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The Christian Brethren Research Fellowship

A MATTER OF POLARITY

It is often stated that the fundamental cleavage in the Church today lies in the matter of attitudes to the Bible. We tend therefore to classify other Christians in relation to two poles of thought on this subject, and to shape our own Christian strategy in relation to that division. This polarisation, be it said, is found as strongly (if not more strongly) among the more 'liberal' elements in the Church as it is among the more 'conservative' (how inadequate those very labels are!).

It is therefore as well to remind ourselves from time to time that real life is not as plainly black and white as our own writings lead us to believe. The instinct which lies behind this particular polarisation is probably aroused by deeper questions concerning authority: but the classification itself becomes increasingly hazy, the more we analyse it. It is not a natural classification, because it has no natural points of reference. So many vital problems blur the apparently clear edges of the divisions which it produces, and ultimately those boundaries disappear altogether. We are reminded of the simpleton who was sorely put out because the boundaries which were so clearly marked upon his map were not to be found when he studied the ground itself!

These problems concern such matters as the nature of the effective communication of thought and ideas; of the interaction of the reader himself with what he reads; of the individual personality and psychology of the one communicating and of the one with whom he communicates; of the implications of Biblical and textual criticism; of the changing patterns of human thought; of the various modes of transmission of the text itself—and what they imply as to the nature of the text. In this issue of the *Journal* one aspect of this matter, a limited but a vitally important aspect, is dealt with. The first five of the papers under the heading of *Topic of the Issue* are all products of the germinal Cambridge CBRF group. The authors are now dispersed to different parts of the globe, but we are more than grateful for the opportunity to put their studies before the membership at large. Nothing which bears upon the text of Scripture is of small importance to those who seek beyond the text for the voice of their Lord.

We are also glad to present a provocative paper on a most practical matter of church life from Mr. Gordon Fowler of Warwick. If some of his ideas are startling to some readers, let them remember that they are born out of practical experience. We should welcome a free discussion of Mr. Fowler's paper in the pages of the *Journal*—but, please, from those with practical experience, and not from the theoretician.

Two able reviews from contributors to whom we already owe much are also included, as well as more comment on the provocative *Liturgy* issue.

SOSTHENES

NEWS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

Objects of the Fellowship. It has been suggested that the objects of the Fellowship should be repeated from time to time in the *Journal*. They are set out at length in the constitution which is sent to all members, the first of them being 'to investigate and study in the light of Holy Scripture the doctrines and practices of Christians today, with special reference to those known as the Christian Brethren'. In the pursuit of these objects, the Fellowship tries to keep an open mind towards all points of view, that it might learn from all what it is needful that we should learn, and that we might understand more clearly and positively the principles which are dear to us in our own church life.

Annual Meeting. The annual meeting was well attended, although not as fully as in 1966. The stimulating papers by Mr. Ellison and the Rev. John Simpson will, in response to requests, be printed in full and circulated to members, who already have a full text of Mr. Clines's lecture.

Council Members. Dr. J. M. Houston and Dr. Andrew Sims both felt that they should retire from the council of the Fellowship at the 1967 Annual Meeting, because of the pressure of other calls upon their time. We are grateful to both these gentlemen for all that they have done for the Fellowship: and we are particularly grateful to Dr. Houston for his stimulation and interest since he first joined the council as one of its founder members. One of the vacancies has been filled by the election of Mr. Paul Marsh, already known to many of our members as a writer and missionary. Although his heart is in Pakistan, Mr. Marsh is at present in Britain and we look forward to the fruits of the gifts which he brings to the Fellowship.

Membership. The secretary reported at the Annual Meeting that the number of applications for membership since the formation of the Fellowship in 1963 amounted to 1,150 of which 1,001 were still enrolled as members. 30% are overseas from Britain (against 20% of last year's total) and 13% are honorary. The percentage of lady members shows a one-eighth increase—from 4% of the total to 4½%! This tiny proportion does not include the many wives who enjoy vicarious membership through their husbands.

Subscriptions. The treasurer asks if all members would please check on their subscriptions, and if they have not been paid for any years (including 1967/8) to remit to him at the address given inside the back cover of the *Journal*. Arrears of membership subscriptions might yet restrict severely the increasingly expensive publication of the *Journal*: prompt remittance both helps the Fellowship and saves much toil for the treasurer. It is also worth noting that the Fellowship, as a charity, can receive donations under deeds of covenant, although this facility is not available in respect of the annual subscription under present law.

Members who have received honorary copies of the *Journal* are asked to notify the secretary when their qualifications for honorary membership cease.

Changes of address. Many copies of each despatch of the *Journal* are returned marked 'gone away'. Members are asked particularly to notify the secretary of changes in address.

Journal Contributions. The editor is always glad to receive members' contributions—and particularly digests of interesting published material from members acting as monitors.

'He who has not believed will not experience; he who has not experienced will not know'. ANSELM.

ASPECTS OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

INTRODUCTION

Christian interpretation of Scripture stems from those briefly recorded conversations of the Risen Lord to His eleven Apostles when He expounded from the Old Testament writings the 'things concerning himself'. The last of the Apostles provided an example in his view that 'the sacred writings are able to make wise to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Every scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete . . .'

Yet the mechanics of the use of Holy Writ by the first Christians are by no means simple, many questions arise, much is hard to explain. Inquiry into such matters may become abstrusely academic, or be lost in a welter of detail, but the Church—especially a 'New Testament' one—ignores it at its peril. The Scriptures are the final court of appeal, if not the sole authority, for all Christendom. It is imperative that they be correctly explained.

Superficially, the matter of quotations of the Old Testament in the New may appear to be a bypath of little profit. In fact, it is a vital component in any system of exegesis and exposition, and a central factor in studies of the Canon and the doctrine of Inspiration. If the principles of the first Christians are held to be valid in present-day church practice, then some attention should be devoted to their approach to Scripture.

The Church's history is peppered with interpretational vagaries; every phase of past and present has its own. Many of these have arisen in reaction to accepted views or in apologetic argument, others were produced to support particular doctrines or theories. The Christian Brethren have contributed liberally to this chest of treasures of dubious worth. Concentrating upon these precious teachings, they have often missed greater jewels found in more widely ranging search. How the Testaments and covenants interrelate, how prophecy may be understood, how the ethics of the Old Testament fit with the teachings of Jesus—these are examples of topics neglected by many.

The Risen Lord expounded the Scriptures of Himself, and it can be said, anticipating the papers presented here, that His followers did the same. While our claim may be to do this, is our insight as deep as theirs, or do we concern ourselves with minutiae, with types of debatable truth, or a rigid literalism? May it be our prayer and our goal so to study the Word that we may learn what the Spirit of Christ signified in writing it.

Several sessions of the Cambridge CBRF group were spent in considering aspects of the Old Testament in the New. This was done with some trepidation and little previous knowledge; the results may not be acceptable in every point, therefore. Moreover, only a partial study of a surprisingly extensive subject was practicable. Nevertheless, it is hoped that presentation of some of the papers to a wider audience may stimulate a few to further research in this field, and serve to inform many who are as ignorant of these matters as were the Cambridge group. ALAN MILLARD

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN ROMANS 9-11

G. Peter Richardson

- I. The problem of the Old Testament in Romans 9-11 is bound up with the whole purpose of the letter itself. It is my contention that these chapters are an integral part of the letter, and, in spite of the fact that there are natural breaks at each end of the section, that it cannot be removed without damaging it. I see chapters 9-11 as having a direct relationship to 1-4, and indeed, it might almost be argued that chapters 5-8 are more of an interpolation than 9-11. However, the point is that these are a part of the purpose of the letter, and that this purpose is bound up with Paul's own situation. Romans is not a great treatise on systematic theology but a missionary document. It arises directly out of Paul's missionary experience, and is written, we can be sure, during the part of his career when, as we know from Acts, it was consistently his practice to go to the synagogue first and only later to the Gentiles. So the rubric that stands over *all* of Romans is: 'to the Jew first, and also to the Gentiles'. This is crucial. The treatment of the 'Jewish problem' in Romans is not incidental; it is central to the whole purpose of his writing, and comes out even in chapters 12-15 when he deals with the ethical problems created by the fact that there are Jewish-Christians. However, when this problem comes to the forefront, as it does in chapters 2-4 and 9-11, and in Galatians, it is natural for Paul to turn to the Old Testament to investigate it for the light which it might shed on a solution.
- II. In chapters 9-11 we find twenty-eight Old Testament quotations, and a number of allusions, so that in these three chapters we have thirty per cent of the Pauline quotations from the Old Testament. These are distributed as follows: fifteen from Isaiah, eleven from the Pentateuch, four from the Psalms, four from other prophecies besides Isaiah, three from the historical books, and one from the Writings. Of the explicit quotations eight agree with the LXX (either together with or against the Massoretic Text) plus six more which vary only in word order; one agrees with the Hebrew against the LXX (from Job, a very strange case). That is, fifteen agree substantially either with the LXX or the Massoretic Text, but thirteen vary from either of these two sources, and these comprise the most interesting group, for there is no clear evidence that Paul follows any given text tradition. Rather he selects the variation which he might have found in a text unknown to us, or else he invents a variant reading to suit the context. We shall look at this point again.
- III. We have outlined the basic materials with which Paul works from the Old Testament. What is his method? First we should note his introductory formulae. There are five kinds. 'As it is written . . .' or the like (in 9: 13, 33; 10: 5; 11: 8, 26f). 'Scripture says . . .' (in 9: 17; 10: 11; 11: 2). 'So and so says . . .', Isaiah, Hosea etc. (in

9: 25f, 27f, 29; 10: 5, 16, 19, 20; 11: 9f). This is unusual in Paul's writings, it appears elsewhere only three times. 'God says . . .' or the next best thing (in 11: 4; 9: 15, and 10: 21 almost). Other miscellaneous ones.

In each case the quotation is given great authority by virtue of his introduction and the message it conveys. Then we may note that Paul often quotes verses in isolation as his argument proceeds, or else he merges quotations together or strings them into a chain quotation. We find merged quotations in 9: 25f (=Hosea 2: 23+1: 10); in 9: 33 (=Isaiah 8: 14+28: 16); in 11: 8 (=Isaiah 29: 10+Deuteronomy 29: 4); in 11: 26f (=Isaiah 59: 20+27: 9); and in 11: 34f (=Isaiah 40: 13+Job 41: 11). In each case there is a special key-word or idea which accounts for his doing this: thus in the first case it is *laos*, 'people', in the second it is *lithos*, 'stone', in the third it is *ophthalmous*, 'seeing' (or really, here, 'unseeing'), in the fourth it is the idea of deliverance from sin which is expressed similarly in the Hebrew as the 'sin of Jacob', and in the last it is the idea of the inscrutability of God.

'Chain quotations' are even more numerous, so we note: 9: 12-15 where *laos* is again the key-word; 10: 5-8, 11-13 where *pas*, 'everyone', could be a key-word; 10: 19-21 where the contrast Gentiles/Israel is central; and 11: 8-10 where 'seeing' is again the word. This latter method is a device of the Rabbis in which they often specifically cited Old Testament texts from the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings, in that order. Paul sometimes does this, e.g. in 11: 8-10, but his approach is looser and he never specifically says that he is doing so.

There is one other aspect of method that must be noted, a type of interpretation called *Midrash Peshet* which is found clearly in the Dead Sea Scrolls, particularly in the Commentary on Habbakuk and the Commentary on Nahum, probably also in John and Matthew, and here in Paul. The essence of this method is a kind of selective interpretation. Thus often, as we noted, Paul diverges sharply from either the Greek or the Hebrew Old Testament text with which he was familiar, and creates an *ad hoc* rendering of his own, or else takes over another non-canonical text form, such as an Aramaic targum—and then he bases his exegesis on this. For example, in 10: 11 he adds *pas*, 'everyone', to the Old Testament text, whereas in 9: 33, citing the same verse, he does not. He changed the citation to fit his purpose which demanded the sense 'everyone'. Another example would be 11: 26ff where he follows the LXX instead of the Massoretic Text because it agrees with his purpose, although it is clearly an inferior text. Then again, he changes person and number, as in 10: 19, where he adds 'you' and changes 'them' to 'you', in order to fit the argument. The method here is to make the quotation subordinate to the purpose, or, better perhaps, to decide what the Old Testament is saying, and then to select the text and alter it appropriately. (In this respect it is somewhat similar to the custom prevalent in preaching to-day in which the translation which best

suits the point to be made is chosen. The difference is that Paul, we may assume, knew what was the *best* text, since he knew Hebrew, and where he diverges from this he has some 'ulterior' motive.)

- IV. As far as the technical aspects are concerned, little more than the above need be said on the purpose, materials, and methods of Paul's use of the Old Testament quotations. Yet it is incomplete in that it has not yet helped us to see where Paul arrives after he has gone through all this. We shall examine briefly the way he turns and shapes his argument in 9-11. It should be noted at this point that the summary given in F. F. Bruce's commentary on *Romans* is very helpful, as well as being concise and accurate.*
- V. Often it is stated that the argument in Romans 9-11 has no unifying factor, and that Paul deals in turn with predestination (9), freewill (10), and universalism (11), without ever connecting them. However, I believe that there is rather more unity in these chapters than this suggests—a unity that is to be discerned in the fact that it arises out of his missionary task. Thus, in grappling with the question of the apparent rejection of Jesus by the Jews, Paul first asserts the universality of the Gospel (in 9), then sets out the argument for the obligation to preach this gospel to all nations, and then, in chapter 11, he tries to deal with the problems which have arisen as a result of this preaching to the Gentiles and what he understands to be God's solution. It is shot through with concern for missions. I would support this interpretation by reference to what is clearly a conclusion to his argument in these three chapters in 11: 28-32, where it is clear that questions of election and retribution play little part. The whole emphasis is on God's gospel, His grace, His calling, and His mercy.
- VI. In 9: 6 there stands out as almost a title to the whole 'not all of the children of the Patriarch Israel are really Israel'. His first Old Testament quotation (in 9: 7) substantiates this theme through the illustration of the choice of Isaac by God. This was connected with a promise (quoted in 9: 9 with some changes) to Sarah, and therefore only children of that promise are seed. In this case there was a selection between what was promised and what was not promised, and there follows in 9: 12, 13 a chain quotation from the Law and the Prophets on the idea that God's choice was selective, between older and younger, between Jacob and Esau. But this last is substantiated from Malachi, where the concern is a national one, involving Judah and Edom, not the two persons. In any case, Paul has established that God discriminates, but this discrimination is a mark of God's freedom, and this is the principle with which Paul is really concerned. In 9: 15 his quotation is aimed to show that God is free, and can deal with whom He pleases (this is an exact quotation from the Septuagint of Exodus 33: 19). Thus the principle is established not so much that God's choice is selective, but that God is free to go beyond the normal

or doctrinaire orders of priority. This is the real point of the section. This purpose is confirmed by 9: 17 with the quotation about God's name being spread through all the earth; and thus we reach a preliminary conclusion in 9: 18: He shows mercy on whom He wills.

VII. His next quotation in 9: 25, 26 is a variant quotation which involves quite a re-application of the original sense. In Hosea the verse spoke originally of a coming unity between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms—both still a part of God's people—but Paul re-applies this Northern Kingdom reference to Gentiles as partaking of the designation 'my people'. This is followed in 9: 27f by a quote to show that God's mercy will still rest upon Israel in spite of their present hardness (a use conforming closely to the original sense), and then in 9: 29 by a quotation of which the implication is that Israel will *not* be cut off and destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah. 9: 33 is a good example of a merged quotation; it originally applied to God, here to Jesus. The way Paul uses it, it becomes a mixed metaphor, the same stone both trips and builds up. 10: 5-8 is difficult both in the way the writer alters the quotations (especially verse 5), and the way he historicizes them by applying what is not a prophecy to the historical Jesus. But in 10: 11-13 comes an important conclusion to the first half of his argument (and it should be emphasized that the argument is divided into two and not according to the three chapters): 'everyone who believes (adding *pas*) will not be ashamed and will be saved'. By emphasizing universality in this first half, by showing that the Old Testament has looked forward to such events, he makes this tremendous assertion on which the whole of his missionary preaching is based: 'there is no distinction between a Jew and a Gentile'. This is the *theoretical* result of his argument to this point.

VIII. He follows on from 10: 14 to the end of 11 with the *practical* result, which is to preach the Gospel to everyone. The rest of 10, with its many quotations, reinforces this from the Old Testament. There are many changes in wording and context from the originals, the most notorious being 10: 20, 21 where he splits what applied to one group into two pieces and applies one half to Jews and one to Gentiles. The key quotation in this part is 10: 19, 'I will provoke you', which he picks up again at 11: 12. Between these two points he affirms strongly that Jews will not be let go, an assertion proved by Old Testament quotations. God will save some, and even though the result of his own preaching is the hardness of many Jews who hear and do not respond, still he develops the idea that, because the Gentiles believe, the Jews will be provoked into belief out of jealousy for the Gentiles receiving the good news of God. He sees much hope in these promises of God, and, in my opinion, he expects that Jews will be turned to belief in great numbers because Gentiles are believing in God through Jesus Christ. (Paul seems to expect this in his own lifetime.) Thus he can affirm at the close, in 11: 26, 27, that 'all

Israel shall be saved' (by which he means not the sum of all individual Jews, but in some sense the godly Jews; i.e. there is a distinction between Jew and Israel in the New Testament), because, as he quotes, 'a Deliverer shall come (and has come) to remove their sins'. The purpose of God in this great problem concerning the unbelief of the Jews is that men be saved. If it was necessary for Jews to not believe so that Gentiles could be given a chance, then that does not mean that Jews are rejected. Rather, by the very fact that Gentiles believe, God will convert His own people. They are still His special people, though Gentiles can now be grafted into them. This is how Paul understands the missionary situation in the Early Church, and the point of his own preaching. But he does not consider himself infallible, and so he concludes with a tremendous paean of praise to God—'Who has known the mind of the Lord . . . '—to which, it seems, Paul wants to add, 'I cannot be sure that I have fully fathomed it, but this is the extent to which I have understood it'.

Note: For the factual material in II, III, we have depended upon E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Oliver and Boyd) 1957.

*F. F. Bruce, *Romans, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Tyndale Press) 1963, 64.

ST. PAUL'S USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

R. Aris

It is tempting to look for dominant signs of St. Paul's Pharisaic training in his letter to the Galatians, for in countering the influence of a Jewish corruption of the gospel he might well be at the top of his rabbinical bent. But, whilst one who was 'all things to all men'¹ would certainly be free to use his skill in handling the scriptures to confound the false teachers 'in their own craftiness'², it is easy to over-emphasise the similarity between St. Paul's interpretative methods and those of the Jewish teachers. This for two reasons. First, the conversion of St. Paul was complete to a degree that few have experienced or been loyal to. Whatsoever things were gain to him (and of these the claim to be 'as to the Law, a Pharisee'³ was not least) he counted, 'on account of Christ, loss',⁴ and he would not necessarily make concessions, even in style, in defence of a gospel that was 'to the Jews a stumbling block'.⁵ Secondly, though there was a large Jewish element in the population, the character of the Galatians may not have called for any display of rabbinical virtuosity. Lightfoot, after describing in some detail the influx of Jews into Galatia and discussing what influence their presence may have had, concludes that 'still with all this foreign admixture, it was the Celtic blood which gave distinctive colour to the Galatian character and separated them by so broad a line even from their near neighbours'.⁶ A very striking instance is their retention of their Celtic language along with the Greek spoken in common with other Asiatics, and though their character had 'gradually deteriorated under the enervating influence of a premature or forced civilization, nevertheless beneath the surface the Celtic character remains the same, whether manifested in the rude and fiery barbarians who were crushed by the arms of Caesar, or the impetuous fickle converts who call down the indignant rebuke of the Apostle of the Gentiles'.^{7*}

There are specific citations from the Old Testament in the Galatian epistle and one rather vague reference to the Law—'For it is written that Abraham had two sons'.⁸ They fall into four groups as follows:

- A. A sequence of six quotations in the argument of the first 14 verses of chapter 3.
- B. Chapter 3: 16.
- C. Two quotations in chapter 4 (vv. 27 and 30) in the discussion of the bond- and the free woman.
- D. The quotation of Lev. 19: 18 in chapter 5: 14, where St. Paul insists that the whole law is fulfilled in one word 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'.

Before briefly commenting on each of these groups, we might pause to note the fidelity of the quotations and the existence of cognate passages. This may be tabulated as follows.

*Preference for the South Galatian hypothesis might invalidate Lightfoot's ethnic conclusions for some readers, but Mr. Aris's point remains valid. (*Ed.*)

	<i>Gal.</i>	<i>O.T.</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Other quotes</i>
A. (i)	3:6	Gen. 15: 6	Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.	LXX.	Rom. 4: 3; Jas. 2: 23; Clem. Rom. 10. Justin. Dial. con. Tryph. 119.
(ii)	3: 8	Gen. 12: 3, 18: 18	In thee shall all the nations be blessed.	LXX. Conflation of the two passages.	Clem. Rom. 10 quotes Gen. 12: 3 only.
(iii)	3: 10	Deut. 27: 26	Cursed is everyone not continuing in the book of the law.	LXX modified to make self contained, replacing 'the words of this law' by 'the things written in the book of the law'.	Justin. Dial. 95. p. 322c quotes it exactly as St. Paul.
(iv)	3: 11	Hab. 2: 4	The just shall live by faith.	LXX has 'my just man'. Heb. has the sense of steadfastness which is here transmuted to faith.	Rom. 1: 17. Heb. 10: 38.
(v)	3: 12	Lev. 18: 5	He that shall have done these things shall live by them.	LXX with which Heb., Syr., and Samar. Pent. agree	Rom. 10: 5.
(vi)	3: 13	Deut. 21: 23	Cursed is everyone hanged on a tree.	LXX has 'cursed by God'. The omission of 'by God' is necessary in applying passage to Christ.	Acts 5: 30 refers to crucifixion as 'hanging on a cross'. Justin. Dial. p. 323c.
B. (vii)	3: 16	Gen. 22: 18	To thy seed (sing.)	LXX.	Acts 3: 25. Cf. Gen. 12: 7, 13: 15, 17: 7.
C. (vii)	4: 27	Isa. 54: 1	Rejoice thou barren . . . children . . . more numerous.	LXX.	Pseudo - Clem. Epist. ii 2. Justin. Apol. i. c. 53, p. 88c.
(ix)	4: 30	Gen. 21: 10	Cast out the bondwoman and her son . . .	LXX has at end . . . 'with my son Isaac'.	
D. (x)	5: 14	Lev. 19: 18	Love thy neighbour as thyself.	LXX.	Matt. 19: 19, 22: 39. Mk. 12: 31. Rom. 13: 9. Lk. 10: 27.

It would appear therefore that in this epistle St. Paul uses the Septuagint rather faithfully. The modifications to Deut. 27: 26 and Gen. 21: 10 are minor ones to fit in with the sense of the passage and make the quotation self-contained. The conflation of Gen. 12: 3 and 18: 18 is a minor one and the omission of 'by God' from Deut. 21: 23 is to be defended on theological grounds, for, though He becomes a curse for us, our Lord cannot be said to be cursed by God, though He was forsaken of Him. Ellis⁹ notes that of 93 quotations in St. Paul's writings, 51 agree with the Septuagint (of which 22 diverge from the Hebrew), 4 agree with the Hebrew against LXX, and 38 diverge from both. Evidently in Galatians the Septuagint is followed more closely than on the average.

To turn to the four groups of quotations, the first might well support the thesis that St. Paul is making full use of his early training, for the running commentary of chap. 3: 6 to 13 is similar in form to the technique of the Midrash. Certainly St. Paul's consummate skill in the handling of the scriptures is shown in the clarity of his argument and range of quotation. The argument is of course that a return to the Law was superfluous, in that Abraham's blessing and all that flowed from it depended on his faith; and perverse, since the Law brought in the very curse that Christ had to bear. This is well known and may perhaps be taken as read, but one or two of the quotations have interesting overtones.

Thus Gal. 3: 8 is one of the texts cited by Dodd in examining the problem of the *testimonia*.¹⁰ The thesis was put forward by Rendel Harris¹¹ that there is evidence for certain pre-canonical collections of messianic proof texts which N.T. writers quote freely. The evidence for this lies in quotations that occur in more than one writer which agree with one another in a reading different from the LXX, and that certain combinations of quotations occur from more than one writer.¹² In later times just such a collection is found for use of apologists and there is evidence that the author is really an editor revising and enlarging an earlier work. Dodd himself feels that this implies too mechanical a process and that the governing intention of the N.T. writers is rather 'to exploit whole contexts selected as the varying expression of certain fundamental and permanent elements in biblical revelation'.¹³ It is not possible here to exhibit these theories in detail but if Gal. 3: 8 is not just an inaccurate recollection of either Gen. 12: 3 or 22: 18 then it is evidence of a permitted freedom of quotation either from a collection of testimonies or from a section of the Law recognised as of particular value in the support of the gospel.

The interpretation of Deut. 21: 23 in verse 13 of the third chapter of Galatians is also of some interest, for the ambiguity of the Hebrew allowed somewhat various application, and the text occupied an important place in early controversies between Christian and Jew.¹⁴ The literal translation of the original is 'for (the) curse of God (is) he that is hanged', and the difficulty is that the genitive may either denote the person who pronounces the curse or the one who is cursed. The LXX and St. Paul take the meaning 'He that is hanged is accursed in the sight of God' and this would seem to be consonant with the injunction not to let the body hang after sunset lest the curse defile the land. An interpretation popular with Jewish

writers however is 'He that hangeth is a contempt of, a reproach or insult to God'. Lightfoot conjectures that this interpretation may have grown up in the days when Jewish patriots were impaled or crucified as rebels by their Syrian or Roman masters. That the curse of God should rest on such would be intolerable to the loyal Jew, and, if the spirit of the passage in Deut. could scarcely sustain this interpretation, the letter could certainly be pressed into service and might then give rise to a traditional interpretation. Certainly we can imagine these words thrown back at St. Paul as he preached in the synagogues—'accursed of God' or 'an insult to God' would do equally well. It was the 'scandal of the cross',¹⁵ which, St. Paul insists, could never be done away. Whilst crucifixion was not a Jewish mode of punishment, no Jew would question the legitimacy of St. Paul's application, for 'it was the hanging not the death that brought ignominy to the sufferer and defilement to the land'.¹⁶ What was unacceptable to the Jew was that the law had become a curse from under which the only redemption was to be found in Christ.

If the passage in the earlier part of chapter 3 betrays some Jewish features, surely the distinction between *seed* and *seeds* in verse 16 outrabbits the rabbis! But perhaps we should not too lightly accuse St. Paul of indulging in extremely fancy and sophisticated argument, viz. that only one of Abraham's descendants was in view, that is Christ. St. Paul was certainly not ignorant of the fact that the singular was used as a collective noun,¹⁷ nor would he try to 'pull a fast one' over the Galatians. There seem to be two aspects of his interpretation. First, he sees the summing up of the whole race of Abraham in Christ (a conception not unknown to rabbinical writers though often grotesquely expressed¹⁸): secondly, by analogy, it is the spiritual descendants of Abraham, the faith family, that take the place of the natural, and he urges that it is the former to whom the promises truly belong in Christ.

The passages in chapter 4 are an example of the allegorical mode of interpretation and bear comparison both with the rabbinical and Alexandrian use of allegory. What distinguishes St. Paul is his sense of the historicity of the events he is using. Thus Philo's¹⁹ use of the allegory of Hagar and Sarah is that of the human soul (Abraham) progressing toward the knowledge of God.²⁰ His two alliances with Sarah, the princess, and with Hagar, the bondmaid, are his training in divine wisdom and in secular learning. His union with Sarah is at first unfruitful, because premature, and she directs him to turn to the inferior learning of the schools which gives more immediate results and allows him later to return to the divine wisdom to good purpose. Isaac represents true wisdom (*sophos*); and sophistry (*sophistēs*), represented by Ishmael, is eventually cast out before it. By contrast St. Paul sees in this passage of the patriarch's life a miniature representation of the workings of God's providence which are later seen in grander proportions in the church's history. 'With Philo the allegory is the whole substance of his teaching; with St. Paul . . . it is, to use Luther's comparison, the painting which decorates the house already built'.²¹

The various readings of Gal. 4: 25 are fully discussed by Lightfoot²² who comes down in favour of *To gar Sina oros estin en tē Arabia*—'for

Sinai is a mountain in Arabia'—a reading adopted by the N.E.B.²³ The confusion of Hagar with the Arabic name for Mt. Sinai is discussed at length by Lightfoot,²⁴ but need not detain us here, for the allegorical use is by direct comparison of elements standing in the same row or column. Thus:

- | | | | | | |
|----|---------|---|----------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Hagar | = | Sinai covenant | = | Present Jerusalem |
| 2. | Ishmael | = | flesh | = | Children of the present
Jerusalem |
| 3. | Sarah | = | New covenant | = | Jerusalem above |
| 4. | Isaac | = | promise | = | Children of the new Jerusalem |

In Gal. 4: 29 the statement that Ishmael persecuted Isaac is of interest. The Hebrew of Gen. 21:9 speaks of 'laughing' or 'mocking', which the LXX expands to *paizonta meta Isaak tou uiou autēs*. Now *paizonta* is patient of both the meaning 'playing with' and 'hunting, pursuing and hence persecuting'. The Midrash says that Ishmael shot arrows at Isaac whilst pretending to play with him! Probably St. Paul has in mind the antagonism between the descendants as much as that between the children.

The final quotation in chapter 5: 14 scarcely requires comment. It stands as the great summary of the Law 'in one word'. A commandment never superseded but transformed by a new standard: no longer 'as thyself' but 'as I have loved you'.

1. 1 Cor. 9: 22.
2. 1 Cor. 3: 19.
3. Phil. 3: 5.
4. Phil. 3: 7.
5. 1 Cor. 1: 23.
6. J. B. Lightfoot *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians*, 1865, p. 12. See whole section pp. 1-17.
7. Lightfoot, loc. cit. p. 13.
8. Gal. 4: 22.
9. E. E. Ellis. *Paul's use of the Old Testament*. Oliver and Boyd. 1957.
10. C. H. Dodd. *According to the scriptures*. Nisbet. 1952.
11. Rendel Harris. *Testimonies*. 1916, 1920.
12. Mark 1: 2-3 gives a composite citation from Malachi and Isaiah and attributes it to Isaiah; this might easily happen in using an anthology.
13. Dodd. loc. cit. p. 132.
14. The following is taken from Lightfoot loc. cit. pp. 152-4.
15. Gal. 5: 11.
16. Lightfoot. loc. cit. p. 154.
17. The plural signifies grain or crops e.g. 1 Sam. 8: 15.
18. Lightfoot. loc. cit. p. 143.
19. Philo. de Congr. Quer. Erud. Gr. 1. p. 519 et seq.
20. Lightfoot. loc. cit. pp. 198-200.
21. *ibid.* p. 200.
22. *ibid.* p. 192.
23. J. N. Darby has 'For Hagar is Mt. Sinai in Arabia'.
24. Lightfoot. loc. cit. pp. 193-198.

THE MELCHIZEDEK CITATIONS IN THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

A. R. Millard

Genesis 14 is one of the most tantalising and mysterious passages in the history of the Patriarchs. Here is an incident in the life of Abraham which mentions four important kings by name, kings who must have been international figures in their time, yet they, and consequently the whole incident, cannot be identified or placed precisely in ancient history. Sufficient to say that it probably took place in the mid-eighteenth century B.C., in which time it fits well. So we see that Melchizedek cannot be 'pinned down' in history. His name, meaning 'King of Righteousness' or 'Righteousness is my King', is of a form common at the period in Syria and Palestine. His position as priest and king is also not unusual. Salem, his domain, is generally identified with Jerusalem, although there can be no certainty about this. It is quite probable, since Jerusalem has good communication with the Dead Sea plain.

Melchizedek appears abruptly, with the simple introduction, 'King of Salem, priest of the Most High God', and, after blessing Abram and receiving his tithe, is 'seen and heard no more'. Within these three verses we learn that Melchizedek was (i) King of Salem, and named without the genealogy customary with kings; (ii) Priest of the Most High God; (iii) respected by Abram to the extent of his giving him a tithe. Melchizedek's action in bringing bread and wine to the victorious Abram is the action of a priest, demonstrating the favour of his God, by offering tokens of fellowship (the sharing of bread and wine is a feature of the making of a covenant). It is interesting to note in passing that the Deity, whom Melchizedek served, is known from extra-Biblical sources by this same title, 'Creator of heaven and earth' (Phoenician, Ugaritic).

Psalms 110, a psalm ascribed to David, although most writers prefer a later date, resumes the theme of Melchizedek. Apparently speaking of the Messiah, it states, 'The Lord has sworn, and He will not change His mind, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek'. No indication is given of the meaning of this title, although it fairly clearly implies a priesthood disparate from the Levitical. We should note especially the words 'for ever', which can only be based upon the fact that Melchizedek is given no genealogy in Genesis, and so lives on, an explanation more explicit in Hebrews. This is, strictly, illogical, since eleven other important men are also mentioned without genealogy.

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews picks up Melchizedek in the course of his demonstration that Jesus Christ fulfils, and more than fulfils, the whole of Messianic prediction, especially as a Priest. The figure of Melchizedek is first introduced in quotation of Psalm 110 to legitimize Christ's Priesthood as appointed by God, apart from the traditional line, and this is repeated in 5: 10 and 6: 20 where Jesus has entered the Holiest place, into the very presence of God. Since He is a priest—a priest of Melchizedek's order—7 is largely concerned with a Christological com-

mentary and interpretation based upon the story of Abram and Melchizedek in Genesis 14. Heb. 7: 1-3 contain a repetition of the Genesis passage with brief interpretation of the statements concerning Melchizedek, thus the meaning of his name is given, and the fact that he has no genealogy is emphasised to the extent of saying that he is immortal. The next six verses contain a sort of homily upon the person of Melchizedek, showing his superiority to Abram, in the fact that the Patriarch himself paid tithes to the Priest. From this is also deduced the fact that his priesthood was superior to the Levitical, since 'One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him' (7: 9, 10). The following group of verses point out that the Levitical priesthood was but transient and again justifies the priesthood of the Lord, a descendant of the tribe of Judah, on the basis of Melchizedek's priesthood, who was neither a Levite nor yet a Hebrew, but acceptable to God nevertheless. Finally, the writer quotes from Psalm 110, assuring his readers that God has sworn an oath establishing Jesus in this priestly office. This office is permanent and filled by One Who has made a single, sufficient sacrifice and 'Consequently is able, for all time, to save those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them'.

The figure of Melchizedek in Genesis 14 and in Psalm 110 is used in the Epistle to the Hebrews as a prototype and precedent for the priestly office of Jesus, which the writer wishes to establish as legitimate. The words of the Psalm are naturally applicable to Him and, while we may consider some of the deductions from the Genesis passage rather far-fetched, we cannot say that they exceed the possible limits of Scriptural interpretation: there is a certain logic in their development.

If we cease from analytical examination of these chapters of Hebrews and read them as a whole, we, too, can say, both of Melchizedek, and of the 'great David's greater Son', 'See how great He is'.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, AND INTERPRETATION TODAY

G. Peter Richardson

1. In the previous papers we have examined the use of the Old Testament in Hebrews and in Paul. But in doing so, we have taken only a partial survey, for as well as being selective in what books we have chosen to examine, we have discussed only those cases in which there was an explicit quotation of the O.T. text. It must be emphasized that as well as these there are innumerable allusions to the O.T., many individual and distinctive words which are taken over, and themes which are often woven through the New Testament writings (such as Exodus, Inheritance etc.). When one takes all these into account, it will be seen that the N.T. is filled with references to the O.T.; these writers lived in the O.T.—for

them it was their Bible. We concentrated on the most exact and rigid N.T. use of the O.T., and there we found a number of factors at work: often there was a very close adherence of N.T. citation to O.T. text; and often there was what may be called a literal fulfilment of prophecy; but we have noted at a number of places that the N.T. author does not quote the text received today, for often he chooses a variant text that makes the point he wants to emphasize; we noted also that they often use a type of exegesis which makes distinctions which are foreign to the text (e.g. Zechariah 9 and Isaiah 65) or import into the text ideas which are not explicitly there (Melchizedek). That is, even in the most rigid form of reference to the O.T. (excluding any examination of less exact citations) we find what I should call 'looseness', for want of a more precise term.

2. The point of this looseness is that the N.T. authors felt the need to interpret the O.T., and to interpret it so that they made the O.T. not only more relevant to their readers, but also more relevant to the events that they had so recently witnessed—the life, death and resurrection of Christ: in large part, the N.T. engages in a Christological reinterpretation of the O.T., and this approach has at least one other effect, to make the O.T. more intelligible to the early Church. They now read it with eyes which have been changed, because they are eyes which have seen Jesus. In attempting to make this new approach as thoroughgoing as possible, they tended to indulge in whatever kind of hermeneutical principle was best suited to their purpose. Thus they could use the O.T. completely historically, so that a given O.T. passage kept its original context and became merely an example of the kind of thing under examination: Hebrews 11 is an extended group of citations of this type. There is no reapplication or interpretation, just illustration. There is also a literal kind of exegesis, which gives great significance to the very words used (in one or other text form) and the N.T. fulfilment of these words. This is common in the gospels, particularly in Mt. where the text is often not a canonical text at all, so that in fact what often seems to be a literal fulfilment is an interpreted one. Some writers have indulged also in typology (e.g. author of Hebrews) and in allegory (some in Paul), though there is little of either of these when seen in the light of the total scope of the N.T. The point is that, first of all, there is a variety of approaches in the N.T. to the O.T.; and secondly, and more important, behind this variety there lies a very basic concern to interpret the O.T. relevantly to its day. It is, in my view, all subsumed under the desire to approach the O.T. through the eyes of a Christian, and in this attempt, the O.T. material is subordinate (in the right sense) to the new things that have come to pass in Jesus Christ.

3. We believe that in so doing the N.T. authors were guided by the Holy Spirit to make these applications. Are we to assume that his guidance to them is the basis for his guidance to us on how to approach the O.T. and the N.T. as well? The question is: Can we expect the N.T. use of the O.T. to circumscribe our interpretation of the Bible? Are we committed to using only those, and all those, methods of exposition which we noted above? My own view, and this is all I can offer, is that we must go behind

the specific kinds of exegesis, and try to discern the underlying motive at work. I should suggest that the authors of the N.T. were each in his own way conditioned by his times. Logically and philosophically their presuppositions and training were different from ours. They were a part of a different kind of society than we, and therefore conditioned sociologically and psychologically in a different way. Our attitude to history, to providence, to hermeneutics, is bound to be different. We should not over-emphasise these differences, but we must recognise real and legitimate differences in outlook and background. Very few of us, I think, would accept as valid the attempt to allegorize, let us say, a parable. By and large we tend to reject this means of interpretation, and, I think, this is at least partly because our education, training and background does not dispose us towards the historical license necessary for such an attempt. In interpreting parables, or any other material, we would all recognize the need to interpret them historically, and very much in their context. Putting the matter in this way, raises questions for us in relation to those cases in the N.T. where the O.T. has been used rather too 'loosely', or in an invalid way. This we need not go into here. But it also serves to emphasize, I hope, the need for an interpretive principle which is consistent with the *aim* of the authors themselves, on the one hand, and the general methods of interpretation of one's own day. One need only survey the vagaries of interpretation on almost any passage over the course of a couple of thousand years to see that *in fact* this is done. I am making a plea for recognizing consciously this requirement.

4. We should then, maintain two emphases; the first that we deal with Scripture at its face value, literally if you like—that we pay extremely close heed to the language and the grammar of the Bible in order to understand what it *says*. And secondly, we must understand *what* it says in its historical, geographical, sociological and ethnical setting. That is to say, literalism and interpretation when properly understood are not mutually exclusive. It is only on the basis of the literal meaning of the words that we can interpret those words in a relevant and meaningful sense; *but we must have interpretation*. The question of prophecy is a special question. We may not deduce from the fact that some prophecy is fulfilled literally the principle that the whole Bible is to be interpreted on a literal basis. In such cases the literal fulfilment is determined by the coming of Christ, and it is only in retrospect that we can see such fulfilment. Moreover, much prophecy is not fulfilled literally, and I question the validity of assuming that *a priori* all prophecy will be literally fulfilled, particularly when much O.T. prophecy has been at least partially fulfilled in Jesus himself or the events surrounding His coming. In these cases it is doubtful whether we should expect *further* literal fulfilment. Moreover, it seems to me illegitimate to put both O.T. and N.T. on the same footing and to determine a schedule of events from an amalgam of two very different types of prophecy. I should prefer in these cases to try to understand what it is that God is trying to do or say or teach, and then to see how this applies to our day. But this is a particular problem, and only an aside.

5. We gain some indication of the process of re-application and re-interpretation in the Sermon on the Mount. Here there stands as an introductory consideration the principle 'not one jot or tittle shall pass away from the law', and then follows a drastic reinterpretation of that law. 'You have heard it said . . . but I say unto you . . .'; and there follows a treatment of the law on killing, adultery, divorce, swearing, retributive punishment, love and hate. *This is interpretation.* The law stands; it is by no means destroyed, but rather fulfilled. Teaching men to break the law means exclusion from the kingdom. But, the law is not self-explanatory. It must be continually brought up to date, not only in Jesus' own time, but much more so now that we can recognize the importance of His death and resurrection. Consequently any treatment of the law or ten commandments, must be viewed backwards through the N.T. to see how it is broadened, deepened, and loosened. For example, in the same kind of context, Paul says: 'For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, not kill, not steal, not covet and any other commandment is summed up in one word, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (Romans 3: 9). But we cannot stop even here. Even the N.T. words need to be interpreted today. We can only interpret the Sermon on the Mount if we understand what practices, what opponents, what abuses Jesus is addressing himself to. What is the Council, the judgment, the fire in the context of punishment for hatred? What is the practice of Judaism in the use of oaths? What is Israel's attitude to its neighbours and enemies? Wherein lies the hypocrisy in giving alms? in praying in public? in religious observances such as fasting? in judging others? But more important, how do we update these today. It is a simple thing to say, on a literal interpretation, we must not fast, we must not swear, we must not commit adultery; but perhaps by doing so we miss the whole point. We are required to interpret these words, even words of Jesus. We must ask, on the basis of the real meaning in the original setting taking into account the opponents, the culture, the unquestioned practices of the day, what is the similar situation today to which this word speaks?

6. This I take to be the nub of the whole issue. We cannot abdicate our responsibility to interpret by any facile literalism. We take the text as it stands as a Spirit breathed account of the historical facts, sayings, admonitions and exhortations—as the Word of God. We take this, and we understand it first of all in its context, a step which is indispensable to valid interpretation. Then by an understanding of our own culture, and perhaps even more by a deep consideration of ourselves and our needs, we bring up to date the Word of God, by establishing similar situations in the old and contemporary times. But here we must stress that we must shun allegory (and typology). The resemblances do not lie in small details, so that we may equate detail with detail in a literal sort of exactness. The resemblance must lie in the intent of the passage, the concern for the underlying problem or situation which can be paralleled. This, it seems to me, is precisely what the N.T. authors were trying to do, in their own way, with the methods and materials that lay close to hand. It was an attempt to relate everything to the Lordship of Christ, in the worlds which were created through him.

We must capture the emphasis on the livingness, the immediacy, of the word in the New Testament. We must realize the particularity of the Bible and that its value lies in its continuity.

PROBLEMS IN BIBLE TRANSLATION

H. Dennett

There are over fifty different versions of the English New Testament (in the whole or greater part) available to the student today, and over thirty of them are currently in print. Some are the work of individual translators, others of a committee. Some are revisions of a previous work, others a completely fresh translation.

In every one of these numerous versions felicitous and vivid renderings may be found, as indeed should be expected. But in spite of the fact that almost all English versions are the product of great labour and careful scholarship, it is only too easy to find in any one of them the harsh phrase, the unhappy choice of a word, the violation of English idiom or the fanciful rendering for which there is no authority in the original. There is in consequence still room for much research into the whole problem of Scripture translation.

It is, of course, notoriously difficult to convey both the precision and texture of a communication in one language to the speakers or readers of another language. An instructive example of this difficulty in the secular field may be seen in a French translation of Carroll's masterpiece, the 'Alice' books. The subtle sallies and frequent play on words simply will not carry over from the English original. If this be so with a merely human composition, however light may be the touch, how much more difficult must it be to translate into another tongue the words of Scripture for here behind the characteristic style of the individual writer is the specific direction of the Holy Spirit.

There are at least four distinctive styles of translation of the New Testament, each of which represents an attempted solution of the problem of conveying to the mind of the English reader the impression made by the Greek original on its first readers. A brief consideration of these diverse styles of translation will underline the whole problem of communication in English of the Word of God.

1. The Literal Style. This style imitates as far as it dare the features of the original Greek, both in syntax and vocabulary. The resulting English is always stiff, and sometimes almost unintelligible. Examples of this style are the translations by Rotherham, Young, and Darby. To a less extent the Authorized and Revised Versions come under this heading. In a literal translation the attempt is made to transport the modern reader back into New Testament times as to a strange land.

2. **The Colloquial Style.** Versions of this type are naturally in modern speech, and their general policy is to bring the New Testament scene into terms of the present day world. There are quite a number of versions of this type, including those by Phillips, Schonfield and the New English Bible in Britain, and the work of Goodspeed and Verkuyl in America.

3. **The Simplified Speech Style.** Versions in this style are produced, in part at least, to meet the needs of the newly literate. Of necessity they must sacrifice some accuracy in conforming to the restricted vocabulary that is adopted. A simplified form of syntax is generally also used. Apart from the special case of *The New Testament in Basic English*, there is *The New Testament in Plain English* by Kingsley Williams in Britain, and Dr. F. Laubach's translation of the Epistles, *The Inspired Letters*, in America.

4. **The Expanded Style.** Here translation encroaches in part upon the domain of exegesis, often with unfortunate results. The two commonly-known versions of this kind are both American. Wuest's *Expanded New Testament* and *The Amplified New Testament*.

The very existence of such diverse types of English versions of the New Testament is an admission of the formidable difficulties encountered in the work of Scripture translation.

It is a fairly sound rule that when a number of versions largely agree in the English rendering of a particular passage of the New Testament, then that passage does not present very serious translation difficulties. John 1.1 and 3.16 are examples of this. It is only translators who deliberately seek to be bizarre who depart much from the older renderings in either vocabulary or syntax. But the converse is also true. There are many passages of which the English renderings are diverse in the extreme, some in fact mutually contradictory. By this suggested rule the opening verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews is a difficult passage indeed, and the first four verses are in consequence very suitable to study in relation to the broad problem of New Testament translation.

This short passage is an extreme example of hypotaxis, and in the original it is composed of a single sentence of no less than seventy-two words, with nearly a dozen subsidiary qualifying phrases and clauses. The Authorized, Revised and several other versions retain the single complex sentence form, but this at once raises a problem. One judges that the Greek was immediately clear to its first readers, yet moderns find such complex examples of syntax difficult to follow. What is the right policy here? Is it to be 'faithful' to the original or to consider the limitations of the seemingly less linguistically agile modern readers? If the latter, how far should one go? Quite a number of recent versions break up this long, single sentence into two or three separate ones. Arthur Way, in his *Letters of St. Paul and Hebrews* goes further and uses eight sentences; Dr. F. Laubach as many as ten.

The next problem is that of word order and its attendant question of emphasis. There have been many solemn expositions of Hebrews 1 in which it has been stated that though the human author is not known, the

Epistle was manifestly dictated by God Himself, for it opens with His name. It certainly does so in the Authorized Version, but not in the original. There the stress is on the two initial words, *'polumerōs'* and *'polutropōs'*, which, by the way, are linked by an assonance which it is impossible to reproduce in an English rendering. Apart from this, the stress of an English sentence seldom comes at the beginning.

Here the versions show great diversity. Most of the recent ones open with a word other than 'God', but there is no agreement at all as to the order of importance of the several phrases which follow 'various parts and ways': 'in old time', 'unto the fathers' etc. How is the correct feel and stress of such a delicately balanced sentence to be conveyed to the modern reader?

Then comes what is probably the most difficult question in the passage, how to put into *idiomatic* English the expression 'en huiō', literally 'in Son'. To say 'in a Son' raises unintended implications; 'in His Son' though factually correct, is not a true translation, and it also misses the vital emphasis of the original. Phillips, often a master of paraphrase, simply puts 'in the Son' and leaves it at that. The only way to reproduce in English the full meaning of the original seems to be an explanatory paraphrase such as that used by Wuest, 'One who by nature is Son'. This does at least bring out the point of character which so often marks an anarthrous expression in Greek.

This short passage of Hebrews is also marked by a series of individual words which test all the resources of the translators, e.g. 'aiōn', which certainly means much more than 'world', yet 'age' is not altogether satisfactory. A full discussion of the nuances of this term alone would need an article to itself. Then there is a galaxy of specialized terms, three at least of them occurring nowhere else in the Greek New Testament, a fact which must always make translation more difficult. Among these are 'apaugasma', 'hupostasis' and 'charaktēr', over which translators have floundered wildly. Few have succeeded better than the old Geneva version of 1557 with 'the bryghtnes of the glorie, and the ingrauned forme of his personne'.

There is one Semitism in the passage, 'the word of his power', for which the idiomatic English of today would be 'his powerful (or 'mighty') word'. Compare a similar idiom in 2 Thessalonians 1:7, where the Revised is less idiomatic than the Authorized Version. It is true that readers of the older versions are familiar with such Semitic idioms which have penetrated through the Greek into English, but it is strange to find the example here cited rendered literally in such versions as the Revised Standard and New English Bible, both of which make such claims to intelligibility to the general reader.

Within the confines of this one short passage of four verses there is considerable further diversity of renderings of word, phrase and clause. Some are apt and luminous, others downright clumsy, witness the term 'purgation' in the N.E.B.

Without straying unduly into the field of interpretation, a translation should surely attempt to bring out evident implications of a term in the original text. Perhaps the most percipient work on the Epistle to the

Hebrews is still that of Bishop Westcott, and one example of such an implication may be taken from his notes on these opening verses. It concerns the word *ekathisen*, which he states 'expresses the solemn taking of the seat of authority, and not merely the act of sitting'. Yet such otherwise careful versions as Moffatt, the R.S.V., Schonfield and the Amplified are content with the plain 'sat'.

Although in the space available it has been possible to examine but a single New Testament passage, and a short one at that, the points here made could be paralleled in many others. It is admitted that even Homer could nod, and it is beyond expectation that any one translator should excel all the time. Yet it seems that there is still much room for research not merely into problems of verbal, and still more important semantic equivalence in translation, but into the deeper one of conveying to modern ears the real atmosphere and background of the New Testament documents.

MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

REVIEWS

A BIBLIOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF DISPENSATIONALISM:

By ARNOLD D. EHLERT.

(Michigan: Baker Book House, 1965. 110 pp. \$1.50)

This pamphlet of 110 pages by the Librarian at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles is reprinted from a series of articles in *Bibliotheca Sacra* (1944-1946) with an additional Bibliography. It aims to trace dispensationalism as taught from earliest times to the present. There is a historical Introduction, a chapter on definitions and early usages, and succeeding chapters on Dispensationalism from the Reformation to 1825, 1825 to 1850, 1850 to the Scofield Era, and Post-Scofield dispensationalism. (We were delighted to see that apart from the Introduction there were seven chapters!)

The author's own definition of dispensation is 'a time-period division in God's program of redemption' (see p. 64, footnote 37). This of course makes for a considerable variety of views to be exhibited in this publication. It is striking to see Darby (pp. 48-50) and B. W. Newton (pp. 51-2) so close together with no remark on the fact that their dispensational views were probably the main difference between them. In fact with such a wide definition of the word one wonders that it is necessary to establish the principle of 'time-period divisions in God's program of redemption'. On the other hand one suspects that though Dr. Ehlert does not approve of the distinction between early, and modern dispensationalism, he in fact feels that the latter is the real thing. In a footnote on page 48 he says that he has not 'sought material primarily from works on covenant theology. That much of that literature contains dispensational elements in connection with the administration of the covenant is admitted, but the viewpoint is not that of dispensationalism proper . . .'

Herein lies the problem. Covenant theology is not dispensationalism proper, but Hodge and other critics of Darby and Scofield, according to Dr. Ehlert, 'would have to admit that their objection is directed not against the larger doctrine of dispensations as time-period divisions in God's program of redemption, but against certain details of single dispensations, and related subjects, such as Israel and the Church . . .' (p. 64). These in themselves, Dr. Ehlert suggests, are not sufficient ground upon which to criticise or denounce dispensationalism itself.

Thus, the question—'What is dispensationalism proper?' does not appear to be faced. Anthony Norris Groves is not mentioned here, but his very simple dispensationalism is in the oldest Christian tradition. Is it however, the real thing? Groves said that there were four divisions of the children of God after the Patriarchs. The economy of the wanderings of Israel (faith) and that of the Promised Land (sight); the economy of the church on earth (faith) and in heaven (sight). (*See: A. N. Groves: On the Nature of Christian Influence* [Bombay 1833] p. 6ff.) One suspects

that this is fully in the tradition of the pre-1825 dispensationalists whom Dr. Ehlert enumerates, but not quite the 'dispensationalism proper' which does not include covenant theology.

When considering the rise of the Darby-Scofield dispensationalism Dr. Ehlert says nothing of the writings immediately previous to Darby's which probably influenced him more than any other. Lacunza's famous *The coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty* is not mentioned though it undoubtedly influenced Irving's thinking and almost certainly Darby's, in view of the similarities. Likewise, Tregelles in his letters recalled that when he first knew Darby, the latter was continually recommending the writings of Lambert and Agier, and shortly after, those of Olshausen. These too are omitted from Dr. Ehlert's bibliography. No reference is made to the writings of Irving and Drummond which gave rise to the Catholic Apostolic movement, though this was a form of dispensationalism run riot. In a recent work by Dr. Clarence Bass there is a brief reference to Rebal as a theologian who may have influenced Darby. The reviewer has searched at some length to find out who this man was and what he wrote, but without success. Dr. Ehlert seems to have drawn a blank likewise. These observations are made, as some readers might hope for these questions to be dealt with in this work.

Half of Dr. Ehlert's monograph is concerned with post-1825 writings and therefore in closing it may be in order to observe the fundamental weakness of the Darby-Scofield school. S. P. Tregelles, who is not mentioned in this bibliography, observed Darby's dispensationalism in its infancy and as early as 1840 saw fit to draw attention to the unity of the community of the redeemed. God may deal differently in time with the Jewish nation and the Church, but not in their eternal destinies. The salvation of the Jews must be as Christocentric as that of the Church. The identity is brought out perhaps most clearly in Hebrews 11: 40. Newton and Tregelles were dispensationalists, but their system never divided the community of the redeemed except chronologically. According to Darby's system, even in glory, the Jews and the Church will be separate.

When the word 'dispensation' comes to have this sort of significance attached to it, we have reason to be cautious, because not only the children of God and the community of the redeemed become divided but, by implication, even the mind of God. Does God have so utterly different a plan for one part of mankind, from that for another? This is the danger of what Newton called the 'grasshopper exegesis' of Darby's school of interpretation. It selects the parts of the gospels that seem in accordance with 'Christian' teaching, (a suspiciously subjective method!) and the rest becomes 'Jewish', even to the extent that half of a verse can be addressed to Jews and the other half to Christians. As a result the Gospels and their characteristic teaching (as for example, the Sermon on the Mount) are thought to be 'lower' teaching than the apostolic epistles. Sir Robert Anderson, who was an extreme dispensationalist of this sort, (believing that the promises of the Gospels, for example concerning the prayer of faith, do not apply to the present dispensation), admitted that the dispensationalism of the Powerscourt conferences was exactly contemporary with the rationalist thinking that resulted in the writings of Baur and

Strauss which put Jesus and Paul in violent opposition. (See R. Anderson: *The Silence of God*—which is omitted, together with his other works, from this bibliography.) We may well wonder wherein lay the basic difference between the different expositors.

As we said above, we are constrained to ask whether, if the people of God are divided so radically, the mind of God is not also divided in such a system. And in this connexion it is very remarkable that Dr. Ehlert has found time to speak of Rabbi Baal Katturim, Hermes Trismegistus, Zoroaster, and even Theopompus, none of whom are exactly central figures in Christian teaching, but has made no mention of Marcion. Dispensationalism is a hermeneutical problem, and one of the earliest and most far-reaching hermeneutical struggles of the early church centred on the Marcionitic system. Marcion maintained that the God of the Old Testament was a different person from the God of the New. The one was the God of the Jews, while the New Testament was concerned with Jesus the Christian God. Logically, according to his principles, he excised from the canon of the N.T. the writings that he thought were 'Jewish' which included much of the gospels, leaving an expurgated version of Luke's Gospel.

If the gnostic context of Marcion's system is replaced by the separatist background of the early nineteenth century his method sounds strangely familiar. In Darby's case, of course, Jewish writings were different from Marcion's selection: which perhaps shows how subjective the selection must be. This time they were not removed from the canon, but simply relegated, in effect, to the Old Testament. Is not this, practically, to divide the mind of God as well as the community of the redeemed children of God?

This is not merely a theoretical question. We are well aware of the untold suffering and cruelty which has resulted from the rigid principles of separation enjoined on the most extreme exclusive brethren. One may point out to these people that this is surely contrary to the Lord's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. The retort is that this teaching is irrelevant today. The God of the Jews is so utterly different from the Christian God that his basic laws of conduct are of no relevance to Christians. This would seem to be Marcionism with a vengeance, and one suspects that it is the logical consequence of a faulty hermeneutical method within dispensationalism itself.

T. C. F. STUNT

DISPENSATIONALISM TODAY: by CHARLES CALDWELL RYRIE.

(Chicago: Moody Press, 1965. 221 pp. \$3.95.)

Dispensational teaching has been a bone of contention among Evangelicals in America during the past few decades. It has been viewed as rank heresy by some students of Scripture, and it has been made the test of orthodoxy by others. Dr. Charles Ryrie, dean of the graduate school of Dallas Theological Seminary, would agree with the reviewer that it is neither.

The purpose of Dr. Ryrie's book is twofold: to correct certain misconceptions about dispensationalism which have given rise to false charges

against it, and to present positively that system as it is being taught in the latter part of the twentieth century. (Although he does not say so, it is dispensationalism in America—and more particularly at Dallas Seminary—with which he is dealing.) The author has done an admirable job in fulfilling his aims.

Some of the critics of dispensationalism have greatly weakened their case by making erroneous comparisons between the way the Bible is handled by dispensationalists and modernists, or by labelling the teaching as 'heresy'. Dispensationalists have never taught that some parts of the Bible are of no value to the Christian believer, or that there was a different way of salvation in the Old Testament under the law from that of the New Testament under grace. Whatever their critics may think are the logical conclusions of their teaching, no dispensationalist has ever held these views.

Two of the most common arguments against dispensationalism are (1) that the doctrine is a relatively recent development in the history of doctrine and (2) that it is a doctrine which is divisive (usually identified with separatism). These are both shown to be misleading and really beside the point. The test of correct doctrine is not history, but 'What does the Bible teach?' One can argue convincingly that baptismal regeneration has been the traditional teaching of the church from the earliest centuries, but this does not make it one whit less unscriptural. And, although many dispensationalists are members of separatist denominations, it is incorrect to equate dispensationalism with separatism. Many dispensationalists are in so-called 'main-line denominations', but the leaders of the separatist American Council of Christian Churches (the I.C.C.C. Council) and its overseas affiliates are almost entirely non-dispensational in theology.

Ryrie devotes chapters to (1) the definition of 'dispensation', (2) a discussion of the various dispensations, (3) the origin of dispensationalism, (4) the hermeneutics of dispensationalism, (5) salvation in dispensational teaching, (6) the dispensational doctrine of the church, and (7) dispensational eschatology. In addition, he includes a discussion of two alternatives to dispensationalism: 'covenant theology' and 'ultradispensationalism'; the system he is defending, he argues, avoids the errors of both.

The essence of dispensationalism is not in the recognition of various distinctions in biblical history; all Christians recognize at least some of these distinctions, as Ryrie admits; and it would be possible to recognize the seven dispensations of the Scofield Bible and not be a dispensationalist. No, the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism lies in (1) the radical distinction between Israel and the Church (God has two peoples and two distinct purposes for them), (2) the consistent application of the principle of the literal (normal or plain) interpretation of Scripture, and (3) the view that the ultimate purpose of God is His own glory rather than salvation (which is a subsidiary purpose). I would, however, regard only the first point as truly distinctive, for however they may differ in their conclusions from those of the dispensationalists, most non-dispensationalists also insist on the principle of literal or normal interpretation; and certainly Reformed theologians have always acknowledged that God is manifesting His own glory both in creation and in redemption.

The purpose of this review is not a detailed criticism of Dr. Ryrie's book or the system he represents. Each reader of *CBRF Journal* is urged to read the book for himself and make his own evaluation. (For those who have not examined the question in any depth, there is a select bibliography of books representing both sides appended to the book.) Here I would only pause to note that the author does not seem to recognize more than two alternative positions: one must be a dispensationalist or a covenant theologian. But the fact of the matter is that the great bulk of Evangelicals do not fall into either category. Where would one place the majority of the contributors to *The New Bible Dictionary* or *The Tyndale Commentaries*? Where would one place Lutheran Evangelicals on the one hand, or Wesleyan Evangelicals on the other? And how would one classify the great bulk of positive biblical research that is being done today by many who are not conservative Evangelicals but who are surprisingly biblical in their conclusions? 'Covenant theology' as Ryrie defines it (cf. pp. 177-191) is not really very widespread today; although a few Evangelicals here and there are doing their best to revive it, it is largely a theology of the past. The author has pointed out that the criticisms against dispensationalism are criticism against a straw-man or are far from up-to-date (which is, of course, true); I suggest that the same criticisms can be directed against his work (and, incidentally, against all the other works by dispensationalists with which I am familiar).

I would argue that one need not make a choice between dispensationalism and covenant theology. Both are, I feel, systems imposed on the biblical revelation, rather than doctrines derived from Scripture on an exegetical basis; both emphasize a certain amount of biblical truth, but both err in that they fail to do justice with other aspects of Scripture. Neither is a necessary guide to the understanding of the Bible. This was my view before reading Ryrie's book, and this is my present view.

If the views of dispensationalism or covenant theology coincide with the results of careful exegesis, then well and good. But if exegesis shows that a certain passage of Scripture seems to teach something contrary to what is taught by either of these systems, so much the worse for the system! No system has the right to serve as the hermeneutic of Scripture. If it is to be held to at all, it must come as a result of exegesis; it cannot determine exegesis. I, personally, would argue for a thorough-going biblical approach to Scripture, apart from any system (whether the system be dispensationalism, covenant theology, Arminianism, Calvinism, Lutheranism, Brethrenism, or what-have-you). The teaching of the Bible cannot be systematized into a neat package. Students of Scripture err when they seize upon some aspect of biblical truth and make this the basis of a water-tight system of theology and then interpret each passage of Scripture in this light. One must allow each passage of Scripture to speak for itself without determining in advance what it must say.

Whether or not one is 'converted' by *Dispensationalism Today*, one must commend the author for his fair presentation of the issues involved and the warm-hearted spirit he demonstrates toward those with whom he disagrees. He admits that dispensationalists have problems which are unresolved. He confesses that dispensationalists have at times given a

wrong emphasis to certain teachings, which has led in turn to misunderstanding on the part of others. He urges Evangelical believers not to emphasize the issues which divide them, but rather those which are basic and which unite us. He pleads for humility and a spirit of love on all sides. If all those who sought to express an opinion on the subject were as fair-minded as Dr. Ryrie, differences of opinion among Evangelicals would not have caused the divisions and hard feelings which they have.

WARD GASQUE

THE DECLINE OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS AND THE WAY AHEAD

Gordon F. Fowler

1. Introduction

The poor results of the usual Sunday School

A Sunday school can be packed to the doors every Sunday for many years, and yet be a failure! The gauge of success should be the percentage of pupils that grow up into Christian men and women, who gather with God's people, and contribute to the advance of God's Kingdom.

A Sunday school that keeps the child until it is thirteen or fourteen and then has nothing more to offer, is like a ladder set up from the cradle to Church membership, but with the upper half of the rungs missing. Indeed the bottom three or four rungs are usually missing as well.

2. The New Approach: The Youth Club as a bridge between Sunday school and Church membership.

(a) The need for independence

Up to the age of thirteen, the child's life centres around the home, with regular excursions to school, grand-parents, birthday parties etc. Sunday school readily fits into this pattern.

In the teenage years however, the adolescent is preparing to leave home altogether. Therefore the centre of interest shifts to work, play and courtship, with the home relegated to the position of a mere base for operations.

If the interest of the child is to be held in the change-over to adolescence, the Church should provide a framework within which this natural development can take place. There, a vivid picture can be built up in his mind, of a life that he can eagerly look forward to. This is best done by his actually observing Christian adolescents enjoying work, play, courtship and worship. The adolescent in turn should be able to observe Christian adults in vital and satisfying activity in work, play, home-building, worship and service.

The need for a youth club

No pious abstract exhortations to Godliness will suffice to bridge the gap between stages in growing up, but the young people should be led across the bridge to Christian adulthood by Christian adults who share their time and activities with them, and who make themselves available for giving counsel and help.

This means that every Sunday school, every church, should not only have a thriving Bible Class, but also a thriving Youth Club. This club can form the newly required half-way house between their parents' home and their own future home. As teen-agers have such large resources of money and spare time these days, the Youth Club and Bible Class activities may quite well comprise the largest portion of the whole of the churches' activities. The extent of the activities should be such that there should always be something to look forward to. Each week each young person

should have enough to absorb his interest and skill. This again points to a wide variety of specialised activities. A large youth club should have as many as forty different specialist sections, to cater for every talent and interest.

The youth club to be independent of the church

One of the greatest steps the adolescent makes, is that from parental control to self-determination. The youth club should therefore be largely self governing, with a youth committee having considerable powers. This raises some difficulties, because decisions will inevitably be made that clash with established Assembly principles and practices. Yet it is not reasonable to expect young people with immature faith, or newcomers with very little instruction, to appreciate the finer points of Church doctrine. It would be therefore advisable to make the youth club independent of the church. The club will then be able to get on with its plans, without feeling that the church is 'on its back' preventing it from fulfilling its cherished desires.

Need for a youth club management committee

A management committee should also be set up to oversee the affairs of the club, and this can form an effective bridge between the church and the non-church going parents of the club members. Some of these will be interested in promoting the welfare of their children, and will be glad to sit on the committee. Their ideas should be taken seriously, however unorthodox, and they will often support the activities they suggest with vigour and enthusiasm, if they are allowed the scope. This will probably involve jumble sales, sales of work, carol singing, barbecues, garden fêtes etc., usually associated with raising money for the club.

Youth club as bridge

The youth club and management committee can then be regarded as a half-way house between the world and the church. It should be kept in a constant state of 'unstable equilibrium' balanced by prayer. If the prayer slackens, it will show signs of toppling towards the world. If the Christians are too insistent on having their own way, the flow of unbelievers into it will cease and the membership drop away. If through earnest prayer, and enthusiastic service, the club is kept in a healthy condition, there should be a constant stream of youngsters and adults through the club into the church.

The need for continuous prayer meetings

The more prayer there is, the more vigorous will be the flow from the world into the church. Probably the best possible way to achieve this, is to have a continuous prayer meeting running at the same time as the activities. Christian young people and helpers who find themselves at a loose end for a while can slip into the prayer meeting and tip-toe out again. Where this has been tried, the workers running the activity have said they can feel the power of prayer coming through from the prayer meeting.

The social life of adults should be catered for

Proper arrangements should be made to receive the club and management members who become interested in spiritual things. This will probably take the form of Junior, Senior and Adult Bible classes on Sunday, and informal discussion evenings with refreshments, either at church or better, in private homes during the week: i.e. there should be something to more than compensate for the loss of 'Pub' and Bingo club life. The church should become a Christian community centre.

Young Peoples' Fellowship

Young people who are converted and baptized should be encouraged to join a Young Peoples' Fellowship attached to the church. They can then embark on a dynamic programme of witness, both in the church, the club and outside, using Christian Beat-groups, choirs etc.

(b) Co-operation with non-Christians

It may be feared by some, that the freedom and responsibility given to outsiders both in management and youth committees, would be a source of great weakness, leading the young people away into worldliness. However quite the contrary can be the case. Even if the Christians are in the minority, they have the power of God with them to keep things moving in the right direction, through earnest prayer, and enthusiastic service. Even if compromises have to be made the whole question can be fully discussed, and the Biblical point of view forcefully put. The unbeliever will then be able to see how relevant the Scriptures are, even if they do not agree with them at first.

The question of 'Separation': our Lord's example

Besides having fears about the wisdom of co-operation with non-Christians, some may object on the doctrinal ground that Christians should be separate from unbelievers, and that to receive any contribution from them is to become contaminated in some way. However, it should be noted that even though Our Lord was 'Holy, undefiled, and separate from sinners', he was also a 'friend of publicans and sinners'. Only by this identification with the sinner, can he be drawn towards God.

The Lord Jesus could quite well have kept separate from sin by remaining in Heaven, in all its spotless perfection and Glory. However, in order to draw all men to Himself, He came down to this sinful earth and became intimately involved in it, to the extent of being born as a human child. Again, it would have been of no avail if, when He died for their sins, as their substitute, they did not understand or heed. The process He used to break down the barriers, was one of giving, receiving, explaining and training. He gave through His miraculous powers to heal and help. He received hospitality, food and drink. The point of contact with the woman at the well was that He asked her for a drink. She was so startled that He, a Jew, should give her the opportunity to give Him something, that her normal barriers of race prejudice were lowered, and He could use the interest raised as a point of contact. From this He could explain His mission.

Lowering barriers

The Christian Church has a great opportunity for service in helping bring up the children of the community. If we are to follow Our Lord's example, we should welcome any contributions an unbeliever can make. This helps to lower the barriers of suspicion and mis-understanding, the contributor soon becomes interested; then involved. This leads to many questions being asked, many discussions naturally ensuing. Finally the interested newcomer will be eager to take up training.

Transitional stages to be encouraged

Even if a nominal Christian asks if he can help teach in the Sunday school, this offer should be welcomed, but it should be tactfully explained that he will not be expected to teach, until both parties are happy that the content of the teaching is understood, agreed and believed. At first the interested outsider should be asked to help with the infant classes, or sit in on the older classes, and after Sunday school, be introduced to a teacher-training course. Provided things are kept moving in the right direction, almost any obstacle can be overcome. During the teacher-training course the gospel will be fully explained and the nominal Christian has an excellent opportunity of becoming a real Christian, in which case he will become a fully accepted teacher on completing the course. If however, some find they cannot yet accept the Gospel, they can be told that this bars them from teaching, but they are still welcome to help as before, while they think it over, provided they are hopeful they will be able to believe in due course.

In many even small churches, one person or more a year may be turned away, who might otherwise find their way to salvation and Church membership, if their problems were handled in a more generously helpful way.

The Church is on the attack

Another doctrinal fallacy, connected with accepting contributions from unbelievers, stems possibly from the mis-understanding of the Scripture 'and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it'. . . . It is assumed that this means that the powers of Hell will never defeat the Church. This completely reverses the meaning of the Scripture, giving the impression that the Church is on the defensive and not on the attack.

Many Christians think that given half a chance, unbelieving men of the world will flood into the Church and undermine its testimony. However the opposite should be the case. Men should fear to have anything to do with the Church, lest they find themselves unable to resist being converted, 'for God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, and love and self-control'. 2 Tim. 1: 7 R.S.V.

Once the doctrine is accepted that the Church is not on the defensive, but on the attack, the scope of youth-work is enormously increased. Coupled with the doctrine that contributions from un-believers should be welcomed, the possibility of co-operation with all kinds of individuals and organisations is opened up. The youth club can then become a base, from which youngsters can launch out into scores of activities that give them

endless opportunities for witness. The loss of members from many a youth club is largely due to the lack of scope offered. Young people like to circulate, to sample all kinds of activities, interests and skills in order to discover themselves, their own talents and aptitudes. If they can find this scope within the reach of the base club itself, they are less likely to become restless and move on.

(c) *Problems and solutions*

Accommodation

The initial accommodation is often a problem, but this can sometimes be solved by investigating the spare capacity of other organisations. It is seldom that a Boys' club or Youth club is open every night of the week. If approached, they may be quite happy to rent the accommodation for one night a week for a very small sum. Some of their own members may find themselves at a loose end on that night and may wish to join both clubs. It may also be possible to affiliate as a group, and so enjoy access to duplicating equipment, club insurance etc. Membership cards should be used to avoid gate-crashing.

Summer evenings

The advent of summer poses a problem as the lengthening evenings tempt the youngsters out of doors. The answer is to transfer one's activities to the open air. Again a quick start can be achieved by affiliation with existing clubs; tennis clubs, canoe clubs, archery clubs etc.

Clubs for affiliation

The club concerned should of course be chosen with care. The atmosphere should be helpful and not too worldly. It would be asking for trouble to affiliate with a club that spends most of its time 'jiving and necking' or where drugs are being peddled, though even this could be overcome by prayer and effective Christian witness.

The most helpful type of club will probably be either a one-sex general activity club, such as the National Association of Boys' Clubs, or a specialist sports club for canoeing, archery, swimming etc. One can often make a contribution to their welfare by making up the numbers for a class to be instructed by a coach from the City or County Youth Organisation, as these normally require a minimum of twelve to form a class.

The young people can usually be steered away from the more worldly aspects of the specialist sports clubs, by providing an attractive alternative. For instance, if when the session is over, the other club adjourns to the pub, the church club can be invited to coffee at the leader's home, or back at the church possibly for a committee meeting or discussion. Older established Christian teen-agers might sometimes go with the others to the pub to sip orange juice and witness to the non-Christians, but the youngsters should naturally be attracted away.

Opportunities should be watched for not only witnessing to the other club's members, but also to the leaders. These are often sincere, dedicated souls, who will grasp at the faith, if they only could hear it.

Care should be taken to impress upon the young people that the Christian alternative in any club or personal decision is ultimately the more attractive and worth while.

By this means a great deal can be achieved with very little staff, one man and one woman each being able to handle twelve youngsters of their own sex.

Minibuses

Lack of accommodation can be alleviated by the use of minibuses. This brings rallies, barbecues, swimming galas and camps organised by churches in other towns within reach. Little preparation is needed and the young people gain a sense of belonging to a larger group rather than a tiny minority. The minibus too is surprisingly versatile, seating twelve or more and all their luggage. It can also serve as an ordinary private car: provided certain conditions are complied with, 'buses are not subject to restrictions usually placed on commercial vehicles. In case of doubt the local Traffic Officer, who is usually most co-operative, should be consulted.

It should be noted that in Our Lord's time the general mode of transport was on foot. The Lord Jesus Himself took the twelve disciples around with Him by that means of transport. Nowadays it could be the Lord's will that each Bible class or Sunday School teacher should take his or her twelve disciples (their class) about with them in a modern form of transport. If not public transport, this could be a minibus.

Cars are regarded universally as a status symbol, and many a Christian will feel it 'infra-dig' to change from a private limousine to a converted commercial vehicle, but this could well be the modern version of the 'reproach of the Cross'. The minibus could become the Christian status symbol.

Small beginnings

The club and Bible class described can start with very small beginnings, such as the senior class of the Sunday School, but it may quickly snowball. School children will bring all their class mates and those at work their work mates. This is where discipline has to be watched carefully, and every effort made to create a high morale, with a feeling of common purpose. Young people should be encouraged to take on responsibility, so that in years to come they themselves will form the leadership.

Inter-dependence of Bible class and club

The Bible class should be run parallel with the club, but be independent of it. There should be an open invitation for club members to join the Bible class. Rather the Bible class should be so enjoyable that the newcomers to the club will naturally want to join from what they hear from the others, but no pressure should be brought to bear. If summer camps, rallies, barbecues etc., are associated with the Bible class, as opposed to the club, these will draw them in, besides the interest aroused by the Bible class members' enthusiastic singing of choruses on outings etc.

The need for Bible class prayer meeting

The Bible class members should be encouraged to pray for the others, and for God's guidance and blessing on all their activities. This can be done by having a period of testimony, discussion and prayer before or after Bible class each Sunday. As the discussion proceeds, the leader notes down a list of items for prayer. Then all prayer volunteers take turns to pray briefly and pertinently for each item on the list, till all are cleared.

Junior Church

Young Christians are often very shy about praying in public, and may find too large a gap between the Bible class prayer meeting and the Church prayer meeting. This will equally apply to the Breaking of Bread service. It may be that a separate Junior Church Breaking of Bread service should be arranged for them, led by the Bible class teachers to start them off. As they grow older, they will then come to the stage when they feel it natural to transfer to the main church service. Breaking Bread at Bible class may also avoid difficulties with unbelieving parents who may feel that Breaking Bread with the church proper is too big a step to take.

Junior Leaders

Young people can then learn how to become part of the leadership, becoming junior leaders, then senior leaders. They can help the adult leaders run their various sessions and ultimately take charge. The club can then grow steadily, constantly providing more scope for its members.

Accommodation will always be a problem, but we must remember that 'a man's life consisteth not in the things that he possesses'; so the spiritual side of the work is always the most important, but the Lord will provide what little is needed.

(d) Practical Applications

As the work grows, and special accommodation becomes a possibility, careful consideration should be given to the type of building required. Care should be taken to avoid letting the building cramp later development, so it should be adaptable and extendable. It should not be a copy of a pagan shrine, as most of the Christian church buildings down the ages have been. It could quite possibly be something completely different.

The Peckham experiment

The church of the future might well look at the Peckham Health Centre as a model for its buildings among other things. This was a sociological and medical experiment in which the scientists hoped to find the secrets of a healthy society.

The building was on two floors, the upper floor being the main public area. This flanked an indoor swimming pool in the centre, a multi-purpose assembly hall on one side and a gymnasium on the other side. The activities going on could be observed from galleries on the main public area. A cafeteria/coffee bar was included on the far side of the swimming pool,

from which diners could watch the swimmers. On the roof was a roller skating rink, and on the ground floor were changing rooms, workshops, committee rooms etc. The grounds were furnished with a children's playground, tennis courts etc.

The purpose was to form a social focus for the local community, and in this it was highly successful. Local families were encouraged to join as a complete unit, but at first only the children came, the parents continuing to follow their established social habits at the local pub etc. However the children persisted in bringing their parents along to see how they were progressing with their favourite activity, such as swimming, till eventually the parents too became enthusiastic about the place. All kinds of adult activities were then developed by the members themselves, some of them reaching national and international standards.

The experiment was run on a purely scientific and rationalistic basis. The scientists in their report state that they had to be careful not to underestimate the nature of human beings, just as biologists had for many years taken for granted that the Mexican axylotl was merely a tadpole-like aquatic species, as it could reproduce in its tadpole state. Only many years after was it realised that this tadpole was going through a mere stage in becoming a salamander; a creature with vastly superior powers and mode of living. Thus though the scientists knew this problem, they seem to have been blind to the eternal destinies of man in the spiritual realm.

This experiment could well be repeated by the Church, using Christian doctors, psychologists, youth leaders etc. to ensure the complete spiritual, mental and physical health of all its members. Having given due regard to the true spiritual potentialities of man, the results should be markedly different.

An experiment commenced

The principles described above have been tried out in a small way at Warwick Gospel Hall. There a Sunday School had been running for forty years and must have had 400 children pass through it. Only four of these had come into church fellowship (not counting children of church members) making a 1% success. The rest had all left at fourteen or so. Some had stayed on till sixteen in a Bible class, but most of these got married and were not seen again.

An opportunity to start another Bible class presented itself when a nurse in fellowship took an office-hours job, making her available at week ends. A brother who was available every other week joined her, and organised speakers for the week end when he was away.

Six girls from the top class were moved up to the Bible class, which was started off in the front room of an old lady who came to church. There was no musical instrument, so choruses were put on a tape recording. The girls soon brought their school friends, and soon twenty-four boys and girls were crammed into the small room. This unfortunately led to congestion and friction, and without a nucleus of Christians it was difficult to run a satisfactory class: consequently many left. However with persistence, this was eventually overcome.

The social needs of Bible Class members

It was realised from the start that previous Bible classes had probably failed because the social aspect was neglected: young people always want a friend to do things with, so arrangements were made to help the young people to make friends with their fellow Bible class members. For this purpose they were invited to tea in the church on Sunday afternoons in the winter and to Bible class picnics in the summer. At first, for the winter sessions, the class was divided in half, and as one half prepared the tea, the other half was taken for a ride in the car. Then after tea the second half washed up and prepared the church for the Gospel Meeting while the remainder were taken for a ride. They would then all stay for the Gospel Meeting.

Gospel Coffee Bar

This arrangement was not entirely a success, as the Gospel Meetings were generally focussed on the adults, and the young people became restless. They prefer something more informal. Accordingly they are now taken across to a Gospel Coffee Bar called Sunday Special, run by a Methodist church at 8 p.m. in the neighbouring town of Leamington. This has been a great success and hardly a week goes by without someone being converted or being counselled. There is free coffee, and Christian Beat Groups sing Gospel songs to electric guitars, drums and cymbals, interspersed with testimonies and short addresses. The older leaders engage in prayer in the prayer room continuously, while the junior leaders engage the young people in conversation at the tables. When they have finished a session at a table they drop in at the prayer meeting and give a report on progress. They say a few prayers and return.

This venture is so popular, that if the minibus is not available for some reason one week, and the young people have no money for the 'bus, they walk the three miles there and three back. When the minibus is available they usually implore the leader to take them home the long way round through the country lanes, where they can make as deafening a noise as possible singing choruses etc. This they thoroughly enjoy and it seems to round off the day for them.

Week night activities

It was soon realised that contact with the young people on Sundays alone was not sufficient. It was also all very well to get them to know one another, but a bridge must be found between them and the assembly; and between their parents and the assembly, the latter being most important, because if the parents see their youngsters growing up into a different kind of person from themselves, through the influence of a church they do not understand, they may stop them coming.

A difficulty arose here however as the young people coming along straight from worldly families behaved in such a way that the church members were continually complaining of being associated with them in any way, lest they should bring disgrace upon the assembly. The activities suggested by the young people and their parents such as jumble sales, raffles etc. were also frowned upon for the same reason.

Independent youth club

It was therefore decided to form an independent youth club, that could be recognised by the County youth organisation. The leader accordingly took a part time youth leader's course, which was very instructive. A Management Committee was formed of interested parents from outside, together with the youth leaders from the church. This enabled the young people to have their own committee, which had powers to decide what they could do, under the guidance of the leader.

Affiliation with other clubs

The first step was to affiliate with the National Association of Boys' Clubs, and to obtain permission to use their games room on the night when they themselves were not using it. This was a great success, there being two table tennis tables, billiards, darts, chess and a coffee bar. However when the lighter evenings came on, the attendance dropped off, so at a committee meeting it was decided to investigate the possibility of canoeing. The following week the club paid the two guinea affiliation fee for joining Leamington canoe club. There were two double canoes and three single canoes, giving seats for seven without any expenditure beyond paddles and life jackets. (In the winter the canoe club books the local swimming baths for an hour a week and the affiliated club joins in with this.)

Jumble sales

To raise money for the required equipment, jumble sales were organised by the parents and £27 was raised at the first sale held in the local Congregational Church Hall. The County Youth Organisation also made a grant of £10.

Girls' section

A separate section was arranged for the girls, and they now have swimming sessions on a separate night, and it is hoped to have hair-dressing sessions etc. for the older ones in the future.

On Saturdays the young people are taken in the private minibuses and cars to rallies, swimming galas, barbecues etc. organised by the Birmingham assemblies, and in the summer they share in the camp at Exmouth for 250 children. The older ones are taken to Filey Crusade week, or to Christian Guest Houses.

Very profitable discussions are often enjoyed with the parents when calling at their homes to fix up details for jumble sales etc. sometimes lasting till nearly midnight. Parents have started coming to church, and some of the young people are asking about baptism, so the gap may soon be bridged.

When this kind of thing starts happening, the Devil will surely attack, so constant prayer is required to keep Him at bay. The young people are encouraged to realise this for themselves through their discussions and prayer meetings on Sunday afternoons.

If these methods of bridging the gap both between the Sunday school and church fellowship, and between the parents and the church, really work, there should be more than ten baptisms a year. At this rate, any small struggling church will be completely transformed in a decade. If they were successfully put into practice by all Assemblies and Evangelical churches, God could use this to change the course of history.

CORRESPONDENCE

MR. B. P. SUTHERLAND, (4451 Tyndall Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., Canada), writes:—

I offer a few comments on the April 1967 issue of CBRFJ, which I find disappointing and somewhat disturbing.

Much of Mr. Clines's criticism is a matter of definitions, which in ordinary practice and also in his article are not too precise. Admittedly many brethren speak of the service for the breaking of bread as the 'worship meeting', but this does not mean that we imagine that worship is limited to that service. Neither does the designation 'morning meeting' imply that no other service should be held in the morning. One could equally criticize the term 'service of worship' common in other circles.

The first objection then seems to be that Brethren hold a separate service for the breaking of bread, and other collective acts which could be described as worship (for example, intercessory prayer and Bible teaching) are carried out by the church at different times. To many of us the hour a week devoted primarily to remembrance (the specific command) and that worship which expresses the resulting realization of the Lord's great worth and our utter unworthiness—this is a most blessed and hallowed experience that seldom fails to stir our souls. It is normal at the close of the service to announce forthcoming activities, special personal needs and other matters which are briefly mentioned in the concluding prayer, but the church's collective intercession is usually concentrated at a mid-week or other service regularly convened for the purpose. Similarly, Bible teaching, instruction of the young, Gospel preaching, are carried out at other services as most convenient for those concerned. What is so wrong about all this? Comparison of the Anglican Morning Prayer and the Brethren Breaking of Bread is thus beside the point.

In my experience it is nothing unusual at the breaking of bread service to acknowledge our sinfulness and unworthiness; indeed, the realization of these seems inevitable on this occasion. Nevertheless Matthew 5: 23-24 and 1 Corinthians 11: 28 suggest that specific sin should be confessed and dealt with prior to the communion service. The Old Testament sacrifices necessarily involved the remembrance of sin (Heb. 10: 3) but the worship of the New Covenant rejoices in the assurance of effective forgiveness. One would therefore expect this thought to dominate the service in which we remember Jesus Christ our Lord and His once for all sacrifice.

It is not to be expected that all Christians will find the Brethren type of communion service the best for themselves. But no more will all agree with the formal type using written liturgy, proposed by your writers. To many Christians, not only Brethren, this kind of service is uninspiring repetition. After some experience I suggest it is a vain hope to suppose that a form of service can be developed to satisfy all the Christians except of a very small community, perhaps. One might well question whether it is a desirable objective. It seems that there are marked differences in the preferences of various Christians as to the form of services in which they best serve the Lord and that any attempt to insist on uniformity will be strongly resisted.

In one community in which I lived, the Brethren joined with the other local churches on numbers of special occasions for services of intercession, thanksgiving or other purpose. There was no difficulty in agreeing on an acceptable form including written prayers, responsive readings, extemporaneous activities and so on as seemed best. On other occasions we participated in community services when in each church building the form would follow the normal pattern for that denomination, with Christians from other fellowships participating freely. But there has been no desire that I have seen to make radical or permanent changes in the individual forms of service as a result of this joint activity.

One thing that particularly disappoints me about this issue of the *Journal* is the situation disclosed as to Brethren meetings in Great Britain. After reading High Leigh conference reports and the like over the years, we would have anticipated that the openness and freshness of view evident would have developed in corresponding practice. Some years ago in the assembly of which I was then a member, we used one of the High Leigh reports as the basis of a series of Bible studies and modified our practices as we found it written in the Scriptures, all with the full agreement of the whole assembly.

But Mr. Clines indicates that the pattern cannot be varied even to allow two hymns in succession. Surely he could have made this little variation on occasion if it had seemed desirable. In this country it is by no means uncommon, nor is it anything strange to have a Scripture reading immediately after the opening hymn. If the situation with you is so difficult what hope is there for the radical changes outlined by Mr. Stunt? Would it not be wiser within the liberty available to make sure that the prayers are of higher quality, by Dr. Short's methods or others, and similarly to make adequate preparation for fresh if brief exposition of Scripture unfolding the redemptive work of God and the glories of Christ? Within its present open structure our familiar Breaking of Bread service can still be an effective vehicle for worship and a means of blessing to the participants. Those who prefer the Anglican form of service can find it in those churches.

MR. J. P. U. LILLEY, (3 Ashleigh Close, Horley, Surrey), writes:—

Doubtless many of us have fretted for years under the 'P. B. Prayer-book', and sought in our little corners to disown and discard it. Doubtless we have often been grieved at the evident lack of true spontaneity in prayer, and experienced some of the obstacles in ourselves. It is beyond question that the shortcomings we would acknowledge in our worship are at least partly due to a cliché-ridden and shallow appreciation of the Lord and of his work in us. David Clines seems to leave open (p. 11) the question, whether the situation requires the development of a written liturgy, or a development of liturgical consciousness according to the gifts which may be given; but the latter would seem to compromise the basic definition of liturgy as a 'set form'.

The justification of a set form of worship meeting seems to be that, without it, some important features of worship might be omitted, so that

our worship would be defective and even wrong theologically. The argument, being applied to the breaking of bread, presupposes that the principal object of that meeting is worship. This does not seem to me to be so, on Biblical grounds; and I do not find it proved, but only assumed, in the articles now published. Without wishing to deny to any church the liberty of such emphasis or such breadth of scope as it may approve, I miss in (for example) the Anglican Communion service that concentration on the remembrance of the Lord and of his covenant which I look for in an assembly.

A great deal has been based on the requirements not merely of worship, but of 'public worship'. Is the idea of 'public' worship really Biblical in a Christian (as distinct from a Jewish) context? To derive this from the command to take a prayerful interest in public affairs would, with respect, be straining the evidence. I question whether public worship (of which the Roman and Anglican churches presumably have the fullest experience) does, of itself, 'enthroned God in the life of the community' in any sense which is compatible with the theology of the Christian gospel.

However, if it is contended that the assembly can only fulfil its ministry by making its worship acceptable to other *Christians*, we may readily agree that it is our minimum duty not to make things difficult for them, without thereby being compelled to bring all aspects of worship into the celebration of the Lord's supper. Similarly, with regard to gifts of ability to lead in prayer, and to read the Scriptures, before a congregation; if the recognition of these gifts, and the corresponding liturgical discipline which Mr. Stunt envisages, would encourage other Christians to join us more freely in worship, it does not follow that this discipline is appropriate for the intimacy of the 'supper' of remembrance. Here worship is an unselfconscious response rather than a deliberate exercise. The theology of it is safeguarded by the preoccupation. It is not a cliché that the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us. Where this is a reality, Christians of most diverse traditions appreciate it.

There seemed to be a promise that a fellowship of believers, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, would be taught by him to worship from the heart as the occasion of their meeting required. His teaching might well come in part through written ministry or discussion, but it would be essentially the inward operation of spiritual growth. Is this a myth—or have we failed to experience it simply because we have not learnt to listen to the Spirit?

Where the principles of spiritual freedom are maintained, and there is spiritual failure, the shortcoming will be evident and painful. One of the dangers of formality—whether the code be written or unwritten—is that by ensuring a reasonably satisfactory performance it dulls the awareness of the essential failure.

Some years ago I used to commute from the coast, and quite a few Christians shared a certain compartment from time to time. There was one who never said a word, but I was sure he was of the Family. One evening as we were alone and he was about to leave the train, he broke the ice and introduced himself as a member of a Congregational church. 'We set a very high standard of worship, you know', he said with a most

gracious smile. I didn't know what to say, and the ice froze again; there was no fellowship.

This is not for one moment to deny the need for improvement and for clearing of rubbish; but I should hate to do anything to inhibit a young brother—or sister—from simply giving thanks at the breaking of bread.

Miss E. M. ELLIOTT, (2 Ashbourne Avenue, London, N.W.11), writes:—

I have read the articles on liturgy in the current CBRFJ with great interest, though not entire agreement.

A liturgical service may be shewn on paper to be the perfect service of worship for the people of God, but if it cannot be operated satisfactorily in the average congregation of Brethren, then I say 'Away with it'. Your contributors may not realize what a doleful thing liturgy is in a small church of average musical ability. I am assistant organist at an Anglican church in Central London, and despite all my efforts, the small weekday congregation timidly bleat the responses and mutter the confessions. The members of my Brethren assembly, who now sing hymns with enthusiasm, even if they say or sing nothing else corporately, would doubtless go the same way in time. At first they would take part with interest and vigour, then gradually the repetitiveness of the act of worship would begin to tell, and with minds elsewhere they would mumble their way through 'We have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep' (or whatever other rubric our Liturgical Commission adopts!) till they might just as well be saying the proverbial 'Rhubarb, rhubarb'. This may be pessimistic, but I fear the worst when we cannot command large congregations with a feeling for beautiful words and music, nor have we the good organists of the 'denominations'.

There would be numerous people whom we would alienate by any attempt to make our services into complex dramas actable only by the initiates. Take the case of a boy from a non-Christian home who has been brought to the Lord by means of a Bible Class run on hymn-sandwich lines. One such boy said to me 'You can plug in straightaway to our services'! And so you can; the pattern is familiar, whether it is a continuous service conducted by one man, or the traditional 'morning meeting'. Have I the right to insist on a pattern that is unfamiliar to this boy and, since he is a self-confessed philistine, unlikeable? Surely our present types of service make our meetings an 'available mount for all believers', for there is both order and simplicity. Everyone, from the Bible-class boy to the most intellectual and well-taught Christian, can contribute something and gain something in a flexible method of worship. Don't let us rivet together again those chains that bind even the most evangelical Anglicans!

I am not sure either that the contributors are seizing on the real weakness of the Brethren at the present day. Of course they were dealing with one aspect of our church order to the deliberate exclusion of others, but I am convinced that the order and method of public worship would cease to be much of a problem if the standard of ministry were improved. I know from my own experience that it is when I am receiving mediocre

ministry (as opposed to good or downright bad) that I have hankered after the ordered beauty and peace of the 'highest' ritual I can find. Bad preaching drives one to change one's church; mediocre is more subtle. One is fed sometimes, so one goes elsewhere not for teaching, which one imagines one *is* getting, but for 'experiences'. There is, however, no substitute for ordered, systematic exposition of the Word of God Sunday by Sunday. Until this is the rule in all Brethren assemblies, no amount of prettying up the service will quicken us into life. Unfortunately, it is still easier to invite our brother X from Y Gospel Hall and give him *carte blanche*. Many of us (especially my fellow-sisters who can only suffer in silence!) know what this *carte blanche* is used for, i.e. endless anecdotes which draw attention to the preacher, not to Christ, and 'simple Gospel' which is bad for the Christians present, for they will become either smug or bored. This does not, I agree, deal with the question of the 'morning meeting' directly; but if the evening service were a time of spiritual building of the church (and ordered presentation of Christian doctrine to outsiders) then it would not matter so much if the morning meeting were purely remembrance of the Lord. What is so bad at the moment is that in the morning we have five minutes of blessed thoughts and in the evening thirty minutes of amplified John 3: 16, so that no-one can really grow in their knowledge of the Scriptures. If our congregations were all well-instructed—and not just the leading brethren—*then* we should have meaningful worship.

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