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Does the Bible Prohibit Blood Transfusions?

(This article is published by request).

FROM God's message to Noah and his family after they had been delivered from the flood of waters, we read—
"Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you ; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." (Gen. 9:3, 4.) From this definite instruction to Noah and his sons we see that God forbade His ancient people to drink the blood of the lower animals.

As the science of transferring blood from one human being to another in order to save life was not known in ancient times, it is understandable that there is no direct reference to it in the Word of God. Our conclusions as to whether blood transfusions can be properly placed in the same category, from God's standpoint, as the assimilation of the blood of beasts through the digestive organs must be based wholly upon the principles involved, rather than direct statements of the Bible.

There are generally to be found in the Scriptures certain principles for guidance as to what would be correct or incorrect, even though so often we cannot expect the exact wording of the Bible on the particular matter.

It will be clearly realised that in contrast to God forbidding His ancient people to drink the blood of lower animals, it is human blood that is used in the science of blood transfusions. Another important contrast is that drinking the blood of lower animals necessitates their death, while blood transfusions do not require the death of those who donate their blood. Very often, it is said, it is quite helpful for people to donate blood ; those particularly full-blooded or strong do not find it in the least detrimental. Further, benefits from drinking the blood of animals reach the system through the digestive organs, while in transfusions the blood of the donor is channelled directly into the bloodstream of the patient. It is a completely different process altogether. Apparently, then, there is no similarity between the ancient custom of drinking blood, which was forbidden by the Lord, and the modern science of blood transfusions.

Turning to God's instructions to Israel in Leviticus 17, given some considerable time after the days of Noah, we find the same strict prohibition against eating blood in verses 10 and 11. It is good that we see the importance of this matter

that God gave to ancient Israel, because the same laws given to Israel are certainly most appropriate for us to observe today. "Whatsoever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood ; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls ; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Again in Lev. 19:26 we read—"Ye shall not eat anything with the blood," meaning that it must be properly drained of blood. Deut. 12:16, 23, gives us further information,—
"Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh."

There could be no excuse for the Israelites to be misinformed in regard to this important instruction from the Lord to abstain from eating blood of the animals which God gave them for food, and which was also used to make atonement. As we read in Lev. 17:11 that the blood was given upon the altar to make an atonement for their souls, we realise that such "atonement" made by the blood of animals was of a typical nature only, and pointed forward to the atonement which would be made for Adam and his race by Jesus' blood. Even though it was typical, it was most important that animal sacrifices be carried out strictly to the letter—that the blood of animals be not used for any other purpose than that which God determined it should be, and laid down in these laws for His intelligent people.

Hebrews 9:22 tells us, “And almost all things are by the Law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood there is no remission.” We remember the important incident of the offerings of Cain and Abel, recorded in Gen. 4:3-5. “And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord.

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof.” Cain was a worker of the soil, and he thought he was bringing to the Lord his best fruits, his best production of the soil. But Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock. “And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering ; but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth ? and why is thy countenance fallen ? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted ? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.” Abel was in touch with the Lord, his mind was in tune, and he knew what the Lord would desire. It was not for Cain to offer what he thought the Lord would accept; it is not for us today to offer what we think would be acceptable to the Lord. We need to find out God’s will from His Word. Abel brought the firstlings of the flock for sacrifice. God accepted that because it was pointing forward to the sacrifice of Christ. Cain’s offering was not a type, and God did not appreciate such offerings at all. We see the point, that God accepted the typical offerings of those in harmony with His will, and the same principle applies to us today.

Continuing with Paul’s words in Heb. 9:23, we read—“It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these,”—It was necessary, because God arranged that types should be made of the animal sacrifices. That is why Paul is saying, “the patterns (or pictures) of things in the heavens should be purified with these” —these animal sacrifices and the sprinkling of their blood. “But the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.” Yes, even with the blood of Christ.

We see, then, that as the blood of bulls and goats pointed forward to the shedding of Jesus’ blood, God attached great sacredness to animal blood, and for this reason did not want the Israelites to consider it common or for use as an ordinary food. Holding the blood of animals as sacred would impress the great value of the atonement of Jesus upon the minds of all Israelites who were God’s covenant people.

It may be asked, What relationship is there between God’s prohibition on eating the blood of animals and the matter of refusing blood transfusions ? As previously stated, God’s command had to do with the blood of animals only, and the prohibition was against receiving blood into the digestive organs. In the case of blood transfusions, no animal blood is used, and the human blood is not taken into the digestive organs, but transferred to the bloodstream of the patient. We feel that is a great distinction which should always be kept in mind. Therefore there is no similarity between eating blood of animals and receiving transfusions of human blood into the bloodstream. Further, we know of no Scriptures which could give the slightest indication that blood transfusions should be rejected by Christians or anyone else.

In New Testament times a problem was presented to Jewish Christians in the early church when Gentile converts began to associate with them. These Gentiles were sincere in their acceptance of Christ, but seemingly in many cases their Christian faith was merely superimposed upon their forms of heathen worship, many of which were abhorrent to Jewish believers. Certain Jewish teachers in the church thought to discipline their Gentile brethren by insisting that they obey the ordinances of the Law, such as circumcision. The Apostles, and others more mature in the faith, met in conference at Jerusalem to decide what should be done about this problem. In view of the circumstances, they agreed on a minimum requirement for Gentile converts, and the decision was given first of all by James, and later from all the Apostles as found in Acts 15. It is most interesting to read this whole chapter, from which quotations are made now. “And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.” (verses 1 and 2.) The Apostles, who were inspired of God, would support Paul and Barnabas who also had the Lord’s mind on the matter. But to have the authority of the Council at Jerusalem would carry more weight.

Reading through this 15th chapter of Acts, we find that Peter tells about the wonderful occasion of the Gentiles receiving the hope of the Christian calling, down to verse 12. From verse 13 we see that James, after hearing Peter’s declaration, sums up the same truth, stating that “God at the first (for the first time) did visit the Gentiles, to take out

of them a people for his name,”—for the Bride of Christ. James here gives us the whole sweep of the Gospel Age, and with the reference to the “tabernacle of David” and “the residue of men seeking after the Lord” covers the work of the Millennial Age in God’s wonderful Plan of the Ages, to verse 18.

Returning to the important subject of what was required of Gentile converts, the Apostle James continues in verses 19 and 20. “Therefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from the Gentiles are turned to God: but that we

write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.” In other words, Gentile Christians were on the same basis as Israel in respect of eating blood. It was abhorrent in the sight of God, and was therefore banned. From verse 22 a rather detailed account is given of the decision of the apostles and elders, with emphasis on verses 28 and 29. “For it seemed good to the holy spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.”

Notice the point, “It seemed good to the holy spirit and to us.” God’s spirit was so guiding and directing them that they could speak for God in this matter. And of course, the inference here is that they abstain from eating or drinking blood, just as Israel had been definitely instructed in the days of Moses. The idolatrous worship of the heathen in the time of the early church included feasting on the meats which had been offered to idols, and fornication. Partaking of blood could easily have been associated with these revelries. The immature Gentile Christians may not see any wrong in this, but to bring such practices into the church would have been disastrous. So the apostles insisted that they abstain from them.

However, these instructions to the Gentile believers in the early church have no bearing on the present-day medical science of blood transfusions. Each of the restrictions listed in Acts 15 would be clearly understood in the Apostles’ day, and abstaining from blood, of course, meant to abstain from eating blood. How any Christian could interpret this to include blood transfusions is very difficult to understand, because there seems no connection between the two.

The matter of children under the care of parents or guardians is most important. It would surely be a grave responsibility to deny any child a blood transfusion if it were likely to save its life. All parents and guardians need to remember that children under their care are first of all God’s little ones, and would need to be sustained by every reasonable means at their disposal, even if such adults reject blood transfusions for themselves because of conscience.

Then, the necessity for conscience to be regulated by God’s Word is most essential. Paul’s words in Acts 24:16 are of great help. He says, “Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and men.” The same apostle informs us of some whose conscience would not be a true guide in 1 Tim. 4:1, 2, “. . . having their consciences seared with a hot iron.” Paul’s words here reveal the possibility of the conscience becoming disarranged, not interpreting correctly. So we see it is not sufficient to say, “My conscience tells me so and so is correct and proper, and it must be true.” Our consciences must be regulated by the Word of God. The “Daily Manna” comment on Acts 24:16, for November 24th, puts this matter helpfully,—“Our consciences require regulating, as do all the other features of our fallen nature. If our consciences are to be regulated we must have some standard by which to set and regulate them. The conscience is like a watch whose dial is properly marked with the hours, but whose correctness as a time-keeper depends upon the proper regulating of its mainspring, so that it may point out the hours truthfully ; so our consciences are ready to indicate right and wrong to us, but they can only be relied upon to tell us truly what is right and what is wrong after being regulated in connection with the new mainspring, the new heart, the pure will, brought into full harmony with the law of love, as presented to us in the Word of God.”

Another matter of great importance for all Christians is to see that they do not agree with and obey any injunction of any church or organization simply because it is proclaimed from such organization. The regimentation of beliefs has been a great failing all down the Gospel Age, and the rejection of blood transfusions, through the misuse of Scripture. In our time, has been formulated at the headquarters of an organization, and is strictly followed by all adherents without any individual decision or appreciation in the matter. The Lord’s people need to realise that they gain God’s approval for their decisions on any matter only by being individual Christians, being exercised in their own minds from the Bible as to the truth or otherwise in respect of any teaching proclaimed by any church or organization. In Prov. 29:25 we read, “The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.” The fear of man or organizations of men often hinders people from progressing and rejoicing in the wonderful truths of God’s Word.

While some know the meaning of the Bible “hell”, that it is the condition of death, they hold the fear of “second death” over their followers to influence them, which, of course, is very wrong. There is a second death mentioned in the Bible, but this will be the penalty only for those who are 100 per cent. wilful. For any person or group of people in an organization to determine who is worthy of second death is out of all reason. Some people feel if they take a blood transfusion they will be condemned by the Scriptures God gave to Israel, and suffer the second death. This interpretation comes from a particular organization, not from the Word of God. Those who belong to this organization and feel its teachings must be correct are more or less intimidated. That is why we find people who would rather die than take a transfusion, feeling that they will have a resurrection anyway, but if they had a blood transfusion they would die the second death. It is pathetic to find that people are so misguided and misdirected by what is proclaimed from the headquarters of a particular organization.

How important it is for all the Lord’s people to be individual Christians, and be not intimidated by teachings not

supported by the Word of God. We need to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free—free from the errors of the Dark Ages as well as those of modern times, seeking always to “prove all things” and hold fast that which is good. It is the privilege of Christians to rejoice and encourage one another in the pilgrim way, looking forward to

the glorious inheritance with Christ, and the wonderful hope of assisting in the blessing of all mankind who will obey the laws of Christ’s Kingdom and gain lasting life on the restored earth.

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While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

The Apostolic Council

(Acts 15:12-19)

“Through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.”—Acts 15:11.

AS the envy of the Jews on account of the progress of the doctrines of Christ hindered them as a class from receiving the truth, so we see that a measure of that same spirit among some who accepted the truth was bringing them again into bondage to the Law, and depriving them of their liberty in Christ. And not only so, but some of these were determined to put this yoke upon the whole church by insisting that all Gentile converts must be circumcised and thus become Jewish proselytes before becoming Christians ; and that otherwise they could not be saved.

These Judaizing teachers interfered with the work of Paul and Barnabas at Antioch, and a great controversy ensued. The question was a vital one, and one which involved the whole structure of Christianity ; for the error struck right at the foundation doctrine—the efficacy of the precious blood of Christ for salvation to all them that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles. These false teachers were claiming that faith in Christ as the Redeemer was not sufficient for salvation, but that this was only an appendage to the Law, which still held dominion over the Jewish converts, and to which the Gentile converts must also submit.

The church at Antioch was greatly exercised on this question, and Paul and Barnabas were zealous in proclaiming the full value of the precious blood of Christ, as completely abrogating the former covenant of works, which had been proven powerless to save. But the Gentile converts were anxious to know what would be the consensus of opinion on this important subject among the other apostles in Jerusalem. Consequently they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, a distance of about three hundred miles, and have a conference with the apostles and elders there about this question, which they did, probably at the expense of the church at Antioch.

This was the visit mentioned by the Apostle in Gal. 2:1, 2, about fourteen years after his conversion. The course of the church at Antioch in this matter, as well as its former course in sending them out as missionaries to other cities, whence they had returned to minister to it again (Acts 14:28), gives evidence of its zeal and faithfulness, not only to serve the Lord, but also to come to an exact knowledge of the truth.

The early church, composed first of Jewish converts, was not in opposition to the salvation of the Gentiles, but having been so long under the Law, it is not at all surprising that even the apostles were slow to follow the leading of the spirit in turning to the Gentiles, and that all were naturally inclined to trust in some measure to the old Law covenant of works, not realising that in so doing they were nullifying the covenant of grace in Christ. Paul seems to have been the first to grasp the situation, and his clear declaration in his letter to the Galatians (Chap. 5:2-6) of the allsufficiency of the atonement leaves no room for doubt as to his position on this subject. He says: “Behold I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing; for I testify again to every man that is circumcised that he is a debtor to the whole Law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. . . . For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.”

While God could have quickly made the truth plain to all the church in various ways, He chose to do it gradually and through agencies. Hence through a vision to Peter He first gave indication of His purpose to begin the blessing of the

Gentiles with the Gospel. But to Paul God made known the particulars of His plan, and through him comes the clearer understanding to the whole church, including the other apostles. To him came visions and revelations more than to others.—2 Cor. 12:1-7.

Verses 7-11. When the apostles and elders were assembled together at Jerusalem, there was first a difference of opinion on this subject and much apparently informal disputing, some urging one way and some the other. Then Peter rose up and called the attention of all to the fact of how God had taught him through the vision of clean and unclean beasts that he was not henceforth to call the Gentiles common or unclean, and that He had put no difference between them and the Jews. And so he urged that no yoke of the law be put upon the neck of these disciples, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear; for, said he, “We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we (Jews) shall be saved, even as they” (the Gentiles).

Verse 12. Then Barnabas and Paul were heard; and they declared what great things the Lord had been doing among the Gentiles, and how He had been working with them by miracles and signs.

Verses 13-18. When these brethren had related their experiences among the Gentiles, and after Peter had called attention to his vision and his subsequent experiences, all of which is only briefly stated here, then James, who seems to have been the presiding apostle, gave the decision which had been forming in his mind and the Scriptural reasons upon which he based it. He said, “Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simon (Simon Peter—verse 7) has declared how God at first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name.” Then he shows how this blessing of the Gentiles agrees with the teaching of the prophets, to the effect that the blessing of Israel first is only that through them as a channel it may flow to the Gentiles also. And so they as Jewish converts to Christ were merely the channels through whom God would send His blessed gospel to the Gentiles also. Yes, he said, this was evidently God’s plan from the beginning—verse 18.

Verses 19, 20. “Wherefore,” said he, “my judgment is that we should not trouble them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God”—they are justified by faith in Christ, and have already received the spirit of sonship, in uncircumcision, thus showing that faith in Christ the Redeemer is the only requisite to salvation. He further suggested writing to them merely that they abstain from pollution of idols; that is, from meats offered to idols (verse 29), and from things strangled and from blood—as by eating such things they might become stumbling blocks to their Jewish brethren (see 1 Cor. 8:4-13)—and from fornication. The eating of blood was forbidden, not only by the Jewish Law, but also before the Law was given. The same command was given to Noah. See Deut. 12:23; Gen. 9:4.

Verse 21. The Apostle’s intimation is that Judaism and the Law Covenant were very generally known throughout the world at that time. And this harmonizes with our Lord’s words—“Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte.” Nevertheless these means had not done much to convert the world to God; while the preaching of the gospel by Paul and Barnabas had been signally blessed to the Gentiles—the chief opponents being the Jews. These facts, taken in connection with the words of the prophets which the Lord had just brought to their attention, convinced James that a new dispensation had dawned, of which not the Law Covenant but the Abrahamic Covenant was the basis.

Verses 22-29. This advice of James found favor among all the apostles and elders, and they decided to act upon it.

So Paul and Barnabas were returned to Antioch with a letter of affectionate commendation, and accompanied by two of the brethren from Jerusalem—Judas and Silas—who bore the same testimony to the church at Antioch.

The opening and closing words of this letter are noteworthy—verses 23, 28, 29. The apostles are represented as a class apart from others of the church, indicating the distinctness of their office. The elder brethren or elders signify those of largest experience and development. Note also that those addressed—namely, Gentiles—are called brethren, thus indicating Christian fellowship. The statement: “It seems good to the holy spirit and to us,” etc., indicates that they judged the mind of the spirit by the special providences manifested in the cases of Peter, Paul and Barnabas, as well as by the expressions of the prophets.

It will be noticed that nothing is said about keeping the ten commandments, nor any part of the Jewish law. It was evidently taken for granted that having received the spirit of Christ the new law of love would be a general regulation for them. The things mentioned were merely to guard against stumbling themselves or becoming stumbling blocks to others.

HOPE

“What though the blossom fall and die?
The flower is not the root;

The Sun of love may ripen yet
The Master’s pleasant fruit.”

“What though by many a wayward fall
Thy garment is defiled?

A Saviour’s blood can cleanse them all;
Fear not! thou art His child.”

“Arise! and leaning on His strength,
Thy weakness shall be strong;

And He will teach thy heart at length
A new perpetual song.”

“Arise! to follow in His track
Each holy footprint clear,

And on an upward course look back
With every brightening year.”

“Arise! and on thy future way
His blessing with thee be!

His presence be thy staff and stay
Till thou His glory see.”

—F. R. Havergal.

“Divine Plan of the Ages”

Added costs in the publication of this important study overseas has increased the price for the cloth bound edition to 8/- , and the paper covered to 5/6, post paid in each case. Slightly less prices for more than one copy.

Pilgrim Ways Ended

AFTER a period of ill health our elderly Sister Helen Horn finished the pilgrim way in Tasmania early in June.

For about fifty years this dear Sister had rejoiced in the message of present truth, and gave evidence to all who met her of a deeply spiritual life, developed by much patient study of the Bible and waiting upon the Lord in prayer and meditation.

One Sister who studied regularly with our dear Sister Horn, and who now misses the fellowship very much, relates that in her early life Sister Horn was concerned about Christ's return and came across a book of that title at her mother's house. This led to obtaining other volumes of the Scripture Studies and the message they contained was eagerly devoured. Later she met Brother Brown (who finished his pilgrimage years ago) and found that he had the same volumes; thus commenced a close fellowship that continued from that time onward. Sister Horn gained a wonderful grasp of the truth and spent all spare time in studying, not caring for any worldly things. It was "this one thing I do" with this dear Sister, which it is felt has gained her the Lord's approval and commendation—"Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

Sincere sympathy is extended to the members of our Sister Horn's family, who, while missing their mother keenly, will be encouraged by her life of devotion to the Lord. No doubt they have been impressed by the true and loving spirit manifested, the result of Christ's indwelling spirit sanctifying the heart and mind over many years of sitting at His feet, and learning of Him from His Word of truth. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth (during the harvest of this Gospel Age in which we now live), that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13.)

Another of our brethren, Brother Robinson, of Geelong, Victoria, finished the earthly way towards the close of June after a severe and painful illness. Having heard the broadcasts through 3GL Geelong over 18 years ago, our dear Brother Robinson quickly grasped the importance and value of the truths of God's Word, and had continued to rejoice in the glad message.

Of a very retiring and almost shy disposition, Brother Robinson did not associate as easily as others in fellowship, but whenever this was possible it was evident that he appreciated very deeply the gospel message and was alert to its importance in life. It has been mentioned that in conversation our dear Brother gave evidence of being well developed in the spiritual life, having the treasures of the truth very fully in heart and mind. In his work as a builder consideration for others was a mark of his Christian life, and his self-sacrifice in trying to maintain his family when often very ill spoke volumes for his courage and strength of character, by the Lord's grace. Trusting in the Lord's sufficiency to make up for all shortcomings, our Brother Robinson shall have gained an entrance into the kingdom of Christ.

The loss of a dear husband and father of two sons is felt severely no doubt, and sincere sympathy is extended to the bereaved, trusting that the glad message of the kingdom, which no doubt was often mentioned in the home may lighten the sorrow and give assurance that "earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot heal"—in due time. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

A SURE FUTURE

How blessed in these times of stress and uncertainty, and of fear of what the future may hold, to be assured of all things “by the eternal purpose of our God.” What a foundation for trust.

“Father, I will, that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am” (John 17:24).

Could the soul conceive a greater hope? Assured, eternal, if we be but faithful.

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

What a legacy! What comfort on our way to the sure haven! Why should we fear though the earth be removed, while underneath are the Everlasting Arms. Truly, most blessed are we.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts—Psa. 139:23.

Wrong thoughts are most assuredly sin, to be instantly confessed, not to be excused, or indulged in for an instant.

If you have the least wince of conscience, let there be instant confession, which will surely result in instant cleansing. Recollect the glorious word “cleanseth,” i.e., “goes on cleansing”; claim it and be willing to be kept under the cleansing power of the blood, leaving no place and giving no quarter to even the shadow of a sinful thought.—

F. R. Havergal.

Correspondence

Dear Brothers in Christ,—I received your parcel of most interesting literature last week, and have read all of it twice, so that its full meaning could be absorbed. I do indeed thank you very much for this reading material ; I have learned so much from it during this past twelve months. Spiritual truths that were mysterious to me once are now plain and understandable. The more one reads God's Word, the clearer becomes His Plan and Purpose for mankind. It is really amazing how Scripturally ignorant many people are concerning God's plan, even folks who have been going to church for years, and they are still very hazy and *foggy* about the real truth of God's plan.

That book the "Divine Plan of the Ages" really opened my eyes, and the events that are shortly to happen to this world will no doubt come as a shock and surprise to many millions of people.

My wife and I attend a small fellowship group of 12 to 15 folk who meet once fortnightly to discuss God's Word together, without any minister of religion being present with us, and when my turn comes to conduct the meeting I use the material you have sent me, and, believe me, we have some very lively discussions on the Millennium, Where are the Dead ?, The immortality of the soul, Does God want to save all souls now? Are we predestined to be saved or lost? So far God's Word has convinced all of them that the beliefs they have held for many years are not facts from the Bible, and it is really inspiring to see their reactions when the Gospel truth is presented to them. One man argued with me about the coming kingdom of God and His rule on this earth, and set out to show that the kingdom of God was within you here and now on this earth ; but he only ended up by God's Word revealing to him that the age of God's rule is yet to come, and he had the grace to admit it after his unsuccessful effort to prove otherwise.

I had been very puzzled in my own mind on the subject—Have we a soul or spirit and what happens to it at death ?—but at last I can see from the mistranslations of the Bible and the wrong meanings they have conveyed that at death we are in an unconscious state till the resurrection. Can you explain to me the difference between the body of those who die without the love a Christ and those who are caught up to meet Him in the clouds at His coming again; in other words, What sort of a body will the unsaved be resurrected with, as John 5:28, 29 states, "all that are in the graves shall come forth"?

Would you please send me the following literature — "God and Reason" • "Manner of Christ's Return"; "Our Lord's Great Prophecy" ; "Christ the Foundation"; "The Keys of Heaven". Please find enclosed as cost of the above and you can use the remainder for the extension of Bible truths. Yours in Christ.

(The booklet—"How are the Dead Raised Up—With What Body do They come ?"—explains the resurrection of Christians and the world of mankind, and is gladly supplied free to all interested readers.—B.B. Institute.)

Dear Christian Friend,—Thank you sincerely for papers and letter just received; it is always a real pleasure and enlightenment to read your books, papers and radio dialogues. They truly make the Bible live as no other church can possibly do. I belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and have been to Bible study classes in many denominations, even the Exclusive Brethren, but none make the Bible come alive like your church does. The Exclusive Brethren class themselves as knowing the Bible; I have been to their lectures and discussion groups, but came away just as empty as I went in.

The very first time I read your books and papers I realised you had something that no other Christians had got; your ministry seems a living ministry; you make the Bible really come alive. I will never be able to thank you for what you have opened up to me from the Bible. I never realised the truth of the Bible before I came in contact with you ; now I rejoice and praise God that what I have been seeking for all my life I have at last found through you. May God richly bless you all to continue proclaiming His truth until He comes again.

The Bible takes on an entirely different meaning when we see it in its true light ; it is only those who have ears to hear and eyes to enlighten their understanding that will ever fully know the true interpretation of God's Word as revealed by His holy spirit. Once again thank you sincerely for all you have done for me. I thank God that I ever listened to the Frank and Ernest Broadcast which was the means through you of coming to know the true meaning of the Bible; like so many people I just listened out of curiosity and then got really interested. The teaching was totally different to what I had been brought up to believe, but gradually I accepted the explanation of Frank and Ernest, till finally I realised it was the truth, and now praise God I know for a fact, comparing your teaching with the Bible, that what you say is the whole truth.

I must admit it took a long while to accept it, as it was not easy to brush aside the teaching I had been brought up to believe from childhood for 53 years, but gradually my eyes were opened, and I could see you were right and the other

churches wrong. Now praise God I rejoice in the truth of God's Word to whom be glory for evermore. May God richly bless you all; please give my Christian greetings and love to Frank and Ernest, who have played a big part in helping me to see the truth. Yours in all sincerity.

Building a Disposition

"Well, I do hope that when I reach the age when I have to be taken care of, I shall be willing to let other people have their way instead of insisting upon my own and making it hard for everybody else," said a clear, decided voice as three women parted at the street corner.

They had been discussing the troubles of an acquaintance. As the speaker departed, the other two looked at each other with a significant smile. This friend of theirs was one who had great faith in her own wisdom.

"I am afraid that virtue does not develop suddenly," remarked one. "I suspect that the person who is to be gentle and unselfishly considerate in old *age* has to begin to cultivate that spirit much further back."

That is the story of so many of our failures to attain our ideals. We do not begin to practise their graces early enough. The strong, self-controlled, useful manhood or womanhood does not grow naturally from a careless, self-indulged youth, and the beautiful old age that is a benediction is not likely to spring from the hasty, domineering spirit that has been allowed to rule middle life.

Character is a garden whose gracious flowering calls for early planting.

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