

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 72

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Editorial

Dear Brothers and Sisters. Greetings with love in Jesus Name,

We are happy to have received communications from several of you during the past month and these are a source of cheer among us when distance does not allow us to meet together as we would wish and are among the sacrifices with which God is well pleased.

Violence and the break-down of law and order continue to dominate world news - "the sea and the waves roaring" and even in this country which formerly was relatively law abiding compared with many others politicians and law lords seem unable to adequately cope with it, we know it will wax worse and worse and all the things spoken of by Our Lord in His Olivet prophesy is producing fear in the hearts of men everywhere, but for us brethren and sisters there is hope as we see the dark night of Gentile times is far spent and a new 'day' is about to dawn let us hold fast our faith unto the end whatever trials we may have to face looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of it.

We have heard that our Bro. A.W. Hold of Queensland, Australia is far from well after suffering a stroke, we pray for him and those of his family who are caring for him and all those who are in poor health at this time, we pray for those too who are sincerely searching for truth that they may find it and have a part in the Glorious Kingdom to come.

In this issue we have an exhortation by our Bro. Phil Parry entitled "Ye are all the Children of God through faith in Christ Jesus", also a short one by our late Bro. Fred Pearce "Discretion shall preserve thee Understanding shall keep thee".

May God be with us all unto the day of Christ's coming.

With Sincere love in the Master's Service, Harvey and Evelyn Linggood,

There are no conscripts in the army of Christ; every soldier is a volunteer.

A Religion that is not worth exporting is not worth keeping at home.

The easiest person to deceive is yourself. Almost right is still wrong.

Ye Are All The Children Of God, Through Faith In Christ Jesus.

There can be no doubt that the year 1985 has not come up to the standard of expectation for June, July, and so far August in regard to warmth and sunshine. One thing is certain and reliable from the words of Jesus to those who profess to be the Children of God, and they embody the first and great commandment to Israel under Moses and also the second like unto it, "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is One, and thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart soul mind and spirit and thy neighbour as thyself." Jesus says. Matthew 5:22, "interpret these two commandments by and through the impartiality of God's Love that ye may be identified as His Children." "For He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust". The testimony of Jesus is witness here that God is the creator, and His Love for creation overrides the evil that men do and the fact that in giving rain, sunshine and fruitful seasons to those who seek firstly His Kingdom and His Righteousness, the evil and the unjust are partakers also of these blessings. Paul and Barnabas also "bore witness to this in their encounter with the people of Lystra and the priests of Jupiter one of their false gods. Acts 14:15 "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Exact confirmation of Genesis 8:22 "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." Genesis 9 - "I do set my bow in the cloud." This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

The sceptic will say there is nothing phenomenal or miraculous about a rainbow, it is caused through natural circumstances by means of the sun's rays penetrating the rain drops. Be it so, there would be no bow with sun only, and no bow with rain only, so as a result of God causing his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sending His rain upon the just and unjust, the rainbow, His token of the covenant with the earth and all generations is seen as witness that He is God and Creator of the heavens and the earth. God has never left Himself without witness. The nation of Israel was His witness when there was no strange god among them, Isaiah chapter 45, but they relinquished this role after their rejection as a nation of their Messiah, but God was still gathering His elect according to His foreknowledge and predestination as I shall draw attention to later.

It was in consequence of this fact that the gospel was preached to the Gentiles as well as the Jews. Peter stated, Acts 15:7 "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles "by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." With the Apostle Paul, it is my hearts' desire and prayer to God that Israel after the flesh of the present time will realise this condition of faith expressed by Peter and re-emphasised by him when disputing with some of the Jews who had rejected Jesus of Nazareth, "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the comer. Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

This fact is not being observed universally; only individually, by those whom God is taking out as a people for His Name, both Jews and Gentiles, putting no difference between them when they observe the conditions of belief, faith, and covenant relationship with Him. It is life eternal to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent. While Paul waited at Athens for Silas and Timotheus to join him, his spirit was stirred within him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met him. Among other things he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection, two very important facts of the Gospel, but which Paul perceived would not be understood by worshippers of an unknown God, so later

as he stood on Mars Hill he declared unto them the God of Abraham and Father of Jesus Christ, He who was the creator of the world and all things therein, and seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath and all things and made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though He be not far from every one of us; for in Him we live, and move and have our being... forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."

Paul shows and demonstrates clearly to the idol worshippers of gold, silver and stone, (graven images to be exact) that men could not be produced from them, but that men of one blood are the Creation of a Living God who has spoken and revealed Himself and also the purpose of His Creation. Paul does not mean all men are children of God by natural birth - but all men, just and unjust, are the result of His Creation, having given reproductive powers to the human species. Gods purpose with the earth and man up until the completion of His Kingdom and personal involvement when He is all in all, necessitates that the "blessings He sends on the earth for His own children will be shared by those who are not in that relationship. But there have "been cases where God has intervened in Judgment upon the wicked by extricating His own people from the scene, but this is a different matter than when we are speaking of the whole earth and the Creator giving rain from heaven and fruitful seasons filling people's hearts with food and gladness. This has been the case since creation yet famine and drought has persisted in several parts of the world, and to a great extent man has been to blame for his lack of consideration, preparation, and distribution to the needy, but in other cases it has been the result of Divine judgment for reasons known only to God Himself except where they are given. God said to Abraham concerning Sodom, "If there be ten righteous in the city, for their sakes I will not destroy it. There was not even ten. The alternative therefore, of not destroying the righteous with the wicked was to extricate the righteous, but by their own free-will and faith of course. God did so with Lot and his two daughters, lack of faith and obedience to God's word causing death to Lots' wife on the way as she looked back and became a pillar of salt. Jesus in Matthew 24:15-17 gives a similar warning. Despite the confusion of tongues to impede the tower builders, the practice has still continued even until now in addition to idolatry of the worst kind. The lesson Paul tried to teach at Athens has never been learned and accepted, only by the true servants of God, and now in modern times a city is not a city if it does not have a Cathedral with its towers or spires reaching unto heaven and its vast tomb-like interior full of darkness with the exception of a little candlelight on man-made altars, with crosses of brass and other images of gold, silver or stone graven by art and man's device. Temples of idolatry necessary for military parades, State funerals, Royal Weddings, tourist attraction etc. and commercial gain; a far cry from the Divine instruction to Moses.

Concerning the typical tabernacle or Temple of Christ's Body - "see thou make it after the pattern shown' to thee in the Mount." God dwelleth not in such temples of idolatry made with hands. "For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones", Isaiah chapter 57. Exaltation with God in order to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, is not by Cathedral towers that reach unto heaven of man's building, but through the veil, that is to say, Christ's flesh; though with boldness, yet by humility and contrite spirit which acknowledges that He is the Son of God and sacrificed His life for the life of the world which Adam forfeited to sin. Paul said of the believers in Corinth, "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God; and they shall be my people; Wherefore be holy and free from idolatry, and I will "be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters." Paul here is quoting the prophets of Israel, and he is alluding to those who have accepted Christ and are Jews inwardly, constituting the Israel of God and the all Israel who will be saved when as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins." Romans 11:25-27. The robe of righteousness is acquired through the efficacy of Christ's sacrificial death, and association with him by faith and understanding of the way appointed. The robes or garments of deceit are acquired through the authority of man-made institutions such as Theological Colleges and Universities whereby the Divine

pattern of things in the Heavens and the Heavenly things themselves are of no consequence provided the State or the establishment is not opposed and the people are generally content with what is taught by these State-ordained witchdoctors. The fleshly Jewish Rabbis are no better with their vain traditions, and are as much a disgrace to the examples of the Patriarchs as the Clergy are to the first century body of Christ, idolatry in all its forms has always been the snare to both. The Robe of righteousness must always be worn by those truly qualified as servants of righteousness and must not be discarded. But he who serves the idols temple must first put off and on the garments specified for his office - the long flowing robe or garment of deceit - and parade in full regalia as befits his rank, and with great show of superiority of wisdom over the congregation, teaching for doctrine the traditions and commandments of men who have changed the Truth into a lie. It is into this idolatrous state falsely called Christendom that people think they are rightly introduced by a few drops of water sprinkled on their foreheads, believing after a few years that this has qualified them to be Christians, though as infants they knew nothing, and little more as adults. This is the disrepute with which God's Honour and Wisdom has been impugned.

There is also a parallel in this respect with the natural Jews, and the land of promise. But before I go any further let me stress a fact brought to our notice some time back by bro. Linggood; it is that the God of Abraham holds the title deeds of conveyance in respect of this land, and Abraham and his seed through Christ, are the rightful heirs. The natural Jews think they are the rightful heirs to the land of Israel by birth, and retention of the vain traditions and practices tenaciously held by their Pharisaical forefathers, which some of our modern Bible students like to describe in glowing terms as a retention of their identity, but it is an identity they must lose if they desire to be heirs with Abraham of the same promise they must accept the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth whom their fathers crucified.

As I have said, they believe they are God's chosen people through fleshly descent from Abraham and adherence and preservation of Judaism and the traditions handed down. In fact there are people who nowadays believe that by this identification the Jews of this type are fulfilling God's word through Isaiah, "Ye are my witnesses that I am God," but the context refers to the Jews of the period when these words were uttered, not to present day Jews after the flesh, the latter are not witnesses to the attributes of the God of Abraham but to the fact that they have gone astray from Him and that He is not among them because they have by association and practice involved themselves with the idolatry of the nations. "Wherefore come ye out... and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord." God's witnesses have been always those through whom he spoke and chose to reveal Himself, Jesus being the greatest example together with the prophets and Apostles. These constitute the people of God. Paul says "God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew." This is the Jew that matters of whom Paul speaks to the Roman believers ch. 2 vs. 28 and 29 "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: 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". He is a Jew, who has accepted Jesus Christ the Messiah of Israel, and God has been calling these from all parts of the world through the word of His Grace, a fact demonstrated throughout all generations, and revealed by His word. Examples of this stand out clearly, but which we tend to overlook, for example James ch.1 "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greetings". Also I Peter 1:1, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ - and has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled and that fadeth not away - reserved for you - and to be revealed in the last time"- These words were addressed to Jews who were elect according to the foreknowledge of God.

Indeed God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. He gathered them in the days of the Apostles, He has been gathering them ever since, but it has been conditional on acceptance of Jesus Christ and His sacrifice, the seed singular of Abraham, and not by the Law of Moses.

God is not interested in re-gathering those who call themselves Jews and are not, Romans 2:17, Revelation 2:9, in preference to those Gentiles who are willing to become the seed of Abraham by adoption and grace, in the Spirit and not in the letter, for it is One God, which shall justify the

circumcision by faith and the uncircumcision through faith, and will gather and receive on this basis only, as all Scripture on the subject will reveal in the context if people refrained from an unjustified favouritism towards the natural Jews who as Paul says are as much under sin as the Gentiles. Romans 3:9 see also 11:21-23.

In consequence of these quotations I am not being high minded as may appear, but I accept the situation which the scriptures present to me and in fact it could not be presented better than in Paul's letter to the Galatians chapters 3 and 4 in reference to the two covenants, the old and the new, the former being Sinai in Arabia and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children, and the latter; Jerusalem which is above, or in the heavenlies in Christ, which is free and is the mother of us all. See Isaiah 54:1. I hope I have proved that when God makes reference through the prophets to His sons and daughters, this is what they are by adoption and grace through the only means He has stipulated and this is through the Name of Jesus and all that is involved in that Name. I repeat the words of Peter: "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, neither is there Salvation in any other." In the face of this, can we describe or address the natural Jews as God's people? Is not this equivalent as saying that they are Abraham's seed through the Law of Moses and not through the faith of Jesus Christ?

What then of "Operation Moses"? This is the term applied to the recent evacuation by air of those Ethiopian Jews known as "Falashas," but the term is unjustified and bears little resemblance to the Exodus from Egypt under Moses through the God of Abraham. The latter took place through the slaying and acknowledgement of the Lamb of God typified by the Passover, I doubt if anything resembling this took place with the former, and it has been said, they even thought there was a Temple like unto Solomon's in Jerusalem. Neither is it correct to say (as certain Christadelphian literature does on this subject) that this is in fulfilment of a certain chapter of prophecy relating to the gathering of God's people from Cush or Ethiopia, for I have shown and proved that these 'Falashas,' if they have kept their past identity, are not God's sons and daughters, they are not the seed of Abraham through Jesus Christ and therefore they have not Abraham to their father. The typescript sent to me by the Christadelphians contained the exact words and message I heard on the telephone as the result of an advert in the paper 'Operation Moses', if interested, ring this number etc., and give your name and address at the end. The leaflet, says the air-lift has been aptly named 'Operation Moses;' I have said it was not, and that the impression given in this leaflet is that the Bible is now being fulfilled and that God is gathering His people from among the nations. How can He "be said to be gathering His people if they are not His people. Paul has shown and interpreted from the prophets that it is a remnant that will be gathered from all parts of the earth but it will be as a result of their conversion to Christ, Isaiah chapter 11, and as a result of his presence in Zion and Jerusalem. Are we expected to believe that the natural unconverted Jew of the flesh will be gathered to the land of Palestine and consider it as his inheritance, in priority and to the exclusion of Abraham and his seed, Jews and Gentiles and rightful heirs to the land?

Did not God say of Abraham, "In thee shall all families of the earth be "blessed"? Please let us get our priorities right. Please let us keep to the context of what the prophets are saying in the many references listed in the leaflet, for I have found this to be a grave weakness with Christadelphians, and quite a few of their own members are beginning to find the courage to speak out and to correct many of the accepted errors in doctrine as well as the Jewish question. One member even said that Christadelphians are due for a shock before very long, and events and matters connected with them would be very disturbing, and even he himself regarded the B.A.S.F, as of no consequence to him; but the most revealing news has come to us recently from one in Australia whose book entitled "A More Perfect Way," shows the many flaws in the doctrines handed down from Dr. Thomas, R. Roberts, and more recently in 1958, John Carter and Cooper in connection with the Unity Basis, and he has also confirmed the truth of many of the things for which we have been contending yet he still considers himself a Christadelphian, in the meaning of the name I suppose, and still retains some of the errors.

Please excuse my digression as I return to the Jewish question and the wresting of the scripture from its context. A notable example of this is found in Christadelphian literature in pointing attention to the Jews returning to Palestine. They say it is a fulfilment of the parable of the fig tree mentioned by Jesus in Luke 21:29, "Behold the fig tree and all the trees; when they now shoot forth ye see and know of

your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand". Jesus has mentioned nothing about the Jews nor their revival and return to Palestine, neither does his use of the fig tree lesson give this impression, The lesson he makes is that when the fig tree and all trees shoot forth buds and leaves it is apparent from experience in the past (ye know of your own selves) that summer is now nigh at hand. I have told you of events that you have not yet witnessed, which ye do not know of your own selves but which God has revealed by His Spirit that when you see and experience the signs I have mentioned vs. 25-27, when they begin to come to pass then look up and lift up your heads for your deliverance draweth nigh." I agree with the view of many that the fig tree represents the Jewish nation, but in this case I do not myself think Jesus is using it for that purpose, but as it is the most common to the Jews even as the oak in my part of England is the most common, he gave priority to it in that sense, "Behold the fig tree, and all the trees, when they now shoot forth ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand". Substitute the budding forth of the leaves for the signs Jesus speaks of, and substitute 'summer' for the fulfilment of the signs which indicate the nearness of the Kingdom of God and you have the true meaning of the parable, 'summer', being the Kingdom of God.'

We are to look for the signs spoken of by Isaiah in chapters 15 and 14, Joel 2:51 and also chapter 3, Haggai 2:6, this terrible shaking of the earth and heavens can be a literal fact and the atmospheric dust resulting from it would cause the sun to be darkened and the moon to appear blood-red to the people witnessing these things and it would appear from the reading of Joel 5:1-7 that this is the time when God will bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem and plead with the nations on behalf of His Heritage whom the nations have driven out of Palestine and sold for slaves and prostitution. Jesus said "no man knoweth the day nor the hour but my father only." But he does give many indicative signs with the advice to be ready; "for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." Matthew 24:44. When the Apostles quote the prophets in their epistles and give their interpretations we can be sure that they are reliable and more enlightening to us who may read from the same scriptures, even as Philip enlightened the man of Ethiopia who was an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasures, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, he need not have been Ethiopian by birth, and it does not say he was; he may have attained his position through similar circumstances as those of Joseph who was sold into Egypt, but he knew that Jerusalem was the place where men ought to worship and where God had chosen to place His Name, and he had come for an important reason involved in his worship, I myself believe he was a devout Jew and possessed the scriptures of the prophets and at the moment Philip joined him in the chariot, by divine providence, he was reading from Isaiah chapter 53 and Philip expounded unto him the suffering of Christ and the glory which should follow. Even so with Paul, in his epistles to the Romans and Galatians we should pay attention to his teaching and advanced learning and understanding of the Jewish question where his statements and lessons brought to our notice in chapters 3 and 4 of Galatians are co-ordinated with Isaiah ch. 54; ch. 60; and ch 62, also Revelation 3:12 and Hebrews 12:22, which are sufficient to convince us that only the Elect of God and who are predestinated according to His Purpose and Grace will be gathered out of the nations.

This process has been going on from the beginning on the principle of faith in the atoning work of God in Christ and will culminate in the fulfilment of Isaiah's words concerning Zion and Jerusalem literal and spiritual, they are found in Isaiah chapters 60-61-62 and are confirmation of Revelation ch. 21 in respect of Salvation, Righteousness, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified saith the Lord.

In reading Ezekiel 20:33-38, it does not give me the impression that the Jews are returning to the land of Israel as a result of the work of God's hands, but through desperation and a desire for somewhere to settle and live. It fills me with anger and sorrow to witness what happened to Jews in Poland and Germany and also what is happening to the people in parts of Africa, Ethiopia and Sudan no matter what their race or their religion. I myself could not have differentiated in favour of help for the one more than the other in respect of food and clothing; they all felt the sickness, the pain, the hunger and the cold. Who can say that a suffering 'Falasha' child or adult was more worthy of help than those other Ethiopians? Evidently members of the State of Israel thought so and maybe some other people, for certain reasons. But it does not reflect the attributes of God and His over-riding Love and impartiality of which I spoke in my opening remarks, neither can people be said to be helping God to regather His

people when it is a political matter and organised for other reasons and motives and could end, as some believe it may, with the destruction of many of these people who were air-lifted to Palestine. Any who care to read Isaiah chapter 49 in its proper sense and context will realise that it is “Operation Jesus Christ” that we must hope and pray for, and when reading from verses 1 to 13 let us bear in mind that verse 3, “O Israel” is descriptive of Jesus a ‘Prince with God,’ and ‘Zion’ is descriptive of the mother of the free who have become so through the Truth. Even as Jesus said, “The Truth shall make you free.” John 8:32. What more can be said but that when the Lord dwelleth in Zion. Joel 5:21 and the signs spoken of by Jesus in Luke chapter 21 and Joel 2:31 and 32, “It shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord, that is those who are called by the Name of the Lord, shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.”

Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace, though blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, that is to say, when the number of the elect is made up from among the Gentiles there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant with them when I shall take away their sins, Jeremiah chapter 31. “And so all Israel shall be saved,” - “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God I how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out; for who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? For of him are all things; to whom be glory for ever.”

Let us help the Jews by all means, whether spiritually or materially; the latter may be easier for some people because with the former they are not in the position that Philip was with the Eunuch in being able to expound from the scriptures the reason and necessity of Christ’s Sacrifice for the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles; it is not in the forefront of their preaching, as the Apostles have shown it should be and that they had themselves a clear understanding uncluttered by the false theory that the death common to corruptible Adam and his posterity was not the death he incurred by sin, Adam having been created subject to natural decay and death as the Apostle Paul states in I Corinthians 15:44 to 49 and in Romans 8:20 and 21.

Thankfully we have in our fellowship a Jew inwardly who was convinced that our view of the Sacrifice of Christ harmonised with the Law and the Prophets. Our hope is that many more, Jews and Gentiles, will have the veil removed from their faces and will see clearly and know the peace of God which passeth understanding. Philippians chapter 4 verse 7.

To God only wise be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

P. Parry.

“Discretion Shall Preserve Thee” “Understanding Shall Keep Thee”

Do we understand the full meaning of these proverbs? How do we use them? I, for one, have seen and always kept the word ‘discretion’ in the forefront, I have said that if there was one word that I would like to see written across the sky in large letters, ‘discretion’ would be the word. This word like many others, can be used in many ways; but I think that though the word means ‘liberty to act according to one’s judgment’, it can be used wrongly. We who belong to Christ, know that we are not our own, as we have surrendered to Him, yet in many ways we can use discretion very usefully in natural understanding which is lawful. I believe that it is to be used in its true connection, with the Word of God. How many times have we been told the Bible is full of contradictions? How much do we know of the many things hard to understand, which many that are unlearned wrest to their own destruction? How many of us have altered our minds after further study? How true have we found, that the Bible i.e. its own interpreter? The truth is not always a matter of our opinions. We have no opinion on many things.

We have to take such a lot, as God has revealed it, and no argument can alter it to our judgment, we have to accept it in faith, that God is, and that we only see many things through a glass darkly. We have to study, meditate, line upon line; compare spiritual things with spiritual. There are many natural persons keen on discretion. There are many who claim to be spiritually minded that are not as wise as their generation. So let us be careful and not try to push things down other people's throats, what we think they should do according to our judgment. These thoughts came to me while reading Judges. There every man did what was right in their eyes. In those days there was no king in Israel. We know there are kings and KINGS in the natural and in the spiritual. There was not one good king in Israel after the division of Judah and Israel. We have a few that were good in Judah. We can say, as Samuel said when Israel desired a king like others, that God was King by many of the wondrous things that are recorded, even in Judges.

Now let us have a brief look at some of the things that need discretion. Others no doubt will come to your mind. Take the vow of Israel that none of them would give their daughter unto Benjamin to wife. See what happened, and all because they made a vow which was legal. Surely it is better not to make a vow. Discretion would have preserved them. Paul said there were things lawful but not expedient. Jesus "Sware not at all". While we look upon wisdom as a principal thing, we know that Solomon, wisest man of his day, did not use discretion that would have preserved him. Wisdom is good and profitable if exercised with discretion, but in Solomon it was lacking and he, like many "before and after him acted according to his own judgment. I am greatly impressed "by the way many who are 'teachers' that need to be taught. Take the thought, "that by the law no flesh should be justified," Learned men have used these words to prove that the law was useless. Put another beside it, the fourth commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy" You do not read the first statement in the Old Testament, as the law was given to be kept and it would be their righteousness. But it would not "be their righteousness after Jesus nailed the law to His cross. The same applies to the reverse: we have not got the fourth commandment given in the New Testament. Many are the passages which show the contrary. It was given to the Jews, and it could not be kept by the Gentiles; hence the wisdom of God and His discretion. Summed up in a few words, what applies to one dispensation does not necessarily mean it must be kept in another. Lastly, God changeth not: yet we know that God has changed. The natural laws are fixed, seed time, harvest time etc., but what do we find? Things will come to your mind when you think of what is written. Discretion will preserve us when we see the seven years of famine. God said "Nineveh shall be destroyed," that Hezekiah should die; yet Nineveh was spared and Hezekiah had 15 years added to his life. The answer is plain: God makes conditions on some things, and no conditions on others. God is the same, and this includes His mercy, where He will not do unjustly. His ways are equal, and if we follow His discretion we shall be able to rightly divide the word of God by His discretion. The Scripture is of no private interpretation: if any willeth to know he shall know the doctrine.

By our late brother F. J. Pearce.