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Grace  
and  
Truth

**November 1992**

## **Buried Roman Treasure.**

Recently there was a remarkable find of hidden treasure in England. A Suffolk farmer was approached for permission to search his fields by a retired gardener of his acquaintance. This man had been given a metal detector as a retirement present, and wanted to put it to some use. On obtaining permission, with the recommendation to look for a lost hammer, the man began a systematic sweep of the field, no doubt uncovering metal objects of no value, such as pieces of farm implements and discarded objects from the recent past. Then, on one sweep, the machine gave a sound which indicated some metal object. The man peered down and saw what looked like a coin, possibly the size of a two pence piece, about one inch or two centimeters in diameter. On searching further, he found several others, and then some pieces of jewelry came to light. At this stage he probably had no idea of the value or significance of his find, but the matter was reported to the proper authorities who made a very careful search of the field, to ensure that nothing was missed.

In England the law requires that all such finds be reported to the government, who then decide on the origin of the find, as to whether it is 'treasure trove' or not. The definition of 'treasure trove' is that it is goods of value, concealed or buried by the rightful owner, with the intention of recovering them at a later time.

If the goods are treasure trove, they become the property of the Crown, (in effect the state), and a reward is given to the finder. If they are not treasure trove, they remain the property of the finder. In this case the goods were declared to be treasure trove, and were assessed at a value of at least £10,000,000. (\$16,000,000), and a

reward of £1,000,000 is to be paid to the appropriate person, though we understand that there is some uncertainty as to whom that person is.

Experts have now concluded that the treasure was originally the property of a very rich Roman family who lived in the area about 300-400 a.d. They had probably lived in various parts of the Roman Empire, for the jewelry could be shown to have come from a number of countries. It is thought the family hid the treasure in a time of great danger, and was then overtaken by some disaster and the treasure was never recovered.

This, however, is not the only treasure associated with Romans. When reflecting on this Roman treasure, a number of parallels and contrasts with the treasure in Paul's Roman epistle become evident.

(1) The treasure was of great value, but in one case this was material value, and in the other, spiritual value.

(2) The treasure was hidden, In one case to prevent it falling into the hands of anyone, other than the owners, but in the Roman epistle, in order that the treasure might be revealed to those whom God is calling at this time.

(3). The material treasure could be lost, or even stolen, but the spiritual treasure can not be taken from us.

(4) Material riches often tend to make the owners selfish, while the spiritual treasures increase the wealth of their owners the more they are shared.

(5) The owners of the material treasure could at best have shared it with a few hundred people, while the riches which are ours in Christ Jesus will ultimately and immeasurably enrich the entire creation.

***"The secret of the God and Father of Christ,  
in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and  
knowledge are concealed." (Colossians 2:2,3).***

# "We Are Rejoicing!"

By James R. Coram.

**WE ARE REJOICING!** — *"Even as David also is telling of the happiness of the man to whom God is reckoning righteousness apart from acts: 'Happy those whose lawlessnesses were pardoned and whose sins were covered over! Happy the man to whom the Lord by no means should be reckoning sin!'" (Rom. 4:6; cit. Psa. 33:1,2)*

## DAVID'S EXPERIENCE

David could only tell of such an experience according to the longings of his heart, not according to God's present dealings with him. Yet we who are "Being justified gratuitously in His [God's] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24), are the actual recipients of such favor. Indeed, "To him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness (Rom. 4:5).

## OUR FAITH

Our faith -- whether our basic faith in Christ or our acceptance of these specific declarations concerning the benefits of His work -- is a righteousness faith. It is among those entities which God deems to be righteous (thus He places it "into" such a class). Nothing is more right than to believe God. Consequently, God deems our faith to be a righteous entity, for so it is.

Our faith is not meritorious; yet it is righteous. If little else in our lives should accord with righteousness, our faith in God's word will always thus accord -- and it will always be accounted by Him accordingly.

It is not true that instead of "qualifying for salvation" by doing good works, we qualify for it by expressing faith, thus meeting "the requirements of salvation." To the contrary, our faith does not qualify us for salvation; for our salvation is a gratuitous gift. Thus it has nothing to do with qualification or worthiness.

God saves us, not as a reciprocal act, but of grace. Furthermore, we believe, not because of something of ourselves, but because the grace of our Lord has overwhelmed our unbelief, "with faith and love in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 1:14). The believer's faith, then, does not constitute an entitlement to salvation. Instead, it constitutes a surety to the believer that he or she, indeed, is one of God's chosen ones (cp 1 Cor. 1:21-25), for that very faith is God's approach present to us. This accords with His predesignation and His calling, His justifying, and His glorifying of the believer.

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### **Holiday Week 1993**

**A holiday week has been arranged to take place, God willing, at the Center Parcs Holiday Village, at Elvedon Forest. Cambridgeshire. The dates will be from Friday 11th June, to Friday 18th June inclusive.**

**It will be necessary to make a firm booking by 15th January 1993 at the latest.**

**The approximate cost will be £95-00 plus communal food charge.**

**A £25-00 deposit will be required with your booking.**

**Those interested should write to:- David Osgood, Holiday Secretary, c/o 28 Burlington Rd., Sherwood, Nottingham. NG5 2GS**

# "WHATEVER WAS WRITTEN BEFORE"

By Granville Walker,

For one whose claim was "Not being myself under law" (1 Cor. 9:20), Paul, the apostle to the nations, quoted from Israel's law and the rest of their scriptures quite freely, adapting them radically to reveal new truths, with conviction and authority.

He asked the Corinthians - "Or is the law not also saying these things? For in the law of Moses it is written: 'You shall not muzzle the threshing ox.' Not for oxen is the care of God. Or is He undoubtedly saying it because of us? Because of us!" (1 Cor. 9:9,10).

Beginning the next chapter, Paul gives a brief resume of the events following Israel's exodus from captivity in Egypt – and how that in the majority of them God does not delight, since they were strewn along the wilderness. And we wonder at Paul's relating all this to gentiles – until he explains: "Now all this befalls them typically – *yet it was written for our admonition!*" (1 Cor. 10:1-11) – meaning Paul himself and his converts – yet undoubtedly it applies equally to whoever God has called or is still calling out during this administration of His grace.

A most notable instance of this treatment of scripture is seen in (Romans. 4:2,3). "For if Abraham was justified by acts – he has something to boast in – but not towards God. For what is the scripture saying? Now 'Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness!'" Paul makes the point that a worker's wage is not given as favour, but has been earned and is his due. Whereas the one who is not doing works – yet is believing on Him who is justifying the irreverent, that one's

faith He is reckoning for righteousness. Then he refers (still in Romans) to another place in scripture (Psalm 32) and continues: "Even as David also is telling of the happiness of the man to whom God is reckoning righteousness apart from acts." (Rom. 4:2-6).

Many readers skim through the following passages, to their loss, so please note:

***The Circumcision, in Paul's letters were simply those Jews who, moved to repentance, believed the Lord Jesus was indeed, their Messiah, Who would soon return as their long-awaited King. The Uncircumcision, are those from every land called by God to believe a better evangel for His greater glory, and to herald this evangel He severs Saul, His enemy, from unbelieving Israel!***

"This happiness then," Paul is saying -- "Is it for the Circumcision -- or for the Uncircumcision, also? For we are saying, 'To Abraham, faith is reckoned for righteousness'. How then, is it reckoned? Being in circumcision -- or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision!" (Rom. 4:9,10). For at that time, Abraham had not received the sign of circumcision. Neither did Abraham receive the promise through law. For the law came 400 years later -- through Moses!

"For not through law, is the promise to Abraham, or to his Seed, for him to be enjoyer of the allotment of the world -- but through faith's righteousness. For if those of law are enjoyers of the allotment, faith has been made void, and the promise has been nullified, for the law is producing indignation. Now, where no law is, neither is there transgression. Therefore it is of faith that it may accord with grace." (Rom. 4:13-16).

The inspired Paul then declared: "now it was not written because of him only, that it is reckoned to him -- but because of us also, to whom it is about to be reckoned, who are believing

on Him Who rouses Jesus, our Lord, from among the dead – Who was given up because of our offences and was roused because of our justifying." (Rom. 4:23-25).

Dividing the scriptures into chapter and verse was inspired thinking, but was not the work of enlightened saints. Someone thought the subject closed there – end of a chapter! But chapter 5, verses 1 and 2, is surely the obvious conclusion. "Being, then, justified by faith, we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God!"

Paul had already said of the Jews, "That they were entrusted with the oracles of God" (Rom. 3:2). And Paul's use of them for the other nations, he justifies when he tells us that: "All scripture is inspired by God – and is beneficial for teaching, for exposure, for correction, for discipline in righteousness, that the man of God may be equipped, fitted out for every good act." (2 Tim. 3:16). Not acts of which we may be boasting, for it is "God Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight" (Phil. 2:13). "Written before" – as he provides our final scripture on this subject. "For whatever was written before was written for this teaching of ours, that through the endurance and the consolation of the scriptures we may have expectation." (Rom. 15:4).

# In Defense of the Faith

MATTHEW 7:14

## THE ARGUMENT. . .

The belief that all will be made alive in salvation and reconciliation is contradicted by Christ's teaching that "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads to life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:14)

## REPLY . . .

This is part of the sermon on the mount. The immediate subject is:- "this is the law and the prophets" Then our Lord said, "Enter through the cramped gate, for broad is the gate and spacious is the way which is leading away into destruction, and many are those entering through it. Yet what a cramped gate and narrowed way is the one leading away into life, and few are those who are finding it."

Is our evangel a cramped gate? Does the path we tread lead to life? This is true of the law, but not of the gospel. Those under law depended on their walk for life. We depend on Christ. We *have* life, we are not on the path that leads to it. Of those who seek life by the law, few, very few (if indeed any), will find it. All the others are on the spacious path that leads to destruction. This word, destruction, in its verbal form, is usually translated "lost." The Son of Mankind came to save those who had been destroyed (Matt. 18:11). In fact, the sacrifice He made on Calvary would not be needed by those who could get life by keeping on the narrow path. But shall we deny that many of the lost (or destroyed) did not find life through His death? And shall we allow such a passage to deny the inspired assurance that "As in Adam all are dying, thus in Christ all shall be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22)? Let us freely acknowledge that few (or none) find the way to life by the law. Only those who believe will be vivified at the presence of Christ. But at the consummation, when death itself is abolished, all will be made alive (1 Cor. 15:23-28).

A.E. Knoch.

# A CHRISTMAS HYMN

Tune: "Winchester New"

How sweet the day when to this earth,  
Enchained in bonds of sin's despair,  
The message of a Saviour's birth  
Was witnessed on the midnight air.

To shepherds, resting in the field,  
And keeping watch throughout the night,  
Was first the glorious truth revealed  
By messengers enshrined in light.

There came a sudden single voice,

And all the men were sore afraid.  
"Fear not", the angel said, "Rejoice,  
"Lift up your hearts, be not dismayed".

"To--day is born your great desire,  
Your Saviour, which is Christ the Lord".  
"Glory to God", now joins the choir,  
"On earth be peace and sweet accord".

Well might the joyful heralds sing  
The tidings of that saving Name,  
And all the vaults of heaven ring,  
A Fathers's glory to proclaim.

Still sounds the message of that night  
In ears receptive to its theme;  
Still shine the messengers of light  
To eyes responsive to their gleam.

And hearts most conscious of their sin  
Exult to hear again the word,  
That brings such joy and peace within----  
"A SAVIOUR, WHICH IS CHRIST THE LORD".

# IN THE BEGINNING

(A series of Progressive Studies).

## No. 21. THE SIXTH DAY—(Cont'd).

**"AND GOD said, 'Let us make man'".**

This is evidently the climax of the work of the six days, and its importance is indicated by the change of expression from "Let the earth bring forth. . . ." to "Let us make man".

### **HUMANITY IS A SPECIAL CREATION !**

For the first time in scripture, a conference is indicated in the counsels of the Most High. God is not alone. "Let us make man". He is conferring with the "Son of His love" (Col. 1:13). He is conferring with the One Who is His original Image (Col. 1:15), in whom and through Whom all was created. This shows that man was neither an afterthought nor a chance creation; he was purposed in the counsels of God. And let us here make a further point. This account, in Genesis 1, is not so much a description of the bringing into being of the original man, Adam, such as we get in the second chapter, where he is formed of the soil of the ground. No, this is an account of the creation of humanity, as a type or species, and includes the whole race of mankind latent in Adam. It is humanity which is created in the likeness of God's Image, so that, many centuries later, that same Image could come in the likeness of humanity (Phil. 2:7) and still be recognized as the Son of God. (Matt. 16:16; John 1:49).

In the creation of humanity was incorporated the creation of both male and female (verse 27) with power to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it (verse 28). Adam thus became the head of a race of beings, unlike former intelligent beings in the universe in that they were of flesh and blood, so that they could provide a form in

which His Son could give Himself up to suffering and death for the whole of creation.

## **GOD'S STRANGE WISDOM**

But not only was humanity to provide the form in which the Son of God should come to deliver the universe; it was also to be the instrument which God would use to accomplish His purpose. It would be men, descendants of Adam, who would crucify the Lord of glory.

In this, they would apparently destroy the very means which God had prepared, in the creating of humanity, for the rescue of the universe, and yet we know that, in the wisdom of God, by destroying the One without sin, they performed the very act for which humanity had been created.

Truly, the wisdom of God is strange. His thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are His ways our ways. "The word of the cross is stupidity, indeed, to those who are perishing" yet, "the stupidity of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. 1:18 and 25).

Without the creation of humanity, God's purpose concerning His Son could not be fulfilled. This is God's final creative act until the new creation, spoken of in later scriptures. This is indicated by the threefold use of the word "create" in verse 27. Compare the threefold use of the "create" in verse 27. Now compare with the threefold use of the word "work" in Gen. 2:2,3, where God is spoken of as ending the work which He had made. (Notice also the threefold use of the word "create" in Isaiah 65:17,18).

(In passing, two other scriptures where a word is used three times to indicate finality are Jeremiah 22:29, where the threefold use of the word "earth" is used in description of God's final judgment on Coniah, who was a descendant of David; and Ezek. 21:27, where the word "overturn" is used three times in pronouncing God's final judgment against the fleshly line of David in the person of Zedekiah, the last king to occupy the throne until the coming of Messiah).

With the creation of humanity, God had brought into being everything that was necessary for the enactment of the scene centuries later at Golgotha -- vegetation to provide the wood for the cross, minerals to supply the nails, animals to furnish the thongs which would scourge the Saviour's back, and now humanity to produce, no, not the Saviour, but the murderers. The Saviour must be provided by God Himself; humanity merely furnishes the form in which the Saviour should come. Christ was to be the seed of the woman, not the seed of the man.

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***"The full and final statement on the conduct of the saints is found in *Philippians 2:13*. There we are told that God is operating in us, to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight."***

**E.H. Clayton.**

# JOHN ROGERS

(Born circa 1500 - died 1555)

By David Osgood

The above name is not one that carries any significance for the average person, being generally unknown to all except a few scholars, but by the end of this article I hope you will see that, not only did John Rogers play a major part in making available the scriptures, to which all have had access since the Reformation, but he paid the supreme sacrifice, having his life cut short as a direct act of Queen Mary 1st.

Born in Aston, Staffordshire, Rogers was educated at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, and graduated with a B.A. degree in 1526. After a short period of service in the London rectory of Holy Trinity, he proceeded to Antwerp in Belgium, to act as a chaplain to the English merchant venturers who lived or called there. At that time he was an orthodox catholic priest, but whilst at Antwerp he met one William Tyndale. who was by then engaged in translating the Old Testament into English, his New Testament having been published in 1526. Their friendship developed rapidly, and Tyndale influenced Rogers into abandoning the doctrines of Rome and setting him on a course that would help bring availability of the scriptures to the ordinary people, who had previously been denied access through ecclesiastical suppression. This great friendship was not to last for long however. Tyndale was arrested in the spring of 1535, and paid dearly for his efforts by being executed on October 6th of the following year.

It has been assumed that Rogers was also much involved with Miles Coverdale, but this can be discounted because Coverdale can be traced to having been in England at that time.

Rogers did not allow the severance of his friendship with Tyndale to dampen his stand for the protestant truth being revealed. This led to him to take a wife for himself, and after his marriage to Andriana de Weyden in 1537 he moved to Wittenberg in Germany (the place where Luther had great influence), and became the pastor of a protestant congregation. He quickly became proficient in the German language.

It would appear that very soon after Tyndale's arrest Rogers began his work on Tyndale's incomplete version of the Old Testament. This became the main task that Rogers pursued during 1536, and he prepared the English version of the whole Bible for the press, including Tyndale's translation of the New Testament which had already been published for the first time in 1526.

Tyndale's draft version of the Old Testament had only reached the end of the book of Jonah by the time of his arrest, but Rogers did not include even that book, and in fact only used Tyndale's rendering up to the close of the Second Book of Chronicles. In order to finalize the work for publication, Rogers, not being a translator himself, used, without alteration, Miles Coverdale's rendering, which had already been published in 1535.

The work was printed at Antwerp, and a Richard Grafton of London purchased the sheets. After presenting a copy to Thomas Cranmer (1st Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury), permission was obtained to sell fifteen hundred copies of the edition in England. The title of it ran "The Byble whych is all the Holy Scripture: in which are containyd the Olde and Newe Testaments, truly and purely translated into English by Thomas Matthew, set forth with the King's most graycious lycence."

The volume comprised 1,100 folio pages in double columns. and was entirely printed in black letter. Three copies are in the British Museum today. It was twice reprinted in 1549 and, although Rogers' responsibility for the actual translation is small, credit is due to him for the valuable

marginal notes. These constituted the first English commentary on the Bible.

It must be fairly obvious that by using the pseudonym "Thomas Matthew", and also when signing the dedication to King Henry VIII, Rogers was hoping to preserve himself from the same fate as Tyndale. He was from that time forward known as Rogers, alias Matthew, and his Bible was commonly quoted as "Matthews Bible".

It was only the second complete printed version in English, Coverdale's version of 1535 being the first. Rogers' labours were largely used in the preparation of the Great Bible of 1539, on which was based the Bishops Bible of 1568, which was the main foundation of the Authorized, or King James, Version of 1611, with which we are familiar today. It is therefore certain that the little known John Rogers was effectively one of the prime movers of the classical English translation of the Bible.

By this time there was much controversy in Europe, and Emperor Charles V issued orders for all protestants to conform to catholic practices. There yet remained relative calm in England, and in 1551 Rogers was appointed to the valuable prebend of St. Pancras by Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London in St. Paul's Cathedral. With this went the rectory of Chigwell in Essex. He was widely praised for his zeal in preaching and his ability to "detect and confute Anabaptists and papists alike".

He was appalled by the greed and license of the courtiers around King Edward VI., and he spoke out vehemently against the suppression of monasteries and seizure of their assets for personal gain. However, events were moving rapidly, and his days of freedom were drawing to a close.

On the second Sunday after the death of King Edward, and the day before Mary was proclaimed Queen, he spoke out at St. Paul's Cross, London against all the vices and idolatry

along with superstition, and it may have been this sermon which prompted his arrest, for he had many enemies among the courtiers.

On 27th January 1554 Rogers was removed to Newgate prison. Whilst there he drew up a confession of faith, which rapidly increased his troubles. In December 1554 parliament ordered the privy council to try him. He was asked if he accepted papal creed and authority, but he replied that he recognized only Christ as the Head of the church. He was immediately branded a heretic, though he refuted the charge. In spite of this he was sentenced to death as an ex-communicated person and a heretic. His reply was to confidently predict the speedy restoration of Protestantism in England.

On Monday morning, February 4th 1555 he was taken from his cell to Smithfield, the site of today's old meat market, and burnt at the stake, becoming the first protestant to suffer death at the hands of Queen Mary. Before the fire was kindled, a pardon in official form was offered to him on full recantation, but he refused. So ended the life of John Rogers, alias Thomas Matthew.

John Rogers was undoubtedly one of the prime movers of the reformation, and had a vision of the scriptures being freely available to the enlightenment of all. He saw the possibilities of the printed word, and from a distance of almost four hundred and fifty years we can rejoice in a greater realization of God by having His word in our hands. We are thankful to our God for these men who paid with their lives in order that we might rejoice in the light of His word.

## The Authority of Scripture

# *"It Is Written"*

By William S. Penn

One of the less frequently cited and often overlooked pieces of evidence that the Scriptures are truly inspired is to be found in Matthew's Account, Chapter 4. This is the account of the Adversary's trying of our Lord who had returned after a 40-day fast in the wilderness. This was surely a time when He would be at a low ebb, physically, and more susceptible to the trials. Matthew recounts three trials, three strong temptations that the Adversary put before Him.. Our attention is addressed to His replies.

In the first trial, He is told to order the stones to become bread in order that He might assuage His hunger. Doing that would have been well within the powers He had, but His response is "It is written..." and cites Deuteronomy 8:3, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."

In the second trial or test, the Adversary takes Him to a high place on the temple in Jerusalem and questions whether He is really the Son of God, just as the Adversary had done in the first trial. And, look: the Adversary quotes Scripture from Psalms 91, verses 11 and 12. Note that quoting Scripture does not make the one quoting necessarily correct in the application of what is quoted. And again our Lord answers with "It is written..." and cites Deuteronomy 6:16, the appropriate reply.

In the third trial, the Adversary offers Him all the kingdoms of the world with their glory if He will but fall down and worship the Adversary. Never forget that this offer was real and the Adversary could well have delivered what he offered. Once again our Lord responds with words of the Scripture, quoting from Deuteronomy 6:13 this time. "Begone, Satan! For it is written 'You shall worship Yahweh your Elohim, and Him only shall you serve.'" (The quotation here is from the Concordant Version of the Old Testament.)

Now it is true that all of these citations are from the Hebrew Scriptures, the Old Testament, for the Greek Scriptures (the 'New Testament') had not yet been written. But it is clear that Matthew tells us of three strong temptations that the Adversary puts to our Lord. To each He gives a clear yet simple response. In the first trial, the Adversary offers Him a means of relief from what must have been His

great hunger. All He had to do, the Adversary says, is command the stones to become bread, something easily within the powers of our Lord. The urge to do just that must have been very great, yet He answers with "It is written..." and quotes the appropriate Scripture.

In the second trial, the Adversary suggests that He demonstrate God's care for Him by throwing Himself from the Temple wing. It was quite true that the messengers would have borne Him up so that He did not even injure His foot by hitting a stone. This would have been full proof that He was, indeed, the Son of God. Yet once again He answers "It is written..." and cites the Scripture fitting to the occasion.

In the third trial, Satan offers Him majesty and glory, rulership over all the kingdoms of the world. This was, of course, within the Adversary's power; his offer was real and capable of fulfillment. But once more our Lord responds with "It is written..." and cites the proper passage from Deuteronomy.

It is true that the citations were all from the Hebrew Scriptures, the so-called 'Old Testament;' after all, the Greek Scriptures had not yet been written. But the citing of the Psalms and Deuteronomy passages tells us that God's written word is or has the answers to every temptation we may undergo. Our Lord makes that point by quoting God's word when He easily might have simply rejected the trial by saying 'no!' What He added by using the Scriptures was the authority that His Own words would not have had at that time. Not even He chose to rely on His Own reasonings, nor should we. With God's word at hand, our response to each trial we undergo ought to be based on them; we should not rely on our reasonings but on what God has written, what He has said to us. His words should suffice for each and every trial when it comes to us, but please note that this demands familiarity with the Scriptures and urges us to study to show ourselves workmen unashamed (2 Tim. 2:15)

The citations show plainly that the Scriptures have appropriate replies for us to use in any trial or temptation put upon us. Our Lord easily could have simply asserted the answers He gave; He had no need to use the Scriptures---but He did. In so doing He gave us the basis for our following His example. Not even the Lord chose to rely on His Own words, but employed God's words, and so ought we.

If we are to do this, we must be well acquainted with the Scriptures, we must have studied them to show ourselves to be "a qualified and unashamed worker, correctly cutting the word of truth." We cannot use what is written unless we know what is written; we cannot know except we study His word.

# WOMEN AND THE PRIESTHOOD

By Frank Orton

One of the questions being asked in orthodox churches at this time is "Should women be ordained as priests?"

If there were a clear understanding of the scriptures this question would not be asked at all. The root of this problem lies in mixing scriptures which are addressed to the Jews, with those which are addressed to the nations (Gentiles). God's dealings with the Jews was through the law, and the intermediary between Himself and mankind was the priesthood

At the end of the Acts period, God put Israel aside from their favoured position, and turned to the Gentiles. Paul had been called to teach a completely new evangel (gospel), based on Christ's sacrifice for sin. Faith is the only requirement: there is no law-keeping, no temple, and no priesthood. In Galatians he tells us that if believers turn back to works they are no longer under grace. They are exempted from Christ! (Chapter 5)

Those who would spread the knowledge of God's wondrous grace in Christ are termed **ambassadors**, (2 Cor. 5: 18-21) —never priests. In Ephesians 4: 11-13 Paul lists the active workers of the church, and all these are involved in teaching, not in any ritual. All priests are redundant since Christ died for sins.

"There is one God,  
and one Mediator of God and mankind,  
a Man, Christ Jesus." (1 Tim.2:5).

# "THE FATHER WHO SENDS ME".

(JOHN. 5:37)

By KEN HUTTON

Of the four evangelists of the New Testament it is John who draws our attention constantly to the relationship between the Father and the Son. No less than 17 times in his gospel is it stated by Jesus that the Father "sends" Him into the world. It is noteworthy that 5 of these occurrences are in the intimate prayer to His Father recorded in Chapter 17, immediately before His betrayal by Judas.

## **THE WILL OF THE FATHER.**

There is, therefore, no doubt that the initiative for the despatch of the Son to the world in human form lay with the Father: "I have descended from heaven, not that I should be doing My will, but the will of Him Who sends me" (John. 6:38). The four gospels are historical accounts of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus" They tell of the advent of Israel's Messiah, as foretold in the Psalms and the Prophets. It is only John, however, who hints at the Son's significance for the Nations (e.g, chap 3. 16). We have to turn to Paul's writings to find the full understanding of this significance. So, we can say that the will of God in sending the Son to the world had two aims: one, for Israel, as shown in the Gospels and Book of Acts; the other is shown in Paul's writings for all mankind.

## **ISRAEL.**

"He came unto His own" (John. 1:11). What He said and did ought to have convinced them that He was the promised Messiah. But, because He came in humble guise and not in kingly majesty, "His own received Him not". They crucified Him as an imposter. For them His subsequent resurrection was a nine days wonder, which was eventually to pass into their history as an unsolved mystery. So it has remained for Israel ever since. The Gospels close the story of the rejected Messiah, and Acts confirms it, even after the miraculous operation of Holy Spirit during many following years.

## THE NATIONS-

The second aim of the Father's will is featured not in the *life* of Jesus, but in His *death*, and *resurrection* to His former glory in Heaven with the Father. Paul's writings explain the triumphant consequence for all Mankind of Christ's victory over *sin* and *death*. Perhaps the most concise explanation of this is found in 2 Cor. 5:16-

**"Yet if we have known Christ according to flesh, nevertheless now we know Him so no longer. So that, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: the primitive passed by. Lo! there has come new! Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself not reckoning their offenses to them. . . . For the One not knowing sin He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes, that we might be becoming God's righteousness in Him".**

In this we see the *power* of God's will: in harmony with it was the Son's faithfulness. The faithlessness of Israel has become the open door for those of the Nations into God's grace. The Son had to become human so that He could die a human death, which is the inevitable fruit of sin. He was raised out of death by God's power. In this way God defeated the power of death and sin over mankind. Through Paul's ministry the Father announces that He is now conciliated to mankind through Christ's death. "Lo! There has come new"!

Those who believe in Christ as the Son of God are enabled, by grace of the Father, to be identified by Him in Christ's death (the Old Humanity Rom. 6:6), and also in His resurrection (the New Humanity. Eph. 4:24), and Christ's righteousness is reckoned to them. The truth of this is testified by Paul: "You got the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying, "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15).

## SUMMARY

Why did Jesus repeat so many times in John's Gospel that the Father had sent Him to the world? Surely, the answer must be, firstly, that He had to authenticate Himself to Israel as the Messiah; and, secondly, as God's Image carrying out the Father's will to conciliate all men to Himself, He was humbling Himself, so that the Father might be glorified on the earth (John. 17:4).