read on. He says to him here, he says,

...anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

When does he anoint Jehu king over Israel? And then he says, "Elisha the son of Shaphat shalt thou anoint." When did he anoint Elisha? I don't think you'll find in the Bible anywhere stated that Elijah anointed any of these men. The statements of the Lord here are given in a formal command; but what it means is not a command but a prediction. It is a prediction that through Elijah, God is going to show his will. Is he afraid of Jezebel the wife of King Ahab? Well, through Elijah, God is going, directly or indirectly, to show that the whole dynasty of Ahab is to disappear, and an entirely new dynasty come into being.

And before he even says this, he refers to a greater land than Israel; a stronger, more powerful land, the land of Syria up there around Damascus; why God will even cause an overturn in the dynasty of Syria. The dynasty in power in Syria

will disappear, and another king unrelated to him will take his place. And the Assyrian records confirm this statement, because they say, "Hazeal son of a nobody seized the throne." That's what the Assyrian records say.

Notice the difference between Assyria and Syria. Syria is our modern way of speaking of Aram, the land of the Aramaeans around Damascus. Assyria is the land over across the desert, from which the Assyrian conquerors come; but it's from that land we get most of our written records for this time; and the Assyrian record says that Hazeal son of a nobody became king of Syria of Damascus.

And then after these two wonderful statements of the way in which God's power is going to be shown by overturning the rulership of two great nations—and when God can do that, why should Elijah flee for his life, as God's messenger and God's representative, unless of course God tells him to?

After saying that, then he says, "And poor Elijah, you've made a wonderful start, but you have to appoint someone else to carry on the work that you deserted when you fled down here. So when you go back, anoint Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah to be prophet in your place." Elijah hung his head, and walked back the way he had come, knowing that his ministry had accomplished much but that it was necessary to share it.

And we read, of course, of how he anointed Elisha.

So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

Funny way to anoint a man, to throw a coat over his head! We have no record of any other anointing that he ever did to Elisha. Elisha is spoken of as the man who poured water into the hands of Elijah. Elisha is willing to do the most menial tasks in order to help the great prophet. Elisha didn't say "Well, God has appointed me to be the great prophet; now Elijah is a has-been; I'm going to take over." No, Elisha said, "If I can help that great godly man by just doing the little menial errands for him, going along with him, and learning from him, I'll be glad to serve the Lord in this way."

And Elisha was the man whom God called to carry on the work. I've known graduates of this seminary, who have become assistants to experienced men; and they have been very, very happy to have the position; and then after a little while, they have begun to see the weaknesses of these experienced men—and we all have weaknesses, though probably they had many strengths that these assistants didn't see, didn't realize. And perhaps they think, "Well that fellow

ought to get superannuated. I should be the pastor of this church. That man should just—he'd be all right to help out around, give a talk now and then."

f. Elijah's Declining Years. Now we have this story of Elijah's calling Elisha, or rather of Elijah's throwing his mantle over Elisha, at the end of chapter 19.

We don't have Elijah even mentioned in Chapter 20. We jump back up to the land of Israel. We find Israel and Aram—of course it's here called Syria—fighting; and in that fight we find unknown prophets who come and speak to Ahab; by unknown, I mean men not mentioned by name. We can safely say that Elijah is not included in the number here; but these men were true prophets, who came to King Ahab, and told him what to do in order to win the battle. And some people overlook that, and think of Ahab as the great example of wickedness in the Bible. Certainly Jezebel was a great example of wickedness; and he, as her husband, was her willing ally in most things; but many think of him as so utterly wicked that it's hardly conceivable that God would help him. And yet here you have God sending his prophets to tell Ahab how to win the battle against Syria. God was using even as imperfect a man as Ahab here for his purposes. And so through this chapter, we find God sending prophets to tell Ahab what to do; and Ahab doing what the prophets tell him to, through most of the chapter.

And then, at the end of the chapter, we have Ahab going ahead and using his own intelligence as to what to do; and doing something that was utterly contrary to what the Lord wanted; so that the Lord sends a prophet to make an object lesson to show Ahab what he can expect after God has given him all this; and then he just goes ahead with his own brain instead of looking to the Lord for His will as to what to do with the victory that the Lord has given him.

And this unnamed prophet works an object lesson; he doesn't come, like Elijah, to the face of him and denounce him; he gives an object lesson; and then, when Ahab is giving judgment on the object lesson, he says, "That's exactly the way with you!" The Lord said

And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said unto his neighbour in the word of the Lord, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man refused to smite him. Then said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the Lord, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew him. Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man smote him, so that in smiting he wounded him.

So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and disguised himself with ashes upon his face. And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king: and he said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and,

behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver. And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, So shall thy judgment be; thyself hast decided it. And he hasted, and took the ashes away from his face; and the king of Israel discerned him that he was of the prophets. And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people. And the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria.

And that way Ahab gets to hear a message from the Lord without having the prejudice raised against it first. And that's the thing we find over and over in the Bible. There are times when, like Elijah, God commands one to go straight into the presence of the enemy and denounce him. But in the majority of cases in scripture we find the Lord providing a tactful way for a man to get a hearing.

I think one of the greatest instances that I know of this tact of the Holy Spirit is in the book of Mark. The book of Matthew is the great gospel for the Jews; and it can be summarized in the words, "Behold your King." And the Jews, struggling under the oppression of the Romans, are told God is going to send them his conquering king, and Jesus Christ is that king. And then you turn to the next book, the gospel of Mark, which is written for the Romans. And the Romans are the ones who have the king that the Jews are struggling under; and the Holy Spirit doesn't come to the Romans in the gospel of Mark and say, "Look, behold the king. You're going to lose your kingship, Jesus Christ is going to take it." He comes to the Jews who are struggling for lack of kingship and says "God's king is coming." He comes to the Romans who have the kingship and find it difficult to get the things done right; and he presents the picture of a servant, the one who can do what they need. And then, after they get the hearing in that way, it goes on and gives them the other side of the picture. And in the end, the Roman then comes to throw his lordship at the feet of Christ and recognize him as king. "Behold your king." But that's not the first approach.

And so here; as where Nathan appeared before David to rebuke him, we find an oblique manner of presentation, such as is calculated to win approval of the principle before it is made specific and applied. And then having won a yes answer to the principle, it's easy enough to point out the application; and one is much more apt to get a yes answer to the application this way than if one starts with that point. We find instance after instance of this in the Bible.

But chapter 20 doesn't have Elijah in it at all. Perhaps we should have left chapter 20 to the later heading about Ahab's reign; but right here, in the line of

Elijah, since 20 has so many prophets in it, it's good to know about it at this point.

Chapter 21 has Elijah in it, but he's rather incidentally in it; he doesn't appear until pretty near the end of the chapter. We have here in chapter 21 that Ahab wants Naboth's vineyard; and he can't even take a vineyard from a man that's next to his palace, unless the man is willing to give it. Ahab does not have as much power, you see, as our present government has today. Because all governments today have the power of eminent domain. And you can have a lovely house that you wouldn't sell to anybody under any conditions; but if the city wants to build a school house there, they send assessors in, and put a value on your house, and pay it, and take it whether you like it or not. But Ahab could not do that; his power as king was much inferior to the power of our government here. He as king could not take the land away from Naboth. He tried to get Naboth to sell it, and Naboth wouldn't; and then, when he sulked, his more energetic wife Jezebel borrowed his signet ring, and proceeded to produce a judicial murder of Naboth, by bringing false witnesses to accuse him and causing him to be killed; and then as soon as Naboth was out of the way, she said to Ahab "Now you can go and get the vineyard; Naboth is no longer in your way."

Here I'd like to make a remark about Constitutional Monarchy, because of what happens next. Naboth wouldn't sell Ahab his vineyard. Ahab simply felt very disappointed. Jezebel said that Ahab should do something about it. Did Jezebel go down and seize him and kill him as a Nero would have done, and take his property? No. Instead of that, she hired witnesses to tell lies about him, so that the established courts of the land would consider Naboth to be worthy of death; and thus he would forfeit his property and the king could take it.

In other words, the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah were constitutional monarchies; the king does not have absolute power. Perhaps the constitution was not written down, but it was definitely there, embedded in Israel's legal fabric. Ahab didn't even have the power to force Naboth to sell him his vineyard. He didn't have the power, which our own government has, of claiming the right to compel a citizen to sell property to the government, if the government wanted it. Naboth said, "This is my vineyard, I want to keep it." There is nothing Ahab could do about it. And in order to get it for him, Jezebel had to hire false witnesses to make the established courts think that Naboth was a wicked man who deserved death.

So you have here a very important fact about the kingdoms of Israel and Judah; they are constitutional monarchies. Now in many a constitutional monarchy, the king occasionally seizes powers that don't belong to him; and he causes the properties to be seized. But it is contrary to the law, and a thing that is unusual rather than common.

Take England in the time of King James, a time when the king had very great power. Yet in the time of King James, when Francis Bacon the Lord Chancellor, who was the favorite of the king and had just been lavished by the king with all sorts of fine positions and splendid estates, Bacon was suspected by the people of having sold justice for bribes. The parliament took up the matter, and investigated it, and convicted Francis Bacon; and it ordered that his office be taken away; he could no longer sit in Parliament; he was ordered to pay a hundred thousand dollars' fine to the state; and he was imprisoned at the discretion of the king.

And King James—though Francis Bacon pled with King James—said, "There's nothing I can do to help you." So Bacon was thrown out of his position; ejected from Parliament; had to pay this heavy fine and was put in the Tower of London. Immediately upon that being done, the King exercised his right of pardon; he pardoned Francis Bacon, gave him other gifts, and allowed him to continue in private life without further penalty. But he could not interfere to stop the penalty; and shortly before the Revolution, in the next reign, when Charles I's principal supporter in the government was accused by Parliament of crimes against the Parliament (which were done in order to help the king), they sentenced him to death, Charles I didn't feel he could do anything to interfere with them; and the Earl of Stratford was beheaded at the orders of Parliament, when he simply had been doing what the king had wanted; it was recognized there was a law of the land superior to them.

And that is very evidently the situation here in Israel and Judah. It was a constitutional monarchy. Our present point is in relation to the prophets; that the prophets could say things about the king, which an ordinary man, in most countries, would hardly dare say; and that it was recognized that the prophetic institution was an established situation, in which the prophet had a right to speak what he considered to be the Will of God. And it was only occasionally that the king would dare to use serious methods to stop the mouth of the prophet.

Well, here's the consequence of being a constitutional monarchy in the case of Naboth's vineyard.

And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

And they licked the blood of Ahab in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth here in Jezreel, in Naboth's vineyard, beside the palace of King Ahab.

And Elijah went on,

I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam

I'm going to utterly destroy your house, make it like the house of Jeroboam, not a person left in it.

And of Jezebel, Elijah went on:

The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

And so these terrible predictions were made by Elijah, but we read in verse 27,

[W]hen Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.

And thus the word of the Lord came to Elijah. The Lord didn't want Elijah to see his prophecy unfulfilled, and think that God had forsaken him. The Lord didn't tell Ahab, as far as the record goes here, but he told Elijah:

Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

So when the Lord has said it won't come till the son's days, some people try to prove the Lord was wrong, and that it still did come in Ahab's day; and that when Ahab was killed, not at Jezreel but way over across the Jordan—over where he was fighting in Gilead—that because the chariot was brought back and washed in Samaria—which is not in the prophecy—that that is the fulfillment that dogs will lick your blood. But it says, in the end of the chapter, that God said the evil will come in the days of his son, in his son's days.

Here's a very obscure verse. When the chariot was washed has nothing to do with Ahab himself. But I've had in Prophets course a big struggle over the meaning of this verse. But in this Old Testament History course, all we can do is ignore the passage. But the thing we notice here is Elijah's activity. Elijah is

rebuking Ahab; you might say he is declaring the end of Ahab here, after what he did here and Jezebel undertook to kill him.

But people all over the land knew about Ahab's wickedness towards Naboth; and now, no doubt, it was repeated all over the land what Elijah said; and that helped to keep alive in people's minds the memory of what God had done for Elijah. And then chapter 22 tells about Ahab's death; and in that, there is the great prophet Micaiah, a man who is mentioned nowhere else except in this chapter; a very great prophet of the Lord, but we know nothing about him, except what we find in this chapter. We will refer to this chapter again briefly when we take up Jehoshaphat.

And then we go on to 2 Kings, which really is just a second part of the same book. It was originally one book; some manuscripts have divided it here; others have made the division at a different place. The book was too long for one scroll, and so it was divided; but it's really one book.

And there we find in the days of Ahab's son—we find in 2 Kings 1—that in the days of Ahab's son Ahaziah, who was now king,

Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease.

But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

And the messengers returned and told Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, about this; and Ahaziah told them to go and look for him, and bring him in to him; and he sent fifty men and we read that they called him,

Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down. And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

And this happened to those fifty soldiers and to the next fifty that were sent; and then the third fifty that came had a godly captain—or at least a God-fearing captain—and he bowed down before Elijah, and pled with him; and the Lord said, "Go down with him; be not afraid."

What a blood-thirsty God we have in this chapter—to kill a hundred soldiers that were merely doing their duty in obeying the command that was given them!

I got a letter from a man some years ago. He seemed to be a fine Christian man; he was very active in Christian work; but I got a letter from him; he was an Englishman, he said, "I've just been listening over the radio to a man talking on the Old Testament about a God that is not my God—he is not the God of the peaceful, kind achievements."

Well, it simply shows that he did not understand the Bible. God is the loving, kind God, but He is the God that hates sin, and must destroy it. As far as these hundred men are concerned, they had gone into the army; they were soldiers; there were wars constantly there; to be destroyed by one blast of lightning in this way was probably not half as painful for them as it would have been to be killed by the enemies' swords and spears in hand to hand fighting; and they had to die sometime; it was not particularly cruel that God caused their deaths to come a little early this way.

But in the economy of God's plan, it was another thing done to keep alive the memory of what Elijah had done; to preserve the impression made on the land by the drought; and by the victory on Carmel; until Elisha could be ready to carry on the follow up, as it should be carried on. And so I think it's important we realize that the purpose of this is practically unparalleled. We have nothing else like it in the Bible. But it is here to fulfill a function in God's fighting against the Baal worship; to keep alive the attitude toward Elijah, so that Elisha may take over the work of Elijah; and do the second phase of it as it needs to be done. And then

g. Elijah's Rapture to Heaven. I think it is rather unfortunate that the word "rapture," a Latin word which means "being seized away," has come in modern English to be used mostly in ordinary English to mean simply for somebody to be so taken away with joy that they enjoy something tremendously.

There was a man, just a couple of days ago, saying that he came across people who, in speaking of the rapture of the church, said they thought it meant the time when the church has its greatest joy and happiness. Of course it will be a time of great joy and happiness, but that's not the meaning of the word. The word "rapture" means the snatching away, and Matthew Henry's great devotional commentary, written a long time ago, when it discusses 1 Thessalonians, speaks of this rapture of the church, using the term in what may have been a rather common sense at that time, which has since disappeared from our language, except in connection with the Rapture.

But if it is proper to use it of the rapture of the church, it's equally proper to use it of the rapture of Elijah; because that's just what it was. God reached down and carried Elijah away to heaven, just as the church will be taken away when our Lord comes back.

And we have Elijah's Rapture described in chapter 2 here; how Elijah tries to shake Elisha off; and Elisha wouldn't be shaken; and he followed him as he walked back and forth across two-thirds of the land of Israel. It was good preparation for Elisha for the itinerating work. But he followed Elijah back and forth; and then, when they came over across the Jordan and as he walked across, Elijah took his mantle and wrapped it together and smote the waters, so that they were divided into two parts; so they went over on dry ground.

And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee." And Elisha said, "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me."

And of course, anybody would know it's utterly silly to think this means he said, "I want to be twice as great a man as you are." If he thought that, he'd certainly have more sense than to say it. Although I have known people who didn't have any more sense than to say exactly that sort of thing.

One time Dr. [J. Gresham] Machen was asked by a Modernist, Joseph Fort Newton, of the Episcopal Church in Philadelphia here, who got out a book on great sermons—I think it was 1926 or 1927, one of those years. And he asked Dr. Machen to give him a sermon. And when the book came out, Dr. Machen, referring to the book, said, "It's a fine, Christian sermon by Dr. Machen along with the Modernist sermons of various people, which Newton called *Great Sermons of This Year*."

And in the beginning, Dr. Machen was one of the leaders of the Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy—now happily subsided—and Machen was pretty disgusted about that title; and about the fact that in the book there was one other man who was quite conservative, though not nearly as definite a leader for the truth as Machen was; together with eight rank Modernists—Machen called them that himself—eight rank Modernists.

And I remember one of the students said to him, "Yes," he said, "You can see the attitude of the editor of the book. Why," he said, "if he wanted to really show the Fundamentalist view he'd ask a great preacher like Macartney¹⁵¹ to write it instead of a professor like you." Machen wasn't as great in his delivery

¹⁵¹ Clarence E. Macartney, pastor of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia (1914–1927) and then First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh until his death in 1957. He gave a sermon and pamphlet during the Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy, titled *Shall Unbelief Win?*

as Macartney; but when it came to writing, he was as fine as anybody you'd every find And I don't think Machen appreciated that comment at all.

But I'm sure that Elisha was not showing that sort of lack of tact when he asked for a double portion of thy spirit. There are two suggestions that have been made for interpretation of it; one is a parallel portion, a duplicating portion; another, which is more likely the case here, is that it refers to the laws of inheritance of the day. If a man had one son, that son received the man's property at his death; but if a man had two or more sons, the eldest son received a double portion: twice as much as any one of the others. And that is certainly the reasonable interpretation here of what Elisha meant.

Some people take it—I've heard it said—that for Elijah they count seven miracles, and for Elisha fourteen; and that was the double portion. But I don't think the number of miracles is the full criterion of the greatness of a man, certainly not of his spirit. I'm sure that's not what is meant here; he asked that he should be the successor; the elder son of Elijah; the one to carry on the spirit and work of Elijah. And Elijah said to him, "That's a tremendous thing you've asked for." That's what we can expect a great man to say. When he comes to the end of his work, he just can't see how anybody can possibly carry on properly, to take his place.

That's a tremendous thing Elijah said,

And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan;

As we noticed, when we were last together, Elisha is not speaking here about the chariot of fire that took Elijah up, he is speaking about Elijah as the bulwark and defense of the nation. And he saw him no more. Elijah was gone. And so that's the end of our section on Elijah the prophet.

5. Ahab's Reign.

We had previously only noticed the accession of Ahab. Now Ahab's reign we have fairly well touched upon in connection with Elijah's work. But there is an important thing to note about Ahab's reign, and that is that Ahab is mentioned

in Assyrian records. Not only that, but the mention of Ahab in the Assyrian records gives us our solid point of chronology for this period.

Because the Assyrians—if you leave out the account of the book of Kings—the Assyrians are the first to show what we would call a feeling for history. They had an interest in telling about the great events of their reigns; their kings issued accounts of their reigns, giving details year by year. The Egyptians did not do that. We have some records of the Egyptians, written to be put in their tombs, in order to show the gods what great men they had been; but the Assyrian annals are written and distributed through the land. We have many copies of some of them, and they tell us the events of their reign; written of course from a highly prejudiced viewpoint, the viewpoint of the Assyrian king; but giving us a great deal of historical data. And since they are written on clay tablets they have lasted through the ages.

Other lands may have written them too, but if so they wrote them on papyrus and they disappeared. And the Assyrians had a very interesting system of dating. When a king became king, the first year after he became king, he was called the limmu; so they called it the limmu year of this king. That is, the year is named after the king; and so you will say, the limmu of king so-and-so. That means (say) Ashurbanipal is king, and this year is named after him. Then his leading officer would be the limmu for the next year; and the next leading officer would be the limmu for the next year, and so on; so every year they named after a man; so that all Assyrian contracts, of which we have thousands and thousands in our museums, have at the end of them the name of the reigning king, and the name of the limmu.

Well then, naturally, when you find that a man rented some land, twenty or twenty-five years ago; and he's fallen behind in his payments; and you want to bring him into court and collect it all; you want to know how many years it is; and so the Assyrians made lists of the limmu of the reigns. So you have lists of the limmus of a certain king's reign; and we have a few lists that give the limmus, one after the other, for a period of some hundreds of years. The Assyrian limmu lists are very, very highly regarded by historians.

And so we find the name of the limmu year in which one of the Assyrian kings came to the west and tried to conquer the lands on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. We find that in the 6th year of King Shalmaneser III, which he calls the year of the limmu of Daian-Assur¹⁵², he departed from Nineveh and

¹⁵² [dcb] Walter A. Elwell and Philip W. Comfort, *The Tyndale Bible Dictionary* (2001) on "Monarchical Chronology", p. 276. "The limmu list of the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III provides a basis for the first comparison dates among Assyria, Israel and Judah. In the limmu of Daian-Assur, Shalmaneser's sixth year on the throne, Ahab of Israel was listed as one of the kings who fought against the Assyrians in the battle of Qarqar. Thus the date for that battle may be placed confidently in 853 BC. Assyrian records also indicate that Shalmaneser III came into contact with an Israelite king 12 years later, in 841 BC. That king was Jehu. Thus two fixed points are

headed westward with his army and conquered one city after another, and he came to the city of Qarqar, and there at Qarqar, he tells us, there came against him certain forces; and among them he names

1,200 chariots, 1,200 cavalymen and 20,000 foot soldiers of Hadad-ezer of Damascus; 700 chariots, 700 cavalry and 10,000 foot soldiers appear from Hamath; 2,000 chariots, 10,000 foot soldiers of Ahab the Israelite.¹⁵³

And we notice in this that Ahab, though he had only half as many foot soldiers as the king of Damascus, he had nearly twice as many chariots. And next to the king of Damascus Ahab is the one who has the largest contingent in this group of kings, against whom the King Shalmaneser fought.

But King Shalmaneser after fighting in his 6th year against these kings, tells us about the battle. He says

They rode against me for a decisive battle. I fought with them, with the support of the mighty forces of Ashur which Ashur my Lord has given to me, and the strong weapons which Nergal my leader has presented to me. I did inflict a defeat upon them between the towns Qarqar and Gilgal. I slew 14,000 of their soldiers with the sword, descending upon them like Adad when he makes a rainstorm pour down. I spread their corpses (everywhere), filling the entire plains with their widely scattered (fleeing) soldiers. During the battle I made their blood flow down through the *chur-pa-lu* (streams) of the district. The plain was too small to let all their souls descend into the nether world, the vast field gave out when it came to bury them. I spanned the Orantes [River] before there was a bridge. Even during the battle I took from them their chariots, their horses broken to the yoke. [*ibid.*]

This is the propaganda that the king gave out; but it is 12 more years before we find him becoming aggressive again; and so historians consider that these kings fought him to a standstill. He says he utterly defeated them and annihilated them; but he didn't hold their land and he didn't go back to their land. They fought him to standstill. And the Bible doesn't mention the Assyrian at this point, but the Assyrian records mention Ahab and Hadad-isri, king of Damascus. We have Ben-Hadad mentioned in the Bible but whether these are two forms of the same name or whether one of them is the son and the other the father, we don't have evidence, but they're the same type of name.

And this gives us our fixed date, 853, the Battle of Qarqar. There's been a big struggle among scholars, half ranging on the side of thinking the Battle was in 854 and the other half that it was 853. I'm not sure that it's completely proved

available for correlating the biblical information... Thus it seems evident that Ahab not only fought Shalmaneser III in 853 BC but also died in that year."

¹⁵³ *op. cit.* Pritchard, *Ancient Near East*, p.190.

yet; but Thiele, in his chronology, the *Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, accepts 853, and since his chronology is worked out pretty much in detail... I'm not ready to stake my life that it was 853 or 854. But it is a fixed date which is tremendously helpful in arranging a chronology.

Qarqar is a famous battle because it's our first recorded contact between the Assyrian empire and the Israelites, though not mentioned in the Bible.

Well, Ahab then is important in Assyrian history for this battle of Qarqar. Ahab was evidently a rather able ruler; he gives that impression from this chapter toward the end of Kings.

You remember that great statement, "let not him that putteth on his armor boast like him that taketh it off." Its a wonderful statement for any of us. You know who said it? It was King Ahab.

He said it when the King of Syria sent, and said, "Hand over everything you've got to me." He was going to take it. Ahab said, "Let not him that putteth on his armor boast like him that taketh it off." Ahab was probably a rather able ruler; but carrying out the plans of alliance with neighboring lands, which his father Omri had probably initiated in marrying Ahab to Jezebel, meant the downfall religiously and morally. It brought in the Baal-worship; and it was a terrible thing for the land, and also for Judah a little later.

Well, Ahab's reign ended with his battle over in Gilead, in Ramoth Gilead where he was killed; and King Jehoshaphat was fighting alongside him in that battle. We'll glance at that again when we come to Jehoshaphat. But then we look at

6. Ahab's Sons.

Ahab was succeeded by his son Ahaziah, of whom we read in 1 Kings 22:51:

Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel.

Ahaziah was an evil king, like his father; but after two years, he has this fall from which he died. And Ahaziah was succeeded by his brother Jehoram. We read that

Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. And he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord; but not like his father, and like his mother: for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made.

He is a wicked king, but not like his father and like his mother; for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made. I think we see here the work of Elijah and Elisha beginning to come to fruit. He put away the image of Baal that his father had made.

=====

(Review) We discussed Ahab's reign, and we noticed how the Assyrians referred to him in their account of the battle of Qarqar in 853 BC. It is interesting to have this corroboration of his name. Previously, we have no mention of him from any other source than the Bible. But now we have this interesting mention, from a land way across the desert, with the name spelled out just about the way we have it in the Bible. Of course we learn from that more about Biblical history.

And that's a very interesting point—that the Bible is not a book of history; it is a book to give us God's relation to His people. And history enters into that ; but history, in the usual sense, is political; and this is not primarily political history.

In political history, there are certain things that are of great interest; other things of less interest. In the history of the relation with God, there are also things of great interest and things of less interest. These may overlap to some extent, and they do. We have a great many of the most important political events in Israel's history in the Bible, but not all. And here this great battle of Assyrian conquest, at Qarqar. You'd think it would be of tremendous interest politically, but it's not even mentioned in the Bible. It is a warning against thinking that your account is complete; the biblical account is only a part of the story. You don't have everything about the life of Christ. John says, if everything which Jesus did was written down, it would fill all the books in the world. You haven't got it in the gospels of John, Matthew or Mark. So when you find two events which sound very much alike, it often is the case that these are very similar things which Jesus did on two occasions.

Well then, we noticed Ahab's death in that battle; and we went on to 6. Ahab's Sons. And Ahab's sons followed in their father's footsteps. The first of them, Ahaziah, reigned only two years, as we noted. Then he was succeeded by his brother, Jehoram. Now I hope that you will not get these names confused; I want everyone to know the names of the kings of Israel, and of the kings of Judah. They are only a skeleton; they are not tremendously important in themselves, but they are a skeleton for the understanding of the Biblical history of this period. And if you don't have the skeleton, you're apt to get things all confused.

If you're going to study the Old Testament prophetic books, you should know the kings because many of the prophets relate to the kings. You should know the kings in order. Now this is a point in the Kings where it is easy to get it

confused for this reason. King Ahab was succeeded by his son Ahaziah, who was succeeded by his brother Jehoram. Ahab's contemporary in Judah was King Jehoshaphat, who was succeeded by his son Jehoram, who was succeeded by his son Ahaziah.

The two sons of Ahab then, Ahaziah who reigned two years, but Jehoram had a much longer reign. They were both wicked men like their father, but we notice that Jehoram took away the image of Baal that his mother had built. The very name Jehoram means "Jehovah is exalted". With a name like that, he certainly ought to be a worshipper of Jehovah rather than of Baal. Jehovah is exalted, Jehoram. Of course, for that matter, the name Ahaziah means "the Lord has taken hold of him." That again is a name that should not be held by a worshipper of Baal. If Jezebel had succeeded, then within a couple of generations they'd be naming their kings after Baal. But the great mass of the people never gave in to the Baal worship, and it would not have been politic to name your sons after Baal. But the Baal worship would have won out eventually, if it had not been for the work of Elijah and Elisha. It did win a great many of the leaders, but the mass of the people, doubtless, would have taken a good bit longer to win.

The word Baal simply means "lord" and it applies to God; but it came to be applied particularly to this Baal; and this Baal, which Jezebel brought in, was the god of Tyre; and he is usually called Melqart, which again is not a name. It means "the king of the city." And then when he got down to this land, they called him Baal. But often the same individual goes by different names. It is clear who was meant; it was this god of Tyre; this god of great sophistication, very advanced, highly cultured, highly intellectual; very capable of much that passes for art; much in our own day is considered sophisticated and advanced, but really is very degenerate.

The word "Baal" we use for everybody. It's like the word "god" is used in English, for Wotan, for Thor, for Venus; they're all called gods. God doesn't mean any particular god. We Christians use God to mean our God, whose proper name is represented as Jehovah.

It is just like the word "lord". What is a lord? Well, in England you ask a man, "Can I pass through this estate? Can I walk around and see it?" He answers, "I'll go and ask the lord." They call every man of any standing over there "lord." But of course, we use the term the Lord to mean God, Jehovah. Now Jehovah is not the correct pronunciation, but it represents the name of God, the tetragrammaton, YHWH, Yahweh.

Now doubtless, it's the same development we have in the history of Israel, that in Tyre they didn't call their god by his personal name; they probably were afraid what would happen to them for using it with profane lips; so they called

him the king of the city, Melqart. Then down in Palestine they just called him master, lord, Baal. But the word Baal in itself, there's nothing wrong with it.

Well, by the time of Jehoram, the work of Elijah, followed by the work of Elisha, was very, very considerable proof there was still a good deal of Baal-worship left; but it was no longer in a position of growth and going forward, gaining control; it was being vanquished already, in the reign of Jehoram.

7. Elisha the Prophet.

We noticed Elisha's call; and I think we are perfectly safe in inferring that Elisha had been thinking about it for some time. He wasn't just plowing, with never a thought of the work of God; when all of a sudden, this wild man comes by and throws his coat over him; and he answers, "Wait a minute, and I'll come with you." That, of course, is naturally not what happened. He had heard of him; he recognized Elijah; perhaps many people wouldn't recognize him, but he recognized him; he'd heard about him. He may have been at Mount Carmel, and seen what happened there. If he hadn't, he'd heard all about it. He knew about it. He was one who was wishing that his life could count for the Lord. And he thought, "If I could have been with Elijah when those things happened; if I'd just had a chance just to pour water on his hands; just to do the simple menial tasks to help that great man of God, how happy I'd be!"

Elisha was the son of a rich farmer; he was plowing with several yoke of oxen. Now an ordinary person couldn't own all that cattle. He belonged to a wealthy family. Yet here we have Elijah, the wild man from the desert; that goes around rudely dressed in this desert outfit; he speaks roughly; and we have a cultured wealthy young man, who goes around and makes himself the menial servant of Elijah. It's a wonderful picture of a man, so devoted to God that he is willing to take the low position, with no future involved of any kind, in order to make his life count by helping Elijah.

But when Elijah threw his coat over him, Elisha immediately ran after him and said, "Just wait till I say goodbye to my family, and I'll come with you." Elijah said, "What have I got to do with you?" Well, Elisha knew he had something to do with him, or he wouldn't have thrown his coat over him. And Elisha had probably just been thinking then, "Oh, I just wish I could help in that great work Elijah started. I wonder where Elijah is. He did this great work up on Mount Carmel, and now he has disappeared. Nobody has heard anything about him for some months. I wonder where he is? Surely God hasn't done that work just to have it disappear and be forgotten. Surely there is going to be some follow-up on it. Oh, I just wish I could help him."

And just as he's saying that, and coming along with all these thoughts, all of a sudden here comes this Tishbite; and Elisha looks around, and he recognizes

Elijah. The Lord has been preparing him. And so he left and followed Elijah; and we don't know how long it took. We've no idea just how long it was after this before Elijah is taken up to heaven. Probably not too long, because the work needed to be carried on, and Elijah wasn't the man to do it. But there needed time for preparation. He needed to learn what he could learn from Elijah; and then he would go with a different attitude; a different type of approach; but following up the work that Elijah had begun.

So we have Elisha called; and then we have Elisha following Elijah as the menial servant, doing everything he could for him; that happens in 1 Kings 19 there; and the next chapter we noticed, chapter 20, says nothing about Elijah. In 21 we have Elijah mentioned, but no mention of Elisha at all; in 22 we have Micaiah the great prophet; no mention of either one of them. In 2 Kings chapter 1, we have Elijah meeting the captain of the fifty, and killing the hundred soldiers; no mention of Elisha there. But in chapter 2, Elisha appears again, so we know that during this time he has been with Elijah, just doing menial tasks for him, and learning what he can.

And now we have chapter 2; we've already noticed his request to be Elijah's heir in the work; and the promise Elijah gives him: if he sees him going up... Then we read as Elijah is taken up, his mantle remains behind. The coat had been thrown over Elisha; and it must be getting pretty ragged by this time, but it's still there; and he got the mantle of Elijah that fell from him as he went up. Elisha got that into his hand; he comes over to the water; he says, "Where is the God of Elijah?" and strikes the waters. Nobody saw the miracle, probably, unless these sons of the prophets may have; we're not told they did; they were some distance away.

But Elisha is the one person at the place where the miracle occurred. Now how does that fit with the meaning of a miracle? A miracle is a sign. A miracle is given in order to accredit a messenger of God. Well, then why would God perform a great miracle like this when there was nobody around? What would be the reason? The reason was the most important reason of all. It was far more important right now, to get Elisha oriented right, than it was to reach the thousands of people. Elisha was the one God was going to use. Now to get Elisha was important. Elijah said if you see me go up, you will be my successor. He saw him go up.

Yes, but if a person didn't know—maybe I imagined it. It happened so fast, are you sure you saw it? Was it your own great desire that made you think you had? It's very easy to have all kinds of fantasies and illusions on things like that; it's very, very simple. God wants this man grounded, solid; absolutely certain that he is the one whom God has appointed to go on with the work; and so he takes the mantle; he strikes the water, divides it, crosses again.

I doubt if that ever happened again in his life; but it happens now to give Elisha the certainty that he is going to be Elijah's successor. God wouldn't do that for many, but Elisha would be in a position for the tremendous fight with the Baal-worship. God needs him for this work; and God performs an extra-ordinary work to put the man into the position that only one man can ever fill. No man in all history has ever done this particular work that Elisha did there.

So now this miracle, then; we understand the meaning of it. He comes out now, and he sees the sons of the prophets who want to send somebody to look for Elijah—maybe the Spirit of God has taken up Elijah and dropped him down on some mountain, on some valley; couldn't we go and look for him? Just think, if the Spirit of God has lifted up Elijah and dropped him way off in the heart of the wilderness somewhere, the poor man may starve to death. Hadn't we better go and look for him and find him? What an idea these men had of the Spirit of God! Very, very zealous, earnest people, anxious to do something good; but they were very, very poorly trained, very poorly trained.

And Elijah's been stomping through the land; talking roughly to everybody, and making no attempt to teach these people, who want to do what's right but they don't know what to do. You notice the difference in Elisha's attitude. Before long we find that Elisha is helping the sons of the prophets. He's instructing them, he's leading them. They've got all kinds of crazy ideas; they are men of good desires, but no proper training or understanding. Elisha does little kind things for them; shows a friendly attitude toward them; wins their confidence; and proceeds to help them to get the proper views; and probably many of them were a great comfort in days to come.

After Elisha returned from Elijah, the sons of the prophets met him at Jericho and wanted to look for Elijah. He advised them not to search for him.

And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not. And when they came again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho,) he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not? And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren.

We have here, after these people, he'd told them not to send; and yet they sent anyway and hunted; he waited at Jericho; and they came back, he said, "Didn't I tell you don't go?"

Then the men said to Elisha, this city is a pleasant place but the water is terrible.

And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.

I slept one night there in the ruins of Jericho; and there's that great beautiful fountain gushing out of there; and it's as lovely water as I have ever seen. The cruse of salt that Elisha put in there, if it had been a chemical reaction, it probably would have disappeared long before this time; but it was the Lord cleansing the water and it's still good.

Mr. Welch? (Student: "First they say there is no water, and then...") No, "The water is naught" means the water is terrible; it doesn't mean there's none there. It's naught; the water is no good. It could be interpreted the other way of course; but there's no good water. There had to be some, or they couldn't live there, but the water was bad water.

Well then, we have three of the verses that have puzzled people as much as any thing in the Old Testament.

And he went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them. And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria.

That's a long walk in the Jordan Valley: down to Jericho; up through the valley; up to Bethel. And as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city.

Now in the first place the word isn't "children," it's "young men." And so we don't need to think of innocent little children here, just engaging in a little child play; and this wicked man Elisha has the bears kill them. That's terrible. Well it doesn't say it killed them, either. It says tore 42 children. The question is how bad the tear was. Were one or two of them badly hurt, and were others just scratched? Just what was it? We don't know. It doesn't say the 42 were killed, and it doesn't say they were little children.

And it seems utterly out of character with Elisha; it seems more like Elijah. Elisha was the man that healed the waters. He's the man that fixed the pot when there was death in the pot. He's the man who did all these kind things for

people all his life; and here somebody calls him "old baldy," and so he calls the bears to come out and kill them. Well, that's not the picture at all.

The thing is that here is Elisha beginning his work; and these young delinquents come out, and start reviling him; and right at the beginning of his own ministry here, it is the Lord's will to tie together the ministry of Elijah and Elisha; so that the terror which gathered around the name of Elijah: the one who stood against the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel; the one who declared the coming of the drought; the man of forceful character that the people were afraid of; that they recognized was from God; that that would cling to Elisha as the foundation for his other type of ministry; so that the two would make one force between them; and so there, at the very beginning of Elisha's ministry, is what people are given to understand.

Nobody thought Elisha was a nature lover, who understood how to whistle so the bears would come, and kill somebody. Nobody thought that. Everybody understands that God has given this sign that Elisha is his prophet like Elijah; carrying on Elijah's work; and not a man to deal lightly with or tamper with. That the curse of God would be on you if you interfered with Elisha's work. It would have meant nothing if it happened apart from Elijah's ministry. It's just a carrying on Elijah's work.

Yes? (Student: "But it says the she-bears attacked the children.") But it doesn't say they killed them; it says that two she-bears came out of the woods, and tore at 42 of them. A she-bear is a pretty powerful creature—some of them—some aren't. If you take a she-bear that thinks you are after her young—I've heard it said if you get between a she bear and her young you can be in a mighty difficult situation. I've heard of people that a bear knocked over with just one stroke of its paw. They're very, very strong when they're really irritated, I don't think they often are irritated. But one day, down in Virginia, I was walking in the hills on a foggy afternoon; and walking along on the trail; and all of sudden, just ahead of me, as near as that blackboard is—not a bit further—why three forms jumped up in the fog, and rushed over and they stood over there at a distance. It was a great big bear and two little tiny ones. And I thought to myself, "My I'm glad that the two little ones weren't on one side of the trail and the big mother bear on the other, when I came between them. But they heard me, fortunately, just before I got near; and then they ran over there, and they stood over there, maybe as far as to that door, till I got by.

But I have heard that a she-bear, thinking that its cubs are in danger, can be mighty ferocious; and they don't realize their strength; they can do a lot of harm. It doesn't say that they killed them; they could've scratched the 42 of them. Maybe there were 50 kids there, and the other 8 ran home; and their fathers came out with a big gun and shot the bears! But I doubt if 40 men

without weapons—at least good-sized clubs—could do much against a powerful bear. With a big club you could, certainly.

But the important thing here is: what is the purpose of the miracle? It is a miracle in the sense that it's a sign. It's not a miracle in the sense that Elisha had power to call bears. It's not that at all. It is God calling the bears to come out at this time. Now maybe the same thing happened a week or two before, in the same area; maybe these were particularly vicious bears that were in the habit of injuring people; we don't know anything about it. But this particular occasion happened right after these people had been making light of Elisha; and it happened in a way to connect his work up to that of Elijah in people's minds, and to lead people to realize this is not just a man who wants to serve the Lord; this is the man the Lord has appointed as the successor of Elijah.

Well, then, immediately after that, we find that in [2 Kings] chapter 3, King Jehoram, the son of Ahab, brother of Ahaziah, finds that Mesha the King of Moab has revolted after Ahab's death against the king of Israel. And King Jehoram went out of Samaria and numbered all Israel and he said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, he said, the king of Moab has rebelled against me, will you go with me against Moab to battle? And Jehoshaphat said, "I'll go; I have an alliance with you; we have a mutual friendship pact; I will go and help you as I expect you to help me, if somebody revolts against me."

And so the Israelite army came south into Judah; and then from Judah, they crossed over south of the Dead Sea into the Wilderness of Edom; and they went up through the wilderness to attack Moab from the south. Now this story about the attack on Moab which is contained here in the Bible, up till 80 years ago it stood absolutely alone. Nobody had any other evidence about it whatever.



Moabite Stone (Mesha Stele)

But then about 1868 there was a German missionary in Palestine, who came across a stone which had some Hebrew characters on it, over in the land of Moab. And he tried to get possession of it; and the native people there agreed to sell it to him for about a hundred dollars, which he was glad to give them for it. He bargained with them: I suppose they started with an astronomical figure, and he started with a dime; and they gradually approached each other; they came together at about \$100, and everybody was happy, except the French. There was a French Vice-Consul in Jerusalem named André Lemaire, who was a very able man; he has written on Semitic studies, very valuable things; he studied Palestine, and made some very important discoveries.

And when he heard that this German missionary had purchased it—he didn't even have it yet, but he had been negotiating with the natives and it looked as if they were going to sell it to him—this stone with these marks on it, he decided that he ought to get it for the French Museum, the Louvre; and so he sent a couple of representatives down to see them, and got the Arabs to let him make a squeeze of it; that is they take paper, and they wet it, and press it against the stone in such a way that it makes an impression of the writing. And so they made this squeeze that shows what the writing on the front of it looks like. And they made that, and they told the natives, "Oh, you shouldn't sell that for \$100 to this German; why the French will give you a thousand dollars for it." And it was well worth it; it was one of the great discoveries of modern times. It would be well worth \$1000 for the Louvre Museum; in fact it's in the Louvre today. If you ever go to Paris be sure and see it; the Moabite Stone¹⁵⁴ it is called. And they offered them \$1000.

Well, that was bargaining, but it was foolish bargaining; because the bulk of people there were not educated; they didn't understand about ancient history; about the rivalry of Museums, the French and German rivalry, and so on. And they said, "If this thing is so valuable, it must have magical properties; and if it's so good that they're willing to give a thousand dollars for it, it would be very, very foolish of us to let it get out of our possession at all." And so they said, "Now probably this is an amulet that will cure disease; and if each of us had a piece of it, think how well we'd be; that's much better than if we'd get \$1000 from it; and if we divide it up among us and we get sick, what good's our money if we die?"

¹⁵⁴ Also called the Mesha stone after Mesha, king of Moab.

So they made a big fire, and got this stone blazing hot; and they poured water over it, and it broke into a hundred pieces; and each of them took one of the pieces, so that they would have something to keep them well. Well, that meant that the Germans didn't get it for their museum; the German missionary had offered all he could afford for it.

The stone was a monument to celebrate Moab gaining its liberty from Israel. And it begins with,

I am Mesha, son of Chemosh [...], king of Moab, the Dibonite—My father reigned over Moab thirty years, and I reigned after my father,¹⁵⁵

and so on; and he tells how Omri had occupied the land. He names Omri and he refers to his son, which of course was Ahab; and there are many interesting historical matters in it—Jehovah is mentioned, translated Jahweh here; the name Jehovah, the critics today call it Jahweh. Maybe they're right, we don't know; we've no idea; it probably wasn't Jehovah, but what it was nobody knows. But they call it Jahweh; and the Moabite stone has Jahweh in here. We know those letters represent the name of God; they are represented in the Roman pictures of the conquest of Jerusalem; pictures of the letters referring to the name of God. And when they represent it in Greek records, they put the letters in. But the Tetragrammaton is mentioned in here; places are mentioned in Moab. It is a very important historical record and it was 1868 that it was discovered intact. And the time when it was written should be placed somewhere between 840 and 820 BC, probably. We don't have many such monuments from Palestine, and it is therefore a very important thing, an interesting corroboration of the history in this chapter. I perhaps should have told you that about the Moabite Stone under Jehoram the son of Ahab.

When Jehoram and Jehoshaphat come up through the wilderness of Edom, against Moab, they find themselves without any water, or with very little water, insufficient for the army. (II Kings 3:11)

And the king of Israel said, Alas! that the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab! But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, that we may enquire of the Lord by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah.

Thus we see how Elisha was not yet particularly widely known. He was working in a quiet way among the people. The king had no idea he was even with the army; that he'd come along with the army; and here he was, with the army, over

¹⁵⁵ Pritchard, *op. cit.* p. 209.

there in the wilderness. And so over there in the wilderness they found that Elisha was there.

And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the Lord is with him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him. And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay: for the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab. And Elisha said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.

Do you see the method now? If you want to get a revelation from God, get a minstrel, you see. That is an inference which could be drawn from this passage. And if we found other similar passages, it would be a description of how prophets work; but as far as I know, this is practically alone in scripture.

What was the purpose of the minstrel? I think it's plain that Elisha found himself so discouraged in the presence of the son of King Ahab that he could not quiet his soul enough to listen for the still, small voice of God; and he asked for a minstrel, for music to quiet his heart and to help him to forget the disturbing influences around him, in order that he might listen to the still, small voice of God.

The music would never bring the voice of God; the music would never produce a revelation; but the music would help him to forget the earthly things around him; and I think that's important about all things like that. We cannot consider music or colors or pictures, or anything like that, as a magical thing that will bring God's blessing upon it. But you can use anything of that type as an incidental thing, for the purpose of helping to turn our attention away from the earthly things, and to make it easier for us to listen for the voice of God. It's often difficult to draw the line between the place where these things become harmful; where they become jazzy, or magical, or where they become subjects of worship—where they become that which is wrong—and the place where they are right instruments which are useful.

I know one man who spoke here once about a church; "Oh," he said, "that was the sort of church where they had candles." Well to him, that just marks it as another pagan church, to have candles in it. On the other hand, I was at Columbia Bible College one time, when I gave their Commencement address; and in the evening there, they had all the students that were going to graduate. And they had a lot of candles out there; and they had each one, one by one, light their candles, representing the way they were hoping to be sent out as

messengers for God to lighten the dark corners of this earth. It was a most impressive service. There's nothing wrong with candles; but the candles can be so used that they could become instruments of superstition. And that's true of most anything.

Things are not right or wrong in themselves. I remember one church I heard of that nearly split over the question, should you kneel when you pray, or should you stand when you pray? The Lord doesn't care whether we kneel or whether we stand; but if we find that it helps our heart attitude, that it makes it easier to get the right heart attitude to use a certain posture; it's a thing to use as a means, but never as an end.

Well, here then was Elisha quietly working; the king didn't even know he was there; but you can be sure he wasn't wasting the time on this long trip. His work was finding a success. And then, the next few chapters tell about Elisha's work; and there are many miracles, and there are many wonderful deeds; but running through it, in the main, is this emphasis on the kindness and the helpfulness; there is usually a helpful purpose in most of the miracles which are performed through Elisha.

He is going about among the people; he is itinerating here and there. He is speaking the word of God everywhere; and bringing the message that Elijah had brought into the land, that Elisha is bringing into the hearts of the people.

In chapter 5, we have the story of Naaman the Syrian; how the story of Elisha penetrated even up to Syria; and this great captain came down; and he came down, expecting that Elisha will be so honored to have a great Syrian captain come to see him, that he will come out, and he will stand in front of him, and he will make a great ceremony, and heal him of his leprosy; and Elisha doesn't even bother to come out; he just sends a messenger. "Tell him to go down and dip in the Jordan seven times." And Naaman's feelings are so hurt, he's going to go back home, saying "What do I want to do with a fellow that won't even bother to stop and speak to me." Elisha was not awed by the presence of the great captain. He wasn't looking for the honor of the great captain coming to see him. Probably if it was a little insignificant person, he would have lifted up their ego a little bit by going out and making a little fuss over them. Naaman didn't need his ego lifted any; he needed the healing, and Elisha provided what he needed. He sent the message out, telling him how he could be healed; and the Lord worked the miracle and healed him.

Then, chapter 6, we have the political events coming. We have Elisha helping the king of Israel. Now here is this wicked king Jehoram, that Elisha wouldn't even speak to; but now back in the land, Elisha is helping him in the deliverance of their land from Syria. He is sending the message to the king, the Syrians are coming this way or that way; and the king is able to protect Israel every time.

And then the Syrian inquires and finds where Elisha is; and he sends to get him; and God struck the soldiers with blindness; and Elisha took them and he says, "This isn't the way; follow me and I'll bring you to the man whom you seek." And Elisha walked ahead, and the blind soldiers walked behind; and every step took them nearer to Elisha the man they were after; but every time they took a step, he took a step forward; so that while they were always behind him, they never caught up to him. And then he got them into Samaria, right before the king; but you notice that he didn't let the king smite them; so they gave them a dinner and sent them away.

And then after that, we see in verses 23 and 24—of all the crazy places not to have a chapter division you ever saw, here is chapter 6 with several isolated events; and then here is one continuous story that begins in 6:24 and runs to the end of chapter 7. And the Archbishop put his chapter division at the end of 33, right in the middle of a paragraph, not even a paragraph division in this long story. I think that day surely he had something on his mind, when he made this chapter division, rather than making a reasonable chapter heading. If anybody thinks the chapter divisions of the Bible are inspired, here's one of the finest proofs that they are purely a human thing. They're mighty useful to find a reference, but certainly I think it is always wise, whenever you read a chapter, to start with the verse before; and when you finish, you run on to the verse after, at least in your mind; so as to see whether there is a division or whether there isn't; whether you are missing something important by not getting the connection.

Here, the chapter certainly should have started at 24. There is a big break between 23 and 24. 23 ends:

And he prepared great provision for them: and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.

24 says,

And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria.

The two verses sharply contradict each other. They didn't come any more; after this they came right away. Some people try to explain the contradiction by saying he didn't send little bands, he sent his whole army. It doesn't seem to me a reasonable explanation. I think the fact of the matter is, there's a break between them. They stop for a little while, and then after a while they decide to make an all-out attack.

And so we have the all-out attack here; and Ben-hadad comes and besieges Samaria and the things get so bad there, that the king is going to blame it all on Elisha, you notice; why should he blame it on Elisha? Well, previously Elisha told him when the Syrians were coming; he was able to be saved from them. Now Elisha hasn't given him any word, so Elisha is responsible.

That's what you meet with in this world. Don't ever look for the gratitude of this world. If you're serving the Lord, you'll get gratitude; not in this world perhaps, but you'll get it eventually, worth more than anything in this world; but if you're serving human beings, you can do a hundred things for them; and then you fail at one point, and they'll throw you out. And that's what's going to happen to Elisha. He did all these things to help Jehoram; and then an attack came that he hadn't given warning of; and they were starving. You read that the king said, (verse 31)

God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.

And so he sent a messenger to Elisha and the messenger comes in verse 33; and chapter 7:1, Elisha answers. Of all the crazy places for a chapter division! But here the Lord enabled Elisha to predict the end of the siege through a marvelous interposition of God.

And we're not going, in this course in Old Testament History, right here to see how God used Elisha here, and how these developments produced it, to do something so wonderful that

A lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he [Elisha] said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

One day for three slices of hamburger you had to pay \$6; and the next day they could get the best steak for 20¢ a pound. And when he predicted that's what was going to happen, they just said "the Lord will have to open the windows of heaven!" Yet it happened exactly as he said. Those things happen.

But of course, ordinarily a man can't predict them like Elisha did. God spoke through him in a way he doesn't speak through us. But we see the way that the prophet was working.

In chapter 8, we have a change in what happened. We have Elisha going to Damascus for a visit. And up there in Damascus we have a very interesting incident.

the king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and enquire of the Lord by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Ben-hadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely die.

What a crazy thing to say. He says, "Go and say to him thou mayest certainly recover, howbeit the Lord has showed me that he shall surely die." Did Elisha tell a lie? Or did he tell Hazael to tell a lie? Actually, neither is true.

When Ben-Hadad asked, "What is this disease? Is this a disease that will kill me or not?" Elisha says, "This disease will not kill you. You can recover from this disease." But he says to Hazael, "The Lord has shown me that he's going to die from a different cause."

And he settled his countenance stedfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept. And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered....

Remember, God had told Elijah to anoint Hazael. But this is Elisha. Elisha is Elijah's representative. God must have told him to do this; he was carrying out the command previously given to Elijah; but God told him when to do it.

And so Elisha comes here and Hazael says why are you weeping? And Elisha says

Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.

Was Hazael saying, "Do you think I'm such a mean person I'd do such things like this?" No, that's not what he said: "Is my servant a dog, that he should do this awful thing," but "Is my servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" In other words, "What am I? I'm just one of the king's generals; I'm just a member of the staff; you can't blame me if the king orders me to do these things; it's not my fault; I'm just carrying out orders. Why do you blame me for it, why are you looking at me this way? I'm just a dog, I'm just a little underling. How could I do a great thing like this?" And Elisha answered and said "The Lord has showed me that thou shalt be king over Syria."

Was that anointing Hazael to be king over Syria? You notice how God gave the command to Elijah. What God meant was, "I have power to raise up a new king over Syria." And then he allows Elisha to show knowledge of the fact. I doubt if this put the idea into Hazael's head. My guess is that Hazael intended all along to kill his master, if he could get away with it. I doubt if what Elisha said had a thing to do with his position. He probably had been planning it for some time. But Elijah predicted, and Elisha showed he had an idea what was in Hazael's head.

=====

(Review) Rather than divide the material on Elisha, and deal with part of it under the one dynasty, and part under the next, since his work extended over both, and he as a unit is almost more important than the dynasties, we will continue with him; but I want you to have in mind what we're doing. I want you to have a clear idea of these dynasties; and I want you to have a clear idea of Elisha's work. And in a political history, it would be much better to divide his work into the two dynasties; but from the view point of God's work in the world, the great outstanding portion of it was done by the end of the dynasty of Omri.

And Elisha's work continued; and there were very important parts of it that continued into the next dynasty. But the great bulk that was done was a continuation of the same thing rather than a new thing. So we'll simply deal with it as a unit here.

We noticed yesterday, how Elisha helped in so many different ways in the difficulties with the Syrians. And then we noticed, when there came that siege from Syria, how the king turned violently against him. But still, he made that marvelous prediction of the end of the siege. And then we noticed how he went clear up to Damascus during a period of peace there, and King Ben-Hadad sent Hazael to see him.

Can you imagine Elijah down there in Sinai? When the Lord said, "When you come to Damascus, anoint Hazael to be king of Syria?" Elijah never came to Damascus; it was Elisha who came to Damascus; and when Elisha came to Damascus, he didn't have to go and look for Hazael because Ben-hadad sent Hazael to him; and when Hazael came to him, of course he didn't anoint him. He wouldn't anoint a wicked heathen king; that is, a prophet of God wouldn't. He revealed to him his knowledge of the fact that Hazael was going to be king of Syria.

And so the Lord's word to Elijah, though in the form of a command, is to be taken as really a prediction. God says to Elijah, "You anoint him." What God means is that an anointing indicates God's determination. "I am revealing to you my determination. I am revealing to you the fact that you're afraid of this woman

Jezebel, who has no power at all, except as she can move Ahab to something; and his power is strictly limited. I'm not only going to change the rulership of Israel, I'm going to change the rulership of the greater nation of Syria, way up there in Damascus." So he says, "Anoint Hazael." And those words are not literally fulfilled, but the meaning of them, the full meaning of them, is carried out; that God is going to change the rulership of Damascus; for God controls all the affairs of history. In this case, the way that he controls the rulership there is that he makes it possible for this wicked man Hazael to do the wicked thing he has in mind. And he reveals to his prophet the fact that Hazael is going to be king.

And so Hazael comes to see Elisha; and Elisha has never seen Hazael before, at this point, Hazael is just a messenger of Ben-hadad; and so far as Hazael knows, Elisha's never heard of him before; and he probably never has, except for the message that God had given Elijah. He looks at him and says "I know the evil you're going to do to Israel; you are going to set their strongholds on fire; you're going to slay their young men with swords; you're going to dash their children, and rip up their women with child." And Hazael says, "Well now, that's the sort of thing our army would do if it got a chance; but I'm just a member of the army; I just carry out my part as I'm commanded to do. You couldn't blame me for that; that's just the way our army always fights. And the fact that it's going to be done against Israel... well, that the king decides; I have no place in that; I just carry out my orders. I'm just a dog; I'm just an underling, how would I do anything like this?" And then Elisha looks him straight in the face and says, "I know that the Lord has revealed to me that you are going to be the king of Syria."

So then, we continue; and find that when he went back to his master, his master said, "What did Elisha say?" and he said "He told me that you could recover." This English translation, "Thou shouldest surely recover" is hardly a proper representation here of the infinitive absolute "surely recover", *chaya tichyeh*. As a rule the infinitive absolute may be translated "sure", but that is only a paraphrase; we have no English exact equivalent. And it does not by any means fit in all cases. It is rather emphasizing the word recover.

In this case, the question is, "Is this disease, this sickness, something that's going to kill me?" The answer is "no," as far as this disease is concerned, you can recover. So Hazael passes on accurately the words that Elisha gave him; the words that Elisha gave were not in any sense a lie. They were the answer to the specific question that the king had asked: would he be able to recover of this disease? Yes, he would be able to recover from this disease, if something else didn't come in first to prevent it. And so on the next day Hazael took a thick cloth and dipped it in water and spread it on his face, so that he died, and Hazael reigned in his stead.

And of course we know that just any servant in the house of King Ben-Hadad couldn't take a cloth and dip it in water and put it on his face, and kill him, and reign in his stead. You remember that Zimri killed the son of Baasha; and what happened to Zimri? Did he reign in his stead? He did, for seven days; and then he was killed. And if an ordinary servant did a thing like that he wouldn't reign for a minute. He probably would immediately be thrown into prison or immediately be beheaded.

The fact that Hazael could kill Ben-Hadad, and reign in his stead, was proof that Hazael was established in such a way that there were enough of his friends ready to support him, with Ben-hadad out of the way. It proves a long preparation on his part; whether it's preparation for this or not—at least a preparation to make himself powerful; to make friends who liked him instead of Hadad; perhaps increasing dissatisfaction with Hadad on the part of others; all this years before when the Lord made the statement to Elijah that when you come to Damascus anoint Hazael to be king of Syria.

It was a wonderful accreditation of the fact that the prophet spoke from God; and a wonderful assurance of the fact that God knows all things from the beginning; and that He controls in causing this wickedness to be done. And it did not mean that the prophet did the wickedness, in putting into power in Syria the man who was to take over from Ben-Hadad. And so, in this, what Elisha is carrying out was the first of the commands given to Elijah at Mount Sinai.

And then we have the next great event in the life of Elisha, told in chapter 9, but we have noticed here the parts that Elisha had in it.

Chapter 9, the beginning,

Elisha the prophet called one of the children of the prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this box of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead:

You know where Ramoth-gilead is; the word *Ramoth* is feminine plural of "Ra" which is "high", so it is the heights, and Gilead as you know is that large fertile section over across the Jordan, so Ramoth-gilead is one of the important towns over there across the Jordan. And it was a town which had a wonderful situation.

I remember when I stood there at Ramoth-Gilead seeing the beautiful fertile country around; and in many ways, it was far more attractive, superior to any of the towns over in Canaan proper. And yet the town had a very, very checkered history for two reasons: for one, because the rainfall over there is very uncertain—some years they have tremendous prosperity, and other times they

suffer under drought conditions. And the second reason, probably more important, is that they have no natural frontier. It is open in every direction to attack, and so that region over across the Jordan, has been swept across by armies, time and again. It's been a region that has been settled and prosperous for a century or two, and then absolutely desolate with hardly any one in it.

I was much impressed in 1929 when we went on horseback down through that area, to notice that in Palestine proper, you just never saw anybody then, just the soldiers with guns. It was strictly forbidden to have arms, except for the soldiers, and the police of course. And things were very well policed in Palestine at that time; but when you went over to Trans-Jordan nearly everybody you met was carrying a rifle. The region was so open and exposed that it was more like our wild west.

They had to do a good deal of defending themselves, because it would take a very strong force to police it with the easy way of attack and invasion; with no good natural frontiers around, and a lot of open country, from which to make attacks and run away.

And so this town of Ramoth-Gilead, you remember, was a place where there was many a battle; and here at this time Jehoram's soldiers are over there facing the soldiers of Ben-Hadad; and there the army is occupied; and Elisha takes one of the children of the prophets. Now this is not a very good English way of rendering this figure; the expression does not mean this was a man whose father had been a prophet. Nor does it mean this was a little girl, who was one of the children of the prophets. It means that this was one of the disciples of the prophetic type; one of the people who had gathered together to learn from the prophet. The word "son" in Hebrew is often used in the sense of disciple, in the sense of follower; and that is of course how it is used in this case.

Elisha called one of the younger men of the prophetic company; whether he was a prophet himself, we don't know; because a prophet is one to whom God directly speaks, and there were very few through whom God directly spoke. But there were sons of the prophets, who followed the prophets, and helped the prophets, and wanted to serve the Lord; and the Lord might select one or more of them to be the recipients of his message. This one, we have no evidence that he was actually a prophet, but he was a man who was interested, and glad to carry out what Elisha ordered him; and Elisha said to him

Gird up thy loins, and take this box of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead: And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi,

Now you remember that Jehu is ordinarily spoken of after this, as Jehu the son of Nimshi. I think this is the only time, that I recall, where he is called Jehu the

son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi. It's another example of the Hebrew custom of using the word "son" to mean a descendant. It does not mean the one in the next generation, necessarily, but it means one who is descended; and Jehu is ordinarily called after his grandfather instead of after his father. In this case, where he is first introduced, it gives his full name, Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi.

and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber; Then take the box of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not. So the young man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead.

So here we have one of those commands God gave years before—at least 15 years—I think we can safely say.

When Elijah was down there at Mount Horeb, the Lord said in I Kings 19:15,

when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: 16 And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.

And this command, given years before to Elijah—and Elijah has gone to heaven—and now 15 years later, Elisha is active; and Elisha doesn't anoint him; Elisha sent one of the sons of the prophets. Now it is true he is anointed—the only one of the three, for whom the command would specifically be carried out to anoint him—because he was the one who was to be the king of Israel, and needs to be anointed. And the command is specifically carried out, but Elijah didn't do it; neither did Elisha do it, but it was done by Elisha's representative; and Elisha was representing Elijah.

Yes? (Student: "On this point, do the critics, because of the similarity of the prediction of the command given to Elijah, would they say that a redactor or someone has gotten this Elisha confused with Elijah, and really this is something that Elijah did, but that there is a confusion here with names and persons?") Well, that is what they would probably say if this was a part dealing with strict political history. But these whole stories of Elijah and Elisha, they consider as folktales, myths and legends. So I think they would undoubtedly say that there was a dissatisfied group who had tried to cause a revolution; and that they got a man named Elisha, who was prominent, to assist in it; and then, when later these stories were written up, it was imagined by somebody that this would be the tale. There is so much of the narrative in these; and they're not dealing with men of whom we have any evidence elsewhere; and so the critics quite unanimously take them as folktales. But in this case, there's nothing of the miraculous in this particular story. God works wonderful miracles through

these men; but in this case, the miraculous is the fact that it was predicted long in advance. It certainly wasn't something that occurred to Elijah just on the spur of the moment: "Let's make a new king, let's make Jehu king."

You can see by what had happened here, that people had been thinking; there was general dissatisfaction with Jehoram. He was not as bad a man as his father Ahab or his brother Ahaziah, the scripture tells us; but he was a man who was in general following in their footsteps; and all of the wickedness of the house of Ahab was being blamed on him by the people; and as Elisha's work was leading people more and more to turn away from Baal, and to be loyal to the God of Israel, they realized that the Baal worship had come in through Jezebel; and this was her son Jehoram who was the king; so it increased dissatisfaction with the king.

And now, in this situation, the people are all ready for revolution, at least this group of the army; they probably had been planning it; perhaps had not decided exactly when it was going to happen; because we read that what deterred them was, that when this man came in to Jehu, and got him alone, and told him that he was going to be king over Israel; and going to smite the house of Ahab; and gave these predictions and then fled,

Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and one said unto him, Is all well? wherefore came this mad fellow to thee? And he said unto them, Ye know the man, and his communication. And they said, It is false; tell us now. And he said, Thus and thus spake he to me, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then they hastened, and took every man his garment, and put it under him on the top of the stairs, and blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king. So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi conspired against Joram.

The people asked Jehu, "Well what did this man say?" and Jehu said, "You know the man and his communication." Why did he say that? Were their minds already working in this direction pretty strongly? And so Jehu conspired against Joram.

Now we look at this revolution more under another head; we will look at the political history; but at this point we're noticing Elisha's part in it, which was not actively to promote it, as far as we have evidence, except for this one way, of anointing the man as king. And of course that gave a tremendous spurt; but the soldiers did the rest; and probably they had been planning it for some time; probably they had been conspiring; and this simply united them and spurred them on; and the revolution occurred, and you have the new dynasty of Jehu. And that we want to look at in detail. But we'll go on now and briefly look at the rest of Elisha's life.

The rest of Elisha's life is not so much described in the books of Kings; we can gather that he continued as he had been before—itinerating, going back and forth, talking to the people, telling them of the true God and what God desired them to do, and carrying out the work that Elijah had begun. The two together form a unit that accomplished the work for which they came. They destroyed the Baal-worship. They did not destroy the worship of the Golden Calf; they did not bring Israel entirely back to God, but they did utterly destroy this terrific menace of the Baal-worship. The worst danger that Israel had ever faced in religion was completely eradicated, as a result of the work of Elijah and Elisha.

Now if Elijah, instead of fleeing to Mount Sinai; had gone on with the work immediately; instead of there being a number of years passing, till Elisha could be trained to carry on the work as it needs to be carried on; who knows but what it might not only have done away with the Baal-worship, but also have done away with the worship of the Golden Calf, and brought Israel back to God, so that Samaria would have been a great center as Jerusalem? That we cannot say; but we do see that while the work accomplished a tremendous lot, it did not accomplish nearly what it might have.

We can say that, of course, of every Christian worker. There is no one who has ever accomplished all that might have been done. Everyone has made mistakes; everyone falls short; even the truest fall short. When one is untrue to the Lord; when one does that which is contrary to His will; it is right for us to oppose his wickedness. But when one makes mistakes which hinder his work, if we're in a position to help them with those mistakes, we should do so; but if not, we should hold up his hands, rather than to do anything to interfere with his work. Everyone makes mistakes, I don't mean sin, I mean mistakes; the two are different things. We all do some of both, but it is the sin we must judge; but the mistakes we must study, not criticize; but study, because we will make plenty of our own; and if we can learn to avoid the mistakes that others make, our work will accomplish much more than it would otherwise.

And so this great mistake, that Elijah made here, is one which most Christian workers make to some extent, at some time. I believe the Lord gave us these things for our learning; not merely to show us wonderful examples to inspire us, but also to show us where this man fell short; so that we can learn from him to avoid making similar errors in our own lives.

Well now, Jehu became the king. I'm speaking of this only from Elisha's viewpoint; we come back to Jehu in a little bit; but from Elisha's viewpoint simply to see what happens. We know that Jehu became king, and Jehu reigned for nearly 30 years. And then Jehu was succeeded in by his son, Jehoahaz, for 17 years; and then Jehoahaz was succeeded by his son Joash, or Jehoash, it's called both ways.

And Joash was king when, in 2 Kings 13, Elisha fell sick of the sickness whereof he died. So you see that Elisha's ministry continued into the new dynasty for a long period. There were many years of his activity. His work was felt all through the land; he reached many people; he completely ended the Baal danger; he did a tremendous work.

Joash was the grandson of Jehu; and Jehu had not even become king until 15 years after Elisha began to serve Elijah. Verse 14:

Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.

And so we have here Elisha dying in the wilderness—not dying, going up to heaven—but ending his earthly life, in the wilderness with nobody there but Joash, and Joash says "O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." Joash recognized what Elisha meant to Israel. This man was worth more to the defense of Israel than a tremendous army was; because he was God's instrument to try to bring them back to God; and if they continued in their wicked way, they were bound to go on to destruction. But now Elisha had continued the work of Elijah; it had gone much further; and the value of his work is recognized now, not by simply another prophet, but by the king himself.

And the king comes down to see him and weeps over him and recognizes the value of Elisha to the nation. And that is true of Christian leaders also. True Christian leaders start in, and they struggle, and they work, and they are disliked, and people do everything they can to keep from helping them. But if they push, and go on in the Lord, if they live a long time, usually in the end the value of their work is recognized, widely recognized. John Wesley, when he began his work was stoned, persecuted, and everybody was against him; the bishops criticized him, and the political authorities thought he was queer crank; and he had all kinds of difficulty and trouble; but he continued his work preaching in the fields, and never found anyone to give him a place to preach; but going right out where the multitude was, and preaching and giving the witness, and building new places for them to come together.

And after years of his itinerating, and his preaching, and his work, he says in his journal toward the end of his life; he said he just couldn't understand it; he said people weren't knocking him any more; they were praising him. The king invited him to the palace to honor him; the bishops spoke highly of him; the work was recognized throughout the country; he had never compromised with evil in his work in any way; but he had pushed forward steadily, and had accomplished so much that the value of his work was recognized, even by those who didn't agree with his views at all.

And here is Elisha at the end of his life; and the king recognizes that this man has done more for the defense of Israel than the generals and the great military leaders have done.

Now of course that can be recognized even by an ungodly man; an ungodly king soon comes to recognize that it is the people with Christian character—the people who are steady and dependable, who constitute the source of strength and power in the nation. And no matter how hostile governments may be to true religion, if they don't succeed in killing them, after a time they usually come to see its value for the nation; and they come to desire to get the values.

So then, they often proceed to try to get them to water down the testimony to the point where, in the end, it won't have the value that it had. But Elisha, what he had done, was recognized at his death, after this very long life, and then we read at the end of chapter 13:

And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

The next year after Elisha's burial, as a man was being buried, people saw a band of Moabites coming. They were creeping through the land, and so they said, "We'll be killed if these raiders attack us; what are we going to do with this dead body? The place where he is supposed to be buried is half a mile further down. Well look, here's a tomb. Oh, that's the tomb of Elisha. And so they rolled away the stone from the tomb of Elisha and they took their dead body and they lifted it up there on the shelf which was the way of burying in those days, and they put him in there and as he touched the bones of Elisha, we read here that the man came to life, revived and stood up on his feet.

And why would this happen? We don't even know who the man was, or anything about him. But God gave this evidence again to continue the name, the reputation, the influence of Elisha. Miracles followed this man all through his life and even after his death. This does not mean that the Old Testament is a book of fairy stories, which has a miracle on every page, and just grotesque sorts of things that don't happen in the world any more—the Old Testament is not that sort of book.

You can look at page after page after page; and it is godly men working by means that anybody could work with, if they were loyal to God. Page after page with no miracles; but the miracles are poured out in four great periods of the Bible, periods of special crises, when it was vital for God to work, that

something be carried out; and one of these was this great attack of the Baal-worship in Israel; which, if it had been successful, would have entirely destroyed the worship of God in Israel and in Judah; and would have ended with there being no nation on earth in which the memory of the true God was preserved; and in which God could bring his son the Lord Jesus Christ into the world to die for our sins.

And so amid these terrible dangers, God kept the true religion alive in Israel and Judah; and at this point, the greatest crisis in all the history of Judah and Israel, he sent Elijah and Elisha and sent many miracles in connection with their lives. But we don't find anything like it in connection with the life of Isaiah or of Jeremiah or of Ezekiel.

We don't ordinarily find this sort of thing, but this was the greatest crisis of all. And at this time God sent the miracles, just as he did in connection with the coming out of Egypt, and as he did it in connection with the danger in the exile, and as he did in connection with the life of Jesus Christ, and the beginning of the spread of the gospel.

So that finishes our rapid survey of Elisha the prophet. There's one thing we passed over which, if you studied this material last week as fully as I hope you did, many of you surely would have questions in your mind about it; and that is the incident of the arrows in connection with Elisha and Joash at Elisha's death. But that we will look at under the political history, rather than under the prophetic history. It could be taken under either, but I think perhaps it would fit in a little better in our discussion, taken there instead of here. That will close then our discussion of Elisha the prophet, which we carried on into the next dynasty of Israel.

Oh, just one more thing I want to say before we leave it, which is not specifically about Elisha but about the general subject. I heard a Bible teacher speaking some years ago, in which he spoke very dogmatically; and he said that, after Israel separated from Judah, the godly people left Israel and went down to Judah; the ungodly left Judah and went up into Israel, so that you had all the godly people in Judah and God's favor was with Judah and not with Israel.

Now that there were people who moved, doubtless that happened to some extent; but that it happened to such an extent, that God's favor was entirely with Judah and not at all with Israel, is utterly disproved by the fact that the two greatest prophets—at least if judged by the amount of miracles God did in connection with their lives, and judged by the effectiveness of their work, they certainly are the two greatest prophets—came to the land of Israel, not to Judah; and that it is inconceivable God had cast off his interest in Israel. His two greatest prophets, whose lives are described more fully than those of any other prophets in the whole Bible; that is, any man whom he blessed with so many

miracles, and who accomplished so fully the work for which he sent them. You take Isaiah—he died, his work seemingly a failure; Jeremiah died in exile, in bondage, with the people having turned against him. No other prophet had anything like the apparent success that Elisha had in what he undertook to do; and their work was in Israel, not in Judah. Well, we go to Judah now,

E. Judah Under Jehoshaphat and Jehoram.

And the reason that I have taken this specific section of the history of Judah for one heading is because I mean the kings who reigned during the time of the dynasty of Omri in Israel. Now it's not exactly, but it's actually the same length of time. Asa reigned into the dynasty of Omri. Jehoram's son Ahaziah reigned a little bit—only a year—with the dynasty. In general this was the same period and I want you to keep the two in mind, how they parallel each other; and so that's why I'm taking just that section today.

But it is Judea during this period we are now looking at. God permitted one dynasty to continue all through the history of Judah. That is rare in the history of any land, that a dynasty continue for 300 years. You will find very, very few instances of it in history. In Israel we have four main dynasties and some individual kings separate, during a period of about 250 years. And in most countries there are many dynasties, but in Judah, God promised David he would always have a son to sit on the throne, and the line continued. And so

1. Jehoshaphat.

We do not have a great deal told about Jehoshaphat in Kings. We have a certain amount told about him; but we have twice as much told about him in Chronicles. And the reason for that is because of the different orientation of the two books. Kings is a book that described God's people—the house of Israel—even though divided into two sections; they are one nation, and they are all God's people; and Kings tells about both nations; and in Kings at this period, the center of interest attaches to the wickedness of the house of Omri; and to the terrible menace of the Baal worship; and to the way that God provided Elijah and Elisha to overcome this.

And so in this section, we have more told about the kingdom of Israel during the dynasty of Omri than all the rest of its history put together. It is the period of central focus in the history of Israel.

Chronicles, on the other hand, is about Judah; not about Judah and Israel together. And in Chronicles, we only have Elijah mentioned once; far as I recall, Elisha is never mentioned in Chronicles. Chronicles does not tell about the work of Elisha. It tells about one letter that Jehoshaphat got from Elijah; that's the only mention of Elijah, according to this concordance, or as far as I recall. And

yet they were two of the very greatest prophets. Chronicles is oriented on the history of Judah.

Jehoshaphat stands out as one of the most important characters in the book of Chronicles. He was one of the greatest of the kings of Judah; he was in one sense, you might say, the greatest. He was one of those who reigned longest; he had a very long reign; he was one of those who was truest to God; his loyalty to the Lord is highly praised in Chronicles and in Kings. You put these two together: a long, reign, and a loyalty to God that stands out above nearly all the kings of Judah. If you take all the kings of Judah and you pick the best five, any list would include Jehoshaphat. Where he'd be in that list would be difficult to prove; and we might not be in a position to say; but he certainly is praised in the Bible as one of the finest kings in Judah. And therefore in the book of Chronicles, he is given much attention to show us how good a man he was; and also to show us how even this good man made grievous errors. So we have both of them stressed in the book of Chronicles.

Now Jehoshaphat was the son of a godly father. Asa, you remember, was a very good man. We read nothing about Asa in Kings. Some people say that Chronicles was a late book, written to glorify Judah; and to glorify the kings of Judah and so on; and it just magnifies, and makes everything beautiful and wonderful in this land, written by somebody long after. Well, that critical interpretation does not stand up when you look at the situation. Because when you find the greatest kings like Asa and Jehoshaphat—who are great kings—Chronicles does tell more about them; it has much greater interest in Judah than Kings does. Yes, that is the center of it; but it tells of their errors and weaknesses, which don't come into Kings. Kings is occupied with the great terrible menace of Baal worship, in the face of which all this would be of minor importance, if this menace had succeeded. But Chronicles gives us these men in more detail; and consequently gives us much more of their errors and their weaknesses and their sins instead of simply glorifying them; it simply gives a fuller picture of them.

And so we find much in Chronicles about Asa and his son Jehoshaphat right straight along; it isn't interrupted by the story of the northern kingdom. And in Chronicles, we find that Asa had done a very great work; and Chronicles places him as good in the main, though it does criticize for the weak point of faith toward the end of his life; criticize him for his treatment of one of the prophets; shows he fell into certain grievous errors; as has every sinful human being who ever lived. It shows that, alongside of the good qualities of this great and good man, there were some very serious errors; but yet not serious enough that Kings found it necessary to mention.

As for his son Jehoshaphat, we read here in II Chronicles 17:

And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; But sought to the Lord God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. Therefore the Lord stablished the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance.

Everybody through this period praised Jehoshaphat. He was a great and godly and good man.

But Jehoshaphat did not think certain things through clearly. Rehoboam and Abijam and Asa—till near the end of Asa's life—constantly fought against Israel; they kept saying we've got to re-conquer this land that has revolted from Rehoboam. The Lord said, "Don't try; it is my will that you separate." But they kept on. And they, when Israel would attack them, the Lord would deliver them from the Israelite attack; but it wasn't the Lord's will Israel be conquered.

Now as you remember, Omri changed the whole political basis. Omri made friends with Judah; and he made friends with Phoenicia to the north; and he married his son to Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Tyre. And this new relation was much better for Israel; Israel could grow; it could be prosperous, without constant fighting with its neighbors. They were much better off in this situation. But Omri, very sensibly, followed a principle which is wise for any of us. When you want to do a thing, don't be satisfied with just barely doing it. Go beyond so that it is well enough done to last.

If you want to learn the kings of Israel and Judah, don't just learn them well enough that you think you can remember them to write them down on the test an hour later; because if you learn them well enough for that, and you pass this course, you take Prophets next fall; and there you're asked for them again. You'll probably fail Prophets for not knowing them. And if you don't do that, you will at least not have the background in mind to understand the events of the Prophets, because you don't have these kings in mind in the background.

Learn them so you know them thoroughly; learn them so they are absolutely part of your nature. And then all of this will inevitably disappear. And what's left will be enough to carry on the purposes that you need. That's true in anything you do. If you want to get to church to conduct a service at 11 o'clock, it's wise not to plan on getting in at half a minute of 11; it's much wiser to plan on getting there at twenty of. And then if you get held up by a red light on the way; or if something happens, that you can't avoid being a little later, than you planned on; you still are on time.

Well, Omri wanted not to have the constant bickering with the kingdoms to his north and south; but he said, "The best way to do it is to make real friends of

them," and he did. He made marriage alliances; he made close friendships with them. From Omri's viewpoint—an ungodly viewpoint, but politically a valid viewpoint—that was a wise thing to do.

Now from the viewpoint of Asa and Jehoshaphat, the fact that Israel was ready to live at peace with them was a good thing. If Israel had announced a policy of conquering Judah; if Israel had its envoys going through the world, trying to gather groups to stand for Israel, and stand with them and overcome Judah eventually; and declared this intention, it would be very, very silly for Judah to embark on a policy of coexistence.

But with Israel clearly not seeking to conquer Judah, it would be very wise for Judah to devote its attention to its own development, its own effectiveness, and not to constantly have the enmity and warfare against Israel. And so it was very wise of Asa and Jehoshaphat to accept the proffered hand of peace on the part of the house of Israel. But it was very unwise of them to go beyond accepting the proffered hand of peace, and to make a close alliance with them. That brought tremendous difficulty and danger and trouble to Judah. In fact, it almost meant that Judah was swept over by the Baal-worship; and if the Baal worship had conquered Israel, it would have destroyed Judah too. In fact, it almost did.

And that's where Jehoshaphat made his mistake. Just like our nation in the last war. Faced with the tremendous power of Hitler against us, it was wise to do every sensible thing we could to destroy Hitler; and in order to do that, it was very wise to give lend-lease help to Russia; to do what we could to help the Bolshevik people in resisting Hitler on the other side, and leading to his destruction; but to go beyond that, and make friendship with another dictatorship every bit as bad as Hitler's dictatorship; to make friendship; to join in alliance with them; to give them atomic secrets, and other secrets; to lay everything open to them, was a very, very foolish move, and one which has brought us untold difficulty and trouble ever since.

Now that is the same sort of thing exactly which Jehoshaphat did here.

For Jehoshaphat to say to Omri, "I'm glad that you are ready to renounce all ideas of conquering us; and we are ready to renounce all ideas of conquering you and live at peace, as far as our borders are concerned," when there was no evidence that Israel was set on world conquest, then it was a wise thing to do. But to accept his overtures to the point of joining in an alliance with him; making friendship with him; going up and working with him; even marrying Jehoshaphat's son to the daughter of Ahab, that was a very, very foolish thing to do; and the thing which, if it were not for God's mercy, would in the end have meant utter ruin and destruction to Judah. It nearly did; it nearly meant utter ruin and destruction to the house of David.

We have the account of his going up to Ahab; and he is going to remain true to the Lord, and is going to stand absolutely for that which is right in the Lord's sight; but yet he is going to be a friend to Ahab, and to work with Ahab. They will work together on a non-religious basis. They will work together on a political basis. They will do things together that will be for the good of both kingdoms, but Jehoshaphat will stand true to the Lord. Well, it just doesn't work; and these chapters show how it didn't work.

Well, we'll do it; yes, make peace with them, but stop short of alliances. Keep your eyes on them, make a peace, but don't go beyond that. It nearly destroyed the land, carrying the peace on to the point of alliance. And then Jehoshaphat, we find, he was loyal to the Lord; he was serving the Lord; he was trying to do what was right, but he was giving his support to Omri and to Ahab in their land; and helping them because he said, "These things don't have anything to do with an alliance here; these are separate. I'll keep their friendship," and so on. And the result of it was that Jehoshaphat himself was nearly killed; the result was that his grandson was killed; the result was that the Baal-worship came into the land and, if it wasn't for the mercy of God, would have utterly destroyed them.

And so Jehoshaphat, who deserves tremendous praise for his loyalty to God, and for his great work for the Lord; deserved tremendous blame for his compromise in this regard, which nearly meant the destruction of everything that Jehoshaphat held dear. Now Chronicles does not bring that factor out clearly; but the results are perfectly plain, in both Kings and Chronicles; as we find this daughter of Jezebel eventually trying to kill every descendant of Jehoshaphat, in order that she may make herself the queen in Judah; and almost succeeding, except that one of the nurses stole away one of the little babies, before she could get to it; and she lost count of them, and didn't realize there was one left. And that one grew up to keep alive the house of David, when all the rest had been killed by this wicked woman that Jehoshaphat brought right in there to be the wife of his child. It was her own grandson whom she failed to kill when she killed all the rest of her children and grandchildren who were descended from the house of David. And bringing this wicked woman right into his family was a deed which politically seemed very expedient. They must have said, "Well now, Omri has arranged to make peace; let's make peace with them, and they want to cement the peace with a marriage alliance."

When Ahab wanted to go over and fight in Ramoth-Gilead, in both Kings and Chronicles, we have the full details—a very long chapter in which Micaiah the prophet appears. It's a very interesting incident, very valuable to have both accounts; and yet it's interesting, that it's just about the only thing that occurs just in the northern kingdom that is given in Chronicles. Of course it's about Jehoshaphat; he's quite active in it, so that doubtless explains it. But it's almost word for word in both accounts.

Now in this situation here in this chapter, Jehoshaphat of Judah is there with Ahab; and Jehoshaphat is going to help Ahab, but Jehoshaphat wants to be sure that this is the thing he ought to be doing. He is a true follower of God, and anxious to be sure that he is making no mistake in it.

Now Ahab is quite convinced that this is the thing he wants to do. He is not so worried about the prophets. But he wants to convince Jehoshaphat. So when all these prophets here unitedly say, "Go up there, that's the thing for you to do, you'll conquer them," you'd think Jehoshaphat would be satisfied; but Jehoshaphat says "Isn't there some other prophet we can ask?" In other words, there was something about the attitude of those prophets that led Jehoshaphat to think that these men weren't fulfilling the function of a prophet; speaking what they considered God had told them to say; but that they were men who were trying to pretend they were prophets. They were trying to do what would please the king, instead of acting as real prophets.

So Jehoshaphat keeps saying, "Isn't there another one we can ask, to make sure we've got the divine wisdom on this matter?" So Ahab says, "There's this man Micaiah but he's always speaking against me, I don't like him, I don't want to get him."

Jehoshaphat says, "Oh, don't say that. Let's hear him, hear what he has to say." So they call in Micaiah, and as they bring Micaiah in, they say to Micaiah, "All the prophets agree that this is the thing to do; why you just do what the rest of the prophets do; make your voice like theirs; and speak a good thing for the king—that's the thing you ought to do in order to get along well; and everybody will like you for it." Micaiah says, "As the Lord lives, what the Lord saith to me, I will speak to the king."

And he comes into the king. The king is here wanting to persuade Jehoshaphat that this is the thing that they ought to do. The king turns to Micaiah and he says, "Shall we go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle or shall we forbear?" And Micaiah says, "Go, and prosper. The Lord will deliver it into the hand of the king."

And naturally, the king says to Jehoshaphat, "See, Jehoshaphat, they all agree, even this fellow that speaks evil of me ordinarily. He agrees." He says "That's what we should do. Come on, let's go up to the battle." That's what he would have said of course. The whole situation calls for it and requires it.

And yet we find that, when Micaiah made this statement, the king didn't say that at all. So the only possible interpretation of it is that there is something here that is not stated in words. We have to infer something from the way the king treated the situation. So instead of it being like this, Micaiah said, "Go and

prosper, the Lord will deliver it into the hands of the king," but he said it in such a way that it was clear to the king that he meant something quite different.

And the king said "How many times shall I tell you to tell me nothing but what's true," a thing he never would have said in such a situation. The only possible interpretation is that Micaiah put a tone of voice into it that said "I'm saying what you want, but everybody that hears me is to understand that's what I'm doing." Just the tone of voice, and that's very important. In almost any communication, it is the tone that the voice uses. And in his case, very evidently, the prophet used the tone which gives the exact opposite sense of what was desired. It made Jehoshaphat think, "Well now, this man is under some kind of compulsion. He's just trying to say what the king wants him to; he's trying to keep from judging beyond the king wants, but he's very careful to make it clear that it's what the king wants that he's saying here."

It's just like now; they say there's a law, now, that John L. Lewis is not to call a coal strike; and so he's not calling a coal strike; he's very careful not to call a coal strike. He is merely standing by his previous declaration, that the contract is unfair. He has discredited the contract. Well, that amounts to the same thing. But he does it in a way that avoids the technical punishment of the law, because he did not call a strike.¹⁵⁶

But that's very evidently what Micaiah's done. He says, "Here's what you want me to say; here it is; if you want it, I'll give it to you." But nobody there has any idea but that Micaiah is doing anything but pleasing the king.

It's just like I often feel about the matter of telling a lie. It's wrong to tell a lie, but if you tell a big enough lie, perhaps it isn't always wrong. That is to say that, if you tell a big lie, it is obviously not a lie; it's just a joke, not a lie. If somebody says to me, "How long did it take you to come up here from the train station yesterday?" Well, suppose I came up in 10 minutes, but I said I came up in 8 minutes; that might be a lie. But if I say "Oh I made it up here in 20 minutes," well anybody would laugh and say "Oh, did you?" It's perfectly plain you were just giving an answer which said, "I don't consider this is particularly your concern," or "I don't know the facts, and it's not necessary to give an answer, but I'm simply saying something that you know is just an avoidance of the question." It's not a lie; it immediately goes in the category of a joke; if you make it big enough, people will realize that it is a joke.

¹⁵⁶ [dcb] This comment refers back to the World War II prohibition against strikes. At that time, John L. Lewis was the powerful head of the coal miner's union, but he was prohibited by law from striking during the war. The British miners were under a similar prohibition. Coal was vital for steam engines because this was before the days of diesel power.

So in this case, we have to interpret the verse in the light of context. If we do, its meaning is perfectly clear; and its meaning is the exact opposite of what the words, taken alone, mean. I think that's a very important principle of interpretation; not only of the Bible but of any book. Someone has said, "A text without a context is only a pretext." And that's true for any sort of interpretation.

Now the instance that was being given here, about Micaiah's attitude: we notice how, after he was asked to tell what the situation was, what he really thought the Lord had said to him, he spoke it out in the strongest possible language. It is the institution of the prophet, not merely to say to the king, as in Babylon or in Rome, "You want to make this attack? Now this is not a good day to make it; you're more apt to be successful if you don't do it now; you'd better wait and try it another time"—that is, talking as a representative of the king, helping the king to do what the king wants. The prophet of Israel was never that.

Earlier in the battle against Ben-Hadad, (I Kings 20:13),

There came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith the Lord, Even by the young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall order the battle? And he answered, Thou.

Here the prophet was not helping the king; he was helping the nation. The king was the head of the nation; he was representing it, but this was God's will in the situation: that the king, as representative of the nation, carry out a certain plan; and in the end, when the king didn't use the victory the way that the prophet felt that it should have been used, he gave very strong denunciation upon the king:

And [the prophet] said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people. And the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria.

I would say that we could find other evidences, back as far as the time of David, to show that the idea of the constitutional monarchy, with the king a representative of God; and in one period and another the king, according to his particular character or his particular sense of responsibility, would be able to ignore this; but in the case of Ahab, we have a situation where the king's full character was one to seek what he wanted and ignore any of them.

But in this case, Ahab put Micaiah in prison because of his prophecy, with instructions to "feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace." While he and Jehoshaphat went to battle.

So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and I will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes. So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle. Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that were with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the Lord helped him; and God moved them to depart from him. For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again from pursuing him.

How did they see it was not the king of Israel when he cried out? And what sort of a warrior was he anyway, that as soon as all these people gather on him he cries out? I don't think the translation brings out the meaning to us very well. The word "cry out" in English tends to mean being in difficulty, to cry out for help; but in Hebrew, "to cry out" is more like in our English "to call out." It may mean to call out in difficulty; it may mean to call out for help; it may simply mean to call out. And I believe that in this case, what it means is that Jehoshaphat, when these people gather together against him—and there he was in his kingly robes—that he gave the battle cry of Judah; that he cried out the battle cry, and when they heard it, they recognized it was not the battle cry of Israel but the battle cry of Judah; because it says that, when they saw it was not the king of Israel, then they turned away from him.

I think that's a minor point, but I think it is worth knowing; the English word could give a false impression, which is not required by the Hebrew word; and which is certainly not implied by the context, which says they saw it wasn't the king of Israel—well how did they see it? I would think it quite certain that the crying out was a part of their becoming aware of that fact.

Yes? (Student: "It would seem to me that they would have gone ahead and taken him because he was equally as great as Ahab, and that they could at least have taken him and then continued on.") Yes, they doubtless would have, if left to their own initiative; but we read in the verse before, that the king of Syria had given them orders fight not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel. And they were looking for the king of Israel, who was the head of the opposition. Now if those directions hadn't been given, the chance to get one of the leading associates of the king of Israel would be something worth taking ahold of; but with those directions, they followed them; and as soon as they saw this wasn't the man they were after, they headed off to hunt for him;

because the king of Syria very rightly knew that, if they got the king of Israel, it would take care of much more than killing a good many of the people.

I don't know whether I have ever mentioned to you what I've read about the Duke of Windsor; that, when he was in World War I, he joined the army and he marched and practiced and everything with the troops; and then they shipped the regiment over to France; the day before, they left orders that he was to leave that regiment, and go to another. He marched with them, and practiced, and trained; and then they went to France; and the day before they went, orders came; he was jerked out of that regiment, and put in another. And he didn't like it, so he went to see the Prime Minister; and he said to the Prime Minister, "Why can't I go and fight in France the same as these other young Englishmen are doing? Why should I have to stay home here as if I'm in the army just have to keep marching and training? Why can't I go over there? Suppose I should get shot? I've got several younger brothers and one of them could be the heir to the throne just as well as I."

And the Prime Minister said, "Yes indeed. If you'd guarantee you'd be shot over there, we wouldn't hesitate about sending you. But there's no way to know; you might be taken captive, and you in the hands of the enemy would do us more harm in the war than the killing of a whole regiment of soldiers."

And so they had to watch out, because of the effect on the war of that one individual. And in this case, Ahab was the directing head; and to kill Ahab meant a big setback, at the least. He was the trained director of the forces of Israel; he was the one they all rallied around; the king of Syria was aware of the situation, and he was striking for the strategic point.

And to have killed Jehoshaphat would be a loss to Israel, but not a serious one; and Syria wasn't really fighting Judah. Israel was between them and Judah; and there was no great point in their being much concerned about Judah, except as Judah helped Israel.

Well, Ahab was killed in that battle. And then they brought the chariots back, and they washed his blood up in the chariot; but that is certainly not the fulfillment of Elijah's prediction. But chapter 19 in 2 Chronicles immediately follows; this gives us something we don't have in Kings.

And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem. And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord.

Here Jehoshaphat was rebuked—strongly rebuked—for this alliance with king Ahab; Jehoshaphat was right to desist from futile wars against Ahab, but he was

wrong to make alliance with him; and the evil effect of this came in a way he never dreamed of, and far beyond his realization in the circumstances.

Very often it appears from our human eye as if, by cooperating and working with those who are tearing down God's work, we can secure an advantage.

I remember hearing, not so many years ago, a very godly Christian minister in the East here who told a number of young men that they should go to Princeton Seminary in order to train for the Christian ministry; and they went, and one of them came back, and said to him, "The teaching that they are giving us there, they are tearing down the Word of God. They are denying that various books belong in the Bible. They think Adam and Eve to be simply myths and legends. Isn't it a mistake to be here?" And the man said, "You don't go there for religious value. You go there for worldly advantage. You go there in order to get a fine culture, and a fine training that will enable you to go out, and take the teaching you have from me, and give it in churches that you couldn't get into otherwise."

He was trying to combine getting what he recognized to be purely worldly advantages, and giving three years of his life to studying the Word of God from a false viewpoint, in order to get an entry into a certain place; or in order to get a certain worldly training that he could then, he thought, turn to the service of the Lord. God never blesses mixed motives. If we are truly with our whole hearts trying to follow the Lord, God may send us into some very unusual situation; but we want to be mighty sure the Lord is sending us there. But if our motives are mixed, if even down in the bottom of our heart where we don't recognize it, we are trying to compromise with those who deny the Word of God in order to secure a worldly advantage for ourselves; even if we think it is an advantage that we can turn to the Lord's benefit in service in the end; we can be sure that God would say to us what he said here to Jehoshaphat.

Then we find in the rest of the chapter the account of how he set judges in the land who were to be upright and follow the Lord; how he urged the Levites to do the Lord's will in everything; and the way in which he advanced the Lord's cause. He was evidently a very sincere man; a very earnest man; a very godly man; one whom the Lord blesses in many ways, but whom the Lord rebuked for this compromise; the blessing, though, is stressed in Chronicles but the rebuke is very strongly mentioned two or three times.

Now the next chapter 20, tells something that we're not told in Kings: about a great attack from the Moabites and the Ammonites against Judah; and the people were absolutely beyond any human help; but Jehoshaphat prayed to the Lord, and the Lord gave him a most wonderful victory in that situation.

And after this did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who did very wickedly: And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Ezion-geber. Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.

There is at Ezion-Geber remains of an attempt to rebuild in the days of Jehoshaphat, but nothing comparable with what Solomon had there before; this attempt didn't get very far.

So Jehoshaphat is one of the great figures in the history of Judah; one from whom we can learn much, much good; but one who was strongly rebuked for the mistake he made, for the compromise that he showed; and we see later on what the effects of that compromise were.

2. Jehoram.

Jehoshaphat was succeeded by his son Jehoram. And here is where the results of Jehoshaphat's compromise began to come out. We read in Chronicles that Jehoram had many brothers, sons of Jehoshaphat,

And their father gave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he to Jehoram; because he was the firstborn. Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and slew all his brethren with the sword,

Jehoram had a wife who was the daughter of Jezebel; and he proceeded to make himself strong by killing all his brothers.

Jehoram was thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord.

Jehoshaphat took him with him, up there to meet with Ahab; and when they would be alone, he would say "Now Jehoram, don't you let these folks mislead you; they're an ungodly crowd, but it's necessary for our well-being that we work with them in this thing; but don't you let them mislead you." And I suppose he looked very pious in front of his father; but actually, he was thrown into temptation that there was no sense in his having been thrown into; if Jehoshaphat had kept a wall of separation between himself and the evil forces of the northern kingdom, as he should have done.

And the son, when he took over, as soon as his father was out of the way, walked in the way of the kings of Israel; and he had the daughter of Ahab to wife; his wife was Athaliah, the daughter of Jezebel, and he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord.

Howbeit the Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a light to him and to his sons for ever.

We find, so frequently during these centuries here, how God's mercy was with them because of David, in blessing upon the children, because of the ancestor.

And then (2 Chron. 21:8)

In his days the Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah, and made themselves a king.

David had conquered the Edomites; the Edomites had been subject to Judah; and when Moab revolted against Israel, then the king of Israel, the king of Judah, and the king of Edom had put down that revolt. Now when Jehoram became the king of Judah, the Edomites revolted too.

And we read verse 12,

And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah, But hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself: Behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods: And thou shalt have great sickness by disease.

And so it tells in Chronicles how, after 8 years of reign Jehoram died; and was succeeded by his youngest son Ahaziah. The inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead. Well, we won't look at Ahaziah now.

That finishes the period we're looking at, the Divided Kingdom before Jehu, which was a period of about 90 years, from 931 to 841 BC. A period a little longer than the period of the reigns of David and Solomon together. With these three dynasties of the northern kingdom, the third of them as long as the first two put together. And with these kings, we've looked at in the southern kingdom.

XI. The Divided Kingdom From Jehu to Hoshea.

This begins in 841 BC, a date that would be well to keep in mind. 853 BC is a date of great help to us for chronology, because it is the date of the battle of Qarqar. It is the dividing point in the history of Judah and Israel because it is the date of Jehu's revolt; and so 841 is a date worth remembering. Now we begin this section with

A. The Dynasty of Jehu.

This is the 4th dynasty of the Northern kingdom. It is the longest continual dynasty of the Northern kingdom. This dynasty lasted for about 80 years.

1. The Revolution of Jehu.

We have already noted, in connection with Elisha, the part that he played in connection with the revolution of Jehu. This was a complete overturn; an overturn unlike the case when Zimri killed his master, but nobody was with him, where Zimri was killed within 7 days; and then there were four years of fighting by two of the generals as to which of them would gain the ascendancy.

This was altogether different from that; this represented a growing dissatisfaction with the house of Omri, a dissatisfaction which reached the point that the people were ready to look for some other house to reign; it is the great evil of every system of government that I know of (except democracy), that it is just about impossible to make a sharp change, when the people want it, except with bloodshed.

Many people have the idea that democracy means that all the people determine what is to be done. That of course is utter nonsense. Recent researchers asked questions in the United States here about general events, to see what people knew; they found that half our population did not know whether Berlin was in the west section or the east section of Germany. That is a crucial point today in world history—the situation of Berlin there—which has been over ten years, and yet half of our people didn't know anything about it.

Now democracy doesn't mean that all of our people are determining what's going to happen. There never was a government that was run in that way. It is impossible; there are too many events in view, even if people try—and half of them don't—to know what's happening, and keep abreast of it. There are too many things happening; people can't keep track of it; we don't know the inner details of things, we can't determine them. The people as a whole do not govern; it's ridiculous.

But what democracy means is that, when situations move far enough one way or the other to induce a general dissatisfaction, the people can express themselves by votes instead of by bullets. It means that it is possible to oscillate among people in command in a peaceful way; that's the principle about the democracy. The idea that the voice of the people is the voice of God might be true if all the people were born-again Christians; but even if they were, I think they'd probably want the Lord to come back and rule anyway, rather than that they would unanimously decide all the problems; but the more the citizens are intelligently watching, the nearer the government comes to expressing what we want. But any government, in a real democracy, knows it can't go too far off the main line without getting an adverse vote in an election; and so it is a means that makes possible repeated, bloodless revolutions; and this is really what democracy amounts to.

Now democracy is a comparatively recent development; and the situation back there [at the time of Jehu] was that people in the country were increasingly dissatisfied; but there was nothing they could do about it, except by force. Now God might have intervened; in fact, as you read this history of Judah and Israel, you wonder sometimes why did not God raise up perfect kings for Israel and Judah. With all his sins, David was probably the best king either of them ever had. And Jehoshaphat and Asa and Hezekiah, perhaps Josiah, the next best. Aside from them, they're all pretty inferior. Why didn't God raise up perfect men to be king? Or even, why didn't he raise up men of very fine character—a succession of them—to be kings?

I think the answer to it must be found in the fact that God was not undertaking to establish the kingdom of God on earth at that time, any more than he is today. That in a world of sin, God was dealing with individuals, as he is today. He was sending Elisha through the land to win individuals to the knowledge of the truth. And he was allowing things to go on in a world of sin; and he was interfering only to such an extent as was necessary to keep alive the knowledge of God there, and to prepare the way for the coming of His Son.

And so in political matters, we should do our best for what is right; but we should not feel too badly if, in the world of sin, things go wrong; because there will always be great disappointments through these years until our Lord comes back; and then we will have the only perfect one reigning. And so we have a situation here, where Ahab's (or Omri's) dynasty had degenerated to perhaps its lowest point under Ahaziah; and then it came up a bit; Jehoram was definitely better than his predecessors; but it was still pretty bad. But as those things were improving to some extent in the government, the people more and more were becoming dissatisfied; and this dissatisfaction here was felt in the army pretty strongly; and things were just ripe for a revolution.

Perhaps it was all planned; perhaps they were ready to make it, we don't know; but in any event, what galvanized them together and set their hearts to move forward vigorously, was when this young prophet appeared and poured some oil over the head of Jehu; and they saw Jehu come out of the inner chamber, with the oil going down over the side of his head; and they said, "Who was this man, what did he say?" And then when he told them that the man had said that he was to be king of Israel, they said, "Well, let's proceed at once." They immediately took control of things, and headed back over to Jezreel, where Jehoram was convalescing from the wounds he had had in the battle.

So they went back over there to Jezreel, across the Jordan. It must have been a trip of several hours; and we read how Jehoram and his young nephew Ahaziah, king of Judah who was up there—Jehoram's sister was Ahaziah's aunt—they were there, where Jehoram was recovering from his wounds; and they saw them coming at breakneck speed; and somebody said, "Who is it?" And the watchman said, "He drives like Jehu the son of Nimshi." So evidently, Jehu was well known as a dashing soldier; a man who makes headlong attacks; he was evidently well known and highly regarded; but perhaps the king had a bit of suspicion of him.

At any rate, it wasn't long before the king and Jehu were together there; and as soon as he heard what Jehu said, he began to flee; but Jehu followed him, and Jehu killed him, and killed Ahaziah both; and so Jehoshaphat's alliance with Ahab resulted in Jehoshaphat's grandson, the king of Judah, being killed when the people turned against Ahab, one of the results of this compromise...

Yes? (Student. "Weren't many of the people loyal to the king?") That is a prevalent attitude in all nations that have kings. But this attitude can be greatly reduced after a time, when the king proves unsatisfactory. It's an attitude which you find even today; wherever there is a king, there's a great deal of this; some don't connect it up with religion that way, but Shakespeare says, "There's a divinity that hedges a king." It may be. It is an attitude of people's minds; the average Englishman has almost a veneration for his royal family. There's an attitude toward it, even on the part of the Labor members of parliament which is just inconceivable to us.

(Student. Was Jehu related to the royal line?) No, we have no reason to think Jehu was related to the king of Judah. His father was a man named Jehoshaphat, but this man's father was a man named Nimshi. While Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, Jehoshaphat of Judah, was the son of Asa; Jehu's father Jehoshaphat was the son of Nimshi. So it probably was a fairly common name. Different person altogether.

Well, this revolution then resulted in the death of Jehoram, Jehoram was fleeing, he said to Ahaziah, "There is treachery." They were fleeing. And 2 Kings 9:24 says

And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot. Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain, Take up, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, the Lord laid this burden upon him; Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the Lord; and I will requite thee in this plat, saith the Lord. Now therefore take and cast him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the Lord.

And Olmstead in his *History of Palestine*¹⁵⁷ rather jeers at this, because he says that is fulfilling prophecy intentionally; it's setting out to fulfill prophecy. Jehu had heard Elisha's prophecy, "The blood of Ahab will flow in the field of Jezreel where Naboth was; and now he killed the son of Ahab and takes him there; so he is just working out the prophecy. Well, he jeers at it.

The fact is that, under ordinary circumstances, nobody would have the chance to do anything. The fact that he would get the chance to do it, and be willing to do it, is just as much a fulfilling of prophecy as if it had happened without his knowing the prophecy. The sneer is quite unwarranted, in that connection.

That there would be a king who would be able to fulfill Elijah's prophecy is the completed chain in Israel: the end of a dynasty. And so Jehu threw him into the plot there; and there is the fulfillment of the prophecy which was made about Ahab. But it is said that Ahab humbled himself, and God said this evil will come in the days of his son instead of in Ahab's day. "And so thy blood, even thine"—here it is his blood flowing in the person of his son rather than in Ahab himself. Some try to get around that by saying that when the dogs licked up the chariot in which he had been some hours before that, that was the fulfillment; but that wasn't near Naboth's vineyard anyway.

Well, this Jehu (2 Kings 9:29),

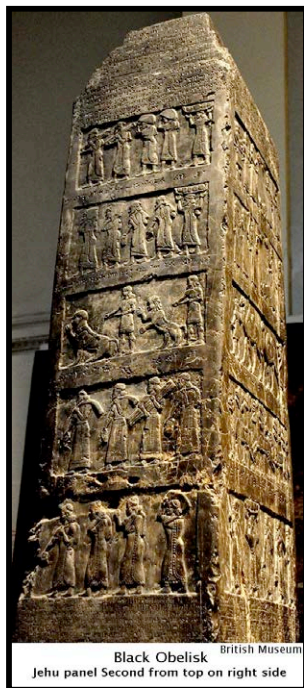
Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?

And she was right; Zimri rose up for his own ambition, and killed his master, and made himself king; and within 7 days, people killed him. But this is a different situation. This was not Jehu an individual, trying to make himself king; this was Jehu leading a movement, a large movement of dissatisfaction with the house of Israel. And it was an altogether different situation.

¹⁵⁷ *Op. cit.*

And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's daughter. And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel: And the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel.

And so this was a tremendous revolution in the northern kingdom, the revolution of Jehu. And notice it also changed conditions in the southern kingdom; because King Ahaziah of the southern kingdom was up there with Jehoram, and he was killed at the same time. But his death had the exact opposite effect from that of Jehoram. The death of Jehoram meant a complete and final and irrevocable end to the Baal worship in Israel. The death of Ahaziah meant that his mother Athaliah could take the throne in Judah, with no one of the royal blood to oppose her; and she could introduce the Baal worship with force in Judah.



Black Obelisk British Museum
Jehu panel Second from top on right side

And so the revolution, which worked for the cause of God in Israel as its immediate effect, had the direct opposite effect in Judah; and for the next few years the Baal worship was dominant in the land of Judah. And if it hadn't been for the work of Elijah and Elisha, despite the good work of Jehoshaphat, his compromise opened the way where it would not merely have turned over for a few years to the Baal worship, but would have gone over completely, and would have been the end of the true religion in Judah.

But God did not allow things to take their natural course there; because he was going to keep in this nation a true witness, to have it be the place where Christ would come to this earth; and where the gospel would begin, from which it would spread out. And therefore he introduced these unusual methods of overcoming human sin; enough to hold it true, but not enough to establish the kingdom of God there; because that was not his purpose for this

age.

Well, the revolution of Jehu brought in a new king; and here it is interesting that we have this new king referred to in the Assyrian records. One of the first important Assyrian references to an Israelite king that was found—one of the earliest come to light—is The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III from Nimrud, shown in Pritchard's book *The Ancient Near East*. Plates 100a and 100b show the two sides of the obelisk. It is 6 feet high, square and about 1-1/2 feet on a side. And on the four sides it has pictures engraved on it, pictures and inscriptions.



The inscription below the Jehu panel says, "Jehu son of Omri presents his tribute to the king of Assyria." And it describes the tribute and shows the fine things that he brings; and it is a corroboration of Jehu's name as ruler at this time. The pioneering archaeologist Henry Layard discovered it in 1846 at the palace at Nimrud, near Nineveh.

They call him "son of Omri"; he was a successor of Omri; he was not the immediate successor, but he had destroyed the house of Omri; and yet Omri's name was well enough established that the Assyrians referred to Israel as the land of Omri, and referred to Jehu as his son. It shows, from a political viewpoint, how important Omri was; though from a religious viewpoint, his son Ahab was far more important. But we who know the facts from the Bible; know that Jehu represented a complete change from the house of Omri; he represented the introduction of an entirely new line.

2. Jehu's Failure.

Jehu was the general, the leader in the army; he became disaffected and was ready to take the place at the head of the popular dissatisfaction with the house of Omri, and with the popular feeling against the Baal-worship. He put an end to it. But he was not a man like David, who was really seeking God, and seeking to do the will of God. And the result was that, he did a good thing to root out the place of the house of Omri; but he proceeded way beyond any reason in the bloodiness of the way he did it; and in the number of little children, descendants of Ahab, and so on, that he killed in order to establish himself as firmly on the throne as possible. 2 Kings 10:17 says

when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the Lord, which he spake to Elijah.

And in Hosea, the book of Hosea begins with the statement that God is going to avenge the bloody day of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu. And that is nearly a century later. It was a long time before it was done, but God held it against him, the bloodiness of what he did, and the unnecessary cruelty involved in the way he did it.

But Jehu rooted out the Baal worship completely. Continuing in 2 Kings 10:18ff,

And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu shall serve him much. Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great sacrifice to do to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. But Jehu did it in subtilty, to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal. And Jehu said, Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed it. And Jehu sent through all Israel: and all the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not. And they came into the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was full from one end to another. And he said unto him that was over the vestry, Bring forth vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments. And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal, and said unto the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the servants of the Lord, but the worshippers of Baal only. And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings, Jehu appointed fourscore men without, and said, If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, he that letteth him go, his life shall be for the life of him. And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, Go in, and slay them; let none come forth. And they smote them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out, and went to the city of the house of Baal. And they brought forth the images out of the house of Baal, and burned them. And they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught house unto this day. Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.

He said, "Jehu is going to serve him much"; he called all the prophets of Baal to come to a "great sacrifice". And the Baal worshippers said, "Say, this fellow Jehu isn't so bad after all, is he?" Very clever. And he got them all together there and then he massacred them.

It's like King Henry VIII, that wicked English King whom many people call the father of the Church of England. He was not at all the father of the Church of

England; he saw a chance for his own political advancement, to take advantage of conditions. But it was William Tyndale and men like that, the English readers of Luther's works, who bought the Reformation in England. Luther was the head, the founder of the Reformation, not Henry VIII. Henry VIII took advantage of it for political purposes; and therefore he gave it a chance to go ahead faster than it might have otherwise. And then towards the end of his life, he tried to slow it up; but he died before he finished that task, and it went on. He had helped it, but not intentionally. Nor did he deserve any credit.

So Jehu proved to be a politically-minded fellow who was using the times and the days for his own benefit.

And the Lord said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.

He left the Baal worship, but he stuck to the Golden Calf. And he had four generations of descendants who reigned; the last one a very brief time, the other three for long periods.

You have nearly a century in which the house of Jehu reigned, a house greatly inferior in leadership and ability to the house of Omri; and a house which did not make up for that with a real loyalty to the Lord; but which kept an outward apparent loyalty to the Lord; and at least gave Elisha and men like that an unhampered opportunity to express their message.

Well, then we find that

In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel;

That is, in all the borders of Israel. Jehu reigned over Israel 28 years, quite different from the length of time that Zimri reigned. Well, so much for Jehu's failure.

3. Jehu's Successor.

And now we come into a period in which we do not have a great deal of importance in what happened; a period of nearly a century, in which you have the son of Jehu, who was called Jehoahaz, and he reigned for 17 years; and then his son Joash, or Jehoash, who reigned 16 years. And he came to Elisha's deathbed.

I hope most of you can follow, either in your English or in your Hebrew Bible, 2 Kings 13:15:

Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.

When Elijah departed from this earth, he was over across the Jordan. A few sons of the prophets, who were not very well instructed on things in general, were familiar with the fact that he was now taken away; nobody else seemed to care much about it. Now a great change had taken place in the relationship of the people of the land to the prophet. The king himself now comes to see the prophet, and to tell him how much he has meant to the kingdom. Under these circumstances, when Joash, the king of Israel, comes and says to Elisha, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof", it is very plain that what he says is exactly the same as if a president of the United States were to go to a great leader of public opinion on his death bed and say, "Oh, you are the tanks and the airplanes. You are the defense of the nation. You mean more than several divisions of soldiers for the protection of the nation." I am sure that that was true of Elisha. God had used Elisha repeatedly to protect the nation from its enemies in a military way; and the king had sense enough to acknowledge the tremendous improvement in the moral condition of this people, and the great increase in their loyalty. And their willingness to try to do their duty in all points, was to a large extent due to the work which the prophet had done. So he very rightly called the prophet the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.

Now this young king of Israel, Joash, who is the grandson of Jehu, and consequently must have been much younger than Elisha, the old man who is now dying; the young king made this statement, and it is now evident that his great interest is in military fame. The people on the whole have been greatly affected by the work of Elisha; and Joash himself has had no interest in the Baal worship whatever. That has been completely rooted out of the nation. The influence of Jezebel and the people she brought in has been utterly destroyed. It has no chance of getting a foothold in the royal palace or among any great men of the people now. But Joash himself would not seem to be really interested in following the Lord. He is interested in being a powerful ruler. It is interesting, in that Joash is flattering the old man, by saying something which, while it has a large element of truth in it, in fact has more truth in it than Joash himself admits in his own heart. Joash is really interested in using God's work for his own purposes. So Elisha used a means here of demonstrating the attitude of the king.

And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows. And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow.

And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands. And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them.

And Elisha said to Joash, "Take the arrows." The old man there lying on his bed, probably about 90 years of age, he lies there and he says to Joash, "Take bow and arrows." And he took his bow and arrows. And he said, "Put thine hand upon the bow." And he put his hand upon it. And Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands. And he said, "Open the window." And he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot." And he shot.

Joash thinks to himself: "There is going to be a battle in Aphek: a battle in which Syria will be destroyed. Now that is an interesting prediction. Let's hope it comes true. It is very nice that the old man is giving us hope for the future." But Joash doesn't express any great note of rejoicing, or of praise to God, or any desire that if God shall do this wonderful thing for him, that he shall be a true servant of God who will faithfully serve the Lord.

Elisha proceeds with another object lesson.

And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground.

The king rather lackadaisically humors the old man. He doesn't see much sense in this. He would like to get back into his palace, where he can enjoy himself; or where he could make plans for his means of carrying out his schemes. He is glad to humor the old man, as long as it doesn't keep him too long; so he just lackadaisically hits the ground three times and stops.

And he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice. And Elisha died, and they buried him

Here is Elisha the prophet of God on his deathbed; and the king comes and tells Elisha how much he means to the nation; and now Elisha gives the king a chance to show just how sincere he is in his feeling, that Elisha is indeed God's representative, and to follow God is what matters. Now Elisha had the sorrow of seeing the king betray this lackadaisical attitude, simply going through the form of doing what the Lord says and not putting any energy and enthusiasm into it. Perhaps his body language was showing that he was just humoring this old, dying man.

And he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

I think there is a lesson in that for our own personal lives. Personally, I do not think that it is right for us, as a rule—there may be instances where it is proper—but as a rule, I do not think the thing for us to pray is that the Lord will keep us from having an accident, or an injury, or from getting a disease, or from having various difficulties. I think that is not to the point, that sort of thing. I think the thing for us to pray is that God will teach us the lessons He wants us to learn; and put us in a frame of mind where we are ready to do our very utmost to follow His will; and if we are not, that He will send to us that which He does, in order to force us back to Him, to make us forget the earthly things, and to see our absolute need of Him.

I think that when sickness comes in the life of a Christian, it may be any one of many reasons which causes it. But there is one which may be the cause. This one may be that we are becoming so satisfied with our own methods of going forward—even if they are methods of carrying on His work that we are forgetting our absolute dependency on Him, and that He often takes a man who is in the very most vigorous service for the Lord; and God lays him on the shelf, and gives him time to sit back, and to realize his dependence upon God; and to realize that the victory is not through us, through what we do, or what we accomplish, but through a true and complete seeking of the Lord's will and seeking to follow Him.

Wasn't that unfair of Elisha? He says to Joash, "Take the arrow, now smite on the ground." And why doesn't he explain that just as many times as you hit the ground with those arrows, you're going to defeat the Syrians? How was Joash to know?

The problem was, Joash was thinking "I'm just here to do my duty to this man"; he wasn't thinking, "This man is for me like being in God's presence; so whatever he says, I must pay full attention to, and do with all my heart." But in any work you do, any situation, you find different rules of the game. You'll find there are all sorts of things that you go at in ignorance, and that you'll have a tough time getting done. But go at it the right way, and you'll get it done.

I tried in 1947 to go to Germany to buy books for Faith Seminary Library; and I wrote to Washington in April and said, "I'd like to go to Germany in July," and a month later I'd had no word. I wrote to the head of the Passport Division; and they said the application was still pending before officers in military government. And then they said, "Let us know to which consulate in Europe to send word to when it comes through." I said, "Send it to England." I went to England, and a month later it hadn't come. Next October, a letter came saying

that there was no military reason why there should be any objections to my going the preceding July to Germany to get my books. Well, I wrote the letter and it went through channels, went through forms, that's what happened. The last day in London I went into the Consulate and I asked whether they had received word from Washington that I had been given permission to go to Germany. No, no permission, no word at all.

Well, the woman said, "Suppose I call the office of military government?" So she called, and I won't take time now to tell what happened; but a certain thing developed in an unexpected way; and the result of that was that I had to go upstairs and sit for an hour and wait; and then that afternoon, I had to go out to the outskirts; go in to the office of military government, where there were people who had been sitting there for days waiting for consideration; and when they'd get through one office, they'd have to wait for hours to get through the next one, and so on; and they took me, and sent a fellow to go to this office and that; and get this signature and that signature; and within half an hour, I had everything in shape; and I went right into Germany, and bought all the books that I could afford to, for the Seminary Library.

In this one case, I stumbled onto somebody who knew the right ropes, knew the way to do it. In the other case, I didn't know how to do it; and sent the letter to Washington, and found out next October I could have gone in July. Anywhere you go, there are rules of the game; there are ways; there are things to find out. But ordinarily, you expect somebody to tell you what they are, to explain how to do it.

Here we find that all Elisha said was, "Smite on the ground." He smote 3 times. Why didn't he say, "Every time you smite, you are winning a battle, and then he'd know? You can't blame Jehoshaphat for it." Well, that's the result you get, when you take the magical sort of approach so many people take to the Bible. Three times; the number three means this, and so on.

You have to read a little bit beneath the surface, and see what really is involved, very often, in interpreting Scriptures. What was Elisha doing? Elisha was showing—not working a magical thing that one smiting means one battle. Elisha was revealing the character of Joash. Joash wants to win the victory; he comes and he says, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." Elisha says, "All right, here's what God wants you to do; you smite on the ground." Joash says, "Oh, I don't know what this foolishness means"; and he stopped; and if he was really interested in knowing what Elisha had in mind, and trying to find out what God's will was for him, then when God's prophet said, "You smite on the ground," you go at it with force and with vigor, and five or six times. He would enter in with his whole soul to doing the thing that Elisha commanded. When he did it three times and stopped, it wasn't the number three that mattered; it was the lack of energy displayed; that

interest, the stopping sooner; and God said, "You are not one who is really interested in obeying the Lord. You are in a half-hearted way doing what the Father says."

And God is going to deliver Israel, he has promised; because he is going to keep alive his testimony here in the land, until the time when Jesus Christ comes among the people of Israel. At this time, he is going to defend them; but he is not going to give his blessing to Joash, as he would like to give it; because of Joash's indifference, and his lack of whole-hearted enthusiasm about endeavoring to carry out the will of the Lord. I think we can trace that in all of our relations with the Lord. We know what the Lord wants us to do; and we go ahead in lackadaisical fashion to fulfill it. The Lord wants you to read the Scripture a certain amount of time; to put a certain amount of time in prayer. God isn't so much interested in how much time you put in these things; whether you do them at regular intervals; whether you go through certain forms; but in the spirit in back of it; the interest; the enthusiasm; the zeal to really accomplish, and do for him, and do what he wants.

And so in this case, I think on the surface you don't see what it really means; and it's very easy to draw magical conclusions from this, and many other passages; and to miss the heart of it, the real thing that God wants us to get.

Well, Joash reigned for a good many years in the land of Israel; and then he was succeeded by his son Jeroboam II; and by this time, the Assyrians were beginning to weaken the power of Syria tremendously. And the result was that Jeroboam II was able to extend the power of Israel very greatly. Jeroboam II, we are told, extended the power of Israel to its earlier frontiers; the kingdom of Israel was at its largest extent since its beginning in the time of Jeroboam I. Jeroboam II was a king who reigned for many years, 41 years. That was a very long reign, as you see; and we know very little about him. We know that Amos came, and gave the messages of God up there, against the practices of Jeroboam II. It's good to get Amos in mind.

Amos came from the southern kingdom up to the northern kingdom to give the messages we have in the book of Amos. Many people think that Amos was the earliest of the writing prophets. Some people call him the founder of monotheism. They recognize that he was a monotheist; they try to do away with the earlier ones. But by that time, all had to recognize the clear monotheism in Amos' writing. He came up from Judah, into Israel; he prophesied at the court, at Bethel, where Jeroboam II was for a time. This ties Amos up with Jeroboam II, and also with the second of the writing prophets, Hosea. And Hosea also refers to Jehu. So it's good to get Amos and Hosea tied in with this rule of Jeroboam II.

And we can tie in Jonah also, because it says in II Kings 14:25 that Jeroboam restored the boundaries of Israel, as God had prophesied by the hand of Jonah.

Some take that as meaning Jonah helped him; well, we don't have any proof that Jonah helped him. But we have proof that Jonah predicted. Did he predict during his reign? We don't know. This we do know, he didn't predict after his reign. So we can say that Jonah was either in the reign of Jeroboam II or before. Although, in the minor prophets, his book comes much later than Hosea and Amos. It's proof that they are not arranged chronologically. Well, Jeroboam II must have been a very powerful ruler. He ruled for 41 years. We do not know a great deal about him. The Scripture tells us comparatively little.

And then his son Zachariah, reigned a very brief period; and then he was killed, and that was the end of this long dynasty of Jehu.

B. Judah during the century after 841.

(Review) We were looking at the revolution of Jehu. The Baal worship was destroyed; the worship of the Golden Calf continued. There is a general downward progression, though nowhere near like it was at the coming in of the Baal worship; and toward the end of this period, you have the coming of Hosea and Amos with their great prophecies; and of course, we have Jonah's prophecy somewhat earlier than this. We don't know whether Jonah was in Jeroboam II's reign or somewhat earlier.

841 BC is a sharp important point in the history of both the northern and southern kingdoms; because, as we noticed, in the northern kingdom there was a revolution, a change of dynasty; there was the end of the political power of the Baal worship; it's the turning point in the northern kingdom. In the southern kingdom, it's also the turning point, but a turning point in the opposite direction. The revolution in the north not only kills king Jehoram of the northern kingdom, but it also killed his nephew who was visiting, Ahaziah, the king of Judah.

1. Athaliah.

And so when young Ahaziah was killed, the southern kingdom was left without a king. But it had a queen mother Athaliah. And she was a resolute, determined woman. She was a foreigner; but not so extremely foreign, not so foreign as Jezebel; because Jezebel was from Tyre, she was a Phoenician woman. This Athaliah was the daughter of Jezebel, but her father was Ahab. So she was an Israelite; brought up in the kingdom of Israel; and therefore would have far more in common with the people of Judah than Jezebel had with the people of Israel.

She had seen her father-in-law die, and her husband reign for a time. She had seen her husband die; and now her son had reigned for just a year. She might be compared to Catherine de' Medici in France; who was related to the Pope; who married Henry, the second son of Francis I, the French king; and

consequently nobody ever thought she'd have any powers in France. Then when her husband's older brother died, her husband became heir to the throne; and then when her father-in-law died, her husband became king; but he had a mistress, who was very prominent and for whom he did everything; and you might say, in a public way, he treated Catherine de' Medici as if she were dirt under his feet; and his reign was the most miserable time in the world for her. She was an Italian and the French people looked on her as a foreigner, and had not much use for her, most of them.

But then suddenly, in a joust, Henry II was killed; it left the throne to his little son; and Catherine de' Medici became the queen Mother and in absolute power. And for the next 30 years, she ruled France in absolute power; and one after another of her three sons was nominally king; but too young to have much power, or too weak. She was one of the great forces in modern French history; and she did more to wreck the Reformation in France than perhaps any other one person. And though she was hated by the French, who considered her as an Italian and a foreigner, she happened to be the one who was in position to seize and hold the power; and she had the brains and the ability to know how to do it.

Now Catherine de' Medici prevented France from becoming a Protestant nation; not because she wanted to, but because she was looking for her own power; that's what she was interested in and was looking for; and it gave the Jesuits a chance eventually to give Protestantism a death blow.

Athaliah would have been an equally great force in Judah, if God had not intervened. And what she succeeded in accomplishing, simply shows us what would have happened to Israel under Jezebel, if God had not interfered with the great miracles of Elijah and Elisha, and the tremendous activities of those two men of God. The Baal worship would never have stopped with Israel. It would have taken Israel and Judah, and turned them both into utterly pagan nations; and the knowledge of God would have been forgotten then, as it was forgotten in all the other nations of antiquity. Baal worship was rooted out of Israel by the activity of Elijah and Elisha; but the revolution that destroyed it in Israel also destroyed the legitimate king of Judah, and left his mother in a position where she could seize power; and she resolutely did so.

She had all of her children and grandchildren seized and killed immediately. That meant there was no one whom people could say, "This is the legitimate king." There was nobody of whom they could say that. Therefore she, being the queen mother, naturally would have the right to the throne, under this silly idea of rule by birth, which has been so powerful in so many nations for centuries until very recently. And so Athaliah immediately proceeded to do everything she could to advance the Baal worship; and for about eight years she was dominant in the land.

But unknown to her, from among the children who were to be killed, there was one little baby who had been rescued; and he was carefully hidden, because if he was found, he would of course immediately have been killed. And then the priests of God made a careful plan; and suddenly, one day they brought out the little boy; declared who he was, the grandson of Athaliah, the son of the last king; and declared he should be the king. They had men with arms right at hand, ready to seize Athaliah; and they made a sudden turnover of the power; and it was not a turnover to an outsider, a usurper; it was the one whom most of the people would recognize was the legitimate ruler.

Athaliah, after all, was only related by marriage to the royal line of Judah; and so it was possible to make the revolution, and put an end to Athaliah's activities. Had it not been for that, probably she would have reigned as long as she lived; and Judah would have been completely wrecked as far as worship of God is concerned.

Athaliah did not reign long; but she shows what the revolution in Israel actually accomplished in Judah; and it shows what a terrible danger there was, if it were not for this intervention of the priests. And then

2. Joash.

Yes? (Mr. Shelabarger. "In this case, do we consider that the throne of David has moved over into the house of God temporarily?") Yes, there's an interesting question. God said that David would never lack a man to sit on the throne. And, yet when the last king Zedekiah was blinded—before which his children were killed in front of him—then he was carried off to Babylon, to captivity and died there; there was no successor. And for a period of nearly 600 years, there was no one who was recognized by anyone on earth as a descendant of David, and actually exerting any authority, any political authority. There was that long period; and in most countries people would say the dynasty came to an end. It was finished.

The king of France was beheaded a century and a half ago; but his descendants call themselves kings of France to this day, there's a small royalist party which claims that a man descended from the king of France should be reigning on the throne today; but it is a small group; most people pay no attention to it. The French people as a whole have forgotten it; and we consider that the line of the Bourbons, as far as ruling is concerned, has come to an end. Similarly, everybody in Israel, except those who believe the Old Testament prophecy about the house of David, after the death of Zedekiah, for at least a century after it. But God knew differently; because God sent his son Jesus Christ, the heir of David, one in the line; and sent him and he came and was there in the land; and we believe he's coming back to set up the throne of David eventually.

Now he is the legitimate king, but not reigning in any physical way today; and he did not reign in any physical way when he was here. There is a gap between Zedekiah and the birth of Christ, and if it would come to actual reigning, the gap is from Zedekiah to the return of Christ, his actual reigning on this earth. But we say that David never lacked a man to sit on his throne; because, though there was a gap, the line did not come to an end. Now the line was continuous from David up to Zedekiah, as far as I recall, except for this one gap. And at this time, of course, there was a legitimate heir unknown to the people; unknown to Athaliah, in the priest's home. So the people might think that the house of David had come to an end.

Actually of course, the only claim Athaliah had on the throne was her relation to the house of David; so that if, she had any right to reign, it was as a member, though a member by marriage, of the house of David. Of course, if Joash hadn't been there, at Athaliah's death what would have happened we don't know. But I think it's a very interesting point that Mr. Shelabarger brought out: that God had promised David would not lack a man to sit on his throne. And he has, for all these centuries since the death of Zedekiah; but we consider the prophecy still in effect because we consider this as a gap rather than an end. And previous to Zedekiah there was only this one brief gap, which in effect was not a gap, because Athaliah had actually got this far by the marriage relationship to another.

I suppose you might say, "In God's sight, the seed continued." But mighty few people knew anything about it. And as far as the priest was concerned, he was hoping they could get the power back to Joash; but I doubt if he had any certainty. It was a potential place there; it was like in England, when Cromwell was the leader. You might say, the seat of power of England, in a sense, was over in France, where Charles II was engaged in his licentious life at the court of the king of France; and sort of hoping that the English people would be foolish enough to invite him back to England.

Well, Joash had a long reign, a reign of 40 years, I think it was. He started off very well; a young boy, who owed his authority to the fact that the priests had brought him up; had saved his life; had brought him into his power; having led the revolution; had destroyed Athaliah. Toward the end of his life, he turned against those who had befriended him. In many respects a good king, yet he cannot be considered as one who stood true to the Lord through to the end, and was really outstanding in his loyalty to God. Now he was succeeded by his son

3. Amaziah.

Amaziah reigned for 29 years. He was a very proud sort of a boy, who got an idea that he was going to re-establish the old glories of David; and he challenged the northern kingdom to fight. Now God could have established the

old glories of David if He chose; but it would be only God's power that could do it, because Judah was only one tribe as against ten tribes of the northern kingdom. And Judah, though this one tribe was wealthier than any tribe of the northern kingdom, was actually only about a third of the power of the northern kingdom. From a human viewpoint, it was utterly absurd for them to challenge the power of the northern kingdom.

But Amaziah did. He challenged the power of the northern kingdom; the king of the north had his hands full, defending himself from the powers north of him in Syria; he didn't want to go to war with him; he tried to put him off; but when Amaziah insisted, then he marched down there and attacked Jerusalem; he made a breach in the wall, and gave them a pretty good defeat. And so Amaziah, if Israel had not also been facing a strong aggressor from the north, would have brought terrible disaster on Judah; but Amaziah's desire to show his power this way... but as it was it didn't do much harm.

And then Amaziah, after 29 years of reigning, the people got so disgusted with him that they put an end to him; and he was succeeded by his son, whom we usually call

4. Uzziah.

And Uzziah is also called in the Bible, Azariah. We usually call him Uzziah; but we find both names in the Bible, Azariah and Uzziah. Perhaps the man who wrote the name Uzziah was a southerner; I don't know, but anyway we have the two forms.

And Uzziah reigned for 52 years, a very, very long reign. How much of it he actually reigned, we are not actually able to say, because the Bible does not give us details. That is to say he was nominally king for 52 years. But we know he wasn't actually king for 52 years. We know that because of something that happened.

Uzziah was in many ways a good king; he gave wonderful promise of being a fine ruler, a great godly man; but he had something of his father's conceit, a feeling of his own greatness; he was like many a young man, who goes into a church and immediately does good things; he stands for what is right; but if people accept what he suggests, then immediately he is going to suggest everything to make the church his own church; and he tries to move practically everything to his own ends, and he loses the support that he has.

Well, Uzziah isn't exactly like that, because he didn't weirdly try to change things. He was something of a military genius, and built up the strength of Judah. It says in 2 Chronicles 26 that he built up the army

And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons [which are flexible mail jackets], and bows, and slings to cast stones. And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong.

Helped by the Lord. But then he went against a definite command of God. He was a ruler; he said, "I'm going to perform the priest's function too," and he went into the temple, and began to offer the incense in the Temple, like a priest.

Now he was in this not defying God, in the sense of trying to destroy the worship of God; he was observing the worship of God, trying to forward it; but in doing it, he was breaking the regulations God had given as to how it was to be done; and taking unto himself more power than God had willed he should have.

And we read in 2 Chronicles 26:16, that Uzziah

went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord, that were valiant men: And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the Lord God. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar. And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the Lord had smitten him.

When he was in the temple, the priests came in and they told him he had no right to be doing this; and he began to remonstrate with them, and tell them he was king; and one of them said "Look at your skin!" He looked at his arm, and it had turned all white, for God had smitten him with leprosy. And so the rest of his life, he lived as an outcast; as a leper in his upper room of the palace; shut in there, seeing nobody. Naturally he couldn't rule, if he was shut in and saw nobody. So his son must have been reigning during this time; but how long it was, we have to try to fit in to make the chronology as a whole fit, because we're not told.

So the story of Uzziah is the story of a man who started out very, very hopefully; and then he proved an utter disappointment, because of his too great conceit as to his own ability to do things the best way, instead of seeing how God had ordained that they should be done. It was not in opposition to God, but it was refusal to work out details as God had prescribed.

And next Uzziah's son

5. Jotham.

And we know very little about Jotham. Dr. Davis in his *Bible Dictionary*, in his chronology, so arranged that most of Jotham's reign of 20 years came inside of the reign of Uzziah. Davis prefers to arrange it so that 16 years of it comes inside Uzziah's reign, and then he has four years of his own; but that's a pure guess—we don't know.

Isaiah says (Isaiah 6:1)

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up....

It's very interesting, starting the ministry of Isaiah, to realize that God's vision came in the year when Uzziah died; and Isaiah thinks that's worth mentioning in starting the book. I don't think he mentions it merely as chronology to show the date; I think he mentions it to show the impression made on his mind by that fact. We have it happen nowadays once in a while, that someone has been a great character. Perhaps someone has been a great person, and then has made a failure and has disappeared from sight; or perhaps, he simply has become old and weak and disappeared, and for years nobody thinks of him; practically never mentions him. Then the person dies, and all the newspapers have big spreads about this person's career; and we are all reminded of it then.

It is most likely that Isaiah, in hearing of Uzziah's death, and realizing that this man was in the upper room for years and nobody saw him; maybe once in a while you'd get a glimpse of his face in the window there, as he went by; but they knew that he was there as a leper, no longer able to rule; they knew he'd made a wonderful start; had given every promise of being a great and good king; and then had dismally failed in this way. It made an impression on Isaiah's mind; and in that situation, thinking of how this great one of the earth was simply laid on the shelf by the Lord, because of his failure to follow the Lord fully; in that situation, Isaiah went into the temple, and there he had his wonderful vision of God. And it was the impression of Isaiah's wonderful start, and Uzziah's failure, and his years of simply waiting there for the leprosy to entirely consume him, that impressed Isaiah's mind with the importance of eternal things, and put him in the frame of mind God wanted him to be in when

he was ready to give him this great vision. Well, this is as good a place as any to mention that.

It slides over into the next period, but in the very beginning, so this is just as good for that. Now next is

We won't go on to Jotham's son Ahab; we'll leave that for the next period. But instead we will take

C. The Assyrian Empire.



During all of this previous century, the Assyrian Empire has been an important power, though it has not entered much into the Biblical account. But from here on, it becomes a vital power in the Biblical account; a tremendous force which was in everybody's mind every day. They didn't know what was going to come. You couldn't understand World War II, if you'd never heard of

Hitler. You couldn't possibly understand it. And if you are not familiar with the Assyrian Empire, you cannot understand the next half century, one of the most important half centuries in the history of Israel and Judah: you cannot understand it at all. And so at this point we note something about the Assyrian Empire.

First I want to be sure you all know what it is. We have mentioned it before briefly. It is the empire that worships the god Ashur; they probably called him Assur. You'll find it written both ways. The god Assur, or Ashur, because the pronunciation probably changed at one period from an earlier pronunciation. This god Assur was the god of the Assyrian Empire, and the whole region is named after the god; so in cuneiform records, you will find references to the land of Ashur, and to the city of Ashur. You see, you have three entities with the same name. You have a god Ashur; and after the god, the city is named Ashur; and also after the god, the whole region is named Assyria.

Now this region of Assyria is the northern section of Mesopotamia. Ancient Mesopotamia can be divided more or less into two main sections. The southern part we might call Babylonia; the northern part was called Assyria. The Assyrian land is very different from the Babylonian land. Babylonia to the south is very, very flat. And in this very, very flat area, you have the two great rivers coming down from the mountains a long distance, reaching this area; and making it possible to irrigate for some distance on both sides of the river. And in this flat country of Babylonia, great cities were able to exist as a result of the fertility of the land from these rivers. Now further north, the land is pretty fertile, but not quite so fertile as it is down south. There are mountains near; and in these mountains there are wild animals.

The early settlers probably came up from the south; some think this is described in Genesis 10, where it says

And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh....

Some feel that that is the reference to the very beginning of this land. But this land was undoubtedly settled by people who came from the south; settled at a very early time, perhaps as early as 2600 BC. But these settlers in the north there, brought something of the Accadian civilization; something of the attitude of the people in the southern area which we call Babylonia now. They had a tough struggle up there, because they had wild animals you constantly had to protect yourself from.

And in addition to that, the mountains nearby harbored groups of people, living a precarious existence up in those little mountain valleys. Looking down from the mountain cliffs into the land, they would see the irrigation that was being established by these settlers from the south; and the towns they were building; and the fertile farms; and they would be tempted to make incursions or attacks, and try to seize and plunder what was being grown. And the result was that in order to exist, the Assyrian people had to develop a warlike character, beyond that which the people of the south usually displayed.

And so Assyria became the center of a very warlike people. And these people had a struggle, through a period of 1500 years or more, to maintain themselves. But they managed to send out colonies; up into Asia Minor, they managed to develop quite a civilization there; and became quite a force, but not a dominant force, in the ancient world, until about 900 BC.

And then beginning about 900 BC, they had a group of rulers who determined to use this power to establish a large empire, from which they could get tribute. And they set to work to conquer neighboring regions. And it became quite a thing for a king to show what an able conqueror he was. So nearly every year—at least as long as the king was young—he would take an army and go out in one direction or another, and try to conquer some cities. And about 900, you got some kings who gave serious thought to the matter of how to build and hold an empire. They organized their people very carefully; they had an excellent system of supply; of preparation of armor; of having things in stock to keep well supplied; and they tried to build a strong empire.

And they saw that, as long as their forces were there, people might be subject to them; but once they went away, the people would revolt. And they went to work to think of a way to prevent that. And so, about 900 or a little later, a clever thought was arrived at, which was this: when we attack a city and ask it to surrender to us, we may be very kindly with it; we may say, you give tribute to us and we will treat you very well and we'll not be very hard on you. You can make all kinds of promises; but once they're under you, then you can oppress them as you may wish.

But they would be very nice in their promises if a nation would voluntarily submit; if a nation did not voluntarily submit, they would fight with the nation; but after conquering them, they might treat them fairly kindly, so that other nations wouldn't get desperate and fight very, very strongly to resist being conquered. They might treat them fairly kindly after they conquered them.

But after they conquered the city, they would make them take the oath of loyalty to their god Assur and to their king; and they would say, "Now remember you are subject to us, if you ever desert us, then you may expect very terrible treatment." And so, when the nations would revolt from them, then they would use the harshest measures imaginable; and they would publish accounts of these, and spread these all over so that other people would see how they treated them.

One king tells for instance, about a town which had been subject to them and revolted. He says, "I surrounded this city with my army; I besieged it; I made a hole through the wall; I went in, I seized all the people; I took them out, and I impaled thousands of the men on sticks around the city. Others I flayed alive; others I cut off their heads, and piled them up in great piles like cabbages, at different places where passers-by could see them." And others, he says, he pulled out their tongues. And he describes the tortures that he made, in order to make a most terrible example of this city; in order that other cities that were subject to them would see what fate must be theirs, if they revolted from the Assyrian empire.

One writer has headed his chapter about this, "The Calculated Frightfulness of the Assyrians." But I don't think you need to remember this king's name in that connection particularly; because this policy, which we find the most clearly expressed by this particular king, was followed by the subsequent kings. And the impression which is made on all the region for miles around was tremendous. From this time on, the Israelites lived under the knowledge of what the Assyrians had done to other nations, and what they may do to them.

Now just when the Israelites started giving tribute to the Assyrians, we don't know. We do have a record, though, that Jehu paid tribute to them. Just what the tribute amounted to; how much he was supposed to be subject to them, it's hard to say; but we have no record of his having been conquered by them; it may have seemed to him that the safest thing was to put himself under their protection, rather than to risk an attack by them. We don't have any record of interference during the next century on their part.

But it so happens that, during this next period of a century, there was quite a decline in Assyrian power. This was a decline from which they came back again with great force later on. But there was this great movement to the west, which came in the 9th century, when two or three kings made campaign after campaign to the west; and it is generally thought that at the battle of Qarqar in 854, the coalition of the kings in the west were able to fight them to such a standstill, that they decided that, for the time being, they'd better give up after that, for nearly a century.

Now sometime during that century, Jonah made his visit to the capital of the Assyrian Empire. The early capital of the Assyrian Empire had been the town of Asshur; but later another of their towns became superior to Asshur; that was the town of Nineveh. And Nineveh became the capital of the Assyrian Empire. And as the Assyrian kings brought back their booty, and brought back their prisoners, they enlarged it till it became one of the largest and strongest cities in the ancient world.

And this city of Nineveh became so much recognized as the capital of the Assyrian Empire, that they would often speak of the Assyrian Empire simply as Nineveh, though Asshur was always a very important city too. But Nineveh became more important. It was a very early city, but less important in the earlier days, than Asshur. Now these later kings of the Assyrian Empire followed another idea to hold their territory. They thought of the idea—this is really getting to the beginning of the next period—they thought of the idea, when they would conquer a nation, of taking its leading people, and taking them away from their homes; and that was a very clever idea, because they figured it this way: if we take, say, the fourth of the people who are the brilliant people—the administrators, the teachers, the best part of them, the people who work with their heads—if we take these people away, and carry them to another

section of our empire, they will no longer be there to serve as agitators and leaders to induce the people there to revolt against us.

A very clever idea. It reminds us of what a police inspector said, how they deactivated gangs in Philadelphia. If they get the leading three fellows out of a large gang, the gang is generally deactivated, until eventually someone (probably someone else of the same family) comes forward to re-establish the gang.

But this Assyrian king figured that, if he was to take the leading people from a nation that he conquered and take them away, there would then no longer be leaders there to organize the people to revolt against him. But these people he would take to some other section of his empire. The people in that section, seeing these people come in, whose language they couldn't understand, whose customs were foreign to them, would think of them as people the Assyrian king brought in; and therefore they would look on them as representatives of the Assyrian king rather than as fellow prisoners.

And there would be apt to be a sharp line of division between the local people and the new people brought in, with them fighting one another. And the bright people brought in, the leaders, would have to look to the Assyrian arms to protect them, because they would be inferior in number and power to the people of the area. So he would become to them their protector instead of their enemy; and he would take the leaders from one area to another; the leaders from that area to another; the leaders from that area, he would take them back to the first one. A very clever idea, very ruthless, very inhumane, but very clever.

Yes? (Student. "Would they oppress these conquered nations?") No, the conquered people had a great amount of liberty. You see there would be tremendous numbers of them; it would not be possible to hold them as prisoners; he didn't want them to act as prisoners; he wanted them to build up the area; to make it a prosperous area, that would provide him income. But they would not have any large number of people of their own language and their own culture, whom they could influence against the king of Assyria. They'd have to work there and be subject to him; and that was his scheme; that was his idea, a very clever idea. But it was a very cruel idea, as far as the peoples were concerned; and it resulted in the tearing away of thousands of people from their neighbors, families and homelands; and taking them to live among people who had no understanding of them; who had a hostile attitude toward them; and it resulted in very great cruelty, and very great misery. But this was toward the end of the period we're talking of now, that the Assyrians introduced this idea. In fact, that gets over into the next period.

XII. The Final Days of the Northern Kingdom.

A. The Assyrian Empire.

In the earlier period, Assyria is sort of in the background; becoming an increasingly important force in the background; often mentioned on account of the tribute which had to be paid; and that, of course, gives us many references to Israel in our archaeological records. But Assyria was not actually a present vital force until this last period of the Northern Kingdom.

But during this last period, the Assyrian empire has a new birth of power. Its kings become very able men; very great conquerors, men who have a thoroughly organized empire subject to them; but who make one fatal mistake that, while they bring the people from these different areas where they think they will be reduced in power and have to be subject to Assyria, they do not find means of making friends of them, and of getting their force as a real support to the Assyrian Empire. They put their trust only in their own people; and their own people bear the brunt of their wars. And more and more, the actual Assyrian people are cut down by the wars and by the great efforts of these years; until in the end, they have a great tremendous empire, but inside it's very, very weak; because their nation has become so weak, and there are so few who can be trusted to be loyal to the king. So that, actually, when it ends, it ends very suddenly, and in a way that just could hardly have been expected.

But you find these Assyrian kings in this later period, still carrying on the same tradition of the earlier period; that is, making attacks in all directions; trying to conquer cities; trying to establish their power; showing the calculated frightfulness against those who revolt against them; but you get a series of conquerors who carry their conquests to a point that had never been reached by the previous rulers at all. And we should become familiar with the names of a few of these most important of the Assyrian kings.

The dates of these kings are pretty well agreed on. In Pritchard's book, there is a section which contains the Assyrian historical records.¹⁵⁸ We have from the Assyrians the Limmu list, year by year, the kings, and for dating of contracts; and we have thousands of contracts; and therefore, it would be very strange if there would be much disagreement about the relative dates of these kings. Now it is possible that a darker period later on might later be illuminated by new discoveries; and the Assyrian dates might all be moved forward or backward. That is possible, but very improbable. But there are some writers I know about Biblical chronology who assume that to be the case; but I think that that is going pretty far, in view of the fact that all secular scholars in the field, and most Christian scholars in the field, agree upon these dates of the Assyrian kings.

¹⁵⁸ Pritchard, *op. cit.* "VII. Assyrian and Babylonian Historical Texts", pp. 188–208.

Later on, there may be dates that may later have to be adjusted one way or the other, but it seems very unlikely. And so, it would be good for you to get the dates down correct for these Assyrian kings based on the Limmu lists:

The first one who becomes important in this period is

1. Tiglath Pileser III. 743–723 BC.

These kings did not use numbers. They simply had a name. It is a device of our own era to give kings numbers. And so they simply used the name; and as we have gathered the material, we have given them numbers to distinguish them; and sometimes we have been in confusion as to what number to give them; and so, some books of history will call him Tiglath Pileser III, and some will call him Tiglath Pileser IV. I believe that now it is pretty well established that there were only three up to this time—at least in what we call the later Assyrian Empire—there were some kings earlier we do not include in the numbers. Tiglath Pileser III was probably the man who introduced this system of colonization. He is mentioned specifically in the Bible as having made an attack on the northern kingdom of Israel; and an attack made on the excuse that he had been invited to do so by the king of the southern kingdom Judah.

He was a very able general, and he succeeded in conquering Babylon to the south; and so Babylon, which had been a great capital while Assyria was just a minor area, now was subject to Assyria. But the Babylonians did not like being subject to the Assyrians; and it was so difficult to hold them in subjection that the Assyrian king found it simpler to pretend to be king of Babylon. The Babylonians knew it was only by force he was king; but he went through the form, and the Babylonians said, "We won't take any Assyrian for our king, Tiglath Pileser." "Well," Tiglath Pileser said, "Before I became king, my name was Pul. Will you take me under that name?" Well, that was better than being killed, so they took him.

So they made him king of Babylon; and he had to go through the great ceremonies of being crowned king of Babylon; and the Babylonians pretended they had their own king, though actually he was the king of Assyria, who was holding them by force. But in the Babylonian record, Tiglath Pileser is simply called Pul. And in the Bible, sometimes it speaks of him as Tiglath Pileser, and sometimes it speaks of him under the name of Pul. Now he became king in 743 BC and he reigned until 723. And you see here in the reign of 20 years, a reign of constant conquest, constant terrorism; a reign of constant difficulty with the people of Babylon who called him Pul.

One thing the Babylonians insisted on: they said, "Our king has to take the hands of our god every New Year's Day. Every New Year's our god establishes him as king; and he can't reign unless he has gone through this ceremony."

Well, the king wanted to be off fighting in Persia or in Palestine or somewhere else, half the time; and how could he be down there in Babylon New Year's Day every year? Well, if he wasn't, they would pretend he wasn't king any more until he went through that ceremony. And it made an awful lot of nuisance for him. But he was Pul as far as the Babylonians were concerned; he was Tiglath Pileser as far as the Assyrians were concerned; and he is very important in the relationship with King Ahab of Judah and with the kings of the northern kingdom.

Then Tiglath Pileser is succeeded in 723 by

2. Shalmaneser V. 723–719 BC.

And Shalmaneser only was king for about four years, from 723 to 719 BC. He continued as Tiglath Pileser had been doing, and he was succeeded in 719 by

3. Sargon II. 719–705 BC.

Sargon II, it is quite generally agreed, is the man who conquered Samaria. The Bible says Shalmaneser V came against Samaria, then it goes on to tell how the king of Assyria fought against it, and it does not mention that it was a different king who takes it. But Sargon in the beginning of his reign mentions his conquest of Samaria. He may have been the general who was directing the conquest, the fighting of the three-year siege there—at any rate he led from 721–705, a very successful rule.

And it is interesting to know approximately how long they reigned. Tiglath Pileser had a long reign, Shalmaneser a comparatively brief one, and Sargon a long one. Now these were the kings who were important during this period. The next period, the kings are even more important.

Sargon re-conquered Babylon which had revolted; held it in subjection; and built a new capital for himself 12 miles northeast of Nineveh, a city which has been excavated, which he called Sargon's fortress; and in which we have found some very interesting and important bas-reliefs and so forth, and he was succeeded by his son

4. Sennacherib I. 704–681 BC.

Sennacherib not as able as Sargon, but an active king; thus he succeeded in carrying out the conquest, which he fought in many different regions. He became so disgusted with the Babylonians, that finally the time came when he destroyed the city. He said he knocked down the great temples; overwhelmed the city; he reduced it to just wasteland, so that it could never again be inhabited. I think that must be greatly exaggerated, because very soon after we find it a very powerful city again. But at least he brought terrible damage to it; and in 681 he was assassinated by his son.

This is described in Isaiah, but the details of it are unknown today. It is a point of real mystery, the details of the murder of Sennacherib. Well, these Assyrian kings are important for us to have in mind, because they were just as important to the whole world in their day as Adolph Hitler was to the world in the period between 1935 and 1945. They were a force constantly aggressive.

B. Judah at this Time.

The last king we looked at was Jotham, spoken of as a fairly good king, son of Uzziah; and his reign probably overlapped a great deal with that of Uzziah. But Jotham may have died as a rather young man, because when he was succeeded, his son, Ahaz, was only 20 when he became king.

1. Ahaz.

And Ahaz, the son of Jotham, is a king who was from a human viewpoint a very clever fellow. He was very worldly-wise. But from God's viewpoint he was very stupid.

He considered religion as a very useful thing to keep the people under control, under discipline, and to maintain their loyalties; but he thought that, after all, what matters is this life, and we want to have our power strong here.

And early in Ahaz' reign, the Assyrian power of Tiglath Pileser appeared as a tremendous threat to Damascus and to Samaria—that is to Syria, of which Damascus is the capital, and to Israel of which Samaria is the capital. Now we assume—but it's a pretty safe assumption—that it's on account of this threat that these two powers made an alliance in order to try to fight back the Assyrians as Ahab had done.

But they said, "We've got Ahaz behind us down there to the south; we can't risk an attack from the south when we're trying to defend ourselves from Assyria. So they said, "Let's attack the kingdom of Judah first, and put our own puppet in there." And so they made an attack on Ahaz.

Now that is the big event early in the book of Isaiah. You cannot understand Isaiah—the early chapters—without having this in mind. This was a great situation which Isaiah faced. Ahaz was telling the people, in the beginning of chapter 7, "We are being attacked from the north; let's build our defense; let's make ourselves strong; we've got Syria and Israel attacking us. But of course Judah couldn't hold out against Israel alone, to say nothing of Syria—which was Aram—and Israel together.

And Ahaz then, very cleverly, sent a large amount of tribute across the desert to Tiglath Pileser. And Ahaz said to Tiglath Pileser, "I will be your subject; I will be

tributary to you, if you will deliver me from the attack from these two powers to the north."

And Ahaz knows that he has secretly sent to Tiglath Pileser to come and protect him; and Isaiah is told by the Lord about this underhanded scheme; and he told Ahaz that it will put them in a position where they will face Assyria directly.

It's exactly what we were in 20 years ago, when we faced the tremendous power of Hitler; and instead of saying, "Let's reduce Germany to where it will still be a powerful nation, but not a menace to us," we said, "We've got to wipe them out on any account; let's make friends with anybody we can to get rid of them." We join in with Soviet Russia—a far worse dictatorship than Hitler—and the end was that Hitler was wiped out; and we're face to face with Soviet Russia and in a far worse position than we were before.

That's exactly what Ahaz did. Tiglath Pileser wiped out Syria and Israel; then Judah faced Assyria. It was a far worse situation than they had been in before; and it was against that situation that Isaiah devotes a great part of his prophecy. When I used to deal with this in prophets class, during the beginning days of our relation with Russia and the early days of the World War II, it was interesting to point out the precise parallel; and it has worked out exactly as I predicted at that time, in view of the clear statements of Isaiah.

And Ahaz soon found himself facing a very disagreeable problem. It is described rather fully in 2 Kings 16. This chapter about King Ahaz is very important. It might be no more important than the events in the reigns of some other kings, to which we pay a good deal less attention; but from our viewpoint of Biblical study, it is of tremendous importance; because it is the background of a very substantial portion of the prophetic books. Therefore it is extremely vital that we have well in mind the principal aspects of this outstanding problem of the reign of Ahaz. We're told in 2 Kings 16

Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord his God, like David his father. But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel. And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

Then we read here about Rezin king of Syria—not in materials from Syria because we have very little from Syria, but in material from Assyria, telling about king Rezin from Syria.

Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath to Syria, and drove the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day.

Syria, you remember, is Aram; but in later times, after the Assyrians conquered Syria, the nations called the whole area Assyria; and then it was shortened to Syria; and then the name Syria got tied on to Aram, which actually wasn't Assyria at all, it was the region the Assyrians had conquered. In modern times, we pretty well stick to the name of Syria for that area. Our Bible constantly says Syria where the Hebrew says Aram, one of the lands of the Arameans, the region centering in Damascus. And Rezin, king of Aram, king of Syria the English translation says, recovered Elath to Syria and drove the Jews from Elath and the Syrians came to Elath and dwelt there to this day.

Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah son of Ramaliah king of Israel, besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. Then we read in verse 7 that

So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me. And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin.

Now visualize the situation; you have Judah here in southern Palestine; north of this you have a region three times as large as Judah, the region of Israel; the Trans-Jordan territory is either in the hands of foreigners like Moab or Edom, or in the hands of Israel; and north of that is Syria, a region twice as large as the region of Israel, though a great part of it is desert, a large and prosperous kingdom; and then Assyria is way beyond the desert across from that. And from the viewpoint of the people of Judah, Assyria probably seems very, very far away. They have little contact with it; they probably didn't think much about Assyria. And from the viewpoint of Syria, Assyria is right next to it; and it is a constant menace, one with which they have fought in the last two or three centuries a number of times; a constant menace and a very, very dangerous one, which has conquered much territory north of them.

Now Israel is between Judah and Syria; and Assyria does not seem as great a danger to Israel, but yet it is far more present to their minds than it is to Judah. To Judah it seems far away. People aren't worried about Assyria way up there; they're worried about Israel right next to them, and about Syria a little bit,

beyond Israel. And so here we have Israel and Syria coming to Jerusalem to war, and besieging Ahaz but unable to overcome him.

Now in Isaiah 7 this particular point is elaborated a little more fully. We find, there in Isaiah 7, it says,

And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it. And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.

And we read a reference to that a little further, in verses 5 and 6, where Isaiah says,

Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying, Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal.

Now that shows in Isaiah there, that they actually were threatening Ahaz's kingship; threatening the destruction of the house of David; threatening taking over Judah and putting a puppet king in power there.

Modern historians make a guess that Pekah and Rezin, fearing the coming of the Assyrians, wanted their rear to be safe from an attack as they're defending against the Assyrians. If they come, they wanted to be sure Judah was friendly with them; and therefore they were attacking to do away with the house of David and put in a new king.

As far as I know, that's purely conjecture. Maybe they didn't even have the Assyrians particularly in mind in this, but simply felt they'd like to extend their domain and take in Judah under a puppet king. Whatever the situation, it was a very great danger for the house of Judah. And in that situation, Kings tells us that Ahaz thought of a clever scheme to protect himself from them, a scheme which has often been used before and since.

Verse 7 says, (2 Kings 16:7)

So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me. And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of

Assyria. And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin.

Now that, we are told in Kings here, is what Ahaz did. We are not told that he told the people that that's what he was doing. And statements in the book of Isaiah make a pretty good reason for believing that he did not confide this plan to his people. Rather, that he dealt with his people on the basis of urging them to prepare to fight valiantly against Israel and Syria, in order to protect their lands from them when they came. And that this scheme, to have Tiglath-pileser come, was something which he knew meant eventually Assyria would be their neighbor instead of Israel; but that in the meantime, he wanted to keep the people fighting hard, so they wouldn't be conquered before the Assyrians got there. There is pretty good evidence for that, because without it much of Isaiah is unintelligible. With it, it's very easy to understand what Isaiah means in chapter 7 and chapter 28.

Now if you could look in your Bibles at Isaiah 7 here, and follow as we look at what Ahaz did here. We notice that when this happened that God spoke to Isaiah, chapter 7:

Then said the Lord unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field.

That is to say, Isaiah did not go in to Ahaz' palace, and talk to him. Probably Ahaz was too busy to talk with Isaiah in his palace. He reserved his time for more important matters than what this preacher would have to say. Ahaz was, as we've noticed, an evil king; a king who was not a believer; a king who was not interested in doing the Lord's will. And therefore, in order to get to Ahaz, it was necessary to meet him outside. But another thing about it is, that it shows evidently how Ahaz was rushing the work forward. This was outside the wall, where they were working in preparing the arrangement for the water supply to resist the siege and strengthen the defenses for Jerusalem.

In other words, Ahaz was on an inspection tour of the defenses. He was out there seeing how the work was coming forward, urging it on. He was interested in raising the morale of the people, and having them ready to fight strongly, and to resist Israel and Syria, if they should attack.

I remember in 1940, when a man told me that conditions in this country, that the war situation, was so serious, and the danger of war with Germany was so great, that President Roosevelt found it necessary to go personally to inspect the munitions plants, in order to be sure that everything was done exactly right. Well, I thought that was wonderful propaganda, political propaganda. Because

actually, of course, to send experts to see how the factories were working would be far more useful than for him to come in with his retinue; and hold up the work while they recognized him in every conceivable way. But it raised morale; it showed the importance of this thing; it showed how important he thought it that everything be done just right. It would not contribute much to the work; it might contribute greatly to the morale; and for many reasons it was, from his viewpoint, a very wise thing to do.

Well, now Ahaz was doubtless doing the same sort of thing. And so here are two reasons why the Lord said go to meet Ahaz, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fullers field. Now there's a third reason why he said it, which we will not notice until during the next reign. But during the next reign we will have another reference to the same place which fits right in; but we won't look at that now till we come to that. So keep the third reason open.

Isaiah 7:3,

Then said the Lord unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field; And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah. Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee,

Verse 7,

Thus says the Lord God, it shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin; and within 65 years shall Ephraim be broken that it be not a people. And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

The Lord says to Ahaz out here; Isaiah steps up in front of the people where Ahaz is carrying on his inspection tour; out there with all the multitudes of pious people around; Isaiah steps up to the king; and the king is saying, "We must fight, and we must hold off Israel and Syria; we must build these defenses strongly." We read here of the house of David,

And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.

And Isaiah says, "Don't be panicky; don't lose heart; don't lose confidence; take heed and be quiet; don't be fainthearted for these two smoking firebrands. They've made their plans, but the Lord says it shall not stand; neither shall it come to pass; why, within 65 years Ephraim won't even be a nation."

Well, Ahaz could not order the guards to push Isaiah out of the way, and go on. He could not do that, because the pious people considered Isaiah to be a prophet of the Lord; and they were interested in these words of comfort from God; and any act of disrespect towards the prophet would hurt the king's standing with the people, and interfere with the defense efforts rather than help them. In fact, Ahaz thought that this was a good thing for the people, that to strengthen them in their faith would make them fight better; it was a good thing for the nation, the religious basis of the nation. But he didn't want to take time away from important defense work, for the words of this prophet.

And so as Isaiah finished, he said,

Thus saith the Lord God, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.

but, he says,

If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

That must have been a reference to Ahaz's facial expression. Ahaz was showing, by his manner, he didn't want to interfere with Isaiah; but he wished he'd get out of the way and let him go on with the work. He wasn't interested in what Isaiah had to say. So, we read in verse 10,

Moreover the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.

"Ahaz, you don't look interested; you don't look as if you really think that God can order that their plans won't succeed. Ask for a sign." Well, this is just the opposite of what Ahaz wants. Ahaz wants Isaiah to get out of the way, and let him go on with the defense inspection; carrying on the preparation to defend the land. Isaiah has already wasted quite a bit of time, delayed the people. Well, maybe he has helped the morale enough to be worth a little intervening, a little bit of a delay; but we don't want it to go on any longer; and he's showing his impatience, his desire for Isaiah to stop and get out of the way.

Isaiah says, "Well, ask for a sign." This is inviting Ahaz to take a longer period, to give Isaiah a longer time to show that this is real; that they can trust the Lord, because in 65 years Ephraim won't be a people. And of course, Ahaz is thinking also, "I don't care what happens to Ephraim 65 years from now; I'll probably be dead by that time; but I'm interested in what's going to happen in the next 65 days. Are they going to succeed in destroying Judah before Tiglath-pileser gets here? With his help, I want them to hold them back now. As far as the future is concerned, I don't need to worry about the Lord. I put my trust in Tiglath-pileser."

I would take it this way: that in verse 3 the Lord says to Isaiah, "Go and meet Ahaz, and say so-and-so," so that from verse 3 is the command to Isaiah where to go and what he is to say and the command goes up to verse 9. But that, between verse 9 and 10, Isaiah goes and does it; and then, that at the end of 9 ["If ye will not believe..."], we have the words given which relate specifically to Ahaz's attitude. And then the Lord spoke again to Ahaz, and that means that God gave Isaiah now a further message, which he hadn't given him before he came. But I would think it very unlikely that it came in any other way than through the mouth of Isaiah.

So that in view of Ahaz' attitude, Isaiah says to him, "Well, you look incredulous; you look as if you don't think that this settles the matter; that Ephraim is going to be destroyed within 65 years. God says their plan won't stand; why not ask for a sign of the Lord? Ask for a sign." Well, we could wait three weeks to see if this sign takes place. Meanwhile we could lose a lot of time; that's not what Ahaz wanted. Ahaz wanted to get away from this and get on with the inspection.

And so he thinks of a very clever idea. It says in verse 12, Ahaz said, "I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." A beautiful statement. A very, very beautiful statement; a clever statement, just exactly the thought we ought to have; we'll trust the Lord; we'll take His word, we won't ask Him for a sign. It's just exactly what a believing man ought to say in the situation. "I don't need it, I believe the Lord" But Ahaz says it; and it is not an answer, but an evasion. It is—as we were told in chapel this morning—it is an attempt to make himself out to be one thing, when actually he has an entirely different purpose and attitude in mind.

Now we can infer that from what we know of the character of Ahaz; and more particularly, from the way that Isaiah answers. If a godly man said that, and Isaiah answered him as in verse 13, we would say Isaiah was utterly lacking in tact, and certainly not a man to represent the Lord. But if Ahaz was a hypocrite and said this, then the answer was the right thing to answer. Many a Christian worker says something that is a good thing to say, but says it to the wrong person, where it is a bad thing to say. He assumes people are hypocrites who aren't hypocrites; and he assumes people are true believers who are hypocrites.

Well, in this case, God is speaking through Isaiah; so we know that Isaiah makes no mistake in it. And I would think, in addition to that, that it must have been that Ahaz's facial expression, and his manner of speaking, made it rather evident, both to Isaiah and to the people, what his true attitude was. Because Isaiah answered in such a condemnatory way, which the words in plain print do not warrant. But the words with the facial expression, or a tone of voice, would show him to be utterly insincere and certainly warrant the response that Isaiah gave.

Isaiah says, "Hear ye now, O house of David"—he doesn't address Ahaz personally; he looks to Ahaz as one who is representing the house of David. He is the son of David; he's the man who is carrying on the promises to David; he is sitting on David's throne; he should be a man who is pious, who is following the Lord, who is trusting Him, who is looking to the Lord to give protection in this; but instead of that Ahaz is doing nothing but evading. And so he says,

And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?

When they asked Jesus for a sign, Jesus said "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." But here we find that an adulterous and wicked generation refuses to ask for a sign, and is rebuked for it. It is because of the attitude involved. Will you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.

The house of David won't always have a man of the type of Ahaz, sitting on the throne of David, and not being interested in God's promises; not being ready to take God at his word, or to look for a sign to show that he should take God at his word. The Lord will not always leave the house of David in such a situation. He's giving a sign to the whole house of David; that the house of David is to have a supernaturally-conceived head to replace Ahaz in God's own time; one who will actually be God-With-Us; who will actually be the representative of God on the earth. And of course, as we find later, more than that, he will actually be God on earth. Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

And then he goes on to assume—this son, we are not told when he is coming, the true son of David. We're not told when he's going to come, suppose he were to come right now? Well, if he were to come right now he would eat butter and honey.

This "that he may know" is a very poor translation; the Hebrew is *leday'to* from *yadah* "to know." The infinitive may be "for the purpose of" but it doesn't have to be, except when it is "in relation to" something, as "for the purpose of this discussion". Certainly it's not a way to get wise, to eat butter and honey. I guess fish is supposed to be brain food, but not butter and honey. Nowhere in the scripture does it say if you want to get wise, eat butter and honey. "Butter and

honey shall he eat that he may know"—no. "Butter and honey shall he eat"—things that you get from the animals; the things that come from a pastoral community; the things that can come from an area where there are not many to till the ground, and there are many plants growing that have to be laboriously planted and tilled and cultivated; but what you get from the animals, that a comparatively few people, with lots of empty land, can take care of these animals, and can get the products of the pastoral life. These things will be available *when* he knows to refuse the evil and choose the good. When this little baby—supposing he were born now—before he would be old enough to know enough to reach for the warm milk, instead of for the hot stove; before he would be old enough to know enough to make simple choices of refusing the thing that is harmful and choosing the thing that is good; before that—verse 15 says—the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

We've been talking about what's going to happen in 65 years; but now we're getting a lot sooner; now we say, before a little child, if it were born now, would reach the age when he could make simple choices; before that, Rezin of Damascus and Pekah of Israel will both have disappeared from the scene of Israel. Now, that's bringing your promise right up close, where it means a lot. And so he makes this promise to us; and then he continues,

The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah; even the king of Assyria.

Moulton, in his *Modern Reader's Bible*¹⁵⁹ says, in verse 17, he must turn his attention away from the king Ahaz and turn it to the king of Israel to the north, because it was the northern kingdom that was attacked by Syria, not the southern kingdom; but I don't think it's necessary to interpret it that way. I think he is saying that the king of Assyria is going to come, and is going to become a factor in your life, not merely in the lives of the people who know him. And Ahaz, as he hears this, thinks, "Well, what on earth is Isaiah referring to the people of Assyria for? Isaiah is not in the privy council; he hasn't heard the private discussions of the plans to relieve the pressure from Israel and Syria by getting Assyria to come attack them. He should not be aware of this; but somebody has given this out. Are people beginning to realize it? But Isaiah hadn't said he'll come against Syria and Ephraim, he said he'll come against thee."

¹⁵⁹ [dcb] Richard D. Moulton, [*Modern Reader's Bible: The Old Testament* \(pdf\)](#) (1899, revised edition 1922). Note p. 486 on "The Child Immanuel and the Child Wonderful": Isaiah presents "a continuous triumph song of the enemy, who picture to themselves [Israel and Syria-dcb] Judah as hungry, cursing, in gloomy distress, while northern Israel [Zebulun and Naphtali] is triumphant." But "the people supposed to be in darkness [Judah-dcb] see great light, and the boasted conquest is rolled in bloody defeat." Thus, according to Moulton, Isa. 7:14 predicts the defeat of the Israeli invasion. This same note also remarks "[Note that butter and honey in Bible poetry means famine food, and is so recognized by commentators.]".

And Isaiah now had gotten bold enough where it's pretty hard to interrupt him; and he is able to give a somewhat longer discourse; and he continues here. And if somebody thinks that the interpretation that I gave to verse 15 is very poor, making butter and honey a sort of pastoral situation of semi-exile, look down to verse 22 and see as Isaiah continues, how he says in verse 20,

In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep; And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land. And it shall come to pass in that day, that every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it shall even be for briers and thorns. With arrows and with bows shall men come thither; because all the land shall become briers and thorns. And on all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.

And on all hills that are ordinarily digged with the mattock, they won't be able to come there because of the fear of briers and thorns, but they'll send out oxen and sheep and goats. It is a picture of the situation where a few people are left with lots of land; a proportionately small number of people, and not enough people to till it, and to grow things that require active cultivation.

Now of course, this is what will take place very soon in the land to the north of them; as the Assyrians took a great many people off with them into captivity. And we read that when, after the northern kingdom was taken into captivity, that the lions began to come into the town, and injure people because the land was so depopulated; there was not the population to keep down the wild beasts.

Mr. Deshpande? (Student. "Is 'Immanuel' a description?") Yes, it would seem that the name here is a description rather than a name as a designation. "He shall be called Immanuel" could be that that's the name he's going to be given, Immanuel. But it could be that it's a designation of his character; he represents God with us. And we find it often; remember Naomi said 'don't call me Naomi, call me Marah', because life has turned bitter, and Naomi means sweet. In those days there was a great stress on the meaning of names, which we don't give today.

Of course, another thing about it would be that everyone in royal families, nearly everywhere, has several names. We call him Immanuel, but Jesus was the direct designation that was given, to put the stress on Saviour; but he also does

fulfill the Immanuel prophecy; he was the Immanuel. Now that's in the realm of prophecy, and we want to keep [in this course] to the realm of history. So I think it's good to touch on this a little, but we don't want to spend much time on it. We want to spend our time principally on the historical aspect of this thing, its relation to the background. That's what we're dealing with in this particular course. But this is important to have in mind as background for the prophets when you get to them.

This is to the whole house of David, not just Ahaz; a sign, you might say. There is a sign as a means of evidence that God really is speaking. And then, there is a sign as a bringing to them of the understanding of God regarding Israel and Judah. Now the latter is particularly involved, in this sign: a sign for the house of David; we don't have to put up with a man like Ahaz permanently. God is going to provide one who will be a proper son of David; that's a sign to the whole house of David.

Isaiah 7:14 is a sign to Ahaz and to the people living then. If this child should be born right now—we're not told when he is going to be born—why within this brief length of time before a child would be able to make simple choices, your immediate pressing difficulty will be gone; because both kings will be out of the way.

Well, this situation here facing Ahaz is a very important situation. It is a situation in which this wonderful Immanuel prophecy is given; but in it, we have Ahaz representing human plans and human ideas of how to meet a great crisis; and Isaiah saying, the way to meet this is to trust in God and look to God. Your human expedients, which seem to be meeting the crisis, Isaiah says, are actually not going to meet it, but to make it worse. They may seem to meet it temporarily, but they're going to make it worse in the end.

So he stresses the theme of exile, which they can take as meaning the exile of the northern kingdom; but he speaks of it in such a way as to suggest the southern kingdom also is in danger of such a thing.

And then in chapter 8, sometime later, the Lord gave another sign to Isaiah dealing with this same situation. He said to Isaiah

Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning Mahershalalhashbaz.

Mahershalalhashbaz. That means "hasten the booty, hurry the spoil." Sounds like war, sounds like difficulty. And so he says,

And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. And I went unto the prophetess; and she

conceived, and bare a son. Then said the Lord to me, Call his name Mahershalalhashbaz.

Be glad you're not a prophet, that you have to give your sons names like that! But the name was given, of course, so that the son would be a living witness to the message God was giving Ahaz.

For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.

You notice he doesn't say the land of Israel is going to be completely despoiled at that time; Israel was not yet destroyed. The king was removed from it, the land was overrun but it was not yet destroyed. But Syria was. And so he says before this time, a shorter time than the previous time designated, the riches of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria will be taken away before the king of Assyria.

And the Lord said,

Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son; Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many,

That's the River Euphrates which gives life to the greater part of Mesopotamia; this is often a figure for the land as a whole; so he says the Lord brings on them the waters of this great river, which is a figure of speech which he explains immediately,

even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.

Here Immanuel is thought of as the one who is the real ruler of the land. Ahaz is an unworthy son of the house of David. This land belongs to Ahaz only temporarily. But in actuality, it is Immanuel's land; and so he says Immanuel's land, "thy land, O Immanuel," is going to be overrun by the king of Assyria.

And he continues,

Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and

it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us.

"For God is with us;" that is, for Immanuel. Now this Immanuel is exactly the same as the Immanuel at the end of verse 8. But the King James, at the end of chapter 8 [verse 10] puts Immanuel here in translation, "God is with us." Now of course, you could make it "God is with us" in both cases; or you could take it as "Immanuel" in both cases. I incline to think it's better to take it as Immanuel in both cases. Of course, it means God is with us. But he says Immanuel, your land is going to be overrun by the king of Assyria. But he says, after all, it is Immanuel's land, and though all these great wicked forces come and attack us, God is going to cause that they be annihilated; that they cannot completely conquer, because it is Immanuel's land—God is with us.

And so he goes on, in these chapters 8 and 9 and 10, stressing the fact that this clever scheme of Ahaz—this clever scheme of getting the king of Assyria to destroy Syria and Israel, so that Judah will be saved from them—actually brings Judah face to face with a far greater and more dangerous aggressor than Israel or Syria ever were. And the removal of the buffer states, though temporarily helpful, is in the end terribly harmful to Judah.

It's exactly what we did 15 years ago [1945] when the whole attitude was unconditional surrender, utter unconditional surrender of Germany—annihilate them, reduce them to an agricultural folk that have no power whatever. A great many of the factories, as soon as Germany was taken, were torn down and shipped off to Russia; and Germany was just to be annihilated, no longer a force in the world. Now of course within a few years, that changed completely, because they began then to realize that, in removing Germany from being a force in the world, they were bringing us right face to face with Russia, which was very nice to have on the other side of Germany as a help to us against Hitler's aggression, but which face to face, was a far greater danger than Hitler ever was.

And that is exactly the situation that Ahaz is facing here, and Isaiah is bringing it out. He should trust the Lord, and know that the Lord can deliver them if they put their faith in him; but if they put themselves, if they look to their clever human schemes to get Assyria to come and help them, in the end they'll be face to face with Assyria, with no buffer state in between, in a far greater danger than they ever were before.

And Isaiah goes on and develops that thought in the next chapters, but at the end of chapter 10, he tells how the Assyrian is, after all, only God's instrument. He says in verse 5 of chapter 10,

O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

Ahaz thinks that he is powerful, that he is doing this on his own, and so verse 12,

Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.

He, the Lord, is going to overcome the power of the Assyrian, even though he uses him temporarily.

So you see the message given in these chapters, as dealing with that immediate century—leaving out of attention for the moment, the very wonderful prophecy of Christ that are in several of these chapters—the message for the immediate situation is a rather complex message. Ahaz is doing wrong, in using these human expedients and making alliance with a wicked power, in order to protect himself against the neighboring nations. God is going to punish him for it; he will see that his scheme backfires; he will see that Assyria will be right next to them, and they'll be in far greater danger than they ever were before.

But the Lord says, "I'm not going to let the Assyrian conquer you." He says, though Ahaz brings this great danger on the land, he says, "I'm going to protect them from it. You don't think I can protect you from Israel and Syria; you have to look to Assyria for help?" He says "When you're faced with Assyria, I will protect you from Assyria. And I will destroy the power of Assyria, and make it impossible for Assyria to destroy Judah," the Lord says.

So you see it's a rather complex message. Well, the same message is given again, in two more places. It is given in chapter 17, where it calls the chapter, "the burden of Damascus," but most of it is talking about Ephraim, rather than Damascus. He is talking about this land, and Ahaz's attempt to protect; and how the Lord is going to protect them, in the end, in his own way.

But you get it more clearly and more fully in chapter 28. In Isaiah 28 you have a situation where undoubtedly, chapter 28 begins with a great banquet at which the nobles of Judah are holding a banquet to celebrate the fact that Tiglath-pileser will come, and deliver them from Israel and Syria; and they're going to be protected by this plan. The people at large don't know of it; just a few nobles who are close to Ahaz. Ahaz, of course, is not at the banquet. It's a banquet where these nobles are making this plan; but these nobles are making this plan,

with Ahaz; and they are now celebrating, because they know that it's going to work out. They feel confident of it. But Isaiah comes into the banquet.

So we have Isaiah 28:1, Isaiah enters into this banquet, and these people say, "Well what's this fellow coming in here for? He wasn't invited." But they're giving out things rather lavishly; they're having a very fine banquet; they're giving a certain amount of things free to the people around; and Isaiah enters in. It's pretty hard to clear him out immediately; so he starts in, and when they've heard a few words, they think this man adds to the pleasure of the banquet; and they are glad to listen to him for a little, because he attacks the people of Ephraim, that they are anxious to be delivered from.

Isaiah says,

Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!

Well, these Judean nobles, reeling in their wine and their luxury of their banquet, are glad that here it is pointed out what terrible drunkards the Ephraimites are, the people of the northern kingdom.

And he goes on,

Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet:

They think well this is good stuff, we're glad this fellow came in. This helps our celebration and it improves the morale of the people. They're glad to hear Isaiah talk through verse 4, where he's talking about the downfall of Ephraim. But then in verse 5 he begins bringing in a little religion into it. "Well, it's all right to listen to that, but we hope you get back to the patriotic theme soon."

Verse 5

In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people, And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

But then in verse 7, Isaiah turns to them, and they don't like that so much. If he had given verse 7 first, they'd have called the bouncer, and thrown him out immediately. But starting with verse 1 about the drunkards of Ephraim, they

congratulate him, he keeps going and now they couldn't stop him quite that quickly. So now he keeps on.

So in verse 7 he says, But they also—a better translation would be, "But these also". He has been talking about Ephraim; now he says, "but these also," the people right in front of him, the banqueters,

have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.

Now the nobles are beginning to get restless. He's attacking them directly, and they don't like that. It's all right to talk about the drunkards of Ephraim but we don't want a temperance message here, at our banquet. So in verse 9, they say,

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:

Does he think that we are little children? Does he think we're infants? He's giving us a temperance lecture here? Precept upon precept... that is the sort of thing he's giving, for children; that's all right for the kids, but that's not what we want at our banquet. They're beginning to wonder whether they hadn't better call the bouncer. Then in verse 11, Isaiah turns directly to them and he says,

For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear. But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

"With another tongue" what's that mean? That means foreign, that means those who can't understand. To whom he said, this is the rest ... yet they wouldn't hear.

But the word of God was to them precept on precept. Simple language was given, but they wouldn't take it. Verse 14,

Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement;

After getting Tiglath-pileser to come and help; when this clever scheme, this alliance with one you can't trust anyway. You've got to stall him. He'll come in and give you promises, and you know you can't trust anything he says in the first place. Therefore, thus says the Lord, verse 18,

your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

Your plan is no good, verse 20,

For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.

[end of class hour]

====

We were looking at Isaiah 28 and 29 the last time we met; and we noticed there how Isaiah pointed out to the nobles of Judah that the plan that they'd concocted was not capable of solving the problems they were facing. That their covenant with death was going to be disannulled, and their agreement with hell would not stand. That this plan they made, this clever plan, to call in a wicked force to overcome the neighboring dangers, was actually removing the buffer state and putting themselves in a worse situation than they were before.

And so in the beginning of chapter 29, he goes right on to see what the result of it is going to be. He says,

Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices.

Woe to Ariel; that means "the hearth of God"; woe to the hearth of God, the city where David was, which makes it perfectly clear it's Jerusalem, the city where David was. Verse 2,

Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel. And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee. And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a

familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust.

Here is the situation that is to be produced through Ahaz's scheme. They are to be brought into danger, worse than what they have now, far worse, because the Assyrian force will be round about them, and they will be in imminent danger of being besieged and destroyed.

Now it's very unfortunate that, in the King James Version, they translate *hamon* at the beginning of verse 5 as "moreover". A much better translation here would be "but", because the context of verse 5 shows a sharp antithesis to verse 4. Verses 1–4 show what the result of the scheme of Ahaz and the nobles is: great danger, great difficulty, worse trouble by far than they're in now. But what's going to happen—

[But] the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.

But the multitude of thy strangers—that is the people from a distance who come to attack them—will be like small dust. Well that could just be how many there were, as many as the dust. And yet you think of *small* dust as something that has not much power.

Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire. And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision. It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion.

Here is the Assyrian king in a dream, he's eating; he's just going to take Jerusalem; but he wakes, his soul is empty. He wakes and he's got nothing.

And then Isaiah goes ahead in the rest of the chapter and denounces the wickedness of the people in general and their indifference to God. But chapters 30 and 31 deal with this situation,

Here are the people who have brought in the Assyrians to deliver them from Syria and Israel. Now they say, "Well, we're in danger from the Assyrians, then we'll turn to the Egyptians." So he says in chapter 30,

Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.

Verse 7, "For the Egyptians shall help in vain to no purpose."

They think, "We're going to get the Assyrian Empire to free us from the danger of Israel and Syria; and if we have trouble with them, we'll call on Egypt, we'll ride the tightrope between the different forces; we'll play our cards very skillfully, we'll be safe through it all." Isaiah says, "You won't be at all safe." He says, "The Egyptians will help to no purpose, in vain. It will not deliver you."

But he says, verse 15,

For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.

And so on, But he tells how the Lord is going to deliver them by his strength, not by anything they do, verse 31,

For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod.

And chapter 31 has the same two ideas; we won't take time to go into detail how they fit together, and how they deal with spiritual needs of the people, and so on; but just this historical matter that he predicts.

He says, "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help." You think Egypt will help you from Assyria, like Assyria helped you from the other? It won't work.

Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!

The Egyptians are men, not God, their horses flesh, not spirit. When the Lord stretches out his hand, both he that helps shall fall, and he that is helped shall fall. The Lord says you won't be able to deliver yourselves from Egypt, but the Lord says, "I'm going to deliver you from Assyria."

Verse 5,

As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it. Turn ye unto him from whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted. For in that day every man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which your own hands have made unto you for a sin.

"As birds fly, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem." That doesn't mean he's going to send airplanes to deliver them; it means like the bird, just seeming to hover overhead; that you can't reach; you can't get at, but that simply is beyond your power. God, is going, by his might and power, to deliver Jerusalem. He'll defend it, he'll deliver it; like birds fly, he will protect you in a way that you could never imagine.

Verse 8,

Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man, shall devour him: but he shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall be discomfited. And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.

Then shall the Assyrian fall; how's he going to fall? Are the Israelites going to overcome him? Not the sword of a mighty man, Well, who's going to kill him? It won't be the sword of a strong man; it won't be the sword of a weak man. It's going to be the power of God.

People in the days of Ahaz must have thought—the ungodly must have thought—"What ridiculous nonsense this man Isaiah is telling us. He says that we're foolish to look to Assyria for help against Israel and Syria. He says he could protect us from them. He says that the result of this is going to put us in a worse plight; and we begin to see he's right in that. We're next to the buffer state; but then, when we have no buffer state, we'll be right next to Assyria; but then, when we say, 'Well, we'll turn to Egypt; the other side will defend us then,' he says that won't be any help; but he says, 'just like birds flying the Assyrian is going to be overcome,' and he says 'it won't be the sword of a strong man or a weak man, but it's the Lord's power that is going to defeat the Assyrians.' Who ever heard of such a thing? A mighty army—a tremendous aggressor like the Assyrians—and simply the Lord's power in a way that doesn't use anybody's sword defeating them?"

Why they probably said—look what Stalin said, when Churchill said to him in their conference for settling up affairs in Europe, "Why not have the Pope be our

ally?" and Stalin said, "How many divisions does he have?"¹⁶⁰ It's the power that's going to settle things. Well, I don't think the Pope is a proper representative of the spiritual forces that enter in; but the fact is that there are spiritual forces that enter in, even though the materialistic philosophy of Stalin may not admit even the possibility.

And Isaiah says here, when earthly things seem absolutely beyond your reach, there's nothing you can do about it, then the Lord's going to deliver Jerusalem, by his own power, from Assyria. This is the prediction he makes in connection with the rebuke against Ahaz and the nobles for their wicked scheme of using wicked human forces as allies instead of trusting in the Lord and going forward in His strength.

And, so these are the statements given in connection with Ahaz reign.

There's one more thing we'll briefly call your attention to, not in Isaiah but the Prophet Micah. I imagine that, after what we've said now, everyone here is aware of the fact that Isaiah prophesied during the reign of Ahaz. I hope none of you will forget that fact; it's very important; but you may not be so familiar with the fact that Micah also did. Micah, a much shorter prophecy than that of Isaiah, but one that is more similar to Isaiah than any other book in the Old Testament. You take anybody that has never read anything in the Bible, and you read to him six or seven chapters from Isaiah; and then you read to him from other parts of the Bible; then you pick a chapter at random and read it; and he'll be able to tell you right away whether it's from Isaiah or not, because Isaiah has a different style from other books of the Bible. It is very different from any other book; much larger vocabulary, much more poetic language; there's a different approach in Isaiah's style of the whole book than any other book of the Old Testament. But a person would, in both cases, immediately say that is Isaiah. But Micah is the only book that some might have a little difficulty in being quite so sure about being distinct from Isaiah. Micah is more like Isaiah than any other book of the Old Testament, though it is quite different, but more like it than any other.

And Micah begins, "The word of the Lord that came to Micah the Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah;" Isaiah begins, "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem."

¹⁶⁰ Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar* Chapter 43, "The swaggering Conqueror: Yalta and Berlin" Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin meeting at the Yalta Conference at Livadia Palace (Russia). "They were discussing the Pope. 'Let's make him our ally,' proposed Churchill. 'All right,' smiled Stalin, 'but as you know, gentlemen, war is waged with soldiers, guns, tanks. How many divisions has the Pope?' "

And Micah begins with a prediction of the destruction of Samaria.

I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard:
and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the
foundations thereof.

After telling of God's punishment against Samaria, then all the rest of Micah deals with the southern kingdom. It is similar to the approach in Isaiah chapter 28, where he deals with the northern kingdom, and then from there on it's all about the southern kingdom. It was during the ministry of both of these prophets that the northern kingdom was destroyed.

Now I'm going to speak separately about Judah and Israel; and now, there's a little question in my mind which to speak of first. So at this point we've been speaking about Judah prior to the destruction of the northern kingdom, and that finished the reign of Ahaz but he is succeeded by

2. Hezekiah.

Hezekiah gets a fair amount of space in the Old Testament, because he was a man of very great importance in relation of the people with God. He is as fine a king as Judah ever had. He is at least as fine as Asa and Jehoshaphat, and perhaps he was finer. And he is very prominent in the early portion—in the first two-thirds—of the book of Isaiah. He is described also in 2 Kings 18–20, and in 2 Chronicles 29 to 32. Thus you see Chronicles has more about him than Kings does. Hezekiah reigned 29 years in Jerusalem. He began to reign when he was 25 years of age, and he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done. He removed the high places, broke the images, cut down the groves, broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made, for in those days the children of Israel burnt incense to it, and called it Nehushtan.

He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. For he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses. And the Lord was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.

That is told in the beginning of 2 Kings 18. "Trusted the Lord"—a very marked contrast from his father Ahaz. But in the fourth year, we read in 2 Kings 18:9,

And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. And at the end of three

years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is in the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken.... Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them. And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold.

Hezekiah gave him these things and he wasn't satisfied. We read in verse 17,

And the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field.

Have you heard of that place before? It's the very place to which the Lord sent Isaiah to stand and face king Ahaz; and tell him that, instead of his wicked schemes, he should trust the Lord and follow him; and that his wicked scheme would result in bringing a far greater danger than the danger that he was trying to deliver himself from by that scheme. In that very spot, we find here the representatives of the king of Assyria stood to call on Ahaz's son to surrender everything to him; and here we find them speaking the most blasphemous words as they call on Hezekiah's people to turn to the king of Assyria; and to surrender to him, and turn over Hezekiah to him; and he will have mercy on the people if they will immediately surrender to him. But otherwise how terribly he is going to treat them, if they resist him.

And this story is told in Isaiah 36–39, in 2 Kings, and in 2 Chronicles. It's one of the outstanding events of the whole Old Testament. This account of how these Assyrians were going to destroy Jerusalem. He sent this message, and you read here in 2 Kings (and it's also in Isaiah almost word for word) how that Isaiah came to Hezekiah with the answer to Sennacherib's threat; terrible threats, threats which had been fulfilled in his terrible treatment of other cities all around, which Sennacherib and his father had taken.

We read

Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.

He had taken thousands of people into captivity; now he is threatening Jerusalem. And God gives a message to Isaiah to give to Sennacherib, in 2 Kings 19:28

Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest. And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof.

See what the sign is? The sign is this: the Assyrian king is down in the Philistine plain with his army. Up here in Jerusalem, the people are able to get out into the surrounding country, to pick, to harvest a certain amount of material; but they are not able to get out enough to do systematic agricultural activity. Therefore, he says, you will eat this year such things as grow of themselves. They had been unable to get out to plant and to properly cultivate but a certain amount grew of itself. The Assyrian is not going to close in on them to the extent that they cannot get food from the country near Jerusalem; but will be a danger, a menace to such an extent that they haven't been able to get out this year to plant and to prepare the ground and to cultivate; all they will be able to do is—when no Assyrian band is in clear evidence—to go out quickly and to gather up everything they can of what's growing and bring it in as fast as possible, lest one of the Assyrian bands going through the land shall see them and carry them away. They are able to get what grows itself this year, but not to really cultivate and plant. And he says, next year will be just the same way.

But he says, in the 3rd year, you'll be able to sow and reap and plant vineyards and eat the fruit thereof. In other words by the 2nd year, they've already been in this situation for some months; but by the 3rd year—the 2nd year away from this—the Assyrian danger will no longer be there. Not only will they not be in danger of its conquering Jerusalem; but they will be in a position where they can go out into the country; and they can run their farms; and they can sow and cultivate and reap in a normal, orderly fashion. The sign here, in other words, is not a miracle in itself; but it's the time element, so that as it happens over this period of three years, they will know that God was in it; he predicted just when it would come. He has not yet told them how it will come. He says "I am going to put my hook in your nose and my bridle in your lips and turn you back the way you come."

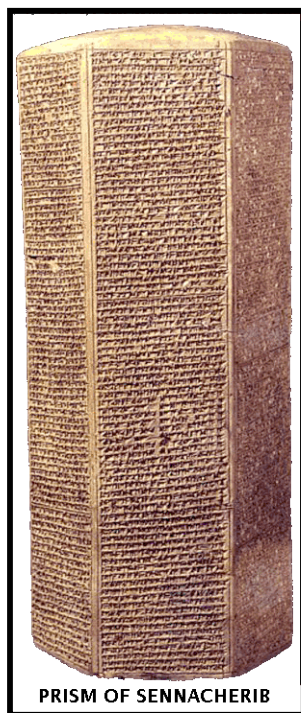
Verse 32, he says,

thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the

Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

"Behold, they were all dead corpses." A much better translation would be, "behold, these were all dead corpses." It doesn't mean the dead corpses arose but it means that when Sennacherib got up in the morning, his people came to the door and said, "Something terrible has happened in the night!" They said, "Our army has just melted away! People have just been dropping right and left, like flies; there are just thousands and thousands of them that have died!" And the military power left was too little to think of going up and conquering Jerusalem, in fact too little to stay there safely; they had to get out, and get back to their own land, before the little force left should even prove too small to protect the king of Assyria.

Well now, that is the tremendous thing that is described here in Kings; the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians—185,000 people—and we find the same thing told in Isaiah, and the same thing told in 2 Chronicles.



PRISM OF SENNACHERIB

Well, that is of course one of the great tremendous events in the whole of the Old Testament history. You notice how it was predicted by Isaiah—so clearly predicted—in the time of Ahaz, that the Lord was going to do this. Ahaz brought the tremendous menace on them; but God, of his own grace and his undeserved mercy, was going to enter in and deliver them by his own power, apart from anything whatever that they did. Well, it's a tremendous thing the Bible claims here; and naturally, one who wants to approach the Bible with an extremely skeptical attitude can say, "Well it is fairy stories made up."

But now we have discovered, in these last two decades, the inscriptions of the Assyrian kings; and it has thrilled the archaeologists to read the prism of Sennacherib, the account which he gave of the great events of his reign; which he put around through the land of Assyria; telling what a great king he was; and how many cities he had utterly destroyed, broke in pieces; and how many of the people he had flayed alive and taken into captivity and so on; and here we have a quotation from it in *The Ancient Near East*, p. 199:

"In the continuation of my campaign, I besieged Beth-Dagon, Joppa, Banai-barqa, Azuru, cities of Sidqia, who had not speedily bowed in

submission at my feet; I besieged, I conquered, I carried off their spoil. The officials, nobles, and people of Ekron, who had thrown Padi their king—bound by oath and curse to Assyria—into fetters of iron, and had given him over to Hezekiah (*Ha-za-qi-(i)a-û*), the Judahite (*la-û-da-aî*)—he kept him in confinement like an enemy—their heart became afraid, and they called upon the Egyptian kings, the bowmen, chariots and horses of the king of Meluhha [Ethiopia], a countless host, and these came to their aid."

And Pritchard has put in here the exact writing in the Assyrian writing; you see how it is written in syllabic writing, but it's a representation of what you get from the Hebrew.

You remember how we find in Isaiah 28–32, how this is what they said we'll do; and they had done it: call for help on the kings of Egypt. "and the bowmen, the chariot-corps and the cavalry of the king of Ethiopia, an army beyond counting—and they actually had come to their assistance.

In the plain of Eltekeh their battle lines were drawn up against me and they sharpened their weapons. Upon a trust-inspiring oracle given by Ashur, my lord, I fought with them and inflicted a defeat upon them. In the mêlée of the battle, I personally captured alive the Egyptian charioteers...

...which Isaiah had predicted some years before. He said, "Egypt will help you in vain, it will accomplish nothing..."

...I captured alive the Egyptian charioteers with their princes and (also) the charioteers of the king of Ethiopia. ...I besieged Ekron and killed the officials and patricians who had committed the crime and hung their bodies on poles surrounding the city. The (common) citizens who were guilty of minor crimes, I considered prisoners of war. The rest of them, those who were not accused of crimes and misbehavior, I released. I made Padi, their king, come from Jerusalem (*Ur-sa-li-im-mu*) and set him as their lord on the throne, imposing upon him the tribute due to me (as) overlord.

Now after telling these terrible things he does to the other city, now you expect Sennacherib to go on and tell what he did to Jerusalem. Hezekiah is the ringleader of the opposition here; surely he'll utterly destroy it. He has destroyed the Egyptian force that came to its assistance, and surely he'll destroy it. You read here then,

"As to Hezekiah, the Jew, he did not submit to my yoke, I laid siege to 46 of his strong cities, walled forts and to the countless small villages in their vicinity, and conquered them by means of well-stamped earth-ramps and battering-rams brought near to the walls, combined with the attack by foot

soldiers, using mines, breaches as well as sapper work. Undermining, I drove out of them 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, big and small cattle beyond counting, and considered them booty."

This is what he did to the fenced cities of Judah. After doing that you can imagine what he's going to do to Jerusalem and Hezekiah.

Himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage. I surrounded him with earthwork in order to molest those who were leaving his city's gate. His towns which had plundered, I took away from his country and gave them to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, and Sillibel, king of Gaza. Thus I reduced his country, but I still increased the tribute...

and so on. And then he goes on,

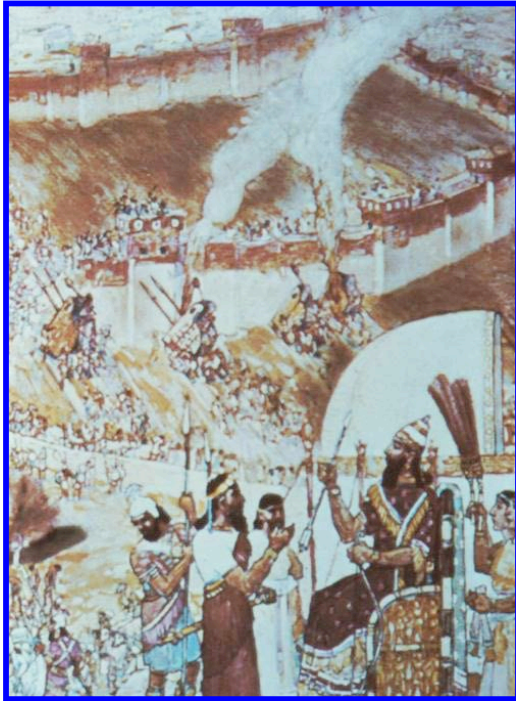
Hezekiah himself, whom the terror-inspiring splendor of my lordship had overwhelmed and whose irregular and elite troops which he had brought into Jerusalem, his royal residence, in order to strengthen (it), had deserted him, did send me, later, to Nineveh, my lordly city, together with 30 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver, precious stones...

and so on. You notice how he destroyed Jerusalem; how he conquered it; he shut it off like a bird in a nest. That's all he said about it. And he can't say he conquered Jerusalem, like he conquered all these others. He's naturally not going to tell people that he was defeated; he's not going to say that he had difficulty and lost a lot of his army; he's going to boast about anything he can; but I don't remember any other case where an Assyrian king boasts of shutting a man up in a city like a bird in a cage. They always tore down the wall of the city, and took the man out and killed him, and wrecked the city. But here he shut him in like bird in a cage. It's a very clear evidence of the fact that the Bible is true; that Sennacherib was stopped; not by human force, not by an army, not by the Egyptians; the Egyptians helped to no purpose... but God interfered and delivered the city; and he made it necessary that Sennacherib give up and go back home.

And, now there's another very interesting thing in connection with that. At the bottom, on page 201 here, you will find the words, "Epigraph from a relief showing the conquest of Lachish."

Sennacherib, king of the world, king of Assyria, sat upon a *nimedu*-throne and passed in review the booty taken from Lachish (*La-ki-su*).

If you turn in the back, I hope you will all look at these figures 101-2; in the back of *The Ancient Near East*, you will find there three pages—two of them together, one great big page, 101 and then 102—Sennacherib seated on his throne, receiving the booty taken from Lachish; and the attack on Lachish by siege engines, pushed up an incline; and accompanied by archers who shoot from behind shields; archers, spearmen, and sling-throwers support the siege-engines; three nude figures impaled. This relief of Sennacherib found in Nineveh, in his great palace.



Sennacherib lived on for the next 20 years. And there in the palace, he had this great beautiful bas-relief put up, showing his great forces attacking Lachish, and conquering Lachish, and destroying it, and showing the booty from Lachish brought before him as he sits on his throne. And it's interesting that he doesn't take one of the big capital cities to show his conquest and his great power. He takes the 2nd most important city of Judah, the city of Lachish. I call this picture, "Sennacherib's Consolation Prize". He tried to forget that the Lord had prevented him from conquering Jerusalem by taking the second most important city in Judah and putting up this great beautiful bas-relief to show the great conquest that he had of the 2nd most important in Judah. He never would have bothered to mention the 2nd if he had taken the first. And,

ordinarily you wouldn't bother to mention the second anyway; but I guess it hurt him pretty badly to think he hadn't been able to take Jerusalem. He tried to comfort himself with this great beautiful large picture there in his Nineveh palace; a picture of Lachish, one of our finest pictures of the Assyrian methods of attack, and the conquest which they made; one of their great monuments of that day. So it is an extremely interesting instance where archaeological evidence has marvelously proven the accuracy of one of the most wonderful stories in the Bible.

Some of you perhaps are familiar with Byron's poem about it, a very beautiful poem in which Byron describes the downfall of Sennacherib. This is one of the great events in Old Testament History; and you see how it was predicted so clearly; you see what a place it played in revelation. His power, and of the folly of trusting in human methods and human schemes and especially in alliances with ungodly forces.

The Destruction of Sennacherib
by Lord Byron

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock—beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

Well, after this, we find all three places describe Hezekiah's sickness; and how the Lord added 15 years to his life; and we have described also how the king of Babylon sent letters and a present to Hezekiah. This is the last thing described in the account of Hezekiah, in all three accounts. But it seems to most interpreters highly possible that actually it took place earlier than any of the other events described in the life of Hezekiah.

In 2 Kings 20:12,

At that time Berodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.

Most interpreters think that, what it really means is that this king of Babylon, which had revolted against Assyria, and had gained its independence for a brief time under this king, Marduk-apla-iddina which contracts—as the Hebrews say it—into Merodach-baladan; but in 2 Kings, it gives it as Berodach—you see a

mistake, a B for the M, a clear technical error—it is Merodach–baladan in the others, but Berodach–baladan here. We well know that the name of the god was Marduk, the god of Babylon.

But this man had led the Babylonians in insurrection against the Assyrians; and for a number of years they maintained their independence. And when this king's representatives came to Hezekiah, they came nominally to congratulate him on recovery from his illness; but they didn't in those days go over 1,000 miles across the desert and down there, simply to congratulate a man on his recovery. That was the excuse, but the real reason was to get Hezekiah to stand with them against the Assyrian conqueror. And so it probably precedes Hezekiah's rebellion against Assyria, and the situation that he went through there.

But we read that Hezekiah welcomed them, and entered into the finest of relationships with these men; and after they left

Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon. And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.

In other words Hezekiah had perfect confidence in these men. They were enemies of the king of Assyria, as he was. He had utter confidence in them. And it's as if—you might say—as if when the Dutch were fearing Hitler, that they would enter into an alliance with another force of about equal power from some other part of the world; say that men came from Paraguay to Holland; and they entered into a friendly relationship with them; and in order to work together against Hitler; and then, say, that a prophet came to the people of Holland, and said, "An army is going to come from Paraguay and is going to conquer and destroy you." They say, "How ridiculous! What utter nonsense!" Well, that's exactly the way this sounded to Hezekiah. Here was Assyria, the great world power, Babylon had been a world power long ago, but now for years it had been subject to Assyria; it had gained its independence and was independent a brief time. And they were glad to do what they could to help Babylon gain its independence from the great rower of Assyria. But to tell him, as Isaiah said,

And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord. Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the

Lord which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?

I like the translation here of it in Kings much better than the one in Isaiah, which seems to give rather poor picture of Hezekiah's attitude; it has practically the same words, but the way it's translated he says, "good is the word of the Lord, for there shall be peace and truth in my days." Hezekiah doesn't mean this is good, that Babylon is going to do this, but he means that "Whatever the Lord says, I am glad to accept it as God's word; and consequently it's good; but praise the Lord, there's going to be peace in my day."

The Assyrian is the great world power. He says the Assyrian is not going to conquer Jerusalem, and it will last nearly another century. They had taken Samaria, carried it off captive; carried away the ten tribes into exile; but for nearly a century after this Jerusalem remains there, un-attacked by the Assyrian king; and then it is not Assyria at all that conquers Jerusalem, but another power; which in the day of Hezekiah appears to be such a minor power.

And this—though it probably occurs in the very beginning of Hezekiah's reign—is placed at the end in all these accounts; not that they're changing the chronological order, but that they are putting the prediction of the Babylonian conquest at the end. They're giving the great deliverance at the beginning, and they're putting the prediction of the conquest at the end. In Isaiah, that's a very logical place for it, because then it introduces this wonderful prediction of deliverance in chapters 40 and following.

Well, Chronicles also tells about the great Passover that Hezekiah proclaims, the greatest Passover that the land has had for many, many years; and the wonderful loyalty of Hezekiah to the Lord, the way in which he established and observed it exactly as the Lord wanted it; and he did away with all the high places where the people worshipped aside from the central place where they were supposed to; the critics, of course, say this was a later invention, because the idea of the destruction of the high places, they say, was never heard of till Josiah's time. But the Bible says that Hezekiah did it.

Well, we had better stop our survey of the history of Judah at this point, with Hezekiah, to go back and look at what has happened to the northern kingdom. We've gone past the downfall of the northern kingdom under Judah; but we go back, and we don't need to look at much detail in the downfall of the northern kingdom, because the great prophets of this period were in the southern kingdom.

We have looked at the northern kingdom in more detail than the southern at the time of Elijah and Elisha, because God sent his great prophets up to the northern kingdom at that time. Then later on, under Jeroboam II, he sent Hosea

and Amos to the northern kingdom; and so the northern kingdom is very important there, from our viewpoint, of the account of God's relations with the people; and of his keeping alive his testimony, until the time of Christ, when he would send Christ into the world.

But at this time, Isaiah and Micah were in the southern kingdom; and it's there they were giving great messages; and so we can look more rapidly at the events which, from the historical viewpoint, are just as important as those that happened in the southern kingdom.

C. The Downfall of the Northern Kingdom.

1. End of the House of Jehu.

Now the northern kingdom, as you know, is not spoken of in Chronicles as much as the southern kingdom is. This is primarily in Kings. But we find that, in the northern kingdom, God has told Jehu that his descendants to the 4th generation will sit on his throne; and we read in 2 Kings 15, in the 38th year of Azariah king of Judah—that's the same man otherwise called Uzziah—

In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months... And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

And here again it happened, as it had when Zimri killed Elah, that the conspirator, the man who slew the king, himself was made the king. He reigned for 6 months.

Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria. For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

2. The Dynasty of Menahem.

The Dynasty of Jehu was followed by this usurper, this assassin who only reigned for one month; that is, Zachariah reigned six months, but Shallum was killed in only one month; and Menahem conquered him, and set up a dynasty of his own. But this dynasty did not last as long as had those of Jeroboam, or of David. There are two kings in it, as in David's [before the disruption], but the two kings lived a much lesser time than those did. Menahem reigned for ten years, and he was an evil king, we are told, but we don't have much detail about him. But we read in 2 Kings 15:19

And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand.

And we find in Pritchard's book, there is, in the inscriptions of King Tiglath-pileser—he is also Pul as you remember—we find that, among those from whom he took tribute, we find on page 193:

I received tribute from ... Rezin of Damascus and from Menahem of Samaria, Hiram of Tyre.

Here we have this Biblical name found on an inscription of King Tiglath-pileser. He reigned for ten years and was succeeded by his son Pekahiah who reigned for two years.

3. Pekah.

It's interesting that the name Pekah is so much like the name Pekahiah. But the two are unrelated. It very often happens that way in history. It is strange how often when you get one name, you'll get another one right away that is very, very similar to it. Happens more than once. You'll have two fellows together with unusual names, from different parts of the country, no relation, come in the same year. You run on such coincidences. Life is full of them.

Pekahiah reigned two years and then we read that (2 Kings 15:25)

But Pekah the son of Remaliah, a captain of his, conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieah, and with him fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his room.

You remember that Gilead is over across the Jordan. Now why did he have 50 men of the Gileadites with him?

It says that Pekah reigned for 20 years; and for many, many years, students have agreed that to fit it in with the Assyrian chronology, there is only room for a ten-year reign of Pekah here. So as Davis stated in his 4th revised edition of his *Dictionary of the Bible*—an edition which was published in 1924 and reprinted in 1954—in this Dr. Davis pointed out that the present Hebrew text assigns 20 years to the reign of Pekah. It is impossible that he occupied the throne of Samaria during all these years. But Menahem, a predecessor of his, was on the throne about 738 BC, in the reign of Tiglath-pileser. Critics of all schools accordingly admit that 20 years are much too long; and then Davis goes on and gives his theory about it.

Davis says there's a fair possibility, however, that the Hebrew writer, when he summarizes the reign of Pekah, that in the 52nd year of Uzziah "Pekah reigned over Israel and Samaria 20 years" does not mean that Pekah reigned all of the 20 year-period in Samaria. Pekah was associated with the Gileadites, we've just noticed. It is just possible that he set up his authority in northern Gilead in 749 BC, during the confusion which accompanied the death of Jeroboam II. And he maintained his power during the greater part of Menahem's reign, being the cause of Menahem's feeling of insecurity, until Tiglath-pileser invaded the north and established Menahem's sway over the whole country. Then Pekah, like Abner before him, abandoned opposition, professed loyalty and was given a high military position in the service of the king, to whom he had hitherto refused obedience.

After Menahem's death, in the absence of Tiglath-pileser, and perhaps backed by Rezin, he seized the throne in the 52nd year of Uzziah. Now that's purely a theory, but it is a theory which would account for the fact that we have a little indication which seems to fit in with it. And the tendency on the part of most students is to think that probably the situation is something like that. In other words, that Pekah reigned 20 years; but actually he reigned about ten years in Samaria, but that he may have reigned in Trans-Jordan for the other ten years. We just don't have enough to prove it. But it's pretty hard to fit it in with the Assyrian chronology, if he actually reigned for a whole 20 years. Well, so much for Pekah.

Oh, no; we need to say a word more about him, don't we? Pekah was a bad man, but an able ruler; an able man, an effective man, a man who tries to deliver the country from the Assyrians by making an alliance with Syria; and it was Pekah and the king of Syria whom Ahaz so feared that he made his alliance with Tiglath-pileser. Pekah also is mentioned in the Assyrian records. And then,

4. Hoshea.

Tiglath-pileser says, in his account, that the people, of Israel (which he calls the land of Omri) overthrew their king Pekah, "and I placed Hoshea as king over them." So Hoshea was made king with the help of Tiglath-pileser. 2 Kings 15:30 says

And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.

And Hoshea, we read later on (2 Kings 17:2), that he was a wicked king, but not as wicked as the kings before him. He reigns 9 years; and he rebels against the king of Assyria; and the king of Assyria came, and attacked him, and destroyed him. And that was the end of Samaria, as it was then. When they came that

time—after that rebellion, Hoshea, having been put in by Tiglath-pileser, reigned for 9 years; and he rebelled against him, and turned to the Egyptians to help, and refused to pay the tribute—then there was no mercy.

Now that Hoshea has revolted, they knew that if the Assyrians take them, Samaria will be destroyed and they will be treated without mercy; and so they make a strong stand against them; and it takes a three year siege to destroy them. That's pretty long. But Samaria was well situated, up on a hill there; good hills on three sides; easy to defend; plenty of water for the city; and it took the Assyrian force three years before it was destroyed; and before the three years was over, Shalmaneser V died; and Sargon became king, who may have been the general of the army that besieged it there. One of the first things Sargon tells us in his annals, is how he conquered Samaria, and destroyed it, and led the people away into captivity. The date 722 BC is the 9th year of Hoshea. Now the conquest was in 722 or 721; that is, it's right there at that period, 722–721. We know it's not 720; it's not 723; but which of these two years it falls in, it may be difficult to say. But that is a fixed date. That is one of the fixed dates of ancient history. We notice the Battle of Qarqar is a fixed date, 854 BC. Of course we don't know exactly where that came in Ahab's reign, but we know it's in Ahab's reign. Now this is a fixed date, 722–721, the date of the conquest of Samaria; because it is explicitly stated in Sargon's annals that it happened in his first year; and we know that that was when he became king. That is as established as any date in this whole period. And it is one of our solid dates in chronology.

Well, then,

5. The Coming of the Samaritans.

2 Kings 17. After Sargon took the city, he took thousands of people into captivity and we read in 2 Kings 17:24 following,

the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day. And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof. And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the Lord:

But they were very small numbers compared to those before; and the lions began to come into the city,

Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of

the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land. Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land.

See, the king of Assyria favors religion. So he sent a priest to teach them the manner of the God of the land.

Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the Lord. Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt.

This is the beginning of the Samaritan religion in the northern kingdom, one which the Jews always felt was entirely apart from them. They felt that it was a mixture; it was very false to the teaching of the Word.

XIII. The Last Century of Judah.

After Sennacherib's disaster at Jerusalem, where 185,000 Assyrian soldiers died, he departed and returned to Nineveh and eventually was assassinated there. How long after the defeat at Jerusalem? The scripture doesn't say. It does not say that it was 20 years later; but it doesn't say it wasn't. It just says (2 Kings 19:36)

Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

He was assassinated. Doesn't say when. And when the scripture doesn't say, we have no right to say that the scripture does say. I think that a tremendous part of the unbelief in the world today has been fostered by people reading into the scripture what is not there. The scripture does not say that man was created in 4004 BC. It doesn't say; but it has been spread all over the world that 4004 BC was when he was created; and then, when you find geological evidence, which it's very, very difficult to explain on any other basis than that this world has existed for millions of years; and man for at least tens of thousands; then people immediately say "Well, that evidence is entirely wrong. You're un-Christian if you take what that evidence seems to present."

Now if the scripture plainly said that man was created in 4004 BC, I would say there will be some way found to interpret this evidence, other than to take it as showing a much longer period. But there's so much evidence of a long period, that it is silly to take an inference based on a very superficial interpretation of scripture, and fight it on that basis. If the scripture clearly stated something, we can stand on it; if the scripture says "that it came to pass, a month after he got back, that his sons assassinated him," I would say there was something more to be found by archaeological evidence, in the light of which we will understand it and see the truth of Scripture.

But the scripture just says he went back and he was killed. It doesn't say how long the interval was. In my opinion, one of the most helpful things you can learn; to be a worthwhile student of the Word; serving the Lord, carrying on his work; is *not* to read into scripture. Take what's there, and stand on it; but when the scripture doesn't say, let's say we don't know.

Here, we just wouldn't know at all, if we didn't find the archaeological evidence; and when we find it different from what a superficial examination of scripture would tell us, then dig deeper. And on careful examination, you see that it just says he went back; and then it says he dwelt there. Well that suggests—he

dwelt there—that he didn't just get home and get killed. You don't ordinarily say "he dwelt a day or two"; ordinarily it implies something of a period of time—in this case, of 20 years—and when you look closely at scripture, the statement he dwelt there fits a lot better with his being there 20 years before he was killed, than it fits with the idea that he just got there, and was killed immediately.

This death is one of the unsolved mysteries of history—the details of Sennacherib's death. Now it is entirely possible that there is some special significance to the worship of Nisroch here in this connection, but we do not know what it is. The fact is, that most of our material from those days, comes from what the kings put up to remember themselves by. Here you have an assassination; and nobody with authority to issue annals, or to put up inscriptions, had the time at this point to sit down and try to give a full statement. Sennacherib was killed. What is going to happen? Well, there was a turmoil for a time until his successor became established on the throne. A certain amount of upheaval; and when it was over, things had to be settled in regular fashion to go on; and actually, we perhaps learn more from the Bible about it than we do from any other source. But the Biblical commentaries on the event do not explain.

But other sources would seem to show that there was a strong Pul Babylonian party in Assyria. A party which looked to the great literary, religious, and commercial traditions of Babylon; wanted Babylon to continue to be a great city. And then there was the party, which was represented by king Sennacherib, who thought Babylon should be just absolutely under the thumb of the king of Assyria; and this business of going down to Babylon every year to take the hands of the god Bel interfered with a lot of other things; that he didn't feel like bothering with it, and he didn't; and he said, "Babylon is under us; we've conquered it; it should be subject to us"; and Sennacherib sent a son of his to rule in Babylon for him; and the kings of Elam doubtless arranged with the Babylonians to counterattack; and take his son off to prison; and he never did get back.

And then, under Merodach-baladin the Babylonians revolted; and for many years, they had their independence; and then Sennacherib seized the place, and Merodach-baladin fled; and he just put in another viceroy, as representing him; and then they killed him; and then he went down and, he says, he utterly destroyed Babylon. But we know he didn't utterly destroy it, because it came back fairly rapidly. But he, at least, did an awful lot of damage there. And historians generally think that there were two parties now in this empire: the pro-Babylonian party and the anti-Babylonian party. And that Sennacherib's wife, favorite wife, had prevailed on him to designate a son—a younger son, her son—as heir to the throne, rather than one of the older sons; and her son had the name Essarhaddon, which is *Ashur-ahu-iddin*, which means Ashur has

given a brother. Now that's pretty good proof he's not the older son—his name means "The god Ashur had given a brother"; and so it seemed that he was designated, he wasn't the first son in line; and Essarhaddon was one who liked Babylon; and who admired the Babylonian culture; and had very high regard for anything Babylonian. And if Essarhaddon came into power, Babylon would have a resurgence of influence in the empire; and the present view of most Assyriologists is that two older sons killed Sennacherib, and tried to seize the power; but that Essarhaddon was too strong for them; and thus that Essarhaddon became king and these two sons escaped into the land of the Armenians.

Now in the time of Sennacherib's grandson, we have a time when he conquered Babylon—a good many years later—and he tells us in his accounts, "I tortured and killed the men who were responsible for the death of my grandfather Sennacherib." But that's all he says; and we don't know what his proof is, or what the connection was. Now the fact that the Bible mentions that Sennacherib was worshipping in the house of Nisroch, his god, it may be that he was trying to have Marduk the god of Babylon recognized as an inferior being; that he was worshipping Nisroch, his deity. We just don't know enough. My feeling would be that, the fact that the Bible would speak of this event in all three places—or at least in two of them—would be pretty good evidence that there is a real importance to this, which may become clear to us sometime as we get further evidence—perhaps somebody's memoirs that he wrote for his children, that were put in his tomb and rediscovered, or something like that—that throws further light. But up to the present, we're pretty much in the dark. All we know is there is no evidence that it wasn't exactly as described here in the Bible; but what the full details are, we don't know.

A. The Assyrian Empire for this Period.

We are now in the last century of Judah.

1. Essar-haddon.

And Essar-haddon reigned from 680 to 669. You see it was not a long reign. But during this reign, he proved to be quite a successful king. 680 to 669 is the date which Pritchard gives here, and which I imagine is quite definite, barring a typographical error.

Essar-haddon is a king who was well-known for his inscriptions and monuments. He was an able ruler and an able conqueror; and he lists in his annals kings from many cities who were subject to him; and he even followed up the conquest of Palestine with a march into Egypt. And he was able to seize, though not to hold, Egypt.

Essar-haddon was very devoted to the city of Babylon. He rebuilt the great temples of Babylon, he strengthened Babylon, he gave it a new importance and helped the Babylonian party very much during his reign. He was succeeded by

2. Ashurbanipal.

Ashurbanipal rules from 669 to 626 BC. He reigned for a long period. Ashurbanipal—you notice the difference between Essar-haddon and Ashurbanipal. Both kings' names started as "Ashur" but it's a queer thing that we usually say Essar-haddon and Ashurbanipal. It has become customary to use "sh" in one and not the other. The fact is that the Babylonian pronunciation is "sh" and the Assyrian pronunciation is just "s", just like in certain parts of Germany today.

Well, here Assyrian is a dialect of Babylonian, and the "h" is omitted; it's a small letter, and consequently you take the ordinary Babylonian pronunciation, and it's Ashurbanipal; but the Assyrians are dominant at this time, and therefore there is a great deal of importance attached to the way the king himself pronounced it. And we sort of make a compromise, by calling one of the kings the one and the other the other; but it's the same [part-]name, Essar-haddon and Ashurbanipal.

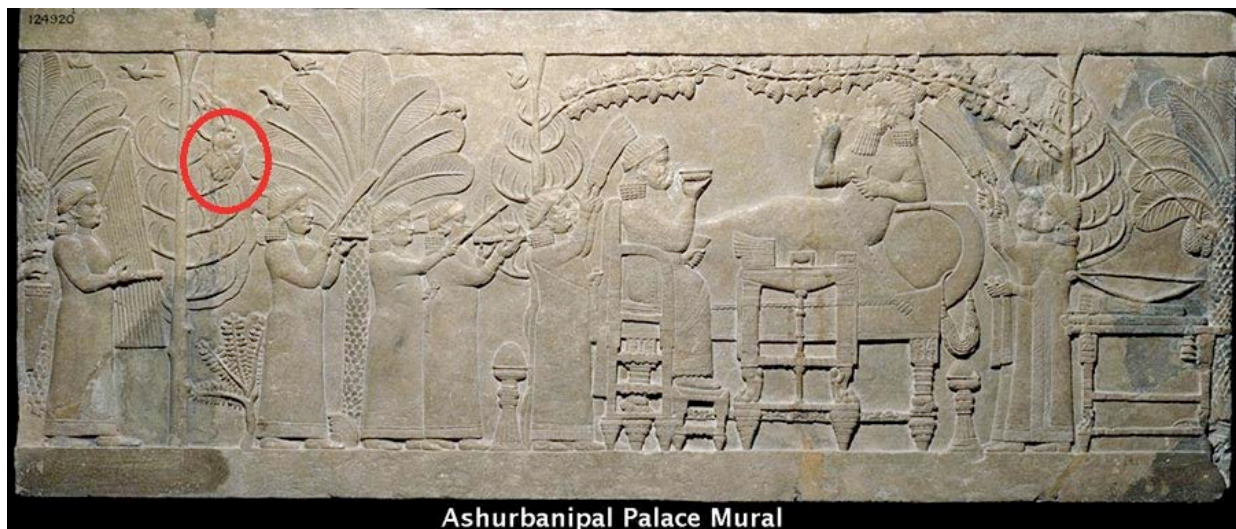
But the more striking contrast between the two is that the name Ashurbanipal means "Asshur has built up an heir." In other words, Ashurbanipal is the oldest son, he is the one who is designated as the heir to the throne; while Essar-haddon means "Asshur has a younger son." So Ashurbanipal was brought up as the heir to the throne; he was trained for it, and was given a training that even most kings didn't have; he was trained as a scribe also. And Ashurbanipal, in his inscriptions, usually shows himself with what at first seems to be a little short sword at his left side. But afterward, it became established that this on his pictures was not a sword at all; it was a stylus; it was the instrument that the scribe uses to press into the clay tablet, to write the cuneiform writing.

And Ashurbanipal, in many of his inscriptions, tells us how he was trained in all the wisdom of Babylon, and of Assyria; and how he was an able scribe and he was very proud of his literary ability.

I have stressed Ashurbanipal's interesting culture and writing and literature, naturally, because it was true. He sent his representatives to get copies of all the literature of Mesopotamia; what they couldn't secure they copied; so he had thousands of copies made for the great library at Nineveh. I stressed this in a class on the monuments in relation to the Old Testament, that I gave twenty years ago; and I remember a woman who was in the class; in her final exam, she said Ashurbanipal was not cruel in this position, and ruthless and aggressive like the other Assyrian kings; but that he was of a mild and peaceful

disposition. Well, unfortunately, mildness and peacefulness don't always go with interest in literature and ability to write.

And so, ever since that happened, I call attention in the class, always, to figure 122 in Pritchard's *The Ancient Near East*. There you have a beautiful idyllic scene, where King Ashurbanipal is banqueting in a garden with his queen, attended by his servants and musicians. This is a bas-relief taken from one of the palaces. It shows him reclining on a couch, drinking wine; and in front of him on a chair sits his favorite wife; behind her are people with fans and with instruments of music; there are trees around with all sorts of fruit on them; it's a very idyllic scene, and you would say a peaceful scene, till you notice that Ashurbanipal is not pictured as looking at his wife, but looking over her head at one of the trees; and you follow his eye to the place in the tree at which he is looking; and you find that there is something there, hanging on the tree; and it's explained in the caption, that this is the head of the king of one of the lands he had just conquered, which he hung in the tree there for his amusement while he was having his banquet. And it shows that Ashurbanipal, though he was a literary man, was just as bloodthirsty and cruel as any of his predecessors on the throne of Assyria.



We instinctively like to associate culture and the fine arts with gentle kindness, with "humanity", as my young student undoubtedly did; but in a pagan or godless secular society, these "high" aspirations may instead be combined with cruelty and intolerance.

Ashurbanipal carried on his campaigns, and he describes in great detail the campaigns he carried on; I was surprised to notice that Pritchard does not include any inscriptions from Ashurbanipal; and therefore there is no mention

of him or a date given in the text, although in the back there are various pictures from his reign.¹⁶¹

But the reason he did not include Ashurbanipal in the front doubtless was that there was limited space; and he stuck to those historical records that make specific mention of Palestine; and Ashurbanipal doesn't make specific mention of Palestine, but he tells about a re-conquest of Egypt which he made; and he describes that in great length, so he must have come down through Palestine. Ashurbanipal found it a nuisance to go down to Babylon every year to take the hand of the god in the New Year Festival. He had too many other things he wanted to do; and down to Babylon would be a trip of maybe a week or two, with the poor transportation arrangements in those days; and so he fixed on an arrangement—or rather his father fixed on an arrangement—for him. Essarhaddon, in his will, left Ashurbanipal as emperor; but he left a younger son, Shamashehamukin, as the king of Babylon; and the king of Babylon was supposed to be subject to the emperor of the Assyrian empire; but in Babylon he was supreme, subject only to his brother. He was the ruler of this area, subject to his brother the emperor.

Shamashehamukin, the name means "The Sun-God has established a name", he was the king of Babylon; he could take the hands of the god Baal; go through the New Year ceremony; the Babylonians would receive him as their king. Unfortunately they received him all too well. They received him so well that, before long, they convinced him that he should not pay any homage to his brother Ashurbanipal; that he should be entirely independent of his brother; and so, as Ashurbanipal tells us, the Babylonians made arrangements with the neighboring kingdom for a concerted attack on Ashurbanipal. He says they closed the gates of the city to prevent his going; they broke the bonds of brotherhood; they declared themselves independent; and all these neighboring countries are joined with them in a revolt against Ashurbanipal.

Ashurbanipal said the thing became so great—the power against him—it looked hopeless; and then he had a vision one night; and Ishtar the goddess appeared to him in flaming fire in the heavens; and she assured him that he was her darling, and he would be established. Well, it worked out; his annals are very beautiful; they have all sorts of picturesque symbols and are very carefully worked out; very picturesque, but evidently it was a real fight he went through in this; but in the end, his army conquered the area around Babylon; and they got into the city itself, and overcame the Babylonian forces; and as his forces came into the city, his brother Shamashehamukin shut himself up in the palace, and set fire to it, and perished in the flames.

¹⁶¹ [dcb] Volume II of Pritchard, *op. cit.* (1975) includes a number of treaty texts and other materials from Essarhaddon, Ashurbanipal and Shamashehamukin (spelled Shamashshumukin): Treaty of Esarhaddon with Baal of Tyre p. 52–3; Vassal-treaties of Esarhaddon, pp. 53–69 "on behalf of the crown-prince designate Ashurbanipal, the son of your lord Esarhaddon, King of Assyria."

And after that, Ashurbanipal said, "Grandfather was right; these Babylonians, there's no use trying to keep them as an equal power in the empire, or even as a subordinate power; we've just got to wipe them out. So there it is in Pritchard here, though he doesn't give a heading here. Ashurbanipal, earlier in the account, where he is speaking of Sennacharib, he quotes this little bit from his annals. Ashurbanipal tells how, when he conquered Babylon, he killed the conspirators who were connected with the death of his grandfather; but he gives us no details. And then Ashurbanipal says that he destroys Babylon; he knocks down its walls; he destroys the city; with the power of his army, he reduces it to just agricultural fields; there was no city. But again, he must have exaggerated because we find that before long it is again a great city.

The people of Babylon had very great tenacity and a great deal of vigor; and although they had not been the mistress of the world now for some centuries, they still retained tremendous stability; and eventually they made a wonderful comeback; but Ashurbanipal was now established; he conquered the region in southern Persia, which had been an enemy, a thorn in the flesh, to the kings of Assyria for centuries; he conquered Elam; he says he went into the treasure house of the Elamite king, where no conqueror had ever gone before, and took out their treasures, carried them off to Assyria; and you would think, from reading the annals of Ashurbanipal, that the power of Assyria was just about at its pinnacle where it would endure, as Hitler said, for a thousand years.

But next is

3. The Fall of Nineveh and its Aftermath.

And Ashurbanipal, when he died in 626—he had reigned as you see for a long time—and probably his great war exploits had mostly been done during the early years of his reign; and as he grew older, he probably did not hold as tight a hold on the reins of government as he had; gave more of his time to literary activities or banqueting; and finally the Assyrian blood had been tremendously cut down; and as long as you had a strong Assyrian force, and a strong administrative power, and you had plenty of men to draw on, from all the different nations that had been conquered; but when your Assyrian central nucleus got pretty well cut to pieces, and when your central organizing power weakened, all of these various peoples were ready to throw off the power of Assyria as soon as they could.

And so after Ashurbanipal's death, almost immediately Babylon revolted again and established its independence. And Babylon, having established its independence, there was no strong successor of Ashurbanipal; but two or three weak successors in the next three years; but no one of them was strong enough to re-conquer Babylon. And then, there was a force over in the northern part of

what is now Persia—the Medes—a people who began attacking the empire; and the Medes and the Babylonians were together.

And in 612 BC, there was an attack made by the forces of the Medes and the Babylonians together on the city of Nineveh; this was successful in conquering the city, and destroying it; and they turned the waters of the Tigris River over the city; and they left it a ruin, and it was never rebuilt. It's one of the few cities in the world's history which have been destroyed and never rebuilt. Nineveh, which had been the mistress of the world; Nineveh, which a very few years before its destruction, seemed to be so powerful that nobody could ever dislodge it; was completely destroyed, utterly ruined; the people driven away from it.

About 300 years later, the Greeks, in their expansion during Alexander's conquests, came near the place where Nineveh had been; and there's no trace of anyone having even suggested what the name of the great city was, which was left an utter ruin there. There just was a complete end to it; and here we should mention one of the prophets, Nahum, one of the lesser-known prophets. A very interesting book, the book of Nahum. The Burden of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

There are three chapters in the book of Nahum, a book which is the burden of Nineveh. "Woe to the bloody city! it is all full of lies and robbery; the prey departeth not." It is a book which predicts the destruction of Nineveh; unfortunately, we don't know when Nahum was written. It sounds like a prediction and therefore it would seem to be a prophecy after the destruction of Northern Israel in 721 BC, but before the destruction of Nineveh in 612 BC.

Nahum 2:11 says,

Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feedingplace of the young lions, where the lion, even the old lion, walked, and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid? The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin. Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions:

The Assyrians took the lion as the symbol of their power; and in addition to that, there always are references to lions. Ashurbanipal loved to put up pictures around his palaces, showing himself fighting lions. One shows him taking a lion by its mane with his left hand and holding it by the mane and smiting his dagger into it with his right hand. Another one shows him in the back of his chariot shooting his arrows into the lion; and it gives a very vivid picture of the lions falling over dead, as Ashurbanipal killed them. He liked to picture himself as a great lion-hunter, a great lion-man, he's not the first one to do it.

You get much of the flavor of the Ninevite Empire here in this book of Nahum, which declared God's determination to destroy Nineveh. The last verse of it says,

There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?

Now Nahum has a vivid picture of how the attack is going to come, and we read in chapter 2:4,

The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.

That verse has been quoted in each of the last two wars, I believe, as being a prediction of tank warfare. But of course, it has nothing to do with modern times; it is a prediction of the upheaval and turmoil in connection with the destruction of Nineveh. The book is a vivid one to read in this connection, with this downfall of Nineveh and here was Jerusalem still standing. Sennacherib was going to destroy Jerusalem; 100 years pass; Nineveh is utterly destroyed and Jerusalem is still standing there.

Look at Chapter 1:12,

Thus saith the Lord; Though they be quiet, and likewise many, yet thus shall they be cut down, when he shall pass through.

Now what does that mean? "Though they be quiet." Now this word *shalem* suggests the word *shalom*, peace. It can mean peace or it can mean wholeness or completeness. And the King James Version translates it, "though they be quiet and likewise many,"—now what does the "likewise"—Hebrew *kēn*—have to do with it? Why do you say "quiet and likewise many"?

The American Standard Version made it, "though they be of full strength and likewise many." Now that's a pretty good guess; it makes a lot better sense than "quiet". "Peaceful" would be a more accurate rendering, "peaceful and perfect", perhaps. But they don't fit the context, any of them.

The Revised Standard Version solves the difficulty very nicely. We find that in the Revised Standard Version, at Nahum 1:12, it renders it,

Thus says the Lord,
"Though they be strong and many,

they will be cut off and pass away.
Though I have afflicted you,
I will afflict you no more.

This leaves out the "likewise" altogether you notice. They leave out the likewise and they take the word that means peaceful and they make it "strong." But they have a footnote, the footnote says "Hebrew uncertain." They have hundreds of footnotes like that, "Hebrew uncertain"; wherever they don't understand it, they just put in what they think will sound good and put in a little footnote, "Hebrew uncertain." Well, it is pretty hard to make sense out of it. "Though they be quiet, and likewise many," though they be complete and likewise many—why the "likewise"?

Well, in the Assyrian records which we now have,¹⁶² we have thousands of contracts. The Assyrians were a great commercial people, and we have these thousands of contracts; we have many from Babylon too; we have them from different countries in the Near East. They are written on clay tablets. It was very, very important to have them; according to the law, if you could be proved to have something in your possession that didn't belong to you, and somebody else proved it belonged to him, you were a thief and were killed; and at the very most, if they were merciful to you and didn't kill you, they'd at least cut off your hands. And so it was mighty important to have your witnesses to any purchase you made. And your witnesses might die; they might go off on a trip; so it was a wise thing to get an impression of their seal. So everybody who bought anything of any value at all, got a clay tablet, with a certification on it; and these seals made a contract with every major purchase; and being on clay, instead of on papyrus, they last; and so we have hundreds of thousands of these contracts.

And the Assyrian contracts have various forms in them, different from the Babylonian contracts. But one thing you notice that occurs over and over and over in the Assyrian contracts; I've read maybe a couple of hundred of them in the original; and in these couple of hundred, I'd say that perhaps sixty out of the two or three hundred, have got in them this phrase—there will be a contract in which say three or four people unite in sealing some purchase; and they will say, that we guarantee repayment; and they give an Assyrian technical legal phrase; and what it means is, in English to translate it, the best legal phrase today to represent the idea would be "collectively and severally". We guarantee this as a group and each of us individually—so both collectively and severally. Therefore you can be absolutely sure of getting your money back, if this is money you have lent; you can be absolutely sure this contract will be carried out, because we are altogether guaranteeing it; but if all of the others fall short,

¹⁶² See Pritchard, Vols. I and II (II published after these lectures), and C.H.W. Johns, [*Babylonian and Assyrian Laws, Contracts and Letters*](#) (pdf) (1904).

every one of us individually guarantees it, and puts everything he has back of the contract.

Now that evidently became established as a usage in Assyria, in some way. We do not find it in the other countries; but it is a very common phrase in Assyria. If you want to be sure that your contract is safe, you ask people to give this guarantee "quiet and likewise"; and that's exactly the phrase that we have here in the book of Nahum.

Though you may be "quiet and likewise many"—Though you Assyrians who use this phrase so much in your contracts; of a group of you holding responsibility "severally and jointly"; though you, as a nation, stand against the Lord all together; and each one of you individually with all his force; yet, he says, thus shall they be cut down when he shall pass through. All you can possibly do will not enable Nineveh to survive. God has determined its destruction and it will be destroyed.

Now you take any place in Britain in the last war; you find German phrases quoted; they get, in wartime, these phrases get quoted from another nation; sometimes they pass into our language and keep on being used (Blitzkrieg, Flak, Kaput, Luftwaffe); other times they disappear after the war is over.

Well, here is a case where, in the book of Nahum, we have this common Assyrian phrase used against the Assyrians; and of course Nineveh was destroyed, Assyria became a ruin; the contract tablets were buried, and remained there for 2500 years; and nobody knew the place anymore; and when the scribes copied the book of Nahum, they didn't know what this phrase meant; and when they tried to make sense out of it, they didn't know what it meant; and so we have the King James saying, "though they be quiet, and likewise many," which is a much more literal translation of the Hebrew than either the American Standard or the Revised Standard. The Revised Standard is correct in its footnote, the Hebrew is uncertain, if you look at it only from the viewpoint of Hebrew. But if you look at it as a quotation of an Assyrian phrase—and this is about Assyria—the whole book of Nahum is about Assyria, it makes perfect sense; and it is, in my opinion, a very interesting instance of the accuracy of the Bible here in giving the background; and of the accuracy of the scribes in copying and re-copying this through many centuries; keeping the context absolutely accurate—a phrase which just didn't make sense to them.

So this book about Nineveh then shows Nineveh's reaction to the destruction of the Assyrian Empire—or this prediction of it rather; but it combines their reaction to what the Lord said was going to happen. And Professor Olmstead, of the University of Chicago 20 years ago, wrote a book *History of Assyria*¹⁶³, a

¹⁶³ Albert Olmstead, *History of Assyria*, (1923)

book with beautiful pictures, and a very good presentation. He knew the subject very well, but he waxes poetic in his last chapter.

He quotes from Nahum and then he quotes from a French writer who goes beyond Nahum in his description of the destructiveness of the Assyrian Empire, and its bloodiness; and then he himself said, "All of this is completely wrong." He says the Assyrian Empire was the guardian of civilization, was spreading civilization and culture. He says Assyria was a shepherd dog which died at its post. He goes from one extreme to the other. But the fact of the matter is, that among the heathen nations, Assyria showed her good points that others had not developed; they showed an organization, an organizing power; they had a knowledge of the Babylonian culture which they took over from the Babylonians and passed on; they had many points which were superior to the other heathen nations around; but they shared in their bloodthirstiness, their cruelty; and God used the Assyrians, as he tells us in Isaiah 10; he used them as his instrument to punish his people for their sins; but having used them, he then in turn punished them, because as it says in Isaiah 10,

Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom...

Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood. Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.

He says, "When I've done my work, then I'm going to punish you." And the downfall of the Assyrians is one of the great destructions of history.

Yes? (Student.) Jonah was a hundred years before this. We mentioned Jonah in the proper place, but we didn't go into it there; perhaps I should have gone into it a little more than I did. God called Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach to it. And we read Jonah immediately took a boat to go in the opposite direction. And of course the reason wasn't that Jonah was afraid; the reason was that Jonah knew that Assyria was this great bloodthirsty oppressor; and he was taking the law into his own hands. He was going to protect his people from Assyria by not being an instrument to save the Assyrians.

We may think of the spirit of Jonah as a terrible spirit; but I tell you, it *is* a terrible spirit but it's not an uncommon one. I was at a Bible Conference in the fall of 1918; fine Christian people, where they were giving some of the finest

Christian presentations you ever heard. But there was a man there who gave a paper on Germany—it was just after the first world war—he said if Germany should come and say, "We have sinned; we've done wrong; we want to be forgiven", then we should forgive them. And those people around me were so angry—some of them were almost ready to lynch that man, in their bitterness and hatred toward Germany. It was so intense, a result of the propaganda during that war that whipped up that feeling. And I tell you, as I saw that feeling on their part, I could understand Jonah's feeling. Jonah was a man of like passions with ourselves. He was a man who had a sense of righteousness, but he was a man who was a real servant of the Lord. And Jonah was ready to risk his life to preach repentance among the people of Israel; but when the Lord said to him, "You go to Nineveh," Jonah said, "Oh those wicked people of Nineveh; if I preach among them, and they turn away from their sin, then their nation will become strong; and it will mean terrible danger to mine." So he fled; took a boat to Spain; and of course God, in his mercy, intervened; and caused him to be thrown out of the boat; and God provided transportation from there back through the Mediterranean, back through to Nineveh; and then we read in the book of Jonah, that Jonah preached, and that the people of Nineveh turned; confessed their sin and turned to the Lord; and then the sad thing is that Jonah, after the people repented, and the Lord postponed judgment—so it was a century later instead of forty days later—Jonah went outside the city and watched to see the city destroyed; and said "Isn't this just what I said, when I was in my homeland, that God will have mercy on the city and won't destroy it?"

And then if Jonah—instead of that, after doing the great work of Elijah and going through the city and preaching ruin to the point where the people turned to God—if then instead of running off, he had then proceeded to teach those people; and to educate them and to give them the word of God; so that it wouldn't be merely a few that sincerely turned to the Lord; and a lot that turned in fear but not in reality, to their God; and had Jonah taken advantage of it and taught them and taught their children; history might conceivably have been different.

But people used to say, "Somebody like Moody or Torrey comes to a city; and preaches and gets people all excited and stirred up to come forward and shake the evangelist's hand; and then they all settle back into their same ways; and there's no change made in their lives; and then it's twice as hard to ever reach them again. Well, that's often true, if there's no follow-up. It isn't always true—even a campaign like that may reach individuals who turn to the Lord, and do a wonderful work in days to come. But they're comparatively few out of many. But the follow-up is just as important as the campaign itself; and in Jonah's case, the follow-up was definitely lacking.

Well now, the Ninevites didn't put up any monument to tell about their revival under Jonah; but doubtless it meant that some people were saved; and it meant

that many others had improved moral character; and it meant that there was a strength and stamina in the nation which, when the nation turned to wickedness again, made it wickeder than it would have been otherwise. So in the end Nineveh, the wicked Nineveh, at the end of its history, was a stronger nation than it would have been if there hadn't been this turning to God. That I should have mentioned at that previous point. I did mention Jonah's place.

Now the fall of Nineveh then is a very important thing in world history. And a whole book of the Bible is devoted to it. I called this section number 3, the fall of Nineveh *and its aftermath*, because the Assyrian Empire was not ended when Nineveh was destroyed. It had received its death blow; but there still was force enough to gather a new capital at Haran, the city on the Upper Euphrates where Abraham had lived for a time; and at that city the Assyrian Empire made a new stand which lasted for about 10 years.¹⁶⁴ And there was still considerable force in it, but the Babylonians and the Medes had destroyed the city, and they were still attacking. The Babylonian force was under the command of the son of the king of Babylon. The father was the Assyrian Viceroy, a Babylonian who had made himself king, right after the death of Ashurbanipal; and his son Nebuchadnezzar was the general of their army; and they were attacking what remained of the Assyrian Empire. It took about 10 years to make a complete end to the Assyrian Empire.

And Pharaoh-necho was the ruler of Egypt who had been put in power by Ashurbanipal; or he was the son of the one Ashurbanipal had put in power. There were two such. His power had come from Ashurbanipal. And he, knowing of the tremendous partisan feeling, thought the side on which we can find safety is the side of the Assyrians. They've won out against these great Babylonian revolts in the past; they still were strong; and so he came with an army from Egypt in order to stand with the Assyrians; and he came up through Palestine to Haran; and there they had a great decisive battle between him and the forces of Nebuchadnezzar. And the result of this battle was that Pharaoh-necho was utterly defeated; and his forces turned and went down pell-mell back down the coastal plain on the Mediterranean Sea, down south through Palestine. And as the forces of Pharaoh-Necho defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, fled down there, Jeremiah the prophet stood up on the hill country in Judah there and looked down on the plain and saw the Egyptians fleeing pell-mell leaving their instruments of war and rushing as fast as they could, the Babylonians following them.

¹⁶⁴ [dcb] The final end of the Assyrian empire occurred at Larissa in 603 BC when a total solar eclipse occurred during an attack reported in Xenophon's *Anabasis* on the (then) Assyrian capital city which had moved from Nineveh to Harran (Calah) after Nineveh's destruction in 612. The eclipse resulted in the total demoralization of the defenders, who (apparently) thought that their Sun God was destroyed. This solar eclipse can be precisely dated as to day and hour, and provides the principal "anchor" for all dating of events in the Assyrian empire because of this eclipse and the limmu lists maintained by the Assyrians. See Maunder, Op. cit., Chapter XI "Eclipses of the Sun and Moon" and the Appendix "Solar Eclipses and Ancient History".

And in chapter 46 of Jeremiah he describes it,

The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Gentiles; Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah.

And he goes on and there's a whole chapter here,

Who is this that cometh up as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers? Egypt riseth up like a flood, and his waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go up, and will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof. Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and let the mighty men come forth; the Ethiopians and the Libyans, that handle the shield; and the Lydians, that handle and bend the bow. For this is the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord God of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.

And there is a whole chapter here, describing the defeat of Pharaoh-Necho by the forces of Nebuchadrezzar in connection with the death stroke of the Assyrian Empire.

Now elsewhere we have other references to this, that I want to mention in connection with the kings of Judah. But this, in the account of the death of Josiah in connection with Pharaoh-Necho's coming up there; Pharaoh-Necho says in our King James Version

After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Charchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him. But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war: for God commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not.

And the cuneiform inscriptions show that he came up there to help the king of Assyria. So it was alleged that there was a mistake in the scriptural account. But the fact of the matter is that the preposition used is the preposition *a/* which can mean "against" but can also mean "concerning." And what the Hebrew says is actually, I haven't come up on account of you, I have come up on account of the king of Assyria. You're not my affair here; you get out of the way and let me by; and Josiah wouldn't get out of the way, so Josiah was killed. But it's not for

you I've come up; it's for the king of Assyria, and he actually had come up to help the king.

But in the English translation of the preposition, which could have either of the two meanings, they picked the wrong one in that place. So in the English translation it seems to contradict the fact. That preposition *a/* is in a way like our English preposition "with". In the last war we fought with the Germans, didn't we? But America fought with England against the Germans, didn't we? So we fought with England in the last war, and we fought with Germany in the last war; and they're both with. But the word "with" here has two opposite meanings. In one case it means "against," in the other case it means "for." Now the Hebrew word *a/* means "against," or it means "on account of."

=====

(review) We are on XII, The Last Century of Judah. This morning we looked at A, The Assyrian Empire. And we had looked, at the end of hour, at Pharaoh–Necho's expedition to help the king of Assyria, and how it was driven back, and how the battle of Carchemish utterly wrecked the Assyrian power. And that very naturally leads us to

B. The Neo–Babylonian Empire.

And under that

1. Nebuchadnezzar.

He's all we're going to discuss about that, at the moment. We have noticed that about 2,000 BC, or somewhat later, Babylon established an Empire; it was practically unknown before. But it became an important city; established an empire which lasted for a couple of hundred years; more importantly, it established itself in the imagination of people by its literary standing; by its commercial standing; by the exploits of its leaders in that time; so that it remained a nation of tremendous reputation during the succeeding 1500 years. But during most of this time, it was not a great powerful empire. It was a city of great importance—commercially, politically, literarily—but the imperial power largely passed to Assyria. Particularly after 1,000 BC.

Now the downfall of Assyria has been brought about by a coalition of the Babylonians and the Medes. And just at the time of the battle of Carchemish, where the remainder of the Assyrian imperial power was broken, and it lost its headquarters at Haran, it disappeared completely after that; just at that time, the general of the army received news that his father had died. And the death of his father put him in line to be the king of Babylon. He rushed back to Babylon; got himself established as king with little difficulty about the succession in this

case; and immediately came back and carried on the fight to establish control over the remnant of the Assyrian power.

And this man Nebuchadnezzar is probably the best-known Mesopotamian ruler today. The reason is that he is prominent in incidents in the Bible that have been stressed in Sunday School. He deserved the prominence though, in addition to that, because he was one of the great rulers of Mesopotamia. He ruled for many years; and during these years he was very powerful; he had a very strong control over Babylon, and over the region round about. He was king from 605 to 562, so you see, a long reign with a very strong power.

Now at the very beginning of his power, you can see that, in a way, it was not quite the same as the old Assyrian power; because the overthrow of Assyria had been brought about with the help of the Medes. And so the Medes remain an independent power to the northeast, particularly east, of Babylonia. But a great part of the old Assyrian Empire was in the hands of Nebuchadnezzar; and he succeeds in conquering Egypt, which the Assyrians had conquered only towards the very end of their days of empire. And so he holds Egypt and most of Palestine, Assyria, and all the region over through Mesopotamia.

Now this man's name, Nebuchadnezzar, in the Babylonian, is *Nabu-kuduru-utsu*, "O Nabu, protect the boundary;" a very appropriate name for one who is a great general and leader of a great empire, as he came to be. But that *Nabu-kuduru-utsu* became contracted to Nebuchadnezzar, the form in which we find it in the book of Jeremiah. In Daniel we find it in the form Nebuchadnezzar; and naturally, there are those who would think that this Nebuchadnezzar was an incorrect name. But in this particular case, I had never heard that charge made; because we have so much evidence, from other sources, of this form having become a well established form. It would seem to be a shortened way of saying Nebuchadnezzar. It's easier to say "dnezzar" than "drezzar"; it's a phonetic process that establishes this as a simpler way of saying the name; and it was written Nebuchadnezzar; but in Hebrew, we're writing in a different language anyway.

And so Jeremiah, who knows Nebuchadnezzar mostly through records and documents, at a distance, uses the formal name the way it is written; but Daniel, who was at the court, uses it the way that it probably was pronounced right there by the people at the court. So either name is correct; the one the more formal spelling, the other the actual representation of the pronunciation.

Nebuchadnezzar is very different from the Assyrian kings who had held the empire before him. These Assyrian kings had been very proud of their warlike exploits; and they made out careful accounts of what they did year by year; these they distributed through their realm in order to show what great generals, what successful soldiers they were; describing place by place and point by

point, their excursions, their conquests, their overthrows of enemies, of cities they conquered, and so on. That was what appealed to these Assyrian kings. Nebuchadnezzar seems to have been a different sort of man; he was a very able general, a very successful one; but to him the generalship, the fighting, the conquest, rather than the other things delighted him. And he has left us no inscriptions giving full details of his conquests or telling where he went year by year.

We thus are in a much poorer position to check his relationship with Judah than we are his relationship with the Assyrian king, because he does not give us the information that they gave. He begins his inscriptions with a statement something like this: "I, Nebuchadnezzar the great king of Babylon, the Lord of the world; I, Nebuchadnezzar have conquered great cities; have crossed mighty mountains; have led my armies through difficult countries; have overcome powerful enemies." Just a general summary, which sounds like boasting, but we have ample reason to believe that it is actually what he did. But it's a general summary of his military exploits.

And then after that, he goes on to tell how I took the great temple of such and such; a temple which was somewhat run down, and I tore down sections of it and rebuilt them; and added two large sections; and then his inscriptions give great detail of his building; and so he was a great builder, rather than a great soldier. He was a great soldier and an effective and successful soldier, but this was secondary in his mind; the building was far more primary to him than the conquest. And it is what he stresses in his inscriptions.

Now we have a tremendous amount of detail in his inscriptions of the building that he did; and we know that he did, because we have the evidence of it. We have excavated in many of these cities; and we can see there how he took the great temples and palaces, and he rebuilt them or he remodeled them; he changed them around, according to a new and better plan. His wife came from a mountainous country. Babylon was a very flat area; and they say that she longed for the hills and her native mountains. So he built a very high brick building, on top of that he put earth and planted trees, and all sorts of flowering plants; and it became known throughout the world as the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, which he built for to please his wife. But it shows in general something of his building.

In Babylon, the German excavation went in there, and excavated a great part of Babylon, studying very carefully what they found; and they found bricks, which had a stamp put on them. We think of printing as something modern. Well, actually it isn't. What is modern is printing with movable type. If by printing, you mean taking something and stamping writing on it; stamping a meaning on the thing; Nebuchadnezzar was perhaps one of the greatest printers in history. Because he had a stamp made, probably many of them, which said,

"Nebuchadnezzar, the great king, the king of Babylon, the king of the four great sections of the world, the restorer of the crown" and so on; the stamp had about ten lines describing the greatness of King Nebuchadnezzar and this was on a stamp of the size that would fit on a brick; and so every brick was stamped with it; and over a million bricks have been examined in Babylon that have the name and titles and exploits of Nebuchadnezzar stamped upon them. You see, it was very similar to what we do when we print a book. We put a lot of writing on a stamp and stamp it on successive pages and thus reproduce; but of course, the thing is, these letters were just put on the one stamp; and it wasn't re-arrangeable anything like our newspapers are. But it's the same principle.

But when you see all these things that Nebuchadnezzar marked in his name, to show what a great builder he was; and when you see the tremendous building that he actually did in Babylon; it makes the book of Daniel live for us, when we read how Nebuchadnezzar looked out and said, "Is not this great Babylon which I have built?" We don't read of any Assyrian making statements like that. They built palaces and temples, but that was to glorify their great military conquests; whereas Nebuchadnezzar didn't glory in the military exploits, but used them in order to get the wherewithal to build the great buildings.

Well, Nebuchadnezzar then, as you see, ruled for over forty years; and he was doubtless a very effective general before that. He was an able ruler, and one who held a very large territory under his sway. And when you see the beginning of this, you note that already there is a very strange situation. You have in the west, along the Mediterranean Sea, all of those kingdoms practically have been conquered, except one of the few that remain is up on the hill country there, above the plains of Palestine; there is Jerusalem, and the section near it which the kings of Judah ruled, and had ruled for a century before. And Sennacherib conquered Egypt, so his armies had to go back and forth within sight of Jerusalem; that is, if you were on a high place in Jerusalem, or out on the edge of the hill country, you could look down to the plains and see his army going back and forth.

And they had taken Egypt; Nebuchadnezzar held Egypt; this Judah is a little island, you might say, surrounded on three sides and practically on the fourth side by the power of the Babylonian Empire and of Nebuchadnezzar. Well, a condition like that we wouldn't expect to last indefinitely.

Well, so much then for the Empire during the last century of Judah. We'll have more to say about it naturally, after the destruction of Judah. But we will go on to

C. The Last Kings of Judah.

And the last king of Judah at whom we have looked is Hezekiah. So we will call

1. Manasseh.

And Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah reigned, if I recall correctly, 55 years. It was a very long time that Manasseh reigned. He had this extremely long reign, 55 years. Manasseh was a very different sort of king from his father, Hezekiah. He probably more took after his grandfather, Ahaz. Ahaz, the very ungodly king, succeeded by Hezekiah, one of the godliest kings in all Israelite history. Now he is succeeded by his son, one of the most ungodly. He was a wicked king; he turned away from following the Lord completely, and completely neglected everything that his father had stood for.

And so this was a long time of moral decline; a time of going down hill as far as his religious life was concerned. But we notice how long a period there is—there is 150 years—almost as long as the United States has existed, that Judah existed after Israel came to an end. We're apt not to realize the length of this period. But of this long period, 55 of the years are years when Manasseh is ruling; and the picture that we're given of Manasseh in 2 Kings is entirely a dark picture. Now in 2 Chronicles, as you note, we have more detail on the king than we have in Kings. And in Chronicles, we have an important incident given which was not given in Kings.

After telling in 2 Chronicles 33 what a wicked king Manasseh was; how much evil he did; how he built again the high places Hezekiah had broken down; made groves; worshipped the host of heaven; and then all the wickedness that he did; then we read, verse 10,

And the Lord spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken. Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God.

And then you read how Manasseh then turned to the Lord,

he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the Lord, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the Lord, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city.... Nevertheless the people did sacrifice still in the high places, yet unto the Lord their God only. Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer unto his God, ... behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel. ... So Manasseh slept with his

fathers, and they buried him in his own house: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

Now when in the course of Manasseh's 55 years did this incident occur? Kings doesn't mention the incident; Chronicles doesn't say when it happened. And so we have no clear evidence of when it happened; but it would be suggested, by the way it's given at the very end of Manasseh's reign, that perhaps it was very near the end. But if it was at the end of the reign, it is understandable how it might have been omitted. If he had a reign of 52 years of wickedness; and then in the end, he repented and turned to the Lord, tried to make amends; it would be such a small thing in its effects, proportionate to the reign as a whole; and leave so little effect, particularly as he was succeeded by a wicked and ungodly son, that it would be understandable how it would come about that it would not have gotten into the accounts of Kings at all. So that I think that is a pretty good ground for suggesting that it probably was near the end of the reign.

Now the critics have raised another serious question about this. Of course, the general critical attitude is that Kings is, on the whole, good history but Chronicles is late and untrustworthy; written by somebody who took what was in Kings and copied a lot of it; and added a lot of stuff from his imagination. That's the general critical attitude of a few years back towards Chronicles. Nowadays, they are not nearly as skeptical of Chronicles as they were, because some of the statements in Chronicles have been receiving a certain amount of confirmation from historical examination in a way to lead them to be not quite so skeptical of it as they were.

Another thing, the general attitude of the critics has been, well, Chronicles is simply magnifying the greatness of Judah; and when you find that in Kings, it tells of a battle in which there were a hundred people killed, Chronicles will say there were a hundred thousand killed, so as to magnify the importance of it all. That's what they say. The fact of the matter is that, in the cases where we have differences of numbers between Kings and Chronicles, they are just as apt to be the other way. They are just as apt to be a smaller number in Chronicles as a larger number, if there's a difference. You cannot say it's a definite tendency to magnify. And that of course has led some very intelligent critical students to take the conclusion that some of the aspersions against Chronicles are not warranted.

Now this particular incident is one which they attack. The statement was made, and right on the face of it you can see that this is an imaginary addition of the Chronicler, because you notice what he says. Verse 9

So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel. And the Lord spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would

not hearken. Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

Well, the critics said, "Why would they take him to Babylon? Would it not be much more sensible to take him to Nineveh than to Babylon?" Now in Kings, when they speak of the kings of Assyria, they tell about his coming to the capital of Nineveh, or they refer to Ninos. But Nineveh was destroyed about 600 BC; and if Chronicles was written 200 years later, when they remember Babylon as the great powerful place, and Nineveh had become hardly more than a memory, why it seems to be a mistake to mention the king of Assyria and say he took him to Babylon. So, they say here is, on the face of it, the evidence of an error in the book of Chronicles.

But now it is an apparent error, but one which is not difficult to answer when we know the actual situation. We do not know when this occurred; and therefore we do not know who was the king of Assyria that did this. Was it Essar-haddon? Was it Ashurbanipal? It would have to be one of the two. Well, Essar-haddon, as you know, was one who loved Babylon; one who spent much time there; one who rebuilt many of the great temples of Babylon.

Under the circumstances it would be quite a natural thing if Essar-haddon would choose to bring some of his captives to Babylon instead of to Nineveh; and to show off his greatness there to the people he wants to impress, the people of Babylon. Now if it was later, if it was in the time of Ashurbanipal—he, you remember, has his great difficulty in Babylon, he was trying to coerce the people; and so in his case there is a possible reason also why he might have chosen to take a captive king and carry him to Babylon.

The fact of the matter of course, is that when we have accounts like this, there can easily be other factors entering in that we do not know anything about. If the account were to say that one of the Neo-Babylonian kings took a prisoner to Nineveh, that would be clearly an error, because Nineveh was not rebuilt. It wasn't even in existence. But Babylon was an important city; and particularly in the reign of these two kings, there are reasons that are easy to see why he might have done exactly what is described in Chronicles.

And so this, which has been suggested as an error, actually, it is not what we perhaps would expect, but it is something which might easily have happened.

Now in the Apocryphal writings, there is a prayer of Manasseh. You notice it refers here to the prayers he wrote; his prayer unto his God. It must be that when Chronicles was written, there was a book the Chronicler had which contained a prayer of Manasseh. Do we have that prayer? I think it very unlikely. It is my guess that some later writer, reading this here—that book having

disappeared which contained that prayer—he made up a prayer, and said probably Manasseh's prayer was something like this. Now that wouldn't be anything dishonest for him to do. When Josephus writes his story of the Israelite kings, he tells about Saul; and how Saul saw the Philistines coming, and he gives us the thoughts in Saul's mind. He said "To be or not to be, that is the question." He didn't use those words probably, but he shows the same sort of reasoning, "Shall I kill myself? Shall I try to flee from the Philistines? What shall I do in this situation?" And he gives us about a page of the thoughts of Saul. Well, it is quite frequently done in writing accounts of history, to imagine something that is in line with the facts as we know; not contrary to them, and to try to enlarge that way, particularly if it's labeled as what he may have said, or what he probably said; but when that's done, it's very easy for people later to get the impression that it's actually a true story, and to repeat it as such. There are all sorts of stories that come into history which are imaginary, never fact; and very often, they didn't come in because somebody tried to palm something off, but because somebody made a definite expression of his judgment, a picturing what probably happened. At any rate, this prayer of Manasseh in the Apocrypha has nothing in it which would apply to Manasseh. It's just a very nice prayer, but it's called the prayer of Manasseh, and it's contained in the Apocryphal writings. Very unlikely it actually had any connection with Manasseh. But it doubtless is the result of this statement having been made there in Chronicles.

Well, I believe that this in Manasseh's life was very late; because it would not seem that there is much effect of it in what follows. And yet, when we find his grandson very anxious to serve the Lord, it might just be that Manasseh did influence the grandson after his own conversion.

2. Amon.

We will go on to Amon. 2 Chronicles 33:20:

Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house: and Amon his son reigned in his stead. Amon was two and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned two years in Jerusalem. But he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and served them; And humbled not himself before the Lord, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more. And his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house. But the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.

You notice the difference from what happened in Israel. Repeatedly in Israel, the people conspired against a king and killed him; and then they killed all of his family, and a new dynasty started. But here in Judah, the king has been killed

but the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead

Now I just wonder if this figure has been correctly preserved, where it says Amon was 22 years old when he began to reign. Manasseh had reigned 55 years when he died, so that his son, his older son, you would normally expect would not be only 22 at his death; you would normally expect he might be older. Now of course it's possible that one not the oldest had been designated as king. But the greater problem with that is, that Amon's son Josiah is made king and Josiah is 8 years old, we read here in 2 Chronicles 34, when he began to reign.

And if he was eight years old; if his father reigned 2 years and was killed when he was 24; and at that time, the son was eight years old; it's not impossible but it's extremely unusual. And it's entirely possible that the figures have been correctly preserved; but it would seem to me at least possible that there's been an error in transmission here and Amon was actually older than 22 when he became king. I can't help wondering: could it be that this young boy Josiah had been influenced by his grandfather after his conversion? That the leaders that Amon had put into power in Judah were wicked men? What you would expect of a wicked king?

Manasseh, on his return, had wicked men all around men; he's old and decrepit. He comes back from his exile and the captivity; and he comes back and he tells how he turned to the Lord, and he begins to improve things. And these men didn't pay much attention to him; they thought he was an old doddering idiot; and they have the power pretty much in their own hands; and he didn't have much energy left to really accomplish a great deal with them; but he might have been able to have a very considerable influence on his young grandson. Now whether this is true, we don't know; it's entirely possible. The fact is that Manasseh was generally wicked, but Chronicles says there was this conversion in his life; and he was succeeded by his son Amon, who was a very wicked king. Amon's own servants killed him after two years; but then the people did away with the whole crowd of those who had been around Manasseh and put the little boy in as king.

3. Josiah.

And so Josiah becomes king; and Chronicles says that he was only 8 years old when he began to reign. And Kings says the same thing: He was 8 years old, and he reigned 31 years.

Those years were very important in the history of Judah. Because this young man Josiah was very godly man.

Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left. For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images.

And so we read about all the good things that Josiah did; and after Josiah had made a great reform, we read that he went up into the country to the north, which the Assyrians had conquered. In 2 Kings 23:

Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove. ...And all the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Bethel.

And he fulfilled that prophecy made 300 years before (1 Kings 13:2)

Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.

The prophet gave his name, and told what he would do; and here was the dynasty of David still going at that time, when there had been four dynasties in Israel; and the land had been taken captive, and the people taken into exile. But Josiah is still king of the line of David and fulfills that prophecy; and he follows the Lord, and he does away with the high places; and in Jerusalem, he sets up the establishment as the word of God said it should be.

And one important event in Josiah's doing this was the discovery in the temple of the book of the Law. And this is one of the central features in the whole critical story, their whole attitude toward the Old Testament.

We read in Kings and in Chronicles about the discovery of the book of the Law in the temple; and we find in 2 Chronicles 34:15 here that

And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan. And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they do it. And they have gathered together the money that was found in the house of

the Lord, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen. Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.

Shaphan read it to the king; and the king determined to carry out the commands of this law. And when you read of the reforms that Josiah brought about, many of them fit exactly with the commands in the book of Deuteronomy. And particularly his doing away with the high places, where they worshipped God in many parts of the land; and putting in place of them all, the worship, the sacrifice, to be centralized in Jerusalem at the Temple.

And the critics say, "This was never known in the land before. It was introduced by Josiah, because of this book of the law of God." So they say that book of the law of God must have been Deuteronomy, which commands that they worship at the one place. Well, they certainly are right: the book of the law of God must have included Deuteronomy. But to say it's only Deuteronomy is entirely unwarranted. It could be Deuteronomy; it could be the whole Pentateuch. Personally I think it's the whole Pentateuch.

Well, how could the book of the law be lost? How could he find it in this way? Didn't the people know about the book of the law of the Lord? Wasn't it to be found everywhere? Well, you've had a 55 year reign of Manasseh, a reign of wickedness. According to Jewish tradition, the followers of Manasseh decided to kill Isaiah the prophet; and Isaiah fled and hid in the woods. And he hid there, according to this tradition, in a hollow tree; and the wicked men who were pursuing him having seen where he went, but not letting on that they had seen him, they said, "Let's chop down this tree; let's cut it"; and they took a saw, and they cut it in two, and cut him in two. And where we read "they were sawn asunder" in Hebrews 11, that is a reference to the Jewish tradition about the death of Isaiah.

Well, certainly Hebrews says they were sawn asunder, so we know some of the followers of God were sawn asunder. But that it means Isaiah, we don't know. This Jewish tradition is late; it may be entirely false. And yet it may be true; we don't know. But after the godly Hezekiah, there was the ungodly king Manasseh; the tradition at least shows the nature of his kingship, the wickedness of his rule; it would be very easy for the law of God to be lost under those circumstances, and a copy of it to be found up there in the temple. Now that doesn't mean that nobody had copies of it. There may not have been, and yet there may have been, many godly people who had copies in their homes, copies which they were reading. But copies which they kept rather carefully hidden.

And when Josiah became king, somebody would come up and say, "King, I've got a copy of the book of the law I want you to read." Well, probably most of

them, after hiding it for 50 years, and reading it secretly, would hesitate for fear of having it taken away from them. They would hesitate to believe the stories about how good this man Josiah was; and how would they be sure that what they had was genuine? But here they found this actually in the temple; and it was certified that this was found there in the temple; and when he heard it he recognized it as the Word of the Lord and gave deference to it.

Now this is generally dated as 621 BC, the date of the discovery of the law and of Josiah's revival. We have noticed that Hezekiah had a similar revival 80 years earlier. But 621 BC is generally given as the date of Josiah's great revival. And it was a great event in Judah's history, unquestionably. But that it is what the critics hold; that it was the beginning of the book of Deuteronomy is something there is no need in the world to believe. It was a time when it came into prominence again; but that's not to say that it hadn't been in prominence before. Now of course that's a long study—the study of the arguments for and against the genuineness of Deuteronomy. We're interested now in the historical situation in the revival to which Deuteronomy undoubtedly contributed greatly.

Yes? (Student. "How did they know it was the genuine law?") Well, the high priest and the scribe who saw it declared their conviction that it was the book of the law of God. And I believe over in Kings we have another witness, also referred to in Chronicles, as having certified to it to the king; that it was in her opinion definitely the book of the law of the Lord.

We read, in 2 Chronicles 34, we read,

And Hilkiah, and they that the king had appointed, went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvath, the son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college:) and they spake to her to that effect. And she answered them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Tell ye the man that sent you to me, Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah: Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched. And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to enquire of the Lord, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel concerning the words which thou hast heard; Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord. Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I

will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again.

Now there is the certification by this woman who is recognized as a prophetess, that this is the book of the law of God.¹⁶⁵ Now we can know, of course, that they felt they had sufficient warrant; and they felt that one whom they recognized as a spokesman for God certified it, that that was the situation.

Yes? (Student. "Was this the only copy?") No, but that would show that there were official records in it, and the compiler of Kings and Chronicles had access to those official records. And when they wrote, the official records were available so people could go to them and get further information. But those official records are evidence there were other books available when they were written, but they're not available nowadays.



SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH

Yes? (Student. "...And that the discovery was the book of Deuteronomy?") There's no doubt, as I say, that Deuteronomy was either the book found or a part of it. I don't think there's any question of that. But to say it was only Deuteronomy is unnecessary; now it may have been only Deuteronomy, but I don't think it likely. And I don't think it likely that they had the other four books (or fragments which the "Redactor" later edited) and just added Deuteronomy to it. I think likely that they found the whole five Books of Moses. That's my personal opinion on it. But that it included the book of Deuteronomy, there's no question of that. I think all

conservatives and liberals are agreed on that, because the reforms so definitely carried out the commands of Deuteronomy.

Yes? (Student. "What about the Samaritan Pentateuch?") No. Well, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Samaritans claim it is the original copy made by Moses; and the critics claim that it is something that as written much later than this, at the time of Nehemiah.¹⁶⁶ But of course we have no proof.

¹⁶⁵ [dcb] It seems reasonable to assume that the prophetess was well aware of the contents of the books of the Law which undoubtedly existed earlier throughout the land, and now were perhaps hidden because of fear of discovery. So her role was simply to confirm that these scrolls found in the Temple were indeed those books and not a fabrication or other ancient documents. Recall the earlier remarks about the general literacy of the population at this time.

¹⁶⁶ [dcb] The British Museum has a complete copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch which includes the books of the Hebrew Pentateuch, in the Samaritan alphabet, written in an old Hebrew script.

Well, the book of Deuteronomy then, they accepted; but the question was asked, how did he know this was the book of the law? I say the whole Pentateuch, at least including the Deuteronomy: how do we know? Well, he thought he was sure. Well, I'd say this. It wasn't that it had just been written that year. He'd be a pretty stupid fellow if they could bring something just written that year and palm it off on him.

The critical theory, as it was advanced a hundred years ago, about this was that the priests in Jerusalem at this time saw this as chance to get a bigger revenue; and therefore they wrote the book of Deuteronomy, and put it in the Temple where they could find it. They called it a pious fraud. It was a fraud, because actually they wrote it and not Moses; it was written in order to get more income for the priests there, to make all the sacrifices there. But also, as it urges good ethics and all that, it was a pious fraud. Of course to do something to get money for yourself, and then actually urge good ethics, doesn't sound very pious. But that was the claim of the critics; that was the original position on Deuteronomy.

But today very few hold that early critical view. Because most recognize that it would be mighty difficult to take something just written and bring it in and have the king and other people accept it as a genuine thing that came from the day of Moses. And most today believe that it had been in the Temple there at least 50 years. Most believe that today; very few think today that it was written at that time. Most think it was written earlier.

And if so, their position is much weaker from a purely human viewpoint. It is not impossible to think of a grasping priesthood making up a book in order to try to increase their wealth. But to think that somebody did that 50 years before, when Hezekiah was against all fraudulent worship, and put it in there in the hope that 50 years later there'd come a reaction in favor of the worship of God, and then it would be found, is rather fantastic.

And so, if it wasn't written at that time, how did it get there? The general view of the critics today is that it is a book written in the northern kingdom. A book which represents the views of the northern kingdom rather than the southern kingdom; and that this part about worship in Jerusalem is a later addition stuck in. Well, it's pretty hard to figure how it ever got into the Temple under those

Another copy (Codex B) is in a library in Paris. The Hebrew and Samaritan Pentateuch differ in only minor ways except for the Samaritan Pentateuch's designation of Mount Gerizim as the Samaritan place of worship. The text for this command is a paragraph added at Exodus 20:17, text which is missing from the Hebrew text. At Deuteronomy 27:2-8 the Samaritan text changes the future tense of the Hebrew text, to the past tense to account for this addition to the text in Exodus. Many minor additions in the Samaritan text serve to clarify certain conversations and events implied in the Hebrew text. All complete manuscripts are dated no earlier than the middle ages, around 1100 AD.

circumstances. But of course the critics, in making it out that this is the first time Deuteronomy came into existence, have to do away with Hezekiah's revival, which we don't find in such a visible form in our ordinary history. And therefore it takes a man with faith in God to accept the Biblical account.

But if you have faith in God, you find that the historical differences are much less, the historical differences in most of the critics' views.

=====

There are those who claim that, where in the book of Jeremiah we read the words (Jeremiah 8:8),

How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain.

They claim that this is proof that Jeremiah considered that Deuteronomy was a forgery. Of course I think that's extremely far-fetched. But there are those who claim that.

On the other hand, the book of Jeremiah is filled with the spirit of the book of Deuteronomy, much of the phraseology of Deuteronomy; and doubtless it was in Jeremiah's mind, the book of Deuteronomy which Josiah had paid so much heed to.

Now the death of Josiah is described in 2 Kings 23:29. And there we find it very briefly given.

In his days Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him. And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

And this day, when he went up against the king of Assyria, has always led people to think that Pharaoh Necho went up to fight against Assyria; but we now have the records of the times, showing how Nebuchadnezzar as general of the Babylonian forces, was fighting against the king of Assyria; and Pharaoh Necho came up to help the king of Assyria. And he was driven back with Pharaoh Necho. And some have thought that there is here a contradiction between the clear full statement of the archaeological discoveries and this statement here.

I do not believe that that is the correct interpretation. I think we should note that the preposition there "against", *a/*, is like our preposition "with" in connection with something. The preposition *a/* is translated "against" in many cases, but it is translated "concerning" almost as often. And ordinarily, if we fight *with* somebody it means we fight against; but it doesn't have to be; a man might very well in speaking of another man, say, "Why say, it's nice to see that fellow, I fought with him at Guadalcanal." And anybody who knew that they were both in the U.S. Marines would understand that they fought side by side. So, while our ordinary use of fighting with someone is to fight against, we do use it in the other sense. And the preposition *a/* here, is part of a very, very brief statement here; and it seems to me that knowledge of the Hebrew preposition saves us from any misconception or any idea of a contradiction. But when you come to translate; when you don't know anything about the situation; you have to do the best you can to translate it into English. And ordinarily you get an idea of the whole situation, and then you try to give a translation that gives the situation as you understand it; but if you can, in translation, get a word which preserves the ambiguity of the original, you are making a better translation than if you give what your interpretation is. Because, especially if it's a situation where you don't know a great deal about it, the later evidence may show whether one or other of two possible interpretations is the right one.

Suppose, for instance, somebody over in Europe says, "a person who came from America." Well, if you're translating that into English, and you say he came from the United States, chances are 3 out of 4 that, when they say America, they mean the United States, just as we do. Canadians talk about the Americans.

But America is also used in the sense for the whole two continents. And it's good to preserve this, as near as you can, the extent of the original. Of course there are times when to preserve it would give nonsense, because you don't have that particular form in the language. In that case, you have to take a stand on it. But if only you could indicate in some way that you have done so, then your readers aren't going to be confused, and say "Look here, this translation says this; that's what it means." Well, that means what the translator thinks it means; but the translator may know perfectly well that another interpretation is equally valid for the original. It isn't fair to blame the translator for it if it's the best he can do; but in that case we cannot stand on a translation; we cannot do it.

I got a letter a couple of days ago, from a man who says he's going to write to the Directors of the Seminary and suggest that I be replaced—that some other one be secured for President of the Seminary. He says we should have a man who will stand by the King James Version, which is the final version and the version which should stand permanently. And in my little pamphlet criticizing the RSV, in the last paragraph I expressed my hope that some time godly men

will make a translation which would be as good for the English of our day as the King James was for its day.

And this man feels that that's a most terrible thing to suggest; that the King James Version could in any way be improved upon. Well, he's sending a copy of his letter, not only to some of the directors but to other friends of the Seminary so that they will see the terrible unbelief there is here in the Seminary.

Of course, you'll find godly people who think the KJV is the last word; it is the true translation. And I will agree that the KJV is as fine a translation as has ever been made. But we've learned a lot since it was made and, in this particular realm, we've learned a lot; and the KJV is in the language of 300 years ago. And when they say, "Oh, Lord, keep me from leasing," nobody today, unless they've gone to look the word up particularly in an Old English dictionary, has any idea what you're talking about, unless they think we're in the real estate business.

But there are many, many expressions in the KJV which just don't make sense today. Well, I don't think that's bad, when a word doesn't make sense. It's easy enough for us to say, "Well, we don't know what this means." But, what's difficult is when word has changed meaning, and you may not even realize it; and that's what throws us off. That's where we can be very, very confused.

And I don't think there's any translation available yet [1958] that's anywhere near as good as the King James; but I hope there will be sometime, because I think we're in a terribly crippled situation having to use a translation that nobody today understands.

Yes? (Student.) Yes, very, very good. "And he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him." That's about as ambiguous a statement as you can possibly make, isn't it? King Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo when he had seen him. Well, we would say, "Whoever wrote that certainly didn't bother to make himself clear." But, you can say, "It wasn't necessary to make himself clear; because he would assume that the reader would go on and read the next verse." The next verse makes it clear; and it is perfectly all right to use abbreviated language in expressing things, if we've already, in what precedes or follows, made clear what we're saying.

But unfortunately most of us don't do that. I get letters and it's impossible to tell what they're talking about. Because they assume that you know who the "he" or the "him" is that they're talking about. Now in this case, we read on, and it says that his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. We know that they didn't do that to Pharaoh Necho, because he wouldn't have a sepulchre of his own in Jerusalem. So then we realize that it's Josiah that is meant. But you have to go on to get it; it was not clear.

Fortunately, we have a fuller account. Pharaoh Necho came to fight against the king of Assyria, to the river Euphrates; and King Josiah went against him. It doesn't say whether Josiah went against the king of Assyria or against Pharaoh Necho; but if we gather the situation from the context, then we can understand it. And it may very well be that, when the book of Chronicles was written, the writer of Chronicles who, in so many, many places, copies word for word from Kings, when he came to this place said, "Kings is not clear here; it's too condensed; our readers need a fuller account." And consequently he departed from the practice which he followed so frequently, of following Kings word for word and gave us a much fuller account, and so the writer of Chronicles said in 2 Chron. 35:20:

In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover kept. After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Charchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him.

You see, the writer of Chronicles does not say he came to fight against the king of Assyria. And it's silly to say he came to fight against Charchemish, which is a place not a people. The word translated "against", *v'*, very often means "by" and "near"; and that would be a much better translation in that case. "He came out to fight by Carchemish at the Euphrates; and Josiah went out against him."

But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war: for God commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not.

He sent ambassadors to him. Who sent, Josiah or Necho? Well, the next, what he said makes it clear. What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah?

So it's plain that it's Necho's ambassador. You notice how the Chronicles state this in such a way as to show that Necho was not revealing his intentions. He simply said against the house wherewith I make war: For God commanded me to make haste. The King James Version has God, in capitals. I would rather like it be small, because Pharaoh was not a worshipper of the true God. I think what he's really saying is, "this is my divine command to do this." Well if Pharaoh-Necho thought he had a divine command to do it, he soon found out he was mistaken; because Nebuchadnezzar defeated him. It was three years before he reached that point. He had three or four years of fighting before finding he lost out altogether.

Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo.

Now there it's probably all right to have the capital "God"; the author is saying that God in his mercy was causing Necho to give Josiah a chance to escape. That is, Josiah probably had a misplaced sense of loyalty to God here; and actually Josiah was just a little portion, a tiny portion, in relation to the great empires; and all he did was to hurt himself, by meddling in things that were too great for him to have any effect upon them. If he was going to do it, he should first have long communication with other powers and have the full situation and know where he ought to stand, and do it not alone but with others.

So it says he hearkened not to the words of Necho and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. Megiddo you know is way north of Jerusalem; but it's the place where, coming up from Egypt, up that coastal plain, the plain gets narrower and narrower. The plain is 15 miles wide and gets narrower and narrower as you go up till Mount Carmel comes right up to the Mediterranean Sea, And there in order to get across—to get up to Asia Minor or to Mesopotamia—you have to cross over to the Central Plain.

And so there, in the Valley of Megiddo, a valley next to the fortress of Megiddo, is the nicest place, the easiest place, to cross over and continue north. And it's a very good place to stop the Egyptians; because a small group of well-armed people there could stop a group many times as large, by holding the narrow pass. And so Josiah tried to hold him there and he didn't succeed.

And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded. His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations.

It's interesting to have this mention of the prophet Jeremiah in the book of Chronicles.

So Chronicles has a much fuller account of it; and doubtless they had records which gave the fuller account; but for Kings they had not thought it necessary; and had condensed it, and had perhaps condensed it too much. Chronicles gives it more fully.

This battle here, by the way, is the battle of Megiddo, which attracts the most attention of any battle in the Old Testament. There were far greater battles of Megiddo earlier, between the Egyptians and other people; but this is the one which killed the great godly king Josiah, and it gets naturally big attention in

the OT; and it causes Megiddo, as a battle place, to become prominent in Bible history; though in world history there are other far more important.

Yes? (Student. "I don't quite understand what you mean, they had condensed it and condensed it too much.") Yes, that "too much" was a bad phrase. They had condensed it to the point where it just gave the bare essentials; and the Lord desires that it should have somewhat more information than that, and so the Chronicles gives it in more detail. Now ordinarily, you expect the earlier writers to let you have the detail and the later writers give it in briefer form, and that a brief statement seems sufficient. And that's why I said "too much", I meant that in order to get the full impression the Lord wants for us, more detail is desired than Kings gave. The Lord wanted that we should have more information.

So what I meant is, that I don't think the writer of Chronicles had firsthand information; he got it from writings. Now the writer of Kings may have had firsthand information, because Kings doesn't go much longer than this, another 25 years. He may have seen all this; on the other hand, he may not if he was 25 years later; he could easily have not been around when this happened, and in such case we have the Chronicles. Yes? (Student.) No, I didn't mean to say that, I said a minute ago that God wanted us to have more information. But there are two factors in the writing of every Bible book. There is a human factor, that human beings write what they think is important for us to have. There is also the factor that God has inspired the book, which doesn't mean that he is dictating to these human beings.

Now he has dictated certain portions. "Thus saith the Lord," that's the Lord dictating. But the great bulk of the Bible books has not been dictated by the Lord, but the Lord has inspired them; that means that he has seen to it that what is there as it came from the hands of the original writer is exactly what God wants there; and he has done that in the first place by selecting the writer: selecting them before their birth; by seeing to their education and their training and their preparation; seeing to what they'll see and what they'll know and what special revelations he may give them. And then by overseeing them, as they use words from their own vocabulary, and their own style of writing, to keep out of what they write any erroneous ideas that are in their mind. And so inspiration is a complex process; it is not simply dictation, but the result of it is just as definitely the mind of God as if it were dictation. The Lord sees to it that what they write is exactly what he wants.

Now it may very well be that for the people between the time when Kings was written and when Chronicles was written, this brief statement was sufficient. It may be that the people were passing on by word of mouth all this about him and a great deal more. He was a very well-known figure to them; and many accounts about Josiah were doubtless well-known and passed on to the people. There was no need of having any more than was in Kings. But by the time of the

writing of Chronicles, much of that tradition had disappeared; and some had become twisted; and the Lord desired us to have a fuller account than what Kings gave. Although probably not as full an account as the people knew at the time Kings was written. And so he led the Chronicler to give us more details here.

Mr. Welch? (Student. "Mentioning this as being an important battle in the OT, does it mean then that this has come to be symbolical in the NT, rather than being a decisive battle as the NT describes?") Well, I would say we would have to examine the evidence. It would be entirely possible for it to be used symbolically. Like we say, a man has "crossed the Rubicon," when he hasn't gone anywhere near where the Rubicon River is. It's entirely possible to refer to the king of Assyria when you don't mean Assyria at all; or to refer to Babylon when you don't mean Babylon at all. Because after they have become established and well-known, they can then easily be used as figures for something big or similar.

On the other hand, though they may be used as figures, they may be used as specific places. You have to study the particular context to make your decision on it. We cannot say that for a person to take a word—to say that Assyria is used symbolically of the great aggressor—in a part of the Bible written long before the kingdom of Assyria became that; that would be ridiculous. It cannot be used as such, until it has become well-known in this category. But after it has become such, then no one can be accused of misinterpreting the Bible, if you interpret something like that as a figure of expression. He can be accused of misinterpreting, if he does it through carelessness, without careful enough attention to context.

Well, the death of Josiah. It was not an important battle; but it was important because it meant the death of this great and good man whom the people loved; but it was actually a very small skirmish with Pharaoh-Necho.

Yes? (Student. "Why did Josiah attack Pharaoh?") We are not told. My guess is that it was a misplaced sense of loyalty to the king of Assyria. My guess is that he had heard of the downfall of Nineveh; he knew now the capital was being held at Haran. The kings of Judah had been paying tribute to the kings of Assyria; he felt he had an obligation to him; he felt "Well now, if I can hold the pass at Megiddo and stop the Egyptians from coming up, it may make all the difference in the battle." And he may not have realized that Pharaoh Necho was coming up to help. Or it might have been the other way around. It might have been that he thought Pharaoh Necho was going up to hurt the king of Assyria and that he thought he could interfere with it.

Whichever was in his mind, he actually did not have the power to carry out a thing like that; and it was a matter of worldly politics rather than a matter

whether right or wrong was involved. There were two wicked nations fighting against each other. God had not given a revelation that he wanted his people to be on the side of one or the other of these wicked nations, neither of which was holding principles which were more wicked than those of the other; and so I would say that Josiah made a mistake in what he did. But I think that it came from a misplaced loyalty. I think that he thought he was performing a worldly obligation. Now that's purely a guess; the Bible doesn't say; we don't know. It may be something entirely different in his mind. The Bible just hasn't told us.

Pharaoh Necho was not intending to fight Judah. He was going to fight with the king of Assyria against Nebuchadnezzar. That we know because we find that when he got up there Nebuchadnezzar defeated him and drove him back precipitately. And Nebuchadnezzar defeated the king of Assyria.

Yes? (Student. "Could the battle at Megiddo have indirectly determined the outcome of the fight with Nebuchadnezzar?") Well, I would say that it could have, perhaps, if Josiah had gathered as great an army as possible; and gone and made a determined fight against him; even if he were defeated, it might perhaps have been sufficient to contribute to his defeat in the next battle. But the account doesn't sound like that; it sounds to me as if he just heard the king of Egypt was coming with a force; and rapidly gathered the small group that was immediately available to him; and it sounds as if just a little group went up there, thinking that a little group could do something; but they suddenly come to this situation; the king of Egypt is more than sufficient for that, and told them to get out of the way; there's nothing you can do, you just get out of the way; and when they didn't, he thrust them through. So the account doesn't sound as if he'd had a big army. If he had, he'd have been standing on one of the hills near, directing the forces instead of out in front on his horse so that they could kill him. Yes? (Student) Well, I would say it was either a misplaced sense of loyalty to the king of Assyria, or a misplaced feeling that he could benefit the world by injuring the king of Assyria; and which of the two it is, we don't know. Well, we go on to

4. Jehoahaz.

Kings and Chronicles both tell us that the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead. This man Jehoahaz is elsewhere in the Bible called Shallum (Jeremiah 22:1), the same name as one of the kings in the northern kingdom. But usually he is called Jehoahaz. Not the oldest son of Josiah; evidently the people thought he'd make a better king than the older brother. So they picked Jehoahaz, made him king in his father's place. He was 23 years old when he began to reign. He was an evil king. People decided in less than three months that they had made a mistake in choosing him; but Pharaoh-Necho came into Jerusalem within three months after this. So that would sound as if Pharaoh-Necho, having defeated Josiah, had come down

with his troops against Jerusalem; and the people said, "What can we do against the forces of the Egyptian king?" And they didn't make any very great resistance; and so he came into Jerusalem; he made them pay him a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold; he seized Jehoahaz and carried him off to Egypt as a prisoner; and he took his older brother, Eliakim and made him king over Judah and Israel.

It was Eliakim, which means "God has established," but Pharaoh-Necho changed his name to Jehoiakim, which means "The Lord has established." And what does Pharaoh-Necho care whether his name means "God has established" or "The Lord has established?" It didn't make the slightest difference to Pharaoh-Necho which of the two names he had; but for him to change the name was a sign of his power. He didn't change it to an Egyptian name or to a heathen name; but he simply made a change in it so that they would have to admit that he was in charge. So he changed his name to Jehoiakim; and Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he began to reign, two years older than his brother who was taken away to Egypt. And, so

5. Jehoiakim.

Another son of Josiah. And Jehoiakim, we are told about in about four verses in Chronicles, very, very brief. In Kings, the account of Jehoiakim is also quite brief. In Kings, Jehoiakim has seven verses. So you see that neither Kings nor Chronicles considers Jehoiakim as very important. We learn much more about him from Jeremiah. He is an extremely important figure in the book of Jeremiah.

2 Kings 23 says "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord according to all that his fathers had done." And in the next chapter, it says of his successor Jehoiachin, "And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done." You notice the difference? One is singular and the other is plural. Well I trust you all know why it is; we won't take time on it. But Jehoiakim was a very wicked king according to the book of Kings; it says (2 Kings 24:4), "he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the Lord would not pardon."

And, the book of Jeremiah tells us something about this Jehoiakim, he reigned for 11 years; he was a very wicked king, we learn from Kings,

In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him. And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of the Lord

came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did;

After he had reigned three years, King Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem. Pharaoh–Necho had been defeated by Nebuchadnezzar; and his forces go hurling pell–mell down toward Egypt, with the Babylonians after them. Well that's when Nebuchadnezzar becomes king of Babylon. Now three years after the death of Josiah, Nebuchadnezzar comes down to Jerusalem; and again the people don't resist him much. What's the use? The tremendous army of the king of Babylon, a nation with many, many times the power of Judah.

I remember in the beginning of World War II. Somebody said the Germans could work by long distance telephone. And it practically amounted to that. Forces just came in and took Denmark. Well later on, there was a very robust underground; there was considerable resistance; but when they first came in, just practically no resistance. Well, why should there be? What could they do against the power of Germany that was at least ten times, perhaps thirty times, as great as of Denmark? To resist simply meant to be mowed down. They saw no possible point in resisting.

Well, the situation was even more so here, when Pharaoh came in, took away the king, made the older brother king. Now, after three years, Nebuchadnezzar comes; and so he just comes in to Jerusalem. I'm not sure he came; he may have sent a representative; but at any rate, he said to Jehoiakim, "I have defeated this man; I have utterly defeated Pharaoh–Necho; now you were put in by Pharaoh–Necho, but I know you've no special loyalty to him; you promise to be loyal to me, I'll let you stay king.

So Jehoiakim became tributary to Nebuchadnezzar; and Nebuchadnezzar took some of the royal family with him to Babylon, as hostages, for the good behavior of Jehoiakim; he took some young men from the land off to Babylon, said, "Now you be subject to me," and left Jehoiakim to reign in Jerusalem. And Jehoiakim reigned another 8 years. The very next year—the 4th year, the year after Nebuchadnezzar had been there—the prophet Jeremiah wrote a scroll of the Lord's denunciation against Jerusalem for its wickedness, Jeremiah 26:7:

So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the Lord. Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die.

And Jeremiah then went and hid; and his friends read the scroll in the public square. And somebody heard it, and told king Jehoiakim what was happening; and king Jehoiakim said, "Let me hear the scroll." So they got ahold of the

scroll; and they brought it in to Jehoiakim; and he sat in his summer palace where he had a little fire in the grate; and as he sat there, they read to him the scroll Jeremiah had written; and as they finished a section of it, Jehoiakim would take it, and take his pen-knife, and cut it in pieces, and throw it in the fire. And he showed what he thought of the word of God as given by Jeremiah, by his treatment of it, in the 4th year of his reign.

Now there's nothing told about that in either Kings or Chronicles. But Jeremiah 36 has the account of this occurrence. And in Jeremiah 26 we have an account of Jehoiakim's attitude toward Jeremiah. In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, we read in Jeremiah 26—those two numbers are worth having in mind, Jeremiah 26 and 36—

Thus saith the Lord; Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the Lord's house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word: If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings. And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord; If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you, To hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending them, but ye have not hearkened; Then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth.

The Lord had commanded Jeremiah to stand in the court of the king's house and to rebuke the sin of the nation. And Jeremiah had done it, and when he had done it he went into hiding.

We're not told, earlier in the Old Testament, that the temple at Shiloh was destroyed; but here he says this temple at Jerusalem will be like Shiloh; and there's no point in the comparison, unless everybody knew Shiloh had been destroyed. And this city shall be desolate without inhabitants.

Then, we read in verse 10, when the princes of Judah heard these things, they came unto the king's house, to the house of the Lord, and sat down in the entry of the new gate of the Lord's house. Then

When the princes of Judah heard these things, then they came up from the king's house unto the house of the Lord, and sat down in the entry of the new gate of the Lord's house. Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy to die; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.

And then verse 16 tells us,

Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets;
This man is not worthy to die: for he hath spoken to us in the name of the
Lord our God.

And so the elders in the land and the princes protected Jeremiah. But it's interesting, when we read down in verse 20, that there was also another man who prophesied in the name of the Lord, Urijah the son of Shemaiah of Kirjath-jearim. And Jehoiakim sought to put him to death but he fled to Egypt. And then Jehoiakim sent men to fetch him from Egypt and Jehoiakim killed him with a sword. Verse 24:

Nevertheless the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

You see here how Jehoiakim, at the beginning of his reign, was unable to injure Jeremiah, because the good princes whom his father Josiah had put into power protected Jeremiah; but he did kill this other prophet, and what a picture that put before Jeremiah's mind for the rest of his reign. All during the next 30 years Jeremiah had vividly before him this other prophet who gave exactly the same prophecies he had given; spoke according the same words Jeremiah had; whom the king had chased clear down into Egypt and brought back and killed; and Jeremiah knew that would have happened to him too, humanly speaking, if it hadn't been for these princes who had protected him.

And during the next 11 years, little by little, Jehoiakim manages to replace these princes. One of them dies; Jehoiakim puts an evil man in his place. Another one of them, perhaps, is caught in some slight indiscretion, which normally wouldn't matter; but with the king hostile to him, he uses it as an excuse to get rid of him, and puts in an evil man. And thus little by little, in those 11 years, Jehoiakim changed the princes, until the princes were men who were evil men instead of good men. But at the beginning of his reign, God had seen to it, through Josiah, that good men were there as princes, to protect Jeremiah.

Well, it comes to the end of the reign of Jehoiakim; and some say that the book of Jeremiah contains a false prophecy, because Jeremiah made a prediction against Jehoiakim. Jeremiah 22:18,

Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

In two places Jeremiah said, "Jehoiakim will be buried with the burial of an ass; his body will be cast out of the city unburied." That's what it says. And Kings and Chronicles say that Jehoiakim died and he slept with his forefathers; and how could he sleep with his forefathers, if he was cast out of the city, and buried with the burial of an ass? They say there's a contradiction.

Well, of course it's the sort of a contradiction, which on the face of it cannot be a contradiction, because that is what they say, "Jehoiakim must have had a normal death and been buried properly" or else, how could they say he slept with his forefathers? Well does "he slept with his forefathers" mean he was put in the same grave with them? I don't think it has to at all. It doesn't mean they put five of them in the same grave; that the man slept with his forefathers; it doesn't mean that at all. It means that he went into the realm of the unseen, as his forefathers had done.

Well, we have no evidence Jehoiakim ever was, but we have two possible attitudes toward Jeremiah. We know the book is written right at the time when these events happened. Jeremiah was active for another 25 years afterwards. Now there are two possible attitudes. One is the book of Jeremiah is a true book which is God's word; and God gave the prediction; and then of course, the prediction is fulfilled; in that case there's no problem about Jeremiah having given a false prediction.

Now there's another view, that it's just a human book; that Jeremiah simply made some guesses; and tried to make people think he was a great prophet. Now if that is the case, would a book which came out at the end of his life, containing material written up to the end of his life, anywhere from ten to twenty years later—would such a book contain a prediction of something that everybody knew didn't happen? It would be perfectly ridiculous. It would be absurd, that he would get out a book saying, "I predict that Jehoiakim would be buried with the burial of an ass, cast outside of the city, his body unburied," when everybody knew he'd had a good state funeral, and died a normal death, and been buried. It's the sort of alleged contradiction which a little examination of the situation shows to be utterly ridiculous. If the book of Jeremiah contains this statement and was written within, distributed within, a very few years after the events, when everybody knew the facts...

It's like this: suppose somebody would get out a book today, to show what a wonderful prophet he was; that he had predicted that Adolph Hitler was to be killed in the battle of Stalingrad. Why if somebody did make a prediction like that, he wouldn't get out a book today to show he had. If he was getting out a book today showing his wonderful predictions, he'd certainly leave that out.

So it's perfectly obvious that from any viewpoint this is an absurd charge to bring against Jeremiah. What it means is that, from Jeremiah's prediction which

is given, we learn something about the history which we're not told. We're not given the full details of history. We're given comparatively little, in fact. We know that it must be that there was an insurrection against Jehoiakim; there was something, probably Jehoiakim was so wicked and he tried to make alliances with Egypt, to turn against Babylon and refuse to give the tribute; and the situation got so bad that the people revolted against him; and he was killed in the revolt; and they took his young son, who they thought would have all his good points, without any of his bad points; and made him king, and 3 months later Nebuchadnezzar's army came, and took Jehoiakim's son and carried him off to Babylon.

Well, that's getting on to the next point

6. Jehoiachin.

Yes? (Student. "What does 'burial of an ass' mean?") It means that you take a king, and he dies; and you wrap him up in good linen; put fine things around him, and jewels; and bury him in a wonderful tomb; to lift his body up on a shelf in that beautiful tomb; put the rock up against it; like the rich man did with the body of Christ.

But in the case of an ass, when it dies, you just throw it over the wall and let it rot. And the burial of an ass, that's what it meant; you just threw it out into the refuse. And it means that probably, there was such hard feeling against Jehoiakim, that there was an uprising; and he's cast out like that; probably they didn't leave him; he probably was brought in and buried; but it may have been that the Babylonian forces had come by that time and were around the city; and it may have been some time before there was opportunity; maybe they couldn't find him after the battles were over, and so forth. But Jehoiachin, his son, Kings says, was an evil king. But he didn't have much time to prove it, because Jehoiachin was only ruler for 3 months.

Now there's a very nice thing in the English. The name Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin in the Hebrew are spelled exactly alike, except that the father's name ends in "m" and the son's ends in "n". That's the only difference. But in English, for some reason, we always say Jehoiakim ending "kim", and Jehoiachin ending "chin". It's a different spelling of two things that are absolutely alike, except the last letter. But it does make it very nice for us, because at a glance we know which of the two it is, much more easily than if the only difference was the m or n. So I think it's a very nice thing. But it's not grounded on any solid basis.

This Jehoiachin then is also called Jeconiah in Jeremiah 27:20. He is called by three names: Jehoiachin, Jeconiah, and Coniah. All three forms are used for him. He was a young lad when he became king. I believe Kings says he was 18

years old and Chronicles, says he was 8 years old. At any rate he was a young lad. And he reigned for 3 months. Kings says

he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done. At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign.

Not of Jehoiachin's reign, but of the king of Babylon's reign. Continuing:

And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

7. Zedekiah.

Now Jehoiachin, you might think, was very unimportant; he only reigned for three months; but actually the people gave Jehoiachin a tremendous importance, because they considered him the rightful king. He was the son of Jehoiakim; he was the one who should be king; he was taken off captive; they said, "One of these days he will return. He is our rightful king; we want to get our freedom from Babylon and have Jehoiachin come back." And so he was 38 years in captivity in Babylon, in prison, when they finally let him out of prison. But the people of Judah all thought he is our king; and they thought of his uncle Zedekiah as just a sort of a regent, ruling until he should get back. So Jehoiachin was very important in the minds and hearts and affection of the people. He was too young a man to have shown his wickedness much, and they put all the glory of kingship onto him; but actually, Kings says he did that which was evil. So he wasn't worthy of it. But he was succeeded by his uncle Zedekiah. And Zedekiah was only 21 years old when he began to reign, so he was thus only ten years old when his father Josiah died. And Zedekiah was a young fellow, a well-meaning young fellow. Kings did not say that he was a bad man;

it says he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. It speaks of what he did, not of what he was.

If you just read Kings and Chronicles, you would say Zedekiah was an evil king, because they point out that he did evil. But Jeremiah tells us much more detail on it; and we find that Zedekiah, though he did evil, was a man who wanted to do good. He was a man who desired to be a good king, but he was a man who did not have the strength of character to resist the bad princes who were in power. And consequently, he went along as the princes led him; and he gets the blame, and deserves it, for what he did as king. But it wasn't what he would have done if he'd been left to himself, if he'd had the power to do it.

He certainly does not give any evidence of being the sort of man who would have initiated the evil which the nobles wanted. He was rather holding back on them; holding back, and yet realizing that his power was far inferior to theirs; and he hated discussion and dissension anyway, and he tried to get along with them as well as he could; and he did what they wanted; but when they wanted to kill Jeremiah, he was able to prevent it; and when they put Jeremiah down in the dungeon, he was able to send a man to pull him out. But when he called Jeremiah in and talked with him, he said to Jeremiah, "Now don't you tell these nobles what I've talked with you about. You just tell them that we've had just a nice discussion and you were asking me if you couldn't have your conditions made better."

Well, Jeremiah doubtless had asked that, so it was no lie to tell them that; but Zedekiah was afraid that they would know that he had asked Jeremiah, "What shall I do in this Crisis?" Because they weren't interested in Jeremiah's opinion, but evidently he was.

Zedekiah was like the bulk of people that go along with the tide. They may resist the tide a little bit, but they don't resist it a great deal. They go along with it; and if they happen to be in a good tide, they're pretty good people; if they happen to be in a bad tide, they're pretty bad people. But comparatively few will really exert themselves on their own, trying to have an influence. And Zedekiah was not one of these who would exert themselves.

Now Zedekiah is quite prominent in the book of Jeremiah. In the book of Ezekiel, Zedekiah is very little mentioned. But the book of Ezekiel is almost more important for the reign of Zedekiah than the book of Jeremiah is. That is because the book of Ezekiel, about half of the book, is written during the reign of king Zedekiah. And Ezekiel was called a colonial in his day. He was a man who was devoted to Judah, but was not in Judah. In his case, he was not a willing colonial. He had been taken into exile. But there in exile, such people were the most patriotic of all. We often find that today; the people in exile, or

the people who are away from their native land, often are the ones who are the most outspokenly patriotic people.

Ezekiel had been taken into exile at the beginning of Jehoiachin's reign; and there in the exile, over in northern Mesopotamia, the people were saying, "It won't be long now before God will take us back. This land, that is Palestine, is God's land; it's God's people; it's God's temple; God can't let his temple be destroyed; God can't let the heathen take over. Look at what happened in the days of Isaiah, against the mighty Assyrian aggressor; God protected Jerusalem like birds hovering. Now he certainly will protect Jerusalem now." They were saying—these men who were studying to be prophets were saying—"just a few years, 2 or 3 years, God is going to cause that we be taken back to our homeland."

Here was Ezekiel facing that sort of an attitude on the part of the very, very patriotic people; and he was having to say to them, "No, you're not going back to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is going to be destroyed, and the temple is going to be completely burned." Well, it didn't make him popular at all.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel had two of the most unpopular ministries in all history.

The book of Ezekiel starts:

Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity,

And so here we have this great number of captives, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken away, and among them is Ezekiel. And Ezekiel is over in the land of the captivity, in Mesopotamia, while Jeremiah is in Jerusalem. And they're both prophesying during the reign of king Zedekiah.

And Ezekiel, there in the exile, had to go to these people and bring them God's message; and yet do it in such a way that he wouldn't get killed while he was doing it.

And so the Lord, first, in the beginning of Ezekiel, appeared to the prophet and gave him a vision of himself, in order to strengthen him, to be aware of the unseen God; as it is so much more important to be true to him than to think of the reaction of those to whom he spoke.

And then, in chapter 3, the Lord told Ezekiel to go to the people, and to warn them of their sin, to warn them of their iniquity. He told him to tell them that he was a watchman and he says

I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me... When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.

The righteous man who turns into sin will suffer for it. But you are responsible to warn the wicked and to warn the righteous. Now, between verses 10 and 21 this command is given to Ezekiel to go and to warn the people and to speak directly to them, warning them about God's will for them, and then you find right in verse 22,

And the hand of the Lord was there upon me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee. Then I arose, and went forth into the plain: and, behold, the glory of the Lord stood there, as the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar: and I fell on my face. Then the spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me, Go, shut thyself within thine house. But thou, O son of man, behold, they shall put bands upon thee, and shall bind thee with them, and thou shalt not go out among them: And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprover: for they are a rebellious house. But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear: for they are a rebellious house.

Now how do you fit this together? In verses 10 to 21, the Lord says to him, "You go and reprove them for their sin; reprove them for their iniquity; you're responsible to God for every one of them." And, then in verse 26, he says to him, "You are to be quiet; you're to be dumb; you're not to be a reproof." The two come almost one right after the other, and they're sharply contradictory. Who says there are no contradictions in the Bible? Here are two sections, just five verses apart, that absolutely contradict each other. It's just as if one of you were to say, "Why, Saturday morning around 11 o'clock I saw Dr. MacRae walking down toward Cheltenham." Somebody else'd say, "Why that must be wrong; at 11 o'clock I saw him walking up from Cheltenham." And one of you might have seen me walking down, and one might have seen me walking up; and you might both be absolutely right: I might have gone down and then ten minutes later come up. One of you saw me one time, one saw me the other.

And the only way you can make any sense out of this apparent contradiction is to consider that the element of time is involved in it; though not clearly stated, it is doubtless there. God gave him the command to reprove the people; to speak to them directly; and Ezekiel started out to do it. And after a little while the Lord said, "Now you be quiet, you be dumb. Don't reprove them any more."

Why did he do that? Doubtless it was because Ezekiel had gone to the people, and had talked to them, and had told them of their sin, and pointed out their wrong; and now they wouldn't listen to him. And Ezekiel might have said, "Oh, those people, they just won't listen to me; they're just going on in their wickedness; there's no use to try to talk to them anymore." And that will be the Lord's will. The Lord can use another method. The Lord used one method; he sent Ezekiel to reprove them, to talk to them directly, to give the message; and then it reached a point where everything Ezekiel said just made them angry, and made them not interested in going on. And the Lord said, "There's no use in going forward, since it is accomplishing nothing; we'll use a different method." If he went on, they might pay no attention to him; or they might just get so angry, they'd kill him. They'd throw him out of their connection there altogether. He would have no chance to have any influence with them further; the Lord didn't want that; the Lord wanted Ezekiel to have a great influence upon them; and he wanted him to use means that would get their interest. And so here in chapter 3, the Lord now said to Ezekiel, "You're are not to be a reprover anymore." But in verse 27, "but when I speak with thee I will open thy mouth; and thou shalt say to them, 'thus saith the Lord.'" God's going to give him a message at the time he wants him to have it. But Ezekiel's not to go using his own judgment any longer now, in giving messages, simply because another method is necessary in order to get the message across.

I talked to a missionary in South America, who told me of going into a town and seeing a missionary who was there; he had a little place off in the corner of the town, where he'd been preaching the Word of God faithfully for 25 years; and he had about five people that came and heard him; and no one else was the least bit interested. He couldn't get them to come; they just had no use for him. This man told me how he thought about the problem, how could he reach more people. And he said that he had set to work.

He knew Spanish very well; and had gotten about a dozen Spanish proverbs, very prominent, well-known Spanish proverbs; he hired a hall, and announced that he was going to speak for 12 nights on the following subjects: and he mentioned these proverbs. And people saw this and said, "What's that? That sounds interesting—and he had that place crowded. And he spoke for 12 nights; he started in with this little proverb; and he went ahead, and talked about things of daily life—things that interested the people—gave them a few little interesting suggestions about their lives; and then led it on to show sin in their lives, and to show the place of the Gospel, and the need for the Gospel;

and in the end the missionary, who'd been 25 years there and had about five people coming to his meeting, the next week he had a couple of hundred out; this was the result of this man having used a different approach, to try to get the people where they lived, and get them to show an interest, and get them to come out.

Well, now Ezekiel here used an approach, which is a good thing to use if it gets results. But if it doesn't, some other method is necessary at that time. And then he can return to this method later.

So the Lord said to Ezekiel, he said in chapter 4,

Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and portray upon it the city, even Jerusalem: And lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set battering rams against it round about. Moreover take thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign to the house of Israel. Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.

Some say, "This is utterly impossible! How could he lie there 390 days? He wouldn't have any food; he wouldn't have any sleep. That would be impossible, just a dream that Ezekiel had, or something that he told about as if it had happened, when it never actually happened." Well, they miss the point of the whole story. The point of the story is that he become an object lesson; that he go through something without doing anything to upset or disturb people; he takes something that will arouse their curiosity. He lies out there in the public square; here's Ezekiel, lying there; and he has this tile; he has drawn on it a picture, that anybody can see is a picture of Jerusalem, if they look closely. And there he lies; and he holds an iron pan up between himself and it; and he lies and holds this pan up there; and he puts up a sign "Day One."

How long he stays there—whether an hour, two hours, three hours—we don't know; but he might come back the next afternoon; he might come back the next morning, and put up a sign: "Day Two." The people would see these signs, Day One, Day Two, Day Three. And the man lies there and holds up this pan, and there's the tile out in front.

The little children would say, "Mummy, what's that fellow doing there? What's that mean anyway? What's that thing in front of him?" And, the mother would

look closely and "Why," she'd say, "that's Jerusalem. Why, look that looks exactly like Jerusalem. Look, son, I've been telling you about the different parts; and you can see it on that tile, as he's drawn it there. You see that's where the King's palace is; and over this side, that's where this gate is, and so on. I've been telling you about it; and here's a nice picture of it. Bring the other kids and have them look at it."

The kid would be interested; but he'd say, "But what's the man doing there? Look at the way he's lying, and the way he's holding up that pan; looks as if he's hiding, protecting himself with it, or something." Well, she'd say, "I guess he's representing a siege of it"; "Well," she'd say, "the city was besieged a few years ago; but that isn't going to come again. God's going to protect us; we're going back to Jerusalem one of these days."

But day after day, they'd see him; and they'd be asking questions. And after he'd done that a few days, then we read that the Lord said to him

Take thou also unto thee wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentiles, and millet, and fitches, and put them in one vessel, and make thee bread thereof, according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon thy side, three hundred and ninety days shalt thou eat thereof. And thy meat which thou shalt eat shall be by weight, twenty shekels a day: from time to time shalt thou eat it. Thou shalt drink also water by measure, the sixth part of an hin: from time to time shalt thou drink. And thou shalt eat it as barley cakes, and thou shalt bake it with dung that cometh out of man, in their sight.

He was to take food and he was to measure it out; take a little scale, and measure out about two ounces of food very carefully, and eat it. And then a certain time later, he'd measure out two ounces again, and he'd eat it. And they'd say "Look how carefully he weighs his food." And then he would take water, and he'd measure it out.

And the Lord said "And thou shalt eat it as barley cakes, and thou shalt bake it with dung that comes out of man, in their sight." When the Lord gave Ezekiel this command, poor Ezekiel was stopped. And he said, in verse 14,

Then said I, Ah Lord God! behold, my soul hath not been polluted: for from my youth up even till now have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, or is torn in pieces; neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth. Then he said unto me, Lo, I have given thee cow's dung for man's dung, and thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment: That they may want bread and water, and be astonished one with another, and consume away for their iniquity.

Ezekiel found it a lot easier to do this, using the cow's dung to cook with, instead of human dung; but either one of them would make clear to the people the terrible situation to which the city would be reduced; when they wouldn't have fuel, they would have to use even such ingredients as that to have fuel; and they'd have to measure out their water and have to measure out their food.

And it just dawned on them gradually what he was doing, and what it meant. Instead of his coming up with a big declaration that would make them angry; and they'd all storm out of there; and they'd go and ask if he had a permit to hold a meeting at that place; and ask that it be revoked, or something. Why they just gradually saw, it just gradually sunk into them what it meant.

And so the Lord gave him—through the next few chapters here—gave him the object lessons to perform, in order to get across to the people in a way that did not arouse their antagonism. And it didn't arouse it too much, so that they wouldn't listen any further. He got them to watch it; and then the Lord gave him some messages to give there, after interest was aroused to a certain point; but the Lord became a little concerned about this. He said, "Ezekiel is not a particularly good speaker." He said, "Get these points across."

So in Ezekiel 6:11,

Thus saith the Lord God; Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.

He said, "It's not going to do you any good to just stand up there and give your message quietly; you ought to stamp with your foot, and bring your fist down; get the point across." So here we have a good public speaking lesson right in the Bible, in the book of Ezekiel here.

Now some might prefer to take it that this is a sign, has a certain particular meaning, a prophetic meaning for us; but in the context it's very clear that that's what it is: it is a public speaking lesson that the Lord gives Ezekiel in order to get the point across to the people.

And so in these early chapters of Ezekiel here, we have the Lord showing Ezekiel how to use various ways to get the truth across. At first he will fail in this, but they will gradually be led along, in order that the truth will come into their minds and into their hearts.

And then, after he had used the method of object lessons, we find that the irritation against him which his constant rebuke had aroused had subsided to quite an extent.

And so in chapter 8,

And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me—

The people by this time had come to think, "Maybe he does know something that's worth our hearing; let's go and see what he has to say"—some of the leaders at least—"and let's talk to him." So here they are in his house; and he said, verse 2,

Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber. And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north;

And now we have Zedekiah's reign described to us here; but it's Ezekiel, who is far away across the desert; but the Lord, in a vision, carries him across the desert, over there into Jerusalem. And now we have a number of chapters in which Ezekiel sees what the children of Israel do in the Temple; and these chapters describe the abominations and the worship of false gods and the heathenism that is coming in; and it shows the destruction that is going to come. Ezekiel sees that, all in a vision, evidently while the elders of Israel are there in his room. And then, doubtless, he tells them what he saw.

And this is a very unusual way of getting a message across to them; and if he had just said, "Why, in Jerusalem there is all this wickedness," they probably would not have believed it or paid any attention to it; but here they see him having a vision; they hear what he says he's seeing in the vision; and as he mentions some of these things, they remember little bits they have heard in letters that have come, or from visitors; a little thing that fits in here, and fits in there, and fits in there; and it certifies to them the fact that Ezekiel really has a vision there that the Lord has given him.

And so poor Ezekiel has a task there, of being among the most patriotic of all the people—the people who are already in exile—and telling them, "No, God's not going to protect Jerusalem, he's going to destroy it."

And so Ezekiel, then, in chapter 12, the Lord gives him another object lesson. The Lord says,

Prepare thee stuff for removing, and remove by day in their sight; and thou shalt remove from thy place to another place in their sight: it may be they will

consider, though they be a rebellious house. Then shalt thou bring forth thy stuff by day in their sight, as stuff for removing: and thou shalt go forth at even in their sight, as they that go forth into captivity. Dig thou through the wall in their sight, and carry out thereby. In their sight shalt thou bear it upon thy shoulders, and carry it forth in the twilight: thou shalt cover thy face, that thou see not the ground: for I have set thee for a sign unto the house of Israel.

And so he dug a hole from his cellar up outside of the house, so instead of coming out of the door, the obvious way, he was coming up through this. People saw the dirt begin to come out, and begin to emerge—"What's happening here? What's going on anyway?" And then they see Ezekiel begin to carry his stuff out; and they say, "What does he mean by that?" And they're all aroused, and they're all interested; and Ezekiel turns to them and says "This is what's going to happen in Jerusalem; people are going to have to dig under the wall, and try to get out of the way before they're captured. They're going to have to get what they can carry, and run with it, because it is all going to be destroyed."

And so the Lord gave him these object lessons, and these visions of the conditions in Jerusalem, in order that the people in exile who were so patriotic, could be shown that the important thing was not for them to be patriotic for a nation, or for an institution, or for an organization, but to be loyal to the Lord. And to see what is the message the Lord wants given.

In Isaiah's day, the Lord wanted to show, despite the wickedness of the people, that he could protect his city. He wanted to demonstrate that; he was not yet ready to destroy Jerusalem. Now the Lord wanted to destroy Jerusalem, and to show the people that no physical city, no physical temple was necessary to represent the Lord; that the Lord was the unseen One, who holds all the world in the hollow of His hand; and that, even though the people of Jerusalem were far better than any of the nations round about them; morally they were high and lifted up above the nations round about them; yet they came far short of God's standard; and it was necessary that God should punish them; that he should send them into exile; that he should purge out their sin from them.

And so, Ezekiel continued giving messages and showing these object lessons to get the idea across to them, until the Lord sent him one of the most difficult object lessons, in chapter 24. Here, we find in verse 15 and following, of chapter 24,

Also the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy

shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded. And the people said unto me, Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest so?

And the people came, and they couldn't understand it; they said, "Ezekiel, we've seen you all these years; how close you were to your wife; and we always thought of you as just an ideal couple, so utterly devoted to one another; here, she has died, and you are not going into mourning ceremonies; you are not showing any of your feelings; and Ezekiel says to them, "The reason is because the Lord has told me that the terrible things coming on the nation are so great, that the suffering of one individual, even though terrible, is small in comparison." And so he used this as an object lesson.

And then the Lord said to him, in verse 26,

That he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears? In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am the Lord.

In other words, chapter 24 here, is right at the time when the siege of Jerusalem began. That's brought out in the beginning of the chapter, in verse 1 he gives a date,

Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day.

And so there's the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem.

Back in chapter 21, the Lord has been showing the coming of that calamity, the attack against Jerusalem. In chapter 21, the Lord said, verse 18,

The word of the Lord came unto me again, saying, Also, thou son of man, appoint thee two ways, that the sword of the king of Babylon may come: both twain shall come forth out of one land: and choose thou a place, choose it at the head of the way to the city. Appoint a way, that the sword may come to Rabbath of the Ammonites, and to Judah in Jerusalem the defenced. For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver.

Now somebody nowadays reading this, they'd surely wonder what it's talking about. The king of Babylon stood at the head of two ways; this way goes to the Ammonites' capital—that's the capital of Jordan today. The other one goes to Judah, to Jerusalem. He stands at the parting of the ways, to use divination; he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver.

Well, I'm sure that a hundred years ago, people would be very, very puzzled by that statement. What does it mean? That the king of Babylon looked in the liver. How do you look in a liver?

Well, we now have excavated at Babylon and at Assyria; and we have found hundreds of pictures of livers, hundreds of them. We have found these pictures, hundreds of them, which show the liver of an animal; and one lobe of the liver will be enlarged; and they will say, "This is the way the liver was when king so-and-so asked for it; and the next day he was assassinated. So if you find a liver of an animal like this, watch out."

Then they'll show another liver, with the lobe in the different part of the liver; and they'll say, "This is that way the liver was, before there was a great victory; and the country was greatly extended; so if you find a liver that looks like this, that's fine." And this was a great science among the Babylonians, the science of liver-looking.

They had special experts appointed to slay an animal—not for sacrifice—but to get the liver; so they could examine the liver, and see what the future would be; and what procedure the king ought to use. You might think, "How could such a cultivated, advanced, intelligent people as the Babylonians do such a thing?"

Well, we think of the Romans as very cultivated, but the Romans had a similar thing; they would look up at birds. And the Romans had a rule, even right at the time of Christ, that if an army crossed a stream, they had to get the omen: to look up and look for the birds; see what bird they'd see and decide whether it was a good omen or a bad omen; and if it was a bad omen, they couldn't go on; they had to stop the battle; they just couldn't go on, couldn't continue the thing they were planning. And they couldn't cross a stream without taking a new omen. Cicero was very, very anxious to be elected head of the watchers of the omens. He had no faith in them, he'd no belief in them but he thought it was a very important position in the Roman power and he wanted to have it. But the Romans had this meaning much like the Babylonians did.

And if you think that it all died with the Romans—I was sitting in the streetcar one day, and happened to glance at the fellow next to me; and he had a little book in his hand that said, "What Astrology tells us About What's Going to Happen Next Month". And it told which stocks were going to go up, and which stocks were going to go down; what the stars had to say about it. Now I never

saw the man again, so I don't know whether he became wealthy as the result of following the stars in his speculations or not. But there are plenty of people today who use just as silly methods. But among the Babylonians, it wasn't just a silly idea, it was something that was scientifically worked out. They had hundreds of pictures of livers, and they had them arranged according to what was found at different times. They made a definite science of it.

And when you get away from the Christian teaching, that God is controlling the world; and that God deals in accordance with His plans; and He reveals them only as He may choose; the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and the Lord sends things into our lives for His own purpose; sometimes He chooses to let us know, and sometimes He doesn't. When you get that, you have the complete answer to all this sort of interpretation. But when you don't have that, you can get scientists that are absolutely materialistic; and they don't believe in any of this supernatural business at all; it's just fact, it's just what science proves; and you follow those men along for a few years, and you'll find that most of them fall into some kind of superstitious nonsense of some kind or other.¹⁶⁷ Because the human mind knows there's something more to life than just materialism. And if we don't find the answer as God has given it, we're going to find it somewhere else.

It's amazing that the people that seem to be so intelligent fall into the most crazy things. But among the Babylonians, this was almost done as a science; and then all that stuff was buried and forgotten; and about all we knew about it was this reference here in Ezekiel, which preserved the recollection of the habits of the Babylonians. It describes the king here, making his arrows bright; they fired an arrow and saw where it landed, that gave them information. They consulted images, and he looked in the liver.

But now in chapter 24, we notice the Lord said to Ezekiel, "Now," he said, "This is the day that the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem; this same day." Well, Ezekiel told the people; the king of Babylon has today begun the siege of Jerusalem. Well, that's way across the desert; they couldn't know whether he was talking truth or not, not until they hear later on. But when they do, and find it is right, it is a divine arrangement to increase people's confidence in the fact that Ezekiel is God's messenger; that he knows the facts in advance.

In Chapter 24 he says, "This day began the siege" and in chapter 33 he says, verse 21,

¹⁶⁷ [dcb] There are many examples in the history of science: in the late 18th century, phrenology (the study of head shapes as a predictor of intelligence). Some extremes of Freudian Psychology provide other examples.

And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity, in the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, The city is smitten.

And then Ezekiel goes on; and he gives messages of comfort to the people through most of the rest of the book, after that. But in between—and Ezekiel is arranged in chronological fashion—there are very few places in the Bible arranged in strict chronological order. Jeremiah is not. But Ezekiel is arranged in a chronological fashion. Every message is dated; and nine-tenths of the messages in the book are given in the order in which he received them. And the date is nearly always there; and between chapter 24 and chapter 33, there are no more messages against Jerusalem, against Judah, against the Israelites; no more condemnation in those chapters.

During these 38 years, the Lord gave Ezekiel no message of rebuke for the people of Israel. The reason for that is perfectly simple. Before that God is warning the people, telling them what is coming, preparing them for it. When it comes they are too shocked; they are too stirred; their emotions are too stirred by it, for him to give a message. He probably would have been stoned; they just wouldn't be able to stand it. And God has him refrain during that period.

But he gives messages; but they are messages against the foreign nations round about. They are messages of God's wrath against the sin of the Ammonites, of the Edomites, of the Philistines, of the people of Tyre and Sidon and Egypt, and so on—those very interesting messages; many of these have been so wonderfully literally fulfilled; they were given to them during this period; when to the people, knowing their city was under siege and probably would be taken and destroyed, it was a comfort rather than a rebuke; and it strengthened them, instead of turning their enmity against Ezekiel.

They'd look at the terrible things they were hearing from Jerusalem; they say, "Well, Ezekiel warned us; he told us this was going to happen." But Ezekiel wasn't saying that. Ezekiel was giving messages which gave them the pleasure that misery has in company; of knowing that these other people, which were worse, were going to get their punishment too. God was against Jerusalem for its sin; but that didn't mean that he was condoning the sin of these other nations, which were worse than Jerusalem. And so the book of Ezekiel is a wonderful picture of those times; it's a wonderful picture of the sin of Israel; the reason why God had to send them into exile; it's a wonderful picture with its prophecy of the future, of what's going to happen.

But it's more than that; it's a picture of the way God directs his prophets in bringing his message; and presenting it in such a way as to reach the hearts and minds of the people; and to get a hearing for the message.

Well, Ezekiel then, after the fall of the city, gives messages of comfort; and he pictures a great future and how God is going to bless; these do not particularly concern us in this particular course. But this part of it is extremely important and interesting in connection with the stories of the reign of Zedekiah.

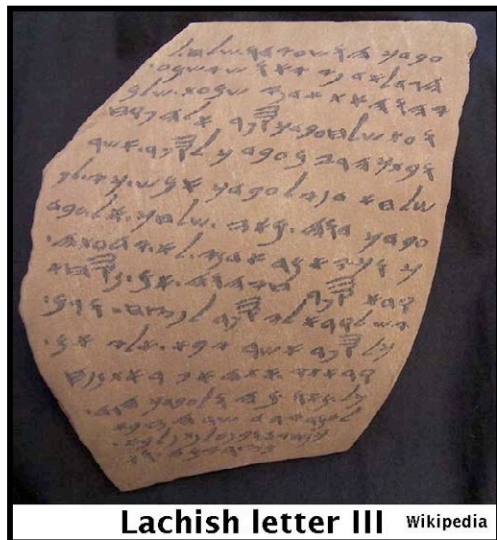
Now one interesting thing that has come to light in connection with the reign of Zedekiah. I've mentioned to you a number of times the city of Lachish. It's the second most important of the cities of Judah. The city of Lachish was destroyed by Sennacherib; it was conquered, but was rebuilt later, a very important city. In 1890, the Palestine Exploration Fund sent Petrie to excavate Lachish. He went to Tell el Hesi in Palestine, which everybody agreed was Lachish; and there he laid the foundation of modern excavation principles in Palestine; he learned there the principle of the tell and the principles of the pottery.

And any book up until at least 1925—at least the next 3 years after that—that tells about archaeology of Palestine, refers to Petrie's excavation as the excavation of Lachish. About 1921 or 22, Professor Albright said, "That is not Lachish at all. Lachish is Tell ed-Duweir." And very few people paid attention to him for a while. Eventually the British Exploration Fund was interested in a place to excavate; they picked Tell ed-Duweir, They excavated there; and there they found that was the true Lachish; as Dr. Albright had, in this case, correctly figured out from the arrangements in relation to other cities in the Bible. And so, from then on, Petrie's work is called the excavation of Tel el Hesi, not the excavation of Lachish. And the excavation of Tell ed-Duweir is called the Lachish excavation.

Well, I forget the year—was it about 1934 or '35? sometime along there—when the British were excavating at Tell ed-Duweir, that the word came over the Associated Press that a group of Israelite letters from the time of the destruction of Jerusalem had been found at Lachish.¹⁶⁸ The most important discovery of written material ever made in Palestine. And the newspaper reporters immediately went to prominent archaeologists and people like that all over this area. And the paper came out; and this one said, "Oh that's wonderful", and this one said, "That's marvelous"; but none of them knew anything about it, except what they'd been told; so they couldn't say much, until they got to Dr. Albright. And he was very clever. The papers—they went to Dr. Speiser of the University of Pennsylvania and told him that they had discovered this marvelous group of material in Palestine. Dr. Speiser said, "If that is true, that would be something as great as the discovery of the Tell el Amarna letters." And he went on for a whole column to tell about the Tell el Amarna letters, which were discovered back in 1883; and on the front page of

¹⁶⁸ Discovered in January–February 1935 by J. L. Starkey. See [Wikipedia](#) which gives the translations of several of the letters, now in the British Museum and the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem. All of them appear to be written in ink on shards from the same clay pot, and apparently written to one person, possibly the commanding officer at Lachish.

the *Inquirer* they had a whole column of Speiser about the Tell el Amarna letters, which the average person would know just as little about as they would the Lachish letters; and they are really much more important than the Lachish letters, because they're so much more extensive; and they've been studied so many years and we know so much about them. Well, there's a great deal about them we haven't figured out.



Now these Lachish letters are the largest group of written material in ancient Hebrew that we have. But they are very fragmentary. There are 21 of them; they're on potsherds, pieces of pottery, written on it with ink. Just about all we have, of ancient Hebrew writing, is the Siloam inscription in Hezekiah's tunnel; a few occasional words in the El Amarna letters; the Moabite Stone; and these Lachish letters. And so they're very important, but unfortunately very damaged.

But in these letters—on these pieces of pottery—we have evidence that this was when Lachish was besieged, in the last days before

the conquest of Jerusalem.

One letter (Letter 4) states:

May YHW[H] cause my [lord] to hear, this very day, tidings of good.... And may (my lord) be apprised that we are watching for the fire signals of Lachish according to all the signs which my lord has given, because we cannot see Azeqah. [Letter IV, Wikipedia]

The signal lights of Azeqah we are unable to see any more. But he names cities they can see, which shows that they had a system of signaling with lights, especially with the enemy there, signaling from one town to another. And here the lights have ceased to come from one of the towns, which may mean that the Babylonians had now taken that town. We have evidence in them that some man was accused of treason there, and he was under trial for it, but it's very fragmentary; we cannot figure a great deal out about it.

The word "prophet" occurs a number of times in these letters. Some have thought it a reference to Jeremiah, but we're not sure; and there was one name which is a name that occurs in Jeremiah; but unfortunately it's turned around; Jeremiah speaks of a certain man the son of a certain one; this has it reversed. And so whether it's the same name, and one or the other is mistaken, or whether it is his grandson, we just don't know.

So the Lachish letters do not tell us a great deal; but they may be more helpful one of these days, when we find out a little more. But they are one of the very few actual ancient Hebrew writings that we have found. And they do give that vivid picture of the people in Lachish and surrounding cities, looking for the signal lights. And noticing that there are no longer signal lights coming from Azeqah, but they were getting them from others.

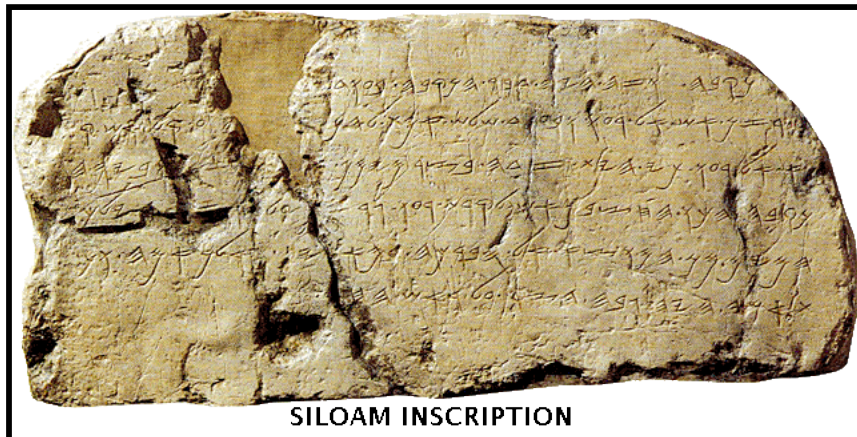
Yes? (Student. "Are they definitely from this time?") Oh, yes, on the basis of stratification they have been definitely attributed to this time, I don't think any archaeologist questions this. Now, of course, that's not to say—they don't specifically mention Zedekiah, they don't specifically mention the Babylonians by name, so that there's one chance in ten thousand that there might proof come up that the identification is wrong, but it's very, very unlikely, the evidence is quite strong.

Most of them are rather short. They are actually short letters or memoranda. They usually call them the Lachish letters, but I think memoranda would be much better.

Yes? (Student. "You mentioned the Siloam inscription. What is that?") Yes, the Siloam inscription; didn't I mention that? Well, that's good to know a little bit about. It's in the museum in Constantinople, because it was found when Palestine was part of the Turkish Empire. So they took it there. It was found a long time ago before the turn of the century.¹⁶⁹ In Jerusalem, there is a tunnel which carries water from a spring, to bring it into the city; and Hezekiah tells us how he covered over this spring outside, in order to bring the water into the city. Well, it goes maybe as far as from here over to where I live [several hundred yards]. It goes that distance underground; it's so large that you can walk through; maybe have to stoop your head; in some places you have to bend over pretty far.

But this tunnel goes that distance there; and it's quite a stunt in Jerusalem to walk through this; but it's a little bit dangerous, because once every hour or so, there's a time when the water seems to spurt and to come right to the top, and so it could be rather difficult to survive in there in such a situation. And the other reason is that, where the water comes out, the Arabs there like to gather there at that pool and wash their clothes. And occasionally a young archaeologist has walked through it, and muddied up the water, and made it difficult to wash their clothes; and when he stepped out, and they've seen him, they've all picked up mud and rocks and thrown them at him. This is not very pleasant either.

¹⁶⁹ The Siloam tunnel was discovered in 1838 by archaeologist Edward Robinson. The inscription was discovered by a boy in 1880. The inscription was cut out of the rock and is now in the Istanbul Archaeology Museum.



SILOAM INSCRIPTION

But somebody was looking around inside of this—I think it was about 1900, I forget just when now—and he noticed some queer marks on the side there; and he told someone about them; and they investigated and found there was a writing in old Hebrew letters, which is

attributed to the date of Hezekiah. It is still our best ancient Hebrew inscription.

The inscription is something like this from the Jewish Encyclopedia (1906)¹⁷⁰:

- (Line 1). . . the piercing. . . And this is the history of the digging. When . . .
 2. the pickaxes one against the other. And when there were only three cubits more to cut through, the men were heard
 3. calling from one side to the other; [for] there was zedah in the rock, on the right and on the left. And on the day of the . . .
 4. piercing the workmen struck each to meet the other, pickax against pickax. And there flowed
 5. the waters from the spring to the pool for a space of 1,200 cubits. And [100?]
 6. cubits was the height over the head of the workmen.

It shows what, for those days, was quite an engineering feat. To dig from both sides and to come through and to meet there in the middle and make a tunnel through. And that is in old Hebrew letters, not the kind of letters we use now. They're the same characters we have [i.e., same letters: aleph, beth, etc.] but they're a little different in form.

The Moabite Stone, of course is in the Moabite language. These inscriptions are just the same as our Hebrew, except that they do not contain any vowel letters; it is usually considered that they didn't have vowel letters in those days.

Now those are our three principal things in ancient Hebrew; we have quite a lot more than that in Phoenician; we have a few Aramaic inscriptions; and then we have hundreds of thousands of Babylonian; and we have thousands of Egyptian; but in Hebrew we have really very little.

8. Judah Immediately after the Destruction.

¹⁷⁰ See Jewishencyclopedia.com article on the [siloam inscription](#). Also see the [Wikipedia article](#).

After Jerusalem was taken by the Babylonian king, all the people were rounded up—that is the bulk of the people were rounded up—and carried off into captivity. And when they got the people a certain distance away, they found that Jeremiah was one of the prisoners who was seized and was being taken. And Jeremiah said to the man who was the official there, he said, "Get word to king Nebuchadnezzar that I'm here, among these people." And they got word to Nebuchadnezzar.

And Nebuchadnezzar said to Jeremiah, "If you want to go into exile with these people, you may; if you want to stay in Jerusalem you may. It's up to you." And evidently, he'd been hearing about Jeremiah's good work, in telling the people they couldn't win out anyway; they might as well give up their arms and surrender to Nebuchadnezzar; so Nebuchadnezzar thought of Jeremiah as an ally. Of course he was very unpatriotic, but he wasn't an ally. But he put loyalty to God ahead of loyalty to people of the nation, the group. And so the people thought he was disloyal; but it was loyalty to God which led him to do what they considered unpatriotic.

But Nebuchadnezzar of course didn't understand that. Nebuchadnezzar recognized him as an ally; and he told him he could do what he wanted. And Jeremiah said, "I will stay." So after this, we have an account in 2 Kings, and in Jeremiah, of the people who stayed in the land. There weren't many; but for these people who were left in the land, we find that the king appointed a man who should be in authority over these people, subject to the king of Assyria.

And this account in 2 Kings 25:22, he picked out Gedaliah, a good man, and

And when all the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, there came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men. And Gedaliah swore to them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon; and it shall be well with you. But it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah. And all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.

Well, now that's the brief account in Kings; but one is told more at length in Jeremiah.

After Gedaliah's assassination, the leaders came to Jeremiah; and they asked him to seek God's will for what they should do. And they promised they would do whatever God would reveal to them through Jeremiah. Jeremiah prayed to the Lord, and after ten days received an answer (Jeremiah 42:1-7). Then Jeremiah informed them (42:9ff):

And [Jeremiah] said unto them, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to present your supplication before him; If ye will still abide in this land, then will I build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: for I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you. Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the Lord: for I am with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand. . . . But if ye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the Lord your God, Saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, . . . Then it shall come to pass, that the sword, which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die.

This is God's will, that you should submit to His will, and trust him for protection from the Babylonians here in Israel. And if you flee to Egypt you will die there. But they didn't listen to Jeremiah. (Jeremiah 43:1):

And it came to pass, that when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the Lord their God, for which the Lord their God had sent him to them, even all these words, Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the Lord our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there.

We find further details about Gedaliah's death, who was killed along with the men with him, after only six months as governor: (Jeremiah 41)

Now it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, and the princes of the king, even ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and there they did eat bread together in Mizpah. Then arose Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword, and slew him, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land. Ishmael also slew all the Jews that were with him, even with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found there, and the men of war.

After this killing spree, Ishmael fled to the Ammonites (Jeremiah 41:15). Most of the other leaders remained; but, fearful of reprisal, they fled to Egypt, contrary

to Jeremiah's prophecy, and grabbed Jeremiah and carried him off with them. (Jeremiah 43:4)

So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the Lord, to dwell in the land of Judah. But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah; Even men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah. So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the Lord: thus came they even to Tahpanhes.

They fled to Egypt, but they grabbed Jeremiah and carried him off with them. So poor Jeremiah was taken to Egypt, carried down there with these people; and then the book of Jeremiah gives some of the prophecies that he gave in Egypt; and he died there in Egypt.

So Jeremiah's life was truly a sad life; standing for the Word of God, and not being listened to much, even at this point. But in the future, many people read Jeremiah's books [Jeremiah and Lamentations], and he has had a tremendous influence in the world since that time.

But this is what happened in Judah immediately after the destruction. Jeremiah really was very patriotic. He was declaring the Lord's will, but he hated to think of what was going to happen. And so Jeremiah wrote a book, five chapters long, which we call the Lamentations of Jeremiah:

How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies. Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits. The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.

The book of Lamentations is Jeremiah's weeping over the destruction of Jerusalem. And he has been known ever since as the weeping prophet.

=====

XIV. The Exile.

A. The Beginning of the Exile.

When did the exile begin? Well the answer to that question is similar to the answer to most historical questions. There is not a precise point at which it is necessary to say that the change between two historical periods occurred. I think that is something very important for us to have in mind. I've seen little booklets with the title, "Are there two returns of Christ? Christ returns once. He's coming back, a second coming. There's not third and a fourth. Therefore his coming is one instant, it all happens at once, not a series of events."

Well, that argument is simply contrary to history. Every important change in history has had various points in it. It is not just one individual event. And we are told in the Bible that Christ's return comes suddenly, unexpectedly; nobody knows the day or the hour; and it seems to me that makes it absolutely clear that the first recognizable event of it is unexpected. There is no sign which we must then say this must come before it can occur.

Now in the case of the exile, when did the exile begin? Well, it is natural to say the beginning of it is the end of the kingdom of Judah. That's the natural thing to say, but I'm not saying that's the right thing. That, you might say, is the complete thing to say. When Judah was no more, then the exile was there. Well, even that, you might question; because you remember that, after Jerusalem was destroyed and Judah was taken, there was almost a year in which there were a large number—not a tremendous number—but a sizeable number of people left in the land. And then they killed Gedaliah and they fled to Egypt.

For them, the exile really began when they left to go to Egypt. But that was a comparatively minor thing.

1. First Stage, 2 Kings 15:29, about 730 BC.

For a very substantial portion of the people, the exile began as described in 2 Kings 15:29. We read,

In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abelbethmaachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria.

So here we have Tiglath-pileser overcoming Pekah in the northern kingdom and taking large numbers of people off to Assyria. Now whether he took half of the people in the northern kingdom, or a third or a fourth, we don't know. But he took a very sizeable number at that time. And that would be about 730 BC. So if

you want to know when the exile began, it began for a very substantial number of people—perhaps nearly as many people as the whole population of Judah—it began about 730.

But that's just the first stage.

2. Second Stage, 2 Kings 18:11, about 721 BC.

Well then, in 2 Kings 18:11, we read about the larger exile of the northern kingdom. This is 721 or 722 BC; you can't tell just the year, but you read

And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes:

And this is an exile which probably took 50% more people than the whole population of Judah; because this, I would say, was at least half of the people of the northern kingdom, and maybe even two-thirds, included in this second phase of the exile. And Israel was always two or three times as numerous as Judah. So that this might be called the beginning of the exile; or it might be called the exile of the northern kingdom. It's the second stage of the exile of the northern kingdom, the larger stage; and the northern kingdom is by far the larger portion of the two.

People say, "Where are the twelve tribes?" And someone said, not so long ago, they said that in Hebrew, vowels don't count; therefore they said Isaac's sons, if you don't count the vowels, you could have Saxons; and so the British people are the ten tribes of Judah, of Israel, because they are Isaac's sons. Well, there are 50 other arguments, just as silly as that, which are advanced for the so-called British-Israel view; and it sounds so silly, that you wouldn't think any sensible person would pay any attention to it; but if you go through 20 years of ministry, and don't strike at least one or two people who are very, very ardently devoted to this foolishness, why you're probably on a desert island somewhere. But the twelve tribes are mixed together; and what we call the Jews of today, are not simply from the tribe of Judah, they represent the twelve tribes.

When they came back from "Babylon" at the end of the Babylonian captivity, we simply mean from the area which Babylon held under its power, which is represented by Babylon. But the exile of the northern kingdom, then, was to Assyria; and the southern kingdom to Babylon; that's important to have in mind. But they both were in the same area—except the capital would be different—when each of them held this whole large region. Now that is the second stage of the beginning of the exile. And the largest of all. Then

3. The Third Stage, 2 Kings 24:1, about 604 BC.

And this is more than a hundred years later than the second. In 2 Kings 24:1, we read

In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him.

(Student. "What is the year 606 noted for? That's a year that's usually mentioned.") Well, 606, I believe, would be when the king of Egypt, Pharaoh-Necho, came into the land and he held them. I doubt if Nebuchadnezzar got there quite at that time. I'm not sure whether we have evidence to establish it exactly in that period. But 606 is used often—Well, it's somewhere between 606 and 603. My inclination would be toward a little bit later than 606. But this was a small stage of the exile. It would hardly be worth mentioning if it were not for its being the beginning of the movements which came later on. This was a time when the people were made subject to Babylon; they'd been made subject to Pharaoh in Egypt just before that; and the Babylonian king did not take many people into captivity at this time. But we find a further explanation of this period in Daniel 1, where it says "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah." That would be pretty close to 606. It wouldn't be much after, so perhaps 606 is a fair date to give for that. (Daniel 1:1–2)

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

Well, now that doesn't sound like any capture, does it? It sounds like a tribute, many a king did that before.

But in verse 3 it says,

And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

So we see that here, probably 606 is a good number to use for it, it would be very close to that anyway, that in 606 Nebuchadnezzar took certain of the princes away. Mostly young men to be trained to be in his palace. That you would not call an exile, if it were not for the later stages, because so few were

involved. But there were a few involved, perhaps a hundred, I don't think we have evidence of any more. But there's many a time when two nations have fought; and at the end of the war, one of them has taken hostages from the other. Many a time that's happened. If the exile didn't follow after, we wouldn't call this the beginning of the exile. But since the exile did follow after, as far as Daniel was concerned, this was the beginning of the exile, about 606 BC, because that's when he was taken into exile.

When the Romans came into Palestine about 60 BC, they took hostages; they took a young man to Rome; he was brought up there, he was there for 20 or 30 years, educated a Roman; then he came back and became king of Judea; his name was Herod. He had lived for many years in Rome as a hostage, but that didn't make an exile. That was not an exile. Most of the people were in their land. This I wouldn't call an exile except that the other stages followed it; and for those who went and didn't come back, they stayed; so for them it was an exile. And so we can call 606 the third point in the exile; and it would be the beginning of the second main stage of the exile of Judah, not mentioned really in 2 Kings 24:1, merely alluded to there; but mentioned very definitely in Daniel 1:1-4. Then

4. The Fourth Stage, 2 Kings 24:14-16 about 597 BC.

Now this sounds more like an exile. It says there

At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

Now there is a tremendous exile. There is very, very large movement; but not as large as 721 BC, because Israel [the northern kingdom] was much larger; but this is a very, very large movement, and that is 597 BC. From this description

here you'd almost think that this was the greatest movement as far as the southern kingdom was concerned. Certainly, it was a movement that took the outstanding people, because it says it took all the trained people and left only the poorest of the land there. And then the final stage of it is

5. The Fifth Stage, 2 Kings 25:11–12, about 586 BC.

Here it says,

And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away. But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.

That is right after the capture of the city. They have taken king Zedekiah, carried him out captive. This was the final end of Jerusalem, as far as that century was concerned, 586 BC. So that in the fullest sense, the exile begins in 586 with this fifth phase. The outstanding people of the land, the bulk of the trained, skilled people, were taken away in 597. A few of the princes, particularly young men, sort of as hostages for good behavior of the people there, and to be trained to be helpers in Nebuchadnezzar's court, were taken in 606. And then of course we have the two stages of the early beginnings of the exile.

The Seventy Years.

Well, now, the land was to lie fallow for 70 years, Jeremiah said. There would be 70 years of exile; when do you start the 70 years? Well, the best way to know is to find out when it ends and then count back 70; that's the easiest way to work it out. Because if you take the beginning and figure ahead, there would be nobody on earth who could say which of these five would be the proper time to build upon. Naturally, Jeremiah said it's after the first two stages so it wouldn't be till then. But some might say it would be 586, that's the final end. Some would say 597, because that's when the outstanding people went. I doubt if anybody would've said it was 606 when the little group of people went, Daniel and a few princes went—something that had happened over and over again in every country—when one country was victorious in a war. 606 would be of no importance, if it weren't for the other two that follow; but the other two having followed, it becomes the beginning of this whole thing.

And at the beginning, it is possible to consider it the beginning of the exile. But it is another example of the fact that the Lord does not usually give us his prophecies in order that we can know exactly what is going to happen.

Prophecy is not "history written in advance", in the sense that we know just what's going to happen. The Lord doesn't want us to know just what is going to happen. But the Lord gives indications of what's going to happen; and certain specific points in it, in order that when they occur our faith is strengthened; and in order that we may properly prepare for certain places in his future plans. Prophecy *is* history in advance, if you mean it contains true things that are going to happen. It is *not* history in advance if you means that it contains a detailed picture, so that we really know in detail what's going to happen, and can exactly work it out.

B. The Nature of the Captivity.

We won't take a great deal of time on the nature of the captivity; but I don't think that most Christians have a real understanding of the nature of the captivity. And I think it's good that we should have an idea just what the captivity really was. Now when we think of captivity, we think of a man being in a dungeon; we think of a man being in prison. He's a captive. Well, it doesn't have to mean that. You're captive if you're subject to another nation. You're a captive if you're under the control of others that you don't want to be under the control of. In the extreme sense of it—a prisoner being in a dungeon, something like that; it was a captivity in that sense for Jehoiachin, who was taken and kept in prison for many years. It was only after the death of Nebuchadnezzar that he was released from prison. He was in prison; and doubtless there were people that the Babylonians would consider war prisoners, whom they kept in prison; though most of those they killed; but there were probably some they kept in prison.

But the bulk of the people were not in prison; the bulk of the people were captive in the sense in which the people of Poland and Czechoslovakia and the other nations behind the Iron Curtain are today subject to Russia [1958]. Now it was further in that sense because they were removed from their homeland. But they were removed—most of them—to other sections of the Empire; and the people from those sections had largely been removed—many of them—to the sections to which they had gone; and the people in these other sections were carrying on their lives with comparatively little hindrance. Instead of being an independent country, they were part of the Assyrian Empire. And instead of being a united part of the Assyrian Empire—with their country simply subject to it—they were scattered through various sections of the empire, scattered in large groups in various sections.

But in the captivity, they had very substantial individual freedom; they built their own houses; they carried on their businesses; many of them became well-to-do; many of them entered government service and secured important positions; they became an integrated part of the empire. It was a place which was not bad for them; it was an awfully lot better, for many of the nations that

had been conquered, than they had been under their own people. If it were not for God's promises to them; and God's interest in them; and the plan which he had to use them as his means for bringing Christ into the world; you could say that for the bulk of the people, they would be better off scattered and integrated into a large empire; with power of becoming great in that empire; and getting along well in that empire; than as a little small nation cut off from all the rest. So that, for the individual, the bulk of them found themselves quite contented and quite prosperous in the region to which they were taken in exile; not necessarily immediately, but within a comparatively short time they found themselves as well off as most of the other inhabitants.

But the thing that kept alive their patriotism, and their dissatisfaction with this, was the promises of God. We read in the Psalms they say, "Sing us a song of Zion. How could we sing a song of Zion in a strange land; how could we do our task, singing a song of Zion?" There was a longing for their own land; and a longing which was more and more stressed as a longing for the land which was the land of promise; the land where the Lord had plans for them; the land where the Lord wanted them to be; the land which was the place where God had promised to give His blessing to them. And so the interest in their returning to their land, and the desire to return, was kept alive by the Bible, and by the stress on God's promises. It was not simply a patriotic desire, but to a very large part a religious desire to return.

And when the exile came to an end, there were great numbers of people who felt much better satisfied to stay in the countries of the exile than to go back to Palestine. So the nature of the exile, the captivity, is something that we should have well in mind. It is brought out very clearly in the book of Daniel. You'll find that Daniel and his friends very soon become prominent in the empire. Now here is Daniel, who cannot eat the king's meat. Daniel does not want to defile himself. This meat has been offered to idols; he has nothing against meat; he's not a vegetarian; but he does not want to eat meat offered to idols; and he cannot make that clear to the men who have charge of the training in the service of the king of Babylon. He simply requests that he may follow his own particular practices, and avoid eating this meat; and the eunuch says "Well, if you come before the king; and you don't look as well off as these others; you're all peaked and thin," he says, "I will lose my position; I may even be killed for not taking proper care of the fellows I'm supposed to fatten up, strengthen, make ready for serving the king properly."

And Daniel and his friends, three friends, said, "Give us a test; let us just take pulse; let us take vegetables and just drink water; and they start off to drink water—no vitamins in it, none of the amino acids they need—and vegetables. How are these people going to be strong and well? And the Lord worked miracles; the Lord caused that the vegetables that these fellows got were vegetables that grew in the section of the land where there was more fertility in

the soil; more vitamins in the soil; they got their protein, and their vitamins and everything that they ordinarily would get; the Lord directed in the bringing of the food, the particular food they got, so that without touching the meat, which ordinarily they would need for their greater strength, these fellows were able to show themselves better and stronger than the rest. But you notice that as far as the Prince of the Eunuchs was concerned, he didn't care what their practices were; he wasn't greatly interested in that, but he was interested that they be able to do their part in the king's palace, that's what he was interested in.

And then, in chapter 2, Daniel and these men get prominent positions; they're not mistreated, they get prominent positions. Now Daniel explains Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2; but in chapter 3, you find that Nebuchadnezzar puts up a great image, and says everybody has got to bow down and worship the image. Now did Daniel bow down and worship the image? Did Daniel refuse to worship the image? Where does it say Daniel refused to worship the image? There's no mention of it. Chapter 3 does not mention Daniel at all. It's all about the three friends, Shadrach, Meschach and Abednego. They're named like three Babylonians: Abednego means "The servant of Nego"; they are all heathen names which these three men were given by the king of Babylon. They go by these names. And they were well-liked and successful in his court; but now he puts up this image; and everybody has to bow to it; and he is very angry when they don't bow. Babylonian boundary stone.



Woolley, the excavator of Ur of the Chaldees, has a theory which is a very interesting here. There's not sufficient evidence to establish it, but it's a possibility. He gives it in his book on Ur of the Chaldees.¹⁷¹ He says that he found, in the great temple of the Moon god in Ur, he found the evidence of the great temple; the way it had been before the time of Nebuchadnezzar; and then he found evidence of how Nebuchadnezzar had made changes in the Temple; and you can tell the new construction, because as we mentioned already, Nebuchadnezzar always had his name stamped on the bricks that

went in to the great buildings that he had built.

¹⁷¹ C. Leonard Woolley, *Ur of the Chaldees* (1929, rev. 1950; quoted edition 1965).

And so this great Temple of the Moon god Nannar¹⁷²—one of the great temples of the world at the time—this great temple at Ur, before Nebuchadnezzar's time, had the statue of the god inside a small room; and then, in front of that, it has a small corridor coming into it, a very small corridor by which you can get into that room; then it has large store rooms round it, so that you could not see into it at all.

It was like the temple in Jerusalem. In the temple at Jerusalem, only the high priest went into the Holy of Holies. The ark of the covenant was not seen by the people; and Woolley says that, in most of the temples of Babylonia previous to the time of Nebuchadnezzar, there was an inner shrine in which the statue of the god was; and the priest came in there and offered incense; and then the priest might carry the statue out, and carry it in procession through the streets; but the people did not see the statue in there, because it was in the room which was not open.

But Woolley says that Nebuchadnezzar tore out the store rooms in front of the shrine; and he established a great wide open way; so that the people could look into the front of the Temple; and could see the statue of the god standing there in all its splendor. And Woolley suggests that this means that Nebuchadnezzar introduced a new custom, of having the statue in prominent view, so the people as a whole could bow down and worship it instead of doing it through the instrumentality of the priest as was generally done before. And that would mean that, ordinarily, an individual wouldn't go to those services at all; but here Nebuchadnezzar, perhaps in introducing the custom, he says, "I've built this big statue and everybody in the neighborhood is to be there; and when the time comes, they're to bow down." Well, maybe Daniel was off on a trip for the king; perhaps he'd sent Daniel to represent him to go to the court of Persia or somewhere else; perhaps Daniel was away on business of some sort or other; perhaps he was sick and home in bed; we're just not told anything about this, but we are told that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow down; and there's not a single mention of Daniel in the chapter.

But these three friends of Daniel's refused to bow to the statue; and the Lord miraculously intervened to keep these three men from being killed. Now maybe in other parts of the empire, there were a few hundred others that didn't bow; that God did not intervene and save; and that were burned in the furnace, or were beheaded for their stand. We don't know. But there was no great amount of persecution during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.¹⁷³

¹⁷² [dcb] Mesopotamian moon god also called Sin. Sin was originally a separate deity but the gods were merged by this time. Often the god is represented by a crescent moon. See [Wikipedia](#).

¹⁷³ Woolley, *ibid.* p. 194ff. "The temple was indefinitely old. Too little was left of the earliest building to show its form, but from the days of Ur-Nammu... for more than a thousand years, successive builders had respected and repeated its ground-plan. The sanctuary [of Nannar-dcb] ... was reached only by a passage which ran round three of its sides; on the other side of the

During the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, such incidents were rare; and we find that, when the people after this, at the beginning of the Persian period, when they wanted to injure Daniel, they had to get a special edict, that for 30 days nobody will pray or make any request of anybody except the king.

Crazy thing, the king, I suppose they flattered him, up to the point where he was ready to sign something without really thinking about it; and he signed the thing; and they did it in order to catch Daniel. It shows that under ordinary circumstances, that sort of religious persecution was not there. The exile as a whole was not a time of persecution. There were individual instances of it; and individual points like this, when the king put up this great statue. Are we to think that these three men are the only men who wouldn't bow to it? That all the others bowed to it? I don't think that that is what happened; I think that probably there weren't many of them in this particular area, because these three are so conspicuous by their failure to bow to it. They were in the service of the king; they were in important positions; they were supposed to do it, and they refused; and God honored their faith. The exile was a time of great testing for the people; a time when it would have been easy for their faith in God to have been completely wrecked; but it was a time when God intervened with this outpouring of miracles. But just all the evidence we have of that particular one is in the book of Daniel.

To me one of the most important statements of this 3rd chapter is where Nebuchadnezzar said to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, "If ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" And verse 17 says, "If it

passage there were store-rooms and priests' chambers occupying the whole of the rest of the temple area, and completely masking the sanctuary—it was hidden away and made as difficult of access as might be. ...§This ancient tradition was completely set at naught by Nebuchadnezzar when he restored the temple. The rooms in front of the sanctuary... were swept away; the whole sanctuary was opened up.... In the old temple everything had been secret; now a numerous public could watch the priest making his offerings on the open-air altar and behind him could see through the dim sanctuary's open door the image of the god.... §There is no doubt that the remodelling of the building implies such a change of ritual, but how can this itself be explained? The answer is given by the Old Testament story of the Three Children in the Book of Daniel [Daniel 3]... What was there new in the king's act? Not in the setting up of a statue, because each king in turn had done the same; the novelty as the command for general worship by the public: for a ritual performed by priests the king is substituting a form of congregational worship which all his subjects are obliged to attend. So striking is the correspondence between the written story and the facts of the ruins and so completely do they explain each other that we must needs accept the background of the legend [of the three Childre] as historical."

[dcb note: If one accepts Woolley's interpretation, the opening ceremony of this rebuilt temple was an official occasion, and one can presume that Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego were there as part of the official retinue, which makes their refusal to bow down particularly heinous in Nebuchadnezzar's eyes.]

be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king." They don't mean if God is unable to deliver them; they knew that he was able to deliver them. They mean if he does not choose to deliver us; because God chooses in many cases that people shall suffer and die for his cause; that they shall lose out, as far as earthly advantage is concerned; and it is His will that we set an example, and we show our loyalty to God by actually losing out. God might have chosen that the three in the furnace there should be martyred; that, earlier, they should come before the king looking peaked and pale and thin, and that he would say, "What's the matter with you fellows? If they won't eat the good food we're given, throw them out; put them in prison." But in this case, He did use the occasion to glorify Himself by giving them his wonderful blessing.

But these men didn't know. For all they knew, he might in their case do as he had in many many others—prefer to have us glorify him through suffering, rather than glorify him through his marvelous deliverance. Well, the nature of the captivity then, was, as a whole, not a time of persecution; not a time of suffering; not as a whole, but there were individuals who suffered persecution; and it was a time when it would have been easy to settle back; and enjoy the general prosperity of the Empire; and forget all about God. God intervened to keep that from happening.

C. The Fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.¹⁷⁴

The Neo-Babylonian Empire did not last a long time. Nebuchadnezzar had a fairly long reign, from about 606 till 562. During this period of 40 years he established his power and made many great conquests. He devoted the latter years of it almost entirely to great building. That took tremendous resources. He used up a great deal of the resources of the Empire with all this building that he did; and as he grew older, he didn't have the energy to go and do a lot of fighting; and the general strength of the empire was lessened very considerably. He was succeeded by his son, Amo-marduke.

Now this Amo-marduke reigned from 562 to 559, only about two years. His son was not well-liked, and was finally assassinated. It was not a successful reign; we probably would not even mention it if it were not for the fact that he was mentioned in the Bible. 2 Kings ends with Amo-marduke—or as it's spoken of here, Evil-Merodach:

And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-Merodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; And he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings

¹⁷⁴ See Appendix B: The Babylonian King List.

that were with him in Babylon; And changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life. And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.

Well this was after 37 years in prison. That's a long, long time, 37 years in prison. All of king Nebuchadnezzar's life he left this young king of Judah, who had only reigned three months, in prison. And then, when Nebuchadnezzar died and his son became king, for some reason or other he thought it was a nice thing to do to release him from prison; and so he released him from prison and gave him an allowance for himself and his family.

And within the last ten years tablets have been discovered in Babylon¹⁷⁵, listing the allowance, saying that for Jehoiachin who had been king of Judah and his family, his children who are named, there is a certain amount set aside that is to be provided for them, for their care, in this first year of Amo-Marduke. A very interesting. corroboration of this account in 2 Kings.



JEHOIACHIN RATION TABLET

Now was 2 Kings written at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem? Well, if it was, these last few chapters were added no less than 25 years later; we don't know. But that's the last event described in it.

Then when Evil-Merodach was killed, he was succeeded by a man who was mentioned in the Bible; though that fact was not recognized until the 20th century.

History has told us about Neriglissar, the old doubting general of Nebuchadnezzar. Neriglissar was rather old by this time. We have the Greek form of his name—*Nargalsar* (Ναργαλασσαρ). He reigned from 559 to 556. He was a strong capable man, but he was pretty old by this time. In the Babylonian form, his name was *Nergal-shar-usur*—"Nergal, protect the king". Nergal is the god of protection. But in the Greek form it's *Nargalsar*.

Well, now, up to a few years ago, nobody knew that he was mentioned in the Bible. But there's an interesting verse in the book of Jeremiah, Jeremiah 39:3. In Jeremiah 39 we have the account of the conquest of Jerusalem and the

¹⁷⁵ See Wikipedia article, [Jehoiachin's Rations Tablets](#). Image from [Bible-History.com](#).

destruction of Jerusalem, which is repeated in chapter 52. And in chapter 39 it tells how Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, took it and verse 3 says,

And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, even Nergalsharezer, Samgarnebo, Sarsechim, Rabsaris, Nergalsharezer, Rabmag, with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon.

How many princes are named here? How many? As it is vocalized in our English text, it would sound like six wouldn't it? Like six princes. But two have exactly the same name, Nergal-sharezer, and that's a queer way to name six princes and name two of them exactly the same, isn't it?¹⁷⁶

But of course, our English was translated from the Hebrew; and the Hebrew was copied and re-copied and re-copied and re-copied. But the Babylonian was not known, because all the tablets were buried that would show the original names. And the knowledge of how the Babylonian cuneiform writing would be pronounced was long lost; so even if clay tablets were discovered (and many had been found with the indecipherable cuneiform writing), they could not be read.

And now we know that, in the Hebrew as it stands today, there is only one mistake; and that mistake is the insertion of a hyphen. The Hebrew *Samgar-nebo*, should have no hyphen; or perhaps better, move the hyphen to the end of *nebo*, instead of the beginning. This is after thousands of years of faithful copying by the Hebrew scribes.¹⁷⁷

So what you really have is this: Jeremiah 39:3 should read,

"All the princes of the king of Babylon came and sat in the middle gate. Nergal-sharezer of Samgar, Nebo-sarsechim, Rabsaris," and then, as if it was an afterthought, having told us that Nebo-sarsechim the Rabsaris was there, he says, "Nergal-sharezer was the Rabmag."

You see, Rabsaris and Rabmag, we now know, are two names of officials of the king of Babylon. And so Nergal-sharezer was the Rabmag, and Nebo-sarsechim was the Rabsaris, which is literally the Chief of the Eunuchs. And the first one named is Nergal-sharezer and it says Nergal-sharezer, Samgar.

¹⁷⁶ Allan A. MacRae, [Mesopotamian Archaeology](#) (IBRI ebook) has a more extensive discussion of this verse and the proper formation of these in the section "Contacts of Mesopotamian Archaeology with the Bible".

¹⁷⁷ *ibid*: "for the next name, Samgar—you know the vowels were not written down in Hebrew till later—could easily be written as "Samgar", but it is very difficult to preserve the vowels when they weren't written down at all in a foreign name. All, of course, that Hebrew deals with properly are the consonants."

Well, we have a Babylonian tablet listing officers, chief officers of Nebuchadnezzar, which mentions Nergal-sharezer of Samgar. Well, now if you take "Samgar" and you say it in Hebrew, how would you say it? Anyone who has had as much as a month of Hebrew doubtless knows that the letter "nun" before another consonant is assimilated; and consequently Sinmaguere would become Simaguere, and so the nun would not be written; but the "mem" would be doubled; and in the Hebrew manuscripts, they don't indicate the doubling—that's a comparatively recent thing, the indication of it. And the "s" sound was just written with a Hebrew *sammech*. And the name was well known, and so it easily got pronounced Samgar. It's very, very difficult to preserve the pronunciation of foreign names, very difficult. In fact you just can't.

I went into a barber shop in Berlin once. A man turned to me, and he said to me in German, "Why, here's an American; he can solve our argument. We're having a big argument. In German, *Felle* is Falls; and what is the correct pronunciation: "Niagara Felle", or "Niagara Felle"? Well, I told him it was neither one, but "Niag'ra"; they just threw up their hands; they couldn't figure it. When a man told me once that he had relatives in the United States, and I asked him where they lived, he said in "Ioha"; and I asked him where, and he said "Ioha, Fort Doge, Ioha". Well the Fort gave me the clue it was Fort Dodge, Iowa; and that seemed to him a sensible way of pronouncing it. And it's that between only two languages which are actually closely related. Proper names we just cannot pronounce, because the pronunciation is different; and people won't even get your name, if you pronounce it the way you say it in your own language.

So here [Jeremiah 39:3] is a marvelous evidence of the accuracy of the scribes; that they took these names; and after the end of the Babylonian realm, they sounded just like nonsense to them; they were strange foreign names; but they copied them so accurately—though they had no idea what they meant—that as you look at it here, in the Hebrew and English it looks like six names; and yet the only thing that's wrong in the letters is a hyphen between Samgar and Nebo where it shouldn't be; because Samgar is the end of the name of Nergal-sharezer. Nergal-sharezer of Simaguere. And the Nebo is the beginning of the name Nebo-sarsechim.

So it is a marvelous evidence of the fact that God has not written the Bible on metal; where the weather cannot touch it; and nothing can happen to it; and every letter remains exactly as it was. There are slight changes that have come in in copying, but they are very slight; and the original was absolutely free from error; the copies have an occasional error of copying which has come in; but the number of errors in copying is tiny compared to that of any other work from ancient times.

Take almost any other ancient work, and you will find many, many times the errors in copying that you have in the Bible.

Yes? (Student. "What are the officers, Rabsaris, and Rabmag?") It's pretty hard to say for this reason: that the literal meaning has been lost even to the Babylonians; they've become titles of honor. Rabsaris would be the Prince of the Eunuchs, and Rabmag, there's some discussion whether it means "Great Chief" or "Chief of the Bakers". There's some discussion. But it's actually like in England: various princes will have names referring to services around the palace which they never do at all—such as the "Knights of the Garter".¹⁷⁸ These were probably names referring to services, that are honorary titles given to men who are leaders in the army, or leaders in the government. So the precise, literal interpretation of the word doesn't mean much, but it is the name of an office the functions of which probably vary.

We have a great deal of evidence on Assyrian offices of state. On Nebuchadnezzar's officials, we have very little evidence. This particular tablet that named these officials here is the only tablet that I know of that names Nebuchadnezzar's officials. And for the Assyrian kings we have many such tablets. But Nebuchadnezzar, in all his inscriptions, talks as if he did everything himself. And so when people say, "Well if Daniel was such a great man in Nebuchadnezzar's household in his government, why don't we have any tablets with his name on them?" Until this inscription was found, we could say he didn't have tablets for any of his officials; he simply claimed credit for everything.

=====

(Review) We were speaking this morning about the fall of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, and we mentioned Neriglissar who reigned from 559 to 556. He was rather elderly when he took the throne, he died after three years and was succeeded by his son Labashi-Marduk. Now this son's name does not occur anywhere in the Scripture. He only reigned 9 months, he's not particularly important from our Biblical viewpoint, not nearly as important as the two previous kings because both of them are mentioned in the Bible. He only reigned nine months and he was killed and there was a conspiracy which put upon the throne a man named Nabonidus. He reigned from 556 to 539, 17 years' reign. The reign of Nabonidus was ended by the conquest by the Persians. Cyrus the Persian conquered Babylon and sent Nabonidus into exile. Babylon became now a part of the Persian Empire. That was the fall of the Babylonian Empire, an empire which lasted for about 65 years, but which was very powerful and very great while it lasted.

In connection with Nabonidus, he is not mentioned in the Bible but he is referred to in the Bible, or maybe implied would be a better word. Now in Daniel

¹⁷⁸ [dcb] According to legend, a woman's garter slipped off during a dance and King Richard returned it with the famous statement "honi soit qui mal y pense" ("Shame on him who thinks evil of it.") That slogan appears on the Order of the Garter heraldry.

5 we have Belshazzar mentioned; and only a few years ago, it was thought there was no such man. Belshazzar is mentioned as king and the lists of kings we have do not contain any such name; and now we know that when Belshazzar said "I'll make you the third ruler of the kingdom," it implied that Nabonidus was indeed the first ruler, and Belshazzar the second.¹⁷⁹

Now there is one other thing there that I'll very briefly mention. We read in Daniel 5:10,

Now the queen by reason of the words of the king and his lords came into the banquet house: and the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed: There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers;

Now twice, she calls Nebuchadnezzar the father of Belshazzar; and yet we now say Nabonidus was his father. Which is correct here, the Bible or the archaeologists? Was Nabonidus his father, or was Nebuchadnezzar his father? How can the one man have two fathers? Was he the adopted son of one of them?

(Student. "Was he a grandson?") That is one possibility, a very good possibility. The fact is that, in the Bible, the word "father" is used for ancestor just as "son" is used for descendant. He could be an ancestor. Now in such a case, that has been guessed by some people; that the queen here mentioned is not his wife, but his mother; and that she is the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. Now of course, it would be quite natural here, that the one who tells him about one from an earlier reign would be his mother, who would know things before he was familiar with them.

And in that case, the queen came in, and she says "thy father", meaning her father, who was his grandfather. That is entirely possible. But it does not prove that Nabonidus' wife was the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar; it does not prove it, because in ancient times the words "son" and "father" are also used of successors and predecessors to the throne. The Assyrian writers speak of Jehu

¹⁷⁹ [dcb] See Raymond Philip Dougherty, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar: A Study of the Closing Events of the Neo-Babylonian Empire*, (1929). This book establishes that Nabonidus and Belshazzar shared the rule of Babylon. Dougherty shows that archaeological discoveries prove the historical accuracy of this portion of Daniel, and that Daniel's account must have been written by a contemporary to the events recorded because no other historical source records them; in particular the account could not have been fabricated around 200 BC as Biblical critics claim. See MacRae, [Mesopotamian Archaeology](#) for further details.

son of Omri; but Jehu had actually killed all the descendants of Omri, but he was his successor. The word "son" is often used for a successor. So the Bible, when it says thy father, doesn't necessarily mean that he was the blood father; it might mean a predecessor; the fact that it's repeated twice—thy father Nebuchadnezzar, the king thy father—would seem to me to suggest that it means more than just a predecessor; and it is entirely possible that his mother was Nebuchadnezzar's daughter; we just don't know. But at least there's no proof of any contradiction from the fact that his real father—his immediate father in the English sense—was undoubtedly Nabonidus. Well, there was a tablet found twenty years ago which says that "in that night the king's son was slain," which fits exactly with the statement here: in that night Belshazzar was slain.

Now there is here in Daniel another immediate problem. That may relate more to the next period, but still I think it would be worth talking on it right here, now that we have our Bible open to chapter 5.

In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old. It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom;

Now any history book will tell you that Cyrus the king of Persia conquered Babylon, and incorporated Babylon into the Persian Empire. But the end of chapter 5 here says that in that night was Belshazzar king of the Chaldeans slain, and Darius the Median received the kingdom. Well now, what about them? If the history books say Cyrus the king of Persia conquered; and if the book of Daniel says that Darius the Mede took the kingdom; and the next chapter tells about Darius' relation to Daniel; is that a contradiction between our historical evidence and the Biblical statement? The higher critics all say that it is.

But if you will look closely at chapter 5, you will find that chapter 5 says, in verse 28, "thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." It doesn't say "given to the Medes." The critics all believe that Daniel teaches, that after the Babylonian Empire there was a Median Empire; and then after the Empire of the Medes there was a Persian Empire; a fact which has no evidence in history; in fact all the evidence is against it. But they say, "That's what Daniel teaches; and therefore the Book of Daniel is completely wrong," as they think you would expect, if it was written three to four hundred years later by somebody who didn't know anything about it, and made up some stories. But you notice here that in 5:28 it says

Peres; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

It doesn't say given to the Medes; it says given to the Medes and Persians; and "the Persians" is not an addition to the text, because the word he's interpreting is Upharsin—Peres—which has nothing to do with Medes, but does with Persians. The chapter itself says that the Medes and the Persians are one Empire, not two.

And then we go on to the next chapter; and you'll find that Darius, who was the king here, who has Daniel put in the Lions' Den, that the men come to Daniel in verse 15 and they say to the king,

Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

Pretty good proof that the writer of Daniel considered the Medes and the Persians to be one Empire rather than two. And in addition to that, you can notice that it says "Darius the Mede took the kingdom." The Aramaic word there, which is translated "took", is better translated "received". Now "receive" might be that he received it because he took it by force; but it's not the usual way you say it. But if he received it from Cyrus, who made him sub-king under himself, that would fit perfectly. And that is, in the opinion of most conservative Bible students, the probable interpretation, that this Darius the king, who set 120 princes over the kingdom; and over these, three presidents, of whom Daniel was third; that he was the king over the Babylonian area, but put there by Cyrus the Persian.

There's one other statement that fits with that too; over in chapter 9 we read, the beginning of chapter 9,

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

Well when a conqueror takes over, we don't usually say he was made king. Now you could, but it's not the usual way. But to say he *received* the kingdom, and he was *made* king over it, fits exactly with the idea of Cyrus putting him in as a subordinate ruler under Cyrus. Now that's not proven, but that is certainly a possibility; and the critics' idea: that Darius the Mede and a Median empire that's otherwise unknown to us; that doesn't exist, but that the book of Daniel tells about it; certainly is contrary to the statements in the book of Daniel, because it speaks of the law of the Medes and the Persians.

Yes? (Student. "The RSV says, 'In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by birth a Mede...' ") Yes, because the editors of it believe that Daniel is false history, and that it depicts a Median empire in there; and so they give a translation which is not there; not an inaccurate translation, but, of various possible translations, selecting the one that contradicts history, instead of an

equally correct translation which would not contradict history—I don't say the other is absolutely necessary but the other is at least slightly the more natural interpretation.

But if it wasn't for their argument, I don't think they ...

Yes? (Student: "Daniel 6:28 says, 'So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.' ") Well, we have considerable information from Cyrus, about how he conquered Babylon, and what he did thereafter. In this information, there is a man who was made his representative in ruling Babylon. It is most probable that this man is the man of whom the book of Daniel speaks, as Darius.

Now we don't know much about the situation; we know of the great conquest by Cyrus; and we know of the great events in Cyrus' life, but the details of his administration we don't know.

Darius reigned a couple of years; and then Cyrus decided that he did not care to have a man with the title of king under his rule of Babylon; there's too much danger of insurrection, so he would rather have just somebody with the title of governor, and call himself king, the one king, supreme. And so, Daniel 6:28

So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Here it's speaking of the reign of Darius, and then of the time of Cyrus; that's entirely possible. Now it is also not impossible, when he speaks of the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian, that he is speaking of the same time-period, one the immediate king and the other his superior. Like you could say, during the time when so-and-so was governor of Pennsylvania and so-and-so was president of the United States. I think that's less likely, but I think that also is highly possible. Well, this is a very important problem in connection with the criticism of Daniel. For our history, the purpose is not so much to determine the authenticity of Daniel as it is to know what the facts are; as to what occurs; and the fact is that there is no historical evidence of a Median empire in between the Neo-Babylonian Empire and the Persian Empire. Now,

D. The Rise of the Persian Empire.

1. The Medes.

The book of Daniel is divided into two parts. Chapters 1 to 6 are the account of the events of Daniel's life. Chapters 7 to 12 are the visions that God gave Daniel. The events of his life in chapters 1–6 go through in chronological order; then the visions he has go through in chronological order, so that chapter 7 is

the first year of Belshazzar, which you see is earlier than chapter 6. Chapter 8 is the third year of the reign of Belshazzar. Chapter 9 is the first year of Darius the Mede; chapter 10 is the third year of Cyrus king of Persia; and chapter 11 is not the first year of Darius the Mede. Notice I said it's not, not is.

The Medes are a wild people; that is, in the viewpoint of the more settled Babylonians; they are a wild people, living in the northern part of what is today Persia. And these Medes had had their battles with the Assyrian Empire; they had never been conquered by the Assyrian Empire; they had had their battles with the Elamites, these people of Elam who were to the east of Babylonia; the Medes were a factor in history for a long, long time. And now the Medes become a very important factor in connection with the downfall of the Assyrian Empire, because it was the army of the Medes and the army of the Babylonians which together had overwhelmed Nineveh.

But Babylon took over the Assyrian Empire—most of the Assyrian empire; but the Medes, who had been friends with the Babylonians; who had been cooperating with them in this; it was only a rather unstable alliance, and the Medes continued as a separate nation, not particularly friendly with the Babylonians.

But just south of the Medes, there was a group which called themselves the Persians; just how subject to the Medes they may have been, we don't have a great deal of evidence. But there was a king among the Persians whose ancestors had been kings of a section called Anshan, a rather small section. Call that

2. Cyrus king of Anshan.

Now this king of Anshan threw off all obedience to the Medes; and he began conquering nations near him; and the king of the Medes decided that he'd better put an end to the danger of this aggressor, Cyrus, king of Anshan; and so he led an army against him in 553 BC. And this army which came against Cyrus—and everybody thought would make short work of him—when they faced Cyrus, the Mede soldiers rebelled against their king, and they delivered him into the hands of Cyrus; and in an hour, Cyrus leaped from the position of king of Anshan—a rank hardly better than petty prince—to the proud position of king of the Medes. And so he called himself king of the Medes and Persians; but he was from the Persian group rather than from the Mede group.

So they speak of the laws of the Medes and Persians; but eventually they call him just the king of the Persians. He had the Median soldiers joining with him, not conquered and destroyed, but turning to him; and so he became king, not so much of a force that had overwhelmed the Medes, as of a force which had been welcomed by the Medes as supreme power; but his people soon became

the supreme leaders in the empire, so the Persian empire was combined from the two groups, the Medes and the Persians, of which the Medes had been by far greater until 550 BC. And after that, Cyrus has the whole empire in his hands, that is, the whole region of the Medes and the Persians.

And in 553 Cyrus starts to conquer territory north of Babylonia, territories which were not in the Babylonian empire; and in the next ten years, Cyrus' armies went north of the Babylonian region, conquering section after section; they got the wealthy cities of Asia Minor, and they conquered one after another, till they came to the River Haleh which was the border of Lydia, the territory of Croesus. Croesus is known proverbially as the richest man who ever lived. King Croesus. We say "rich as Croesus." Well, Croesus was king of Lydia—he had been king there for many years—in Asia Minor; and Cyrus faced Croesus in 546; Croesus went to the Delphic Oracle in Greece, to ask whether he should attack Cyrus; the Delphic Oracle said, "If you attack Cyrus, a mighty empire will be destroyed." Croesus thought that meant Cyrus' empire; but the battle proved it meant Croesus' empire. So Cyrus conquered most of Asia Minor; and Cyrus is—the Persian empire is—pictured with its rapid conquests in the book of Daniel in the visions that Daniel saw.

This rapid conquest went along north of the Babylonian empire; and then way along to the west of it, into Asia Minor; and the people were down there in Babylonia, in the reign of Nabonidus, seeing how this Persian had become head of the whole Median group; which had joined with them 50 years before to overcome the Assyrian empire; and now was swinging through all this country; and they soon had an empire just about as big as Nabonidus' empire. And naturally, the next thing to happen would be for Nabonidus' empire to come in conflict with it.

Well, this progress of Cyrus, this tremendous progress which eventually resulted in conquering the Babylonians, is something which the Lord permitted Isaiah 200 years before to have a wonderful picture of in a vision. We look at the book of Isaiah, chapter 39; and we find that the chapter ends with a declaration of God—through Isaiah—to Hezekiah: that his descendants will be taken to Babylon—not to mighty Assyria—but off to Babylon. And that there, in Babylon, they will be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Now that was a startling prophecy that Isaiah gave; because Assyria at that time of Isaiah was the great tremendous nation; and Babylon was a comparatively weak force then, that Nineveh usually held in subjection. He said, "his descendants will be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

And immediately after the end of Isaiah 39, there is a sharp change in the book of Isaiah. It is the belief of most conservative interpreters that chapter 39 ends the portion of Isaiah which was given in the reign of Hezekiah. So that after the death of Hezekiah, when he was succeeded by his son Manasseh, there was

such terrible wickedness in the land; and eventually, according to Jewish tradition, Manasseh killed Isaiah; but during that time, the godly realized that Isaiah's predictions of exile were bound to be fulfilled; they realized that; they imagined themselves already in that situation; and Isaiah wrote a book to comfort them; to comfort them that the exile was not forever; God would deliver them; and to assure the exiles, when the time came, that he was going to deliver them.

And so Isaiah looked forward 200 years into the future, and in chapter 40, he says,

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

Those people away over there in Babylon in exile; but God said, verse 4,

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:

The difficulties will be removed from their way, for them to come back home again, to Palestine; and at the end of the chapter, we find them fainting at the long journey, which took four months of travel to get from Babylon over to Jerusalem. He says,

Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

This long journey across will not be too much for them; they will experience the end of the exile.

Well, the next chapter, 41, depicts the people in Babylon there, in the Babylonian empire; they see Cyrus coming, in this great progress that we have just described; and Cyrus crosses the mountains of Persia; and rapidly spreads across the territory north of Babylon; and on through Asia Minor; and they hear the reports of what is happening; and all the nations are filled with terror as Cyrus comes. And chapter 41 starts,

Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment. Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? he gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. He pursued them, and passed safely; even by the way that he had not gone with his feet.

Who is the righteous one from the east? Well, that's Cyrus of course. Who brought this man Cyrus, an instrument of God's righteousness, from the east? Called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, made him rule over kings, gave them as the dust to his sword, as driven stubble to his bow? Who pursued them and passed safely, even by the way that he had not gone with his feet?

All the Persians had never been here before; Cyrus is going, place after place after place conquered in this rapid conquest, shortly before the end of the Babylonian empire. God said, "I did this. Who did this?" He says, "I am the one who did it." He then goes on, giving a picture, verse 5,

Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the Lord, the first, and with the last; I am he. The isles saw it, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came.

The people of the Greek islands there, are wondering what to do, as the great Persian army comes. But God says

But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away. Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

You should not fear, because I have raised up Cyrus. Well, somebody might say, "the righteous one of the east that Isaiah speaks of as coming 200 years later?"

Well let's go on, and see how it all fits together. We go on then to chapter 43, and in chapter 43:3 we find that the Lord says to Israel,

For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;

I have loved thee, therefore I will give men for thee, and people for thy life. And after Cyrus conquered Babylon, he let the Israelites go back; but then he went on, he and his son, and they conquered Egypt and Ethiopia, here mentioned. They conquered them; it is pictured as a ransom that God gives them for letting Israel go. Verses 5 and 6 tell the people of Israel they're going to go home.

Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back:

Then we move on to chapter 44; and there God tells what he's going to do. 44:24,

Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

Now when Isaiah writes this Jerusalem hasn't been destroyed, and won't be for another hundred years. But this is nearly a hundred years after that; he says it's going to be rebuilt. That says to the deep, "Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers." That's usually considered to be a figure of speech for Mesopotamia—the two great rivers of Mesopotamia. I will dry up the rivers—not meaning a physical drying up of the rivers, but a bringing to an end of the power of the great empires of Mesopotamia—and that came through Cyrus's conquest of the Babylonian Empire. "That says to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers; That says of Cyrus, He is my shepherd and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built and to the temple, thy foundation shall be laid."

And of course, all the critics say it actually mentions Cyrus by name here; so that proves that Isaiah didn't write this at all. That is, this is written at the time of Cyrus; that is what they say; but we say, "If God could give the name of Josiah 300 years ahead, why couldn't he give the name of Cyrus too?" But the fact that he actually uses the name Cyrus here at the end of chapter 44 is proof that, when before this, he spoke of the righteous one from the east that comes and conquers kings, it's Cyrus of which he is talking. So that we have Cyrus

mentioned here at the end of chapter 44; and it continues speaking of Cyrus. Chapter 45:

Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

And so he is picturing here so wonderfully the coming of Cyrus; and he is establishing his power over the nations; and he says that it is God that is giving him the power to do this; that it is God who is establishing.

Chapter 46 tells us what's going to happen to gods of Babylon.

Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy laden; they are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity.

Babylon is going into captivity. And then in verses 10 and 11,

Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

So he called Cyrus the righteous one in one verse; in another one he calls him the ravenous bird; it depends on how you look at it. If he's God's instrument to do God's works, he's the instrument of God's righteousness; he's the righteous one. If you look on him as the great aggressor, gobbling up all the land, he's a ravenous bird that is conquering everything in his way.

And the result of it is told in chapter 47, what happens to Babylon.

Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans:

Verse 5,

Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms.

And then in chapter 48:20, the Israelites definitely find they are going to be delivered:

Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob. And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.

Now of course, we are not examining this great section of Isaiah, the book of Comfort; we are just glancing at its relation to the Old Testament history; and seeing the vivid picture it gives of Cyrus' rapid conquests; and the assurance, as the people see them, they need not fear as the heathen do; but rejoice, because he's God's instrument to deliver them from Babylon. And so Cyrus then conquered Babylon, he killed Belshazzar, and established himself in power over this great region, and reigned until his death in 529.

Now just a very brief survey of Persian history, during the remaining years of Old Testament history. That will be in

3. Succeeding Kings.

We are not going onto the end of the Persian Empire, because that brings us beyond the limits of the Old Testament. But we want to look at the Persian Empire during the rest of what has any direct relation to any Old Testament book.

Cyrus's son, Cambyses, reigned from 529 until he committed suicide in 522. When he killed himself in 522, after conquering Egypt, and thus receiving the ransom that God gave for Israel, the ransom of Egypt and Ethiopia; on his way back in 522 he committed suicide. He heard a false rumor which terrified him; he committed suicide and another man, not a direct relative but perhaps related distantly, named Darius became king; and Darius reigned from 521 to 486. During his reign the temple in Jerusalem was rebuilt.

Cyrus let the people go back, but in Darius's reign the temple was rebuilt. Darius had a very difficult time getting established as king. After Cambyses killed himself, there were a number of fights for the throne. Darius had to fight in many provinces, which was fortunate for our knowledge of archaeology. He fought in many provinces, but he established himself as supreme; and then he put a great monument up at Mount Behistun in Persia, celebrating his victory and naming all the provinces he had defeated; and he put it up in three

languages; and that gave us the first proof of the reading of the Babylonian language, the reading of that monument that he put up there.¹⁸⁰

But Darius reigned then from 521 to 486 BC. You see, he had a long reign; he held all of the old Babylonian Empire; plus the old Persian region, which extended even into India; and he held Asia Minor and Egypt. And he was succeeded by Xerxes his son. And Xerxes many think to be the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther.

Xerxes, who reigned from 486 to 465, decided to go still further and conquer Greece; and it became the great epic of Greek history, how the Greeks in their little city states, fighting for their freedom, were able to keep from being conquered by the mighty Persian empire; the Persians, of course, had to send their armies tremendous long distances; and their armies were made up of perhaps thirty different languages; and they weren't well organized, but there were tremendous numbers; and the Greeks fought them in the battles of Thermopylae, of Salamis, of Marathon; these battles were famous in Greek history, and represent their success in keeping their freedom from Xerxes.

Xerxes was succeeded by his son Artaxerxes, who reigned from 465 to 425; and after the reign of Artaxerxes, conservatives do not believe that anything more was written in the Old Testament. And consequently from the viewpoint of Old Testament History, there is no need of our going further in the history of the Persian empire.

But I want, then, to show its relationship to the Biblical history; to give a very brief summary; I'm not going into many details, because there's not much about them in the Bible; there's comparatively little.

XV. Return and Rebuilding.

A. Return Under Zerubbabel.

The return under Zerubbabel was brought about because of Cyrus' conquest of Babylon. We have no record of it in archaeological sources that have yet come to light, other than the Bible. We've already noted that 2 Kings ends with Jehoiachin being out of prison 25 years after the Babylonian conquest. 2 Chronicles 36:11ff tells about the conquest of Zedekiah, and then its last two verses jump ahead (2 Chronicles 36:22-23)

¹⁸⁰ The Mount Behistun Monument provided one of the earliest opportunities to decipher the cuneiform (Babylonian) and Assyrian writings by comparing these texts with Old Persian which was close enough to modern Persian that Rawlinson and others were able to decipher these ancient scripts. See the discussion at MacRae, *Mesopotamian Archaeology* (*op. cit.*). The results were published in 1846.

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.

And that's the end of 2 Chronicles. But those two verses which end 2 Chronicles, begin the book of Ezra. So they are repeated on the very next page of our English Bible, almost word for word.

Then the beginning of Ezra, which continues the history right after 2 Chronicles, goes on to tell how some of the people now went back. Well, this proclamation of Cyrus naturally strikes us as very interesting. Did Cyrus the king of Persia recognize the God of Israel as the one who had given him all these powers? We have no record of it in the records we have from Cyrus. We have no record of it in his records of his letting the Jews go back. Well, what is it then? Is it an imaginary thing; did it never happen? Did some Jew make up this story and put it in here?

Well, we have an interesting inscription on it. Here is an inscription by Cyrus telling about his conquest of Babylon; and after he tells about his conquest of Babylon here, he thanks the gods of Babylon for having given him the control of Babylon. He says that Nabonidus had not worshipped Marduk properly.

The worship of Marduk, the king of the gods, he changed into abomination. daily he used to do evil against his city... without relief, he ruined them all. ¶ Upon their complaints the lord of the gods became terribly angry and [he departed from] their region, also the other gods living among them left their mansions, wroth that he had brought them into Babylon. But Marduk... on account of the fact of that the sanctuaries of all their settlements were in ruins and the inhabitants of Sumer and Akkad had become like living dead, turned back his countenance, his anger abated and he had mercy upon them. He scanned and looked through all the countries, searching for a righteous ruler willing to lead him (i.e. Marduk) in the annual procession. Then he pronounced the name of Cyrus, king of Anshan, declared him to become the ruler of all the world. He made the Gutti country and all the Manda hordes bow in submission to his (Cyrus') feet. And he (Cyrus) did always endeavour to treat according to justice the black-headed whom he (Marduk) had made him conquer. Marduk the great lord, a protector of his people/worshipers, beheld with pleasure his (Cyrus') good deeds and his upright mind and ordered him to march against his city Babylon. He made him set out on the road to Babylon going at his side like a real friend. His widespread troops—

their number, like that of the water of a river, could not be established—strolled along, their weapons packed away. Without any battle, he made him enter his town Babylon, sparing Babylon any calamity. He delivered into his (Cyrus') hands Nabonidus, the king who did not worship him (Marduk). All the inhabitants of Babylon, as well as the entire country of Sumer and Akkad, princes and governors, bowed to him (Cyrus) and kissed his feet, jubilant that he had received the kingship, and with shining faces. Happily they greeted him as a master through whose help they had come (again) to life from death (and) had all been spared damage and disaster, and they worshipped his (very) name.¹⁸¹

And so Cyrus says that he took over Babylon at the direction of Marduk the god of Babylon, And then over on Pritchard, page 208, Cyrus says,

"I return to (these) sacred cities on the other side of the Tigris the sanctuaries which have been ruins for a long time, the images which (used) to live therein and established for them permanent sanctuaries. I (also) gathered all their (former) inhabitants, and returned (to them) their habitations. Furthermore, I resettled upon the command of Marduk, the great lord, all the gods of Sumer and Akkad whom Nabonidus has brought into Babylon, to the anger of the lord of the gods, unharmed, in their (former) chapels, the places which make them happy.

May all the gods whom I have resettled in their sacred cities ask daily Bel and Nebo for a long life for me and may they recommend me (to him); to Marduk, my lord, they may say this: "Cyrus, the king who worships you, and Cambyses his son..." all of them I settled in a peaceful place... I endeavoured to fortify/repair their dwelling places... [*ibid.*]

Well you see the claim Cyrus makes here. It is the god of Babylon who has given Babylon over to Cyrus. The god of Babylon has turned against Babylon and given it to Cyrus, and the various gods of Babylon—of the different cities—he has sent back, which had been brought into the city of Babylon.

Well, you see here Cyrus' strategy. The Assyrians and the Babylonians took all of the gods from the different countries, and they brought them to Babylon; and they took the people, and they removed them and resettled them in various areas to force them to be subject to Assyria and to Babylonia. Now Cyrus sees a chance to make friends with these people by reversing the process. He says to these people, "You've been taken into exile; you've been carried away by these wicked Assyrians and Babylonians; your gods are angry about it; they have brought me to deliver you. I'm letting you go back to your own land; I'm letting your gods go back to their own temple, I am brought by your gods to deliver you." That's the attitude that Cyrus took toward these various gods in Babylon.

¹⁸¹ Pritchard, *op. cit.* Vol I. pp 206–208. Parenthetical insertions are in Pritchard's text.

Now the Bible pictures that as the attitude that Cyrus took toward the God of Israel; and it would seem that that was Cyrus' political method. The Assyrian and Babylonian armies had overwhelmed these nations before; now he's going to make friends with them; he's going to live with them. Of course, they'll still be under his thumb; but instead of their being under the thumb of the wicked Babylonians and Assyrians, they're under the thumb of the righteous, good, friendly Cyrus. They will charge them the same taxation; treat them all the same way; but he delivered them from the others, and that makes them subject to him.

That's his strategy, that's his policy. And the Bible represents Cyrus in exactly the way that he represents himself to these other gods. The only thing is, we have no reason to think—no proof at least—that Cyrus actually, personally, recognized the God of Israel. We have none of his writings which show his recognition of him; but we do have exactly the same relationship represented as his claim; and of course, the Bible says that God brought Cyrus; raised him up; gave him power to deliver his people. Cyrus says, "Marduk raised me up to deliver his people." And he says that of all the other gods. Well, Cyrus was ready to admit all the gods raised him up; and he helped their people; so then the people should be subject to him, of course. But we, of course, believe that what the Bible says about him is true. It was God who raised up Cyrus. God brought him for this purpose, God did it to deliver His people and take them back.

As for the other gods, they took their statues which were in Babylon as proof of the conquest; they carried them back with them; but probably not many people went back; the people were well established where they were; they were contented there; not many of them went back to their own land. But the Jews and the other Israelites, having kept alive through the exile the belief in their one God, the true God; and having Isaiah's promise that Cyrus would come, and deliver them, and let them go back; a substantial number of them, though probably a small proportion to the whole, were willing and ready to risk the miseries of a long journey across the wilderness; and to live in a territory which had been torn to ruins by the conquerors, and left in ruins a hundred years before; and just growing up in weeds and ashes; to go back there, and to undertake to rebuild a place where they would have the true worship of God.

Now since Cyrus gave the statues of the other gods to them to take back; in this case there are no statues; there is no statue of the God of Israel; but there are the vessels from the sanctuary; the various things from the Temple which had been carried away by the conquerors; and which Belshazzar was using, when he saw the handwriting on the wall; and he gives these back to them; and tells them they may take them back. And so the facts about Cyrus—letting the exiles go back, as described in the Bible—are not corroborated by specific archaeological evidence, they fit exactly with the evidence that archaeology

gives of the general attitude of Cyrus toward the various people whom the Babylonians and the Assyrians have conquered.

Crossing the wilderness is very difficult, though not impossible; it's a very rough country there, and a very dry country; the Arabs once found themselves in a situation where they had a revolt across that wilderness; and they couldn't take time to go around, they had to get there as fast as they could; and they had no way to carry enough water to get across; so they took their camels, and they made the camels drink all the water they could possibly get into them, and then they started out; and as they went along, they killed camels along the way to get the water out of them; and that way they were able to get enough water to get across; but that is such a very unusual way, that in the Arab Chronicles much is made of it—this very unusual situation, showing the ingenuity and the tremendous power of that particular Arab conqueror. Ordinarily it certainly would not be.

Of course, now an airplane can go straight across without any difficulty. In fact I believe they drive across now; but in those days Cyrus, then, gave the command that they could go; and we have it described in Ezra 1; and we read that he gave them, the last verse says,

All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.

And then, in Ezra, we have the list of some of the people who came with Zerubbabel and made this trip back; and there was a substantial number of people, but a comparatively small part of the whole people, who undertook to make this long journey back; and it took them four months, on the way, to get across; and if Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 BC, then it would be within the next couple of years that they made their way back. So that it would be between 539 and 536 that the beginning of the Return took place.

And it's interesting that, if you go back from that time 49 years, you come to this time of the destruction of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was destroyed in 587; in 539, 49 years later, Cyrus conquered Babylon and let the people go back. And there are those who think that that 49 years fits exactly with the statement that you have in the book of Daniel where you read in Daniel 9:25,

Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

If we take that as seven weeks of years, that could be 49, just the time that passed. And there are some who believe that is the 49 years, though most people do not. But it's interesting that it exactly fits, if it is.

Now in the same chapter of Daniel, it refers to Jeremiah's statement that the land is going to be fallow for 70 years. He says, chapter 9:2, he understood from Jeremiah the prophet that he would accomplish 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem, and he set his face before the Lord to pray. Well if we go back 70 years from 538 we get 608; and assuming they didn't get started for a couple of years, it would be, maybe, 536 they went back; so that would be about 606, about when Daniel and the few princes were taken; which we could think of, in a way, as the beginning of the Exile, though actually it was twenty years later before the real captivity occurred.

=====

(Review.) We were at A, The Return under Zerubbabel. This is described in the beginning of the book of Ezra. It came, as you notice, a little less than 70 years after the first small group was taken from Judah, and a little less than 50 years after the great bulk of the land of Judah was left desolate. This return, we notice, was by the permission of King Cyrus; and while we have no evidence regarding it, we have evidence that this was in line with the attitude which Cyrus took.

So the proclamation was given, and Cyrus made available to them materials to take back. We read that he made these materials available to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah. And then, in chapter 2, we read about the people who came with Zerubbabel.

And there is considerable disagreement as to whether Sheshbazzar is the first prince, and Zerubbabel his assistant who succeeded him; or whether Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar are two names for the same man. The answer to that problem is something on which conjectures can be made, and arguments can be based on inferences from a word or two of Scripture. Personally, I always feel in a case like this, when there is no clear proof, that it is much the wiser policy to say we just do not know, and evidence may eventually come for one or the other. Which of the two the Scripture has not made clear. But Zerubbabel led a comparatively small group of people back. After this period, which can by round numbers be called 70 years, the comparatively small number were allowed to go back, to live in communities of their own, and to take the sacred vessels for the Temple. They were supposed to be allowed to rebuild the house of the Lord. Well, with Zerubbabel, there was the high Priest who is called Jeshua, in chapter 3 of Ezra. Elsewhere he is called Joshua. They got back there, and they proceeded to establish homes for themselves; and they settled in a very desolate land, which had been run down terribly; and it was very difficult

to get re-established. This was about 538 when they returned. Well, after the return they intended to build the Temple right away; but the building of the Temple is a difficult task; it is a large task and a difficult task; they made a very nice beginning on it.

And then we read the adversaries from Judah and Benjamin heard they were going to build the temple, and they tried to interfere with it.

In chapter 4, we read how they interfered. First,

they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither.

Now that was a very fine thing, to have assistance. The little group of them would have a very difficult job to get this great temple built. As a matter of fact, it was many, many years before it was completed. And here were these people who had been established there north of them, established for some time. They say "We worship the same God that you do; we want to help in building this temple." But under the circumstances, Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the leaders of the people were very wise to examine the situation carefully. If these people were indeed of one mind with them; if they worshipped God as they did; it would be very, very foolish to fail to take advantage of their help in building the temple.

There is many a group which has split over very, very minor points; and each part has tried to build something; and neither part has succeeded, because neither part had the energy to do it. I know of one church, up in north Jersey, which nearly split over the question of whether the crucifixion was on Wednesday or on Friday. Some thought it was one; some thought it was the other; and they got so angry at each other, they didn't see how they could work together. And I heard of a group yesterday, out in central Pennsylvania, a church which some years ago split; because when we first began getting cars with bumpers, one group thought that they should have the bumpers black. And so today, I was told, that half of the group has ordinary automobiles; the other half has automobiles with fine chrome on them; and they are just like the others except that their bumpers are painted black; so they're called the Black Bumper Church. And they are distinct from all denominations in central Pennsylvania.

There are all sorts of divisions and refusals to work together over very, very minor points. But in this case, there was not a minor point involved. These people, who wanted to help them in building the temple, were people who had the Samaritan religion, which was a mixed religion. They claimed to worship the

Lord, but actually they had various teachings in their worship which were definitely contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures. And under these circumstances, to bring them into the building of the temple would result in not building a temple to the Lord at all.

There was a man once, when I went to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, who was the pastor of a big Presbyterian Church, who came and spoke to us; and he said he was going to speak on doctrinal preaching. He said that some of his people came to him and said, "We'd like you to give us some doctrinal sermons; we'd like to know what we believe." Well, he said, "You think I want to empty my church? Why should I do that?" The people said, "Well, give us one and try it." He gave one, and instead of cutting the crowd down, the crowd increased; so he thought it was a good thing to give doctrinal sermons.

Well, what was his purpose in running a church? It was to get people there. Well, to get people there, he gave just one joke after another; he amused them, and made them leave feeling that wasn't a tough job to go to church. We've been good people; we've gone to church; and we enjoyed the church when we were there; but they got nothing. But he knew the Scriptures; he had graduated from a sound theological seminary; he understood the Gospel; and when they asked for it, he gave it to them. When it comes to believing, in the sense of considering to be a fact certain beliefs, he was a believer; but when it comes to believing in the sense of putting your trust in it, and believing that this is what God wants us to have, I would say he was a rank unbeliever. He was interested in getting people instead of interested in getting the message of Christ to them. Well, in this case Zerubbabel and Jeshua very sensibly said, "These people are not true believers. If we let them help us in building the house to our God, it will be not a house for the worship of God, it will be a pagan temple."

When I first got to Berlin, I went to the American Church in Berlin; and I was a graduate of Princeton Seminary, and there was a fellow graduated from McCormick there, a very fine chap; and we became acquainted, and we were together a good bit of the time in Berlin. And then we both ran on to a fellow who was a very, very fine chap from America studying medicine. He was over there, a very nice fellow; and we had lots of associations with him; but he was a very outspoken atheist. A very, very strong atheist, and a vegetarian. And he was very pronounced in his attitude, but, as I say, a very cultured fellow; and I was interested to hear this fellow from McCormack say, "Oh, how I wish we could get him into the church; the church needs his culture; if we could only get him into the church." Well, I'd like to get him converted; to know the Lord; to get him into the church. He needed the grace of God; it wasn't that the church needed him. These Samaritans needed the grace of God, but they didn't have it. And here was this little group trying to build the temple; and better never to get the temple built, than have it built, and then it prove not to be a temple of the Lord.

So Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the people said to them, "You have nothing to do with us, to build a home for our God; but we ourselves together will build under the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus, the king of Persia has commanded us." And when these people weren't allowed to help them, then they proceeded to weaken their hands; and hire counselors against them; and interfere with their purpose; and it was many years before they were able to carry on the work of building the temple. They had constant opposition and constant difficulty.

But the book of Ezra is a wonderful book, telling how they overcame the opposition; how they persevered; how they pressed on to build the temple; and eventually they were able to build—nothing like the great beautiful temple of Solomon, but nevertheless a very substantial temple to the Lord, one that was entirely adequate for their purpose.

Now in chapter 5 we have an interesting statement at the beginning of the chapter.

Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them. Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them.

Haggai is a short book, Zechariah is a long one. Zechariah has much future prediction of great interest, some of it rather difficult to understand, particularly in the last half of the book. But the first part—the first third of Zechariah, and the whole of Haggai—have one big theme, and that is this: It is time to build the house of the Lord; you've built your own houses; you've got nice homes, and you're neglecting the building of the house of the Lord. And it was after the initial interest had rather died down, in the face of difficulties, and people had become lax and careless, that Haggai and Zechariah came. But here in Ezra, it is brought out also that these two prophets were tremendously helpful in exhorting the people that it is time to build the house of the Lord.

And their message was a very vital message for that day, but it is a message for every day. It is always time for us; especially when the temple of the Lord has been broken down; modernists have come in and taken over; have changed the temple of God into a synagogue of Satan. That is a day for denunciation of them; it is a day for pointing out their errors; and even more a day for building a true temple; for building up groups of people who will stand for the word of God; and receive His truth, and be assemblies from which the Word will go forth.

Well, Haggai and Zechariah, then, have a message which is very closely related in our history to this specific time; but also a message which is of great interest for all time; and it's just too bad that they've had that word "minor" tagged on to them, leading people to think that they are minor prophets. They are short, but they are just as important as anything anywhere in the Bible.

Well, under the impetus of the activity of these prophets, they proceeded to build the house of the Lord, and the temple there was finished. And so we have this new group of Jews returned from Babylon, mostly in the area around Jerusalem, the bulk of them not in the city. There wasn't enough country around to make a center for the city. You couldn't build a big textile factory in the city; there'd be nobody around to buy your goods. Most of them had to be on farms, down south; they had to produce what they used, and comparatively few could live in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was largely still in ruin. But in Jerusalem, they built a fairly substantial temple; and they came to the temple for their services; and they lived around there; and this situation continued for many, many years. But the return was in 538; the actual building of the temple would not have been completed until around 520.

But then we have a continuation of life, with little evidence told about it, in the first six chapters of Ezra. Ezra himself is never mentioned. He is giving the history of previous times. Zerubbabel's return was in the reign of Cyrus; the rebuilding of the temple ran into the beginning of the reign of Darius. But Darius we've already noticed reigned 521 to 486; then Xerxes 486 to 465, Artaxerxes began to reign in 465; and our next development comes in the 7th year of the reign of Artaxerxes. So you see that it would come in about 458, in other words it is about 80 years after the first group had gone back.

B. Return under Ezra.

About 80 years has passed; the first people who'd returned under Cyrus were probably—practically every one of them—dead. The people who had built the temple were probably, every one of them, dead. And the people who had been children when the temple was built were now the elder leaders of the people. All this, when in 458, the next important step occurred in the history of the return.

That is when a man who was in exile—his parents had not gone back in the first return—he was in Babylon, a student of the Word of God; and he asked the king to permit him to take another group back to the land of Palestine. Some critics deny there was a first group at all; but they have no satisfactory grounds for the denial, though we have little positive evidence to prove the fact; just a clear statement in the first part of Ezra.

But no one could, so far as I know, question that Ezra began the long four months trip across from Babylon over to Jerusalem; and he had a permit from Artaxerxes to go and to see how the temple was coming, how things were going, and to help in the development of Israel. And so Ezra came; and Ezra took general charge of the religious life of the people; and he took a great interest in getting things established in better fashion, 80 years after the first return. I think it's important to realize that the book is called Ezra, but Ezra doesn't come into it till 80 years later, at the beginning of the second return; this was a large group of people who went with Ezra; and it is the 2nd stage of the return. But we do not have to wait as long for the next stage as we did for this one. Because it is only 13 years later. That we will call

C. Nehemiah.

Here we have evidence of how the Jews were getting on in captivity. There were many Jews in captivity who were forgetful entirely of God; they were simply proceeding to be as prosperous as they could, and to get along. There were other Jews who remembered God; and of these, a good many prospered also. And here we have pretty good evidence; here is a man named Nehemiah, who is right in the palace of the Persian Emperor. He is cupbearer to the king. He has access right into the presence of the king; and he has opportunity to make himself liked by the king. That certainly is far different from being in prison. It shows how the Jews were coming forward, with the security of a position at court, and becoming prosperous in the Persian Empire.

But Nehemiah tells us, in Nehemiah 2:1, that in the 20th year of Artaxerxes—in other words that would be 445 BC, 13 years after Ezra's return—that in that year, Nehemiah dared to hope that he might be able to do something to help his people. They had been 80 years back in Palestine; but Jerusalem was still largely in ruins, and it had no wall around it. The wall had been broken down in 587; the wall had been 140 years in utter ruin. The people had been living there.

You might say, "Why do they need a wall? They're in the Persian Empire, and the Persians are guaranteeing peace." I don't know how effective they were in making real safety; but probably they were tolerably safe; probably a lot safer than people were just 70 years ago [late 1800s] in Palestine. The general conditions were fairly well organized under the Persian Empire; but it was a terrible affront, to the pride of the Jews at least, to see this wall lying there in ruins; to know that they were unable to protect themselves in case of attack; and Nehemiah felt very, very badly about this. And there in the Emperor's Palace, he had the opportunity of winning the emperor's favor. But it's one thing to win an emperor's favor, and it is another thing to actually get his help and his support.

Now it's interesting how these people refused to let the Samaritans help them in building. They opposed it, Ezra did; Nehemiah does now, as he comes back; they are absolutely unwilling to let the Samaritans have any share in their work; and yet they rejoice in getting letters from the heathen king of Persia that they will give them assistance; letters that give them the support and protection of the Empire. There is a difference between the two. The first is people entering in as religious cooperators in doing a religious work; the other is the working with the world as it is; with worldly leaders in matters which, while important to the advance of religion, are nevertheless primarily secular, such as getting permission from governments and getting equal privileges before governments. We have today a denomination in this country, the Covenanter denomination—at least one portion of the Covenanter denomination—which makes a great article of faith, that until the United States shall in its Constitution adopt an amendment saying that Jesus Christ is the king and ruler of this land, we cannot conscientiously have any part in what is then a heathen government.

Well, you admire the faith and loyalty which these people have shown many times; we admire what they have lost through their unwillingness to participate in government; or even to vote, in this way; but there's no Scriptural warrant for that attitude. Because the Scripture teaches that Satan is the prince of this world today; it teaches that these are the times of the Gentiles, not the times of the Jews; the times of the Gentiles; times, in other words, when the government of the world is primarily in the hands of heathen. And under those circumstances, Nehemiah did not hesitate about being cupbearer to the king; Daniel did not hesitate to be one of the primary governors in the kingdom under Nebuchadnezzar. They did not hesitate to give advice and help to these kings; give them a testimony in a tactful way whenever they could; and if they were put in a position where they had to deny their faith, standing for it without fear, and dying for it if need be. But they did not hesitate to cooperate in secular affairs in a world which is such, until our Lord Jesus Christ returns. I feel the Covenanters are a credit to their zeal, but I think their interpretation of Scripture is definitely wrong at this point.

And so Nehemiah praised the Lord, that he was given favor in the eyes of this wicked heathen king, in order that he could get his help to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem; after the people were back for 80 years and living there.

Yes? (Student. "Does the question of receiving government help in transportation or building of church schools fall under a similar problem as Ezra and Nehemiah saw?") Yes, and that is, I think, a very definite mistake. There's very grave danger involved. But as you say, building up a protective device is a different thing.¹⁸² I think that's important for us to recognize. I think we should go very slow about taking specific help from government for building.

¹⁸² [dcb] Defense is generally recognized as a legitimate governmental function.

(Student). The Baptists are now yielding right on this point in the southern states. They're saying that it would be proper to receive; they're modifying their views; they're lecturing them regarding parochial support right at this present moment. I'm afraid I'm rather heretical on this matter of parochial support. Personally, I don't feel that the state should specifically help the church. And I don't think it's the duty of the church to educate children; I think it's the duty of the parents. But I can't get away from this feeling, that if the state is going to draw taxes from people in order to educate their children; and if those people don't want their children to have a secular education, but want them to have an education which has something of a religious touch in the direction of what the parents believe; I can't quite see why the parents should have to pay for two schools, for a public school and also for a school of their own religion; that is provided, of course, that the school they are going to has definite standards as far as education goes.

I don't think our government should help the Roman Catholics; I don't think so at all, that it should; but when it comes to a school, I don't see why we should make them pay for a public school, and then pay again for the building of Protestant schools.

(Student. "Can we afford it, in this economy, when we can't even keep our schools up as it is? How can we afford to add these extra schools to the economy, now overburdened apparently?") I think that if we're going to force our children to go to schools with teaching directed by the state, we have the most wonderful machinery for enforcing materialism upon our children, and making atheists of them. And we don't force our children to go to public schools; we do force them to go to public schools or to the other schools which have high educational standards. Well, if we do do that, it seems only fair that a proportionate part of our taxes should go to those other schools. But now that's a thing on which I differ with a great many people. I don't quite see why I should have to pay to support a public school, and then pay again to support a Christian School where I send my children. It seems to me that it would be reasonable that if the state taxes me to support a school, that that proportion of the taxes should go to the kind of school that I want my children to attend.

But in this case, Nehemiah prayed that God would give him favor before the king. He did not go and demand this of the king, because he knew if he did, he wouldn't last very long. He went in, and just prayed that God would lead the king to give him a chance; and the king noticed that there was something wrong and asked him, "What's the matter, you don't look happy today." And he said (2:1)

Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence. Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is

nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid, And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

And so the king said, "Well now, what is it you'd like?" And he prayed then and said,

If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

Here's this nice young man who asks a rather preposterous request: to be allowed to go a four-months' trip away; and to have a group to help him; and to have help from the state in it; but the Lord just worked the circumstance, and the Lord does work circumstances.

We haven't time to tell you how I got into Germany in '47—just after the war—to get books for the Seminary, but the circumstances worked together, one could never imagine, but the Lord just worked it together, as he worked this for Nehemiah. I don't think we should say, "If a door opens, we should step in"—the Devil may have opened the door. I don't think circumstances should lead us; we decide by the word where we should go; and if we're really following God's will, then God may open doors that weren't open. God may cause things to work together as he did here for Nehemiah.

The queen was there; and the king glanced over at the queen, and he thought, "Now she'll like this, if I show real kindness to this young fellow; and I heard her say she liked the young fellow too." And so he says, "Well, how long will this journey take? When will you return?" And he made a tremendous request: letters to governors over there; people to go with him; an escort to take him; and timber to make beams for the palace pertaining to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that he would enter. And the king gave him everything he asked. Then he made the four-months' trip over there, back to Jerusalem; and as he went out, and looked over the city, he found the walls all broken down; he found the place just outside an utter ruin

And then we have a very stirring account of how Nehemiah proceeded to build the wall; and these people in the neighborhood, the children and grandchildren of those who had interfered before in the building of the temple, and had managed to keep that from being done for a good many years, now they really are concerned about walls being built; because, you might say, with the Persian peace in the land they don't need a wall around the city for protection; but if

you have a wall around the city, it certainly means that these people outside can be shut out anytime they want; and it gives the Jews a tremendous advantage against them; and they really were concerned about it.

And so they proceed to interfere with the building of the wall; and it's a stirring account of how Nehemiah proceeded against the difficulties to get the people together, and get them to build the wall; and to do it by constantly watching, lest the Samaritans interfere with them. And so he and the men built with a trowel in one hand and a sword in the other. Nehemiah 4:18:

For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me. And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another. In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us. So we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared. Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour on the day. So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes, saving that every one put them off for washing.

"We've got a system that's absolutely watertight; they can't get at us; they can't injure us in any way." He went up there and stayed there. They might have been perfectly safe, but the walls would never have been built. Nehemiah didn't stay up in his high tower, where it was safe; he went out there, where there was danger; he went out there, and he worked, and he built, but he had his sword ready. He had his sword at his side; he had the trumpeter all ready to sound the alarm; he had the people alert to watch, so that they did not let the building stop for the sake of defense. But they did not let the defense be neglected for the sake of the building; they carried on both activities at the same time, constantly watching but constantly building.

We have today too many people who are doing one or the other; we have people who are only watching, only defending, and never building, and so getting nothing done; and we have people who are building great wonderful things—the United States is filled with marvelous schools, fine churches, great organizations, which godly Christian people have built up but Satan's men have taken over afterwards. Either activity without the other is apt to accomplish very little. Nehemiah gives us an example here; he carried on both activities; he built and he watched.

And they built the wall around the city; they got the work completed. And then when he got the work completed, he found there were hardly any people there

to live in it. He found that Jerusalem had few people in it; most of the people were living out on their fields; and all together, there were very few people; and so it was necessary to ask other people to live in Jerusalem, in order to populate the city. And they had to make the trip every day; they had to spend maybe an hour's walk every morning to go out to their fields; an hour at night to come back, instead of living where it's more comfortable. Extra work, extra time, but they were willing to do it for the sake of the work. Willing to do it in order that the city could be a real city, and not just a beautiful wall with a half a dozen people inside it. They were willing to do double duty to make up for the fact that they were so few in number.

Well, then, in chapter 8 we find that Nehemiah—different from most people—did not feel so proud of his building-work that he made a separation from Ezra, who was giving out the word of God. Many a person would have said, "Well now, look at this fellow Ezra; he's been here 13 years, and they haven't done a thing towards building the wall. He's been here 13 years and he's done a few nice things, but what does it amount to? Now I've built this wonderful wall here, and everybody should listen to me." But Nehemiah knew that he had his task, building the wall, and Ezra had his task of instructing the people. And that it was the Lord's will that each of them should fulfill his task.

And consequently, we find that the book of Nehemiah has a substantial portion of it telling about the activities of Ezra. Now these are not told in the book of Ezra, because the activities in the first part of the book of Nehemiah come before these activities. So to give us a proper idea of the progress of it, it is sensible to give the activities of Ezra later.

But here we find in chapter 8, all the people gathered themselves as one man in the street that was before the water gate; and they spoke to Ezra the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. And Ezra brought the law before the congregation and he read therein and the people were attentive to the book of the law. Ezra stood on a pulpit of wood made for the purpose and opened the book in the sight of the people and he blessed the Lord, the great God. Chapter 8 is a wonderful chapter about how Ezra read the whole Pentateuch, and presented the Word of God to them. And there are several things to notice about it.

One is that Ezra had been there 13 years and he'd been talking to the people about reading the Word of God, and trying to bring it to them; and probably most of them thought, "It's mighty nice to have Ezra to give our children lessons, some good instruction," but they didn't pay so much attention to him. And Nehemiah built the wall, and interest is roused; and people come and ask Ezra to read them the Word of God. He hasn't become sour in the 13 years, disgusted that people weren't paying attention. He was ready to jump in and do the service at the time when there was great need.

And in any kind of work that we're doing, you will hit your head against a stone wall; and work and struggle, and get very little results at certain periods of time; and at other times, everything will just seem to be wide open; and people are just interested and ready and anxious to hear. It's mighty important that we don't become soured in the period of little results; and that we don't feel jealous of the other person that comes along and opens the door, as Nehemiah does; but that we step in and take advantage of the door which he opens; and in the time of little results, it's rather foolish to hit your head against a stone wall so hard that you're numb and unable to take advantage of the real opportunity when it comes; we shouldn't sit back and wait for the opportunity, but we should push ahead and try to find means of bringing it—but know that if we don't succeed, that God has in the past poured out his mercy in periods of great blessing.

Jonathan Edwards, in his early ministry, had hundreds of people coming to the church; and he gave his great revival sermons; and as he preached on sinners in the hands of an angry God, they said, "You could just about feel as if the floor was going to open up and the people were going to drop into Hell!" They were filled with fear, and he had tremendous response; he did a great work there; and then the work kind of quieted down and settled down, and Jonathan Edwards went on working and preaching. Instead of having 50 converts on a Sunday, it got to where he was only getting 10; and then to where he was only getting 3; then he went two or three years with none at all, but preaching just as faithfully, working just as faithfully, The people got together and said, "This Jonathan Edwards is just giving us the same old sermons he gave us 20 years ago; and we're tired of them!" And they voted him out of the church.

So he went out, and he studied metaphysics; and he wrote a book on metaphysics, that was one of the greatest contributions to Christianity that has ever been made in America. And then they called him to Princeton University; he was one of their first presidents. And he had another great opportunity of service towards the end of his life; but after that great opportunity in the beginning of his life, when God so wonderfully blessed him; and then the blessing died out; he was helping, doing a great deal; but it was small compared to what he had done before. He could have gone off and sulked, and said "Oh, this people has all turned bad; there's nothing good ahead." But instead of that he worked faithfully till that door was shut; and then he found other doors of service; he made a tremendous contribution to Christianity in America.

Ezra had his great time of blessing when he first got there; then Ezra had his time of very little accomplishment; and now the people gather together as one man, they come and Ezra reads the word of God; and they're all interested and anxious to hear it. I've known of a number of periods like that my own life,

when in different countries and different areas, there's just a hunger for the word of God; and alas, too often, there's nobody there who is ready, able and trained to take advantage of that hunger and to give them the true word of God. Well, Ezra was there.

Now another thing, though, to notice about this is that here, where Ezra read the word of God to these people, the critics interpret it that the Word of God has never been read to anybody before. They take it that this is not giving them the word of God that they'd all believed for a long time before; but they take it that Ezra was here presenting the Pentateuch for the first time. The critics are just reading their biases into it; there's absolutely no warrant for that. We believe Moses wrote it; and Ezra was reading it to them anew, rather than giving it as something they had not had before.

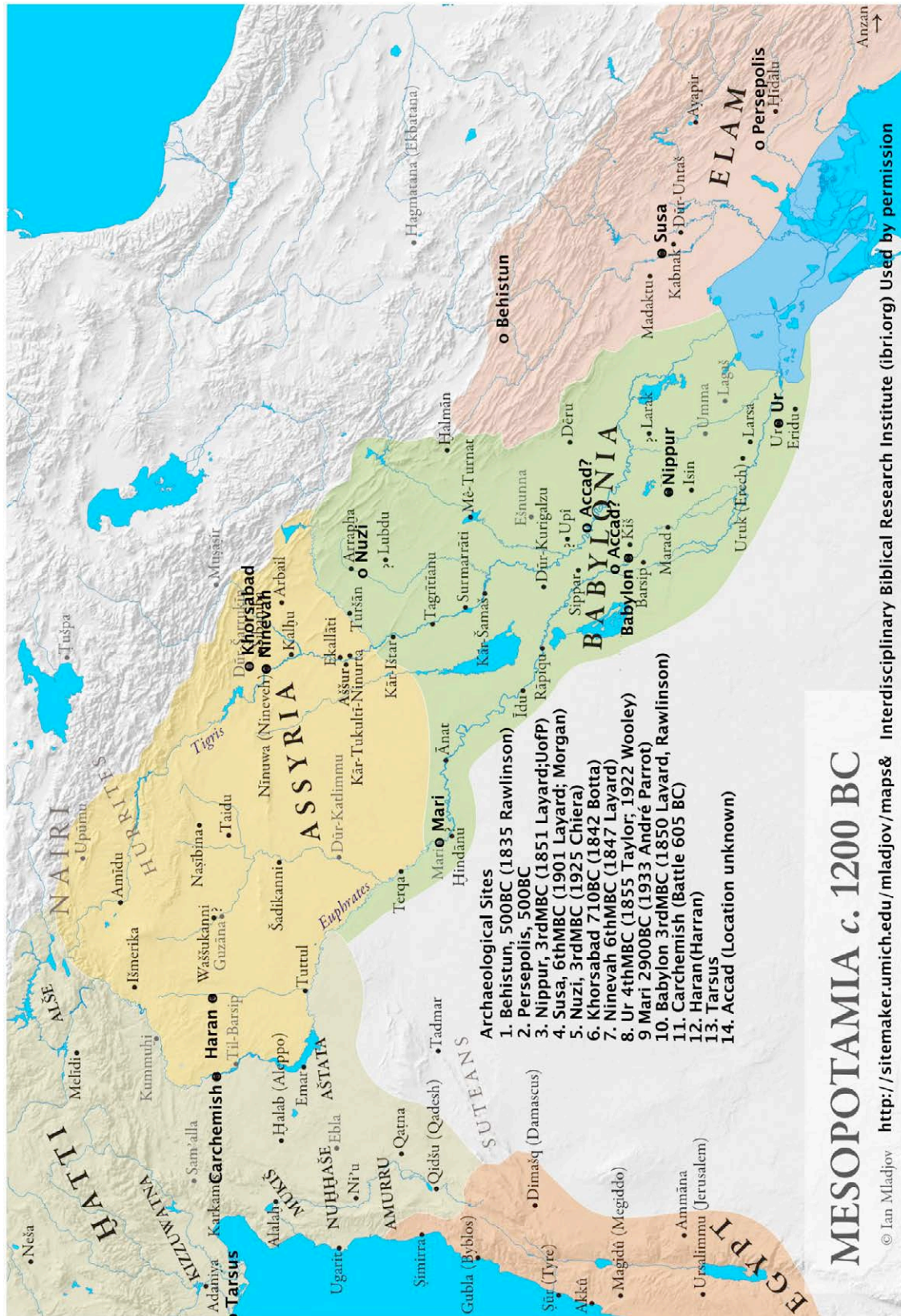
Well, the book of Nehemiah ends with the Samaritans trying to push in; they are trying to get in, and Nehemiah and Ezra are holding them out. We have the Elephantine papyri from a little after this period in Egypt. These papyri are in Aramaic, and they show a Jewish colony in Egypt at this time; and it mentions some of the same people mentioned in Nehemiah. It's a wonderful corroboration of the facts presented here.

But the Old Testament ends in sort of an unsatisfactory way as far as history is concerned. Probably just about the end of the Old Testament, at just about 420 BC, the last book of the Old Testament was written. And it's a rather plaintive book, this book of Malachi. "You have been working for yourselves, not for the Lord; therefore what you have goes into a pocket with holes," Malachi says. He says, "God is going to send Elijah the prophet before that great and terrible day of the Lord."

So the Old Testament ends; it doesn't finish, it just stops. It ends with a little group that has come back; there's a return, but it's not satisfactory; it ends with a waiting and expectation. What is the Lord going to do? Then the Lord left a period of 400 years, so nobody could say the Old Testament was written after the New, before the things would be fulfilled which are promised in the Old; Jesus Christ was coming, and he would fulfill all the wonderful promises of the Old Testament. So here, we have the return and the rebuilding; then of course, the period between the Testaments occurs; and then the coming of Christ, which cannot be properly understood without the Old Testament, and the history which leads up to it.

THE END

A. Map of Mesopotamia (1200 BC)



B. Babylonian King List

BABYLONIAN KING LIST		
Ruler	Reigned	Comments
Nabu-apla-usur (Nabopolassar)	626- 605 BC	Chaldean king. Took control of Babylonia from Sinsharishkun of Assyria, ejected Assyrian armies from Babylonia in 616 BC. Entered into alliance with Cyaxares and destroyed Assyrian empire.
Nabu-kudurri-usur (Nebuchadnezzar II)	604-562 BC	Chaldean king. Defeated the Egyptians and Assyrians at Carchemish. Is associated with Daniel in the Bible.
Amel-Marduk (Evil-Merodach)	562-560 BC	Released Jehoiachin after 37 years in captivity.
Nergal-shar-usur (Nergal-sharezer/Neriglissar)	560-556 BC	
Labashi-Marduk	556 BC	
Nabu-na'id (Nabonidus)	556-539 BC	Last Mesopotamian king of Babylon, originated in Harran in Assyria. Was not a Chaldean, often left rule to his son Belshazzar.
Cyrus II of Persia	539-529 BC	Commonly known as "Cyrus the Great", or "Cyrus the Elder", founder of the Achaemenid Empire.

C. Mesopotamian Archaeology

NOTE: This is published as an ebook: IBRI Syllabi Book 27, [Mesopotamian Archaeology](#).

D. An Excursus on the Law

NOTE: This is published as an ebook: IBRI Syllabi Book 31, [An Excursus on the Law](#).

INDEX

- "Good" and "Evil", 177
- "son" to mean a descendant, 1129
- "tetragrammaton" YHWH, 554
- Abraham, 411
 - Covenant, 427
 - Hagar and Ishmael., 447
 - Melchizedek, 449
 - Sacrifice of Isaac., 437
 - Spiritual History, 427
- Adam
 - city on Jordan river, 811
- Ahaz
 - Alliance (summary), 1197
- Akhenaten
 - opposition – priests of Amun–Ra, 404
- animal sacrifice, 238
- Animals
 - clean and unclean, 306
- Antikythera Mechanism, 26, 905
- Archaeolaogy
 - Chiera, Edward, 151
- Archaeological Specialists
 - Clarence Fisher, 374
 - William F. Albright, 374
- Archaeologist
 - R.A. Stewart Macalister, 356
- Archaeology
 - Ashurbanipal's bas-relief, 1219
 - Ashurbanipal's library, 1218
 - Ben–Hadad Stele, 1045
 - Botta, Paul–Émile, 115
 - Egypt
 - land tenure, 457
 - El Amarna, 516
 - el–Amarna letters, 404
 - excavation
 - esstial tasks
 - direction and recording, 358
 - George Smith, 117
 - household gods, 459
 - Jehoiachin Ration Tablet, 1290
 - Lachish letters, 1273
 - Layard, Henry, 115
 - Moabite Stone (Mesha Stele), 1118
 - Nuzi
 - destruction 1450 BC, 456
 - Household gods proof of inheritance, 460
 - land tenure, 457
 - tablets, 454
 - prism of Sennacherib, 1202
 - Sennacherib's bas-relief of Lachish, 1205
 - Shishak Monument, 1031
 - Siloam Inscription, 1275
 - The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III from Nimrud
 - Jehu, 1153
 - The Fall of Nineveh, 1221
 - battle of Carchemish, 1230
 - Xenophon's *Anabasis*, 1228
 - the Merneptah Stele (Israel Stele), 521
 - Archbishop Langton, 67
 - Armara (Akhenaten), 398
 - Assyria
 - God Ashur, 1168
 - Assyrian Empire
 - Babylonian king Pul, 1175
 - At Sinai, 636
 - The Covenant, 636
 - The Moral Law, 639
 - Baal worship
 - Judah, 1163
 - Baal–worship
 - Destroyed in Israel, 1131
 - Babylon
 - Officials
 - Rabsaris and Rabmag in Jeremiah 39
 - 3, 1292
 - Babylonian
 - Confusion of letters t–d and k–g, 454
 - Babylonian boundary stone, 1286

- Babylonian flood story, 279
 - Relation to Biblical, 285
- Balaam
 - Is Balaam a true prophet, 740
- Balaam Incident, 733
- battle of Megiddo, 1249
- Bible
 - dependability of Historical
 - Accounts, 117
 - Inspiration, 957
- Bible Narrative
 - figurative element, 604
- Biblical Epistemology
 - Presuppositionalism, 805
 - Probability arguments, 805
- Biblical religion
 - human life sacred before God, 773
- Biblical types
 - dangers, 502
- Book of Numbers
 - Hebrew *B'midbar* "In the Wilderness", 607
- Brazen Serpent, 729
- bricks without straw, 564
 - Acheson deflocculation, 568
 - Egyptianized clay, 569
 - Peet's conclusions, 567
- Bronze age
 - Equilibrium in Early Bronze, 361
 - Marker – mass upheaval, 360
- burial of an ass
 - meaning, 1257
- Byblos/Gebel, 333
- Cain's Offering, 245
- Calendar
 - Egyptian
 - Sothic cycle 1460 years, 387
 - year 365 days, 386
 - Egyptian
 - astronomical records, 387
 - Effect on dating, 388
 - Sothic cycle, 386
 - Gregorian, 387
 - Julian year 365.25 days, 387
- Carchemish
 - Battle, 1229
- Carmel, Mount, 334
- chapter divisions, 105
- Chronology
 - Hebrew kings, 1039
 - Ussher, 254
- Chronology–Remarks, 56
- Circumcision
 - Zipporah's son, 550
- Conquest of Canaan
 - Ai
 - Location, 847
 - Division of the Land, 868
 - Gerizim and Ebal, 852
 - Gibeon, 853
 - Jericho, 824
 - Long Day, 858
 - Northern campaign, 863
 - Southern Confederacy, 855
- constitutional monarchy, 1143
- copper
 - smelting (3,000 BC), 359
- copying errors, 1043
- Creation
 - asah* – can it mean 'show' as well as 'make?', 399
 - Made vs. Created, 83
- Creation Narrative
 - Babylonian, 121
 - Enuma Elish*, 123, 138
- Creation of the Universe, 66
- Creation of Woman, 183
- Creation Story
 - Enuma Elish*, 68
- Crossing over Jordan, 801
 - landslides at Adam, 813
- Culture without Godliness, 247
- Curse
 - Ham or Canaan?, 311
 - Pain in childbirth, 222
- Dagon
 - meaning of name, 933
- Delitzsch, Friedrich, 277
- Deliverance from Egypt, 507, 585

dependability, 27, 38, 86, 118, 571, 826
 dependability of the OT, 65
 dependability of the Word, 98
 Discovery of Troy, 114
 Eden
 trees of the garden, 169
 Edward Chiera, 151
 Egypt
 Archaeology
 preservation, 385
 decline and decay between
 kingdoms, 386
 Kingdoms – old, middle, new, 386
 Egyptian history
 dynasties
 Middle Kingdom
 11th to 12th dynasties., 390
 New Kingdom
 First Empire 18th dynasty., 393
 Hatshepsut (1479–1458 BC), 394
 Second Empire 19th dynasty., 394
 Thutmose III (Tothnes III) (1479–1425 BC), 395
 Tothnes IV, Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV, 395
 Old Kingdom
 4th to 6th dynasties., 389
 El Amarna Tablets, 785
eleph (thousands)
 meaning a unit, 767
 equality of women, 221
 eschatological principle
 Creation moves towards a goal, 107
 evidence of floods, 256
 Evolution
 What about it?, 193
 Flood
 Ark discovery expedition., 298
 Babylonian, 274
 Gilgamesh Epic, 274
 Loss of Technology, 301
 Noah's drunkenness, 308
 Story 'Contradictions', 300
 universal?, 295
 Universality, 295
 Ur Flood Not Universal, 297
 When?, 300
 Whole Earth?, 296
 Flood Narrative
 story division, 284
 Flood stories
 Similarities, 274
 flood story
 Critical Analysis, 293
 food
 animals, 304
 Forging
 iron, 336
 frightfulness, 1174
 Garden of Eden
 Location?, 167
 Genealogies
 G. A. Barton, 260
 Generations of Shem, 329
 Genesis
 All important archaeological sites located except Hebron, 377
 Evidence of dependability, 378
 evidence written at the time when it occurred, 378
 Genesis 1:1
 Interpretations, 74
 Geography of Palestine, 332
 Coastal Plain, 332
 The Hill Country and the Jordan Valley, 339
 The Shephelah, 338
 Gezer Calendar, 359, 784
 giants–*nephilim*, 264
 God
 personal name I AM, 540
 gods
 Egyptian
 Amun, 513
 Ra the sun god, 513
 good and evil–physical sense, 239

Grand Canyon
 Kaibab plateau
 Evidence of Evolution?, 299
 Habiru
 Hebrew race?, 787
 Hebrews?, 401
 ideogram, 402
 Haran & Ur
 moon god Nanna worship
 centers, 414
 Hatshepsut
 Pharaoh of Exodus?, 397
 Havilah
 Location, 167
 heathen religions
 ruthlessness about human life,
 773
 Hebrew
 arum = "subtle", 200
 Bring Forth may imply a long
 process, 101
 chazak = *harden*, 573
 Daleth-Resh interchange, 886
 Day, 89
 Day —A period of indeterminate
 length, 100
 Evening and morning, 93
 kathav
 KJV mistranslation, 904
 lacks pluperfect, 165
 n'chosheth = brass or copper,
 1008
 parash = horseman, 997
 pim
 meaning -- file?, 895
 rah = "naughty" = "evil", 178
 repent
 nachám, 680
 shaphat = Judge, 909
 Spirit, 89
 tabernacle
 mishkan, 680
 shakan, 681
 sukkah, 681
 technical words, 942

tehom, 89
 words for, 943
 Hebrew *heykal*
 Sumerian origin, 944
 Hebrew word
 face
 paním, 693
 peace
 shalom, 693
 Hebrews
 Apiru?, 510
 hereditary principle, 947
 Hezekiah
 seige of Jerusalem, 1200
 higher criticism, 262
 Assured results, 292
 house of David
 prophecy of continued dynasty,
 1052
 Hyksos, 384
 ideograms
 Babylonian, 401
 In the Wilderness
 Divine Guidance, 621
 mixed multitude, 617
 Victory over Amalek, 632
 inspiration
 verbal, 268
 introduction to Archaeology, 114
 iron
 pre-flood, 247
 Iron Age, 335
 Tubal-Cain, 894
 Iron Age 1200 BC
 King Og, 361
 Isaac, 451
 Isaiah
 Ahaz alliance, 1178
 Israel
 Constitutional Monarchy, 1100
 Israelite
 Egypt Oppression, 524
 Jacob, 453
 Spiritual History, 465
 Jericho

- Rahab, 799
- Jordan Crossing
 - Garstang, 812
 - waters cut off in Adam, 810
- Jordan Valley
 - ancient cities, 420
 - ancient irrigation, 378
 - ancient tells, 379
 - fertile and populated in Abraham's time, 378
- Joseph, 481
 - 7-year famine, 495
 - Hyksos pharaoh?, 490
 - In Hyksos Period?, 495
 - Spiritual History, 498
- Judges
 - Chronology, 883
 - Deborah and Barak, 898
 - Gideon, 902
 - fleece, 902
 - Gideon's ephod, 906
 - Jephthah, 915
 - Samson, 920
- Kings
 - David
 - Capture of Jerusalem, 969
 - Character, 962
 - Saul
 - age when he began to reign, 1069
 - death, 960
 - Solomon, 985
 - Ezion-Geber
 - blast furnace?, 1013
 - Copper smelting, 1010
 - Glueck's Excavations, 1011
 - navy of ships in Ezion-geber, 1001
 - Solomon's Stables, 995
- Lachish
 - Discovery and excavation, 373
 - Tel El-Hesi (Petrie mis-identification), 348
- Lamech's boast, 249
- land of Omri, 1076

- Law
 - Kinds of Law
 - Ceremonial, 645
 - Civil, 643
 - Moral, 642
 - marrying a non-Israelite, 709
 - Nazarite Vow, 690
 - Sacrifice and Vows, 772
- laws of science
 - Factual vs. Metaphysical, 195
- legalism in Christianity, 203
- Liberalism
 - "superficially denying things that they know nothing", 609
- Limmu list, 1174
- Locations
 - Ophir, 1002
 - Punt, 1002
- magic
 - definition, 756
- Major Excavations
 - Beth-Shan, 371
 - Lachish, 372
 - Megiddo, 370
- Marduk
 - fifty names, 141
- Marriage
 - Cain's wife, 243
- men, mighty, 266
- Merneptah Stele, 788
- Midianites, 774
- Midianites and Ishmaelites
 - Gideon's Attack, 912
 - Joseph's captivity, 484
- miracle
 - contrary to laws of nature or just unknown laws, 808
 - example of unknown law
 - carrying a message over a wire., 809
 - meaning, 938
 - Sign from latin *miraculum*, 939
 - signs, 808
- Moabite Stone = Mesha Stele, 342
- monotheism

Akhenaten, 516
 (god Aten), 396
 Akhenaten influenced by
 Israelites?, 397
 monotheism of Akhenaten is very
 different from that of the Bible
 monotheism of Akhenaten is very
 different from that of the Bible,
 400
 Moses
 Death, 780
 meekness, 708
 slaughter of males, 555
 Moses in Midian, 530
 Moses' birth, 526
 Moses' Call, 536
 Moses' Character, 560
 Moses' Flight from Egypt, 529
 Moses' Preparation, 526
 Mt. Lebanon, 339
 Names of God
 Argument Overdrawn, 284
 Narrative
 Repetition, 283
 Natural Law
 universal laws of nature, 806
 Nature of the Captivity, 1284
 Ninevah
 battle at Megiddo, 1251
 Jonah, 1226
 Noahic Flood
 Critical Analysis, 281, 287
 Antediluvian Patriarchs, 250
 Nuzi
 personal names, 456
 Palestine
 Word meaning, 333
 Palestinian
 literacy, 905
 Papal infallible
 Lord Acton, 949
 Passover
 Gen. 12
 35 idea is taking and giving.,
 587
 35 idea of borrowing and
 lending not in the original,
 587
 Importance and Meaning, 584
 Purpose, 579
 Passover Hebrew
 natz'al = *lent* or *given?*, 585
 sha'al = *borrowed* or *asked?*, 585
 People
 kinds, 977
 Petrie
 Contribution to Palestinian
 Archaeology, 344
 Pharaoh
 Akhenaten, 514, 516
 Amenhotep III, 513
 God hardened heart, 573
 Hatshepsut, 511
 Nefertiti, 514
 Thutmose, 511
 Tutankhamun, 518
 Philistine plain, 335
 Philistines
 origin, 934
 Place Names
 Use of late terms not an error.,
 412
 Plagues
 principles, 574
 pottery
 dating, 354
 Importance of, 349
 Predestination
 Preserved Smith, 441
 promised seed, 229, 232, 234, 237
 Prophecy
 Critical view, 1129
 double fulfillment, 982
 fulfillment, 1129
 Jeremiah's prophecy re. Jehoiakim,
 480
 Prophet
 Micaiah, 1140
Protevangelium, 228, 238
 Race

Divisions, 315
 Rameses II, 410
 Ramoth-Gilead, 776, 1127
 Red Sea Crossing
 Crossing Bitter Lakes?, 595
 Pharaoh's hosts overthrown, 603
 Robinson, 594
 redactor
 contradictions, 286
 evidence for, 283
 Religion
 definition, 756
 Repented (*nacham*) see Comforted
 God, 269, 952
 Rise of the Persian Empire, 1298
ruach (Spirit)
 meaning, 770
 Samaria, 346
 Samaritan Pentateuch?, 1243
 Saul
 Character, 949
 scribal error, 1037
 Comforted (*nacham*); causative
 nachamu, changed emotional
 feeling
 God, 269
 Sharon
 Plain of, 335
 Shechem, 340
 Shephelah, 338
 Shiloh
 destruction by Philistines, 942
 Shishak, 1030
 sign
 Hebrew words for, 545
 signs vs. miracles, 543
 Siloam inscription, 364, 1274
 Sinai
 The Golden Calf, 654
 Sir Flinders Petrie
 foundation for Palestinian
 excavation, 365
 smelting
 discovery 3000 BC marked by
 destruction, 301
 song of victory, 605
 Sons of God took Daughters of Men,
 264
 Sons of the prophets
 meaning, 1128
Sothis
 Sirius (the brightest star), 388
 Sirius (the Dog star, chief star in
 Canis Major), 388
 Spiritual Teachings
 Genesis 1-2, 188
 story of the two brothers, 487
 tabernacle
 Six Hebrew Words, 663
 Table of the Nations (Genesis 10),
 317
 Tell
 Importance to Archaeology, 345
 temple
 Hebrew *heykal*, 943
 Temple of the Moon god Nannar,
 1287
 Textual Criticism, 1072
Textus Receptus, 1072
 The Curses, 217
 The Exile
 Stages, 1279
 The Fall
 Suddenness, 210
 The Fall – Details, 197
 The Flood, 263
 Cause, 263
 Consequences, 302
 The Stone Age, the Bronze Age and
 the Iron Age, 359
 Tower of Babel, 319
 Universe
 Essential Character good, 73
 Valley of Jezreel (Israel), 340
 verbal inspiration, 1043
 Verbal Inspiration and dictation, 112
 vow of chastity, 919
 Wilderness wanderings, 703
 Women
 headcovering, 901

leaders, 899
wordplay
balel=babble, 325

Writing
3000 B.C. history began, 360