



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting **every man** perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume XV
Issue 358

The Witch of Endor

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

Why should the séance at Endor be explained? It is false, from first to last, and we have no more right to believe it than Saul had to attend it.

God had expressly forbidden His people to have anything to do with mediums, or those who had spirit controls (Leviticus 19:31). He said that He would set His face against such (Leviticus 20:6). These mediums were to be put to death by stoning (Leviticus 20:27).

Saul himself had put them out of the land (I Samuel 28:3, 9); but there was one left. Saul disobeyed God and lost his kingdom and his life as the immediate result of consulting this medium. Now we are asked to go with him to get the truth as to the state of the dead! Why not go to a modern medium? They can deceive quite as well as the witch of Endor.

The narrative tells us what false impressions Saul received. The fact that these are recorded in the Bible does not make them true anymore than the protestation of the Adversary at the beginning, "*You shall not be dying to die*" (Genesis 3:4).

This séance, and the stories we hear from evil spirits, even though they come to us through fine men of God, are proofs that the plain statements of the Scripture *are true, for these must be false*.

If we believe the evil spirits, then the events at Endor prove that the dead are *alive*. If we believe God's record concerning these evil spirits, that they are *deceiving* spirits, bringing the teaching of demons (I Timothy 4:1), we will not accept a single word, but, rather, will be confirmed in the truth that the dead are *dead*.



I have no intention of trying to square this spiritistic travesty with the truth. All who go there deserve to be deceived, just as if they attended a meeting of spiritists. If they accept the testimony of lying spirits, how can they expect to know the truth of God?

That there are discrepancies in the Bible is not only true, but absolutely necessary, for it records not only the Word of God, but also the words of His deceived and deceiving creatures. The moment that these are out of line with His revelation, they have no claim on our faith, except as matters of fact.

We must believe that Saul visited the witch of Endor, that the events occurred as related. Beyond that is the sphere of unbelief into which Saul had entered with tragic results. Let us not follow him.

May we, then, not take all texts on a subject without discrimination, but discern between those in which God is speaking through His servants, and the others in which the Adversary is speaking through his minions. We will not get the truth by believing both, or combining them, or making a mixture, but by rejecting one and accepting the other.

Unsearchable Riches Magazine
Volume 35, 1944, pages 218-219

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Bible Student's Notebook™

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This free weekly electronic publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

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What's in a Name?

"DAMASCUS"

by — Wim Janse

Generally, the meaning of the word "Damascus" is given as "bustling, busy or active"; but there is a deeper one.

"Damascus" (or *Dammeseq*) is, in Hebrew, built from two words: *Dam*, meaning "blood," and *ascus* (or better, *meseq*) is from a verb (*shephek* or *shaphak*) that means "to shed" or "to pour."

Don't be misled by the difference between *meseq* and *shephek/shaphak*. Words in Hebrew can differ greatly from the stem from which they come. So where did Saul of Tarsus go with his orders to wipe out the Christians? He went, without his knowledge and opposite to his intention, to meet his Savior, Whose blood was shed. Instead of shedding blood himself, Saul went on his way to meet "Shed Blood."

There is also a somewhat different explanation that goes in the same direction. *Dam* = "blood," and in this version *meseq* means "to draw." So *Dammeseq* or Damascus would, in this case, mean "Blood draw" or "blood that draws," or "blood that pulls."

However, there is more.

The Hebrew letters in the word Damascus (or *Dammeseq*) are: Daleth, Mem, Shin and Koph, or DMSK (pronounced DaMaSeK or DaMaSek or DaMeSeK). The numerical value of these letters is 4, 40, 300 and 100, making a total of 444. This number 4 has to do with the basic creation, the conditions by which life can exist. 444 is 4 x 111 and some say that 111 is some sort of common multiplier, making the number completely filled (like 666 = 6 x 111, the top of mankind, the most wicked one).

On day 4 of the 6 days of (re-)creation in Genesis 1, we see that the conditions that life needs were completed (the basic creation), and that life, in the form of animals and mankind, came later, on day 5 and 6. Since Damascus has this 444 number, does it stand for the basic creation? Is Damascus an image of the basic creation? Damascus



was, and still is, a big city. Were there people and animals from all over the world present in that city?

Abraham was given the promise that all families on the planet would be blessed:

In you all the families of the ground will be blessed (Genesis 12:3, CLNT).

Notice the limitation: ground. It does *not* speak about the creatures in the heavens.

Later Israel will be sent by our Lord to bring the population of this planet back to God.

Going, then, disciple all the nations (Matthew 28:19, CLNT).

Notice again the limitation. Israel did not have the task to bring God's good news to the whole universe, to the creatures "above."

Saul/Paul was to go and bring a different evangel, an evangel that would bring a different group into existence, a group – the Body of Christ – that, one day, will bring the whole universe back to God. That is why Saul of Tarsus had to go outside Israel, to Damascus, to the image of the basic creation, because there, and all over the world, he would find the people God had elected for this job. Damascus is an image of the basic creation. That is why he had to go there.

One more thought.

Isaiah 17:1 says that Damascus will be brought down to a heap, a ruin (*Young's Literal Translation*); it will be completely destroyed. If Damascus stands for the basic creation, an image of God's basic creation, it could be that this destruction of Damascus is an image or a foreshadowing of the total destruction of this present creation, at the end of the 4th eon.

Behold! What Manner of Love

by — E.W. Bullinger (1837-1913)

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God (I John 3:1).

THE DIVINE COMMAND

“Behold” is not mere interjection, but a verb; an imperative command. Look! See! Observe! Notice!

Whenever we meet with this word “Behold” we must expect to find something worthy of our deepest attention.

It is so here; for there is something that will fill our hearts with wonder, joy and admiration as we are brought to see and know and experience.

THE FATHER’S LOVE

This is the great and central subject of this passage. By the figure of speech *Hyperbaton*, the subject “the Father,” which is usually put first or early in the sentence, is (in the Greek) put *last* in order to attract our attention to the fact that it is the love of “the Father” to us, and not ours to Him, which is the great wonder which we are to “behold.”

It is “the Father” who is the Sovereign Bestower of His love, and He has bestowed it on “us.”

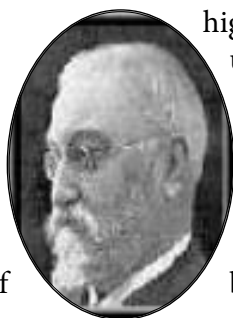
THE MANNER OF LOVE

Father’s love was bestowed freely, given without merit, without a work, “without a cause.” It was:

(1) Uninfluenced

This is indeed “the greatest thing in the world.” Not that we loved Him, but that He loved us (I John 4:10). What a perversion to change this Divine order and speak of our love to God and to one another as “the greatest thing in the world!”

No! This greatest thing in the world is the love of the



high and holy God bestowed on such. It springs up and flows forth of its own self, independently of any extraneous influence.

Our so-called “love” is just the opposite. We bestow it only on a “deserving case.” No other needs to expect anything to be bestowed by “us.”

The only reason Jehovah gives, why He ever did anything for or gave anything to His people, is “because He loved thee.” That was all; nothing influenced it or called it forth (read Deuteronomy 4:37; 7:7-9; 9:5-6; 10:15; Numbers 14:8.)

(2) Infinite

God’s love has no limit to time or duration, no bounds as to extent. It knows no constraints. No good in us called it forth, and no sin in us can keep it back. It is infinite, as to itself, in nature, manifestations and communications. It is infinite as to our deepest necessities, our weakest faith, and our fainting hope and love.

(3) Inexhaustible

Having loved His Own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end (John 13:1).

To the end of time, to the end of their need, to the end of their sins; and neither Sin, nor Satan, nor Death, nor Hell, nor all combined can ever decrease this love or diminish it.

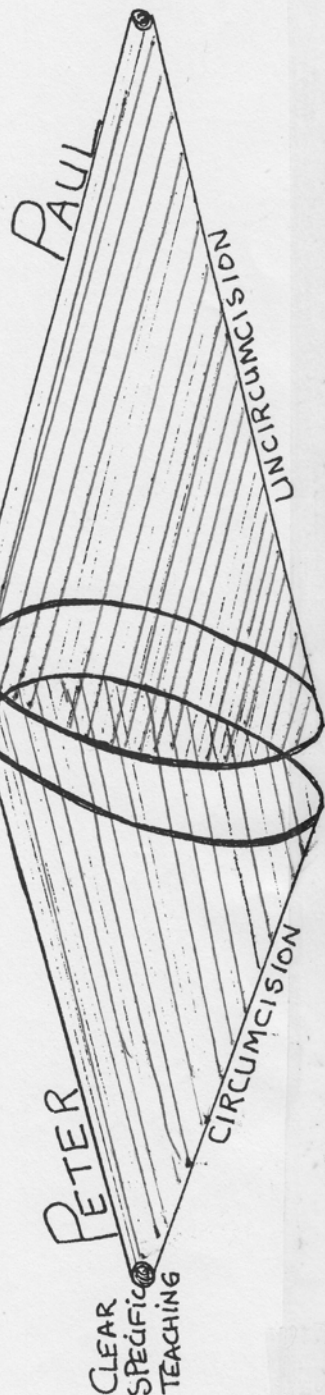
(4) Invincible

Overcoming all obstacles; breaking down all barriers; removing all hindrances; humbling the highest pride; subduing the strongest wills; melting the hard-

(see *MANNER*, last page)

THE TWO APOSTLESHIPS (GAL 2:7)

GENERAL TEACHING



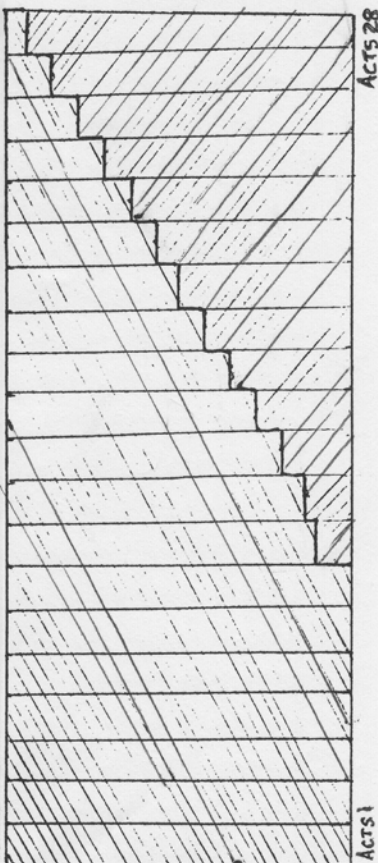
ACTS

THE BOOK OF ACTS BRIDGES THE GAP
"THE IN BETWEEN BOOK"
A DISPENSATIONAL GULF

GOSPELS:
MATTHEW
MARK
LUKE
JOHN
KINGDOM TRUTH

PAULINE
EPISTLES
BODY TRUTH
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
Philemon
I TIMOTHY
TITUS
II TIMOTHY

AD 33 ← TRANSITION OF ABOUT THIRTY YEARS → AD 63



DOCTRINAL
DEVELOPMENT

BODY TRUTH
KINGDOM TRUTH

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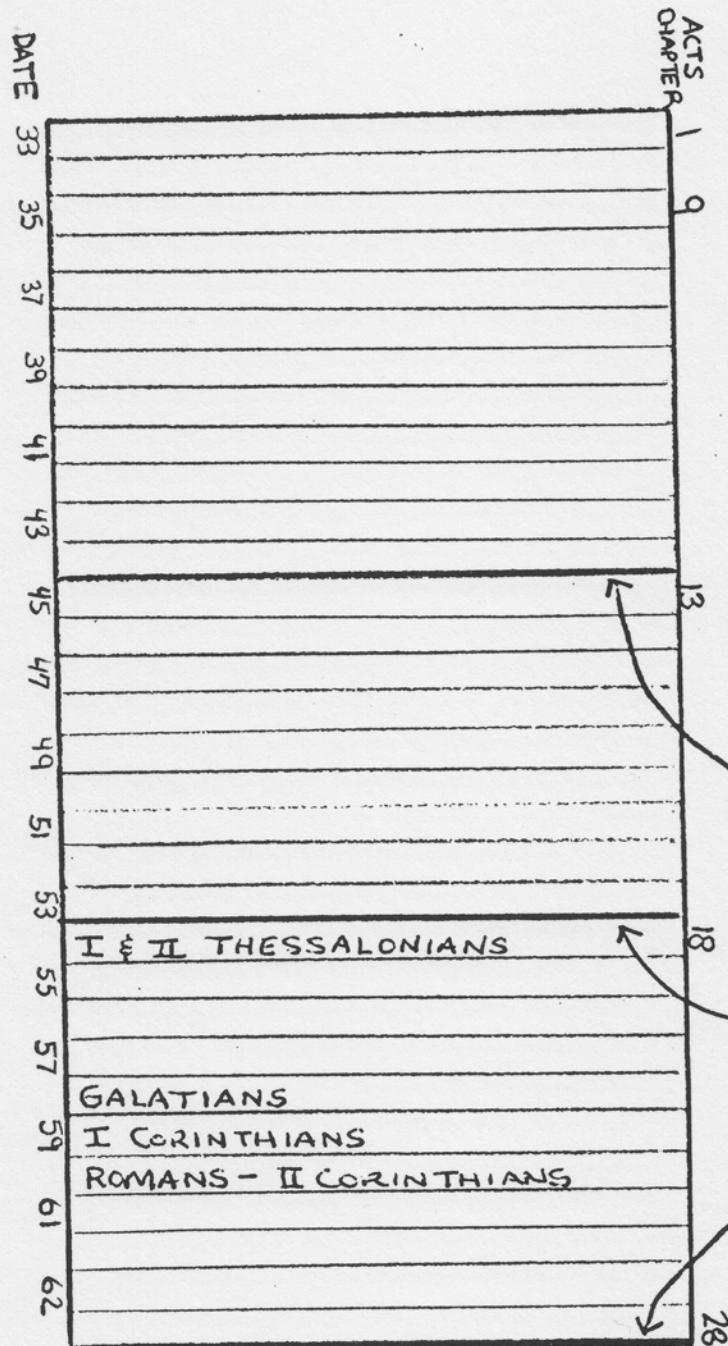
MAJOR EVENTS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

DATE	ACTS CHAPTER	EVENT
33	1	PENTECOST
35	9	SAUL'S CONVERSION
37		
39		CORNELIUS VISITED BY PETER
41		
43		
45	13	DEATH OF JAMES & HEROD PAUL AND BARNABAS SENT
47		
49		
51		
53	18	JERUSALEM COUNCIL PAUL'S SECOND JOURNEY PAUL AT CORINTH
55		
57		PAUL'S THIRD JOURNEY
59		
61		PAUL AT JERUSALEM
62	28	PAUL AT ROME
AD.		

LINES OF DEMARCATION:
 ACTS 13:46 - "WE TURN TO THE GENTILES,"
 ACTS 18:6 - "I WILL GO TO THE GENTILES..."
 ACTS 28:28 - "THE SALVATION OF GOD IS SENT UNTO THE GENTILES..."

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DATES OF PAUL'S EPISTLES IN RELATION TO THE BOOK OF ACTS



LINES OF DEMARCATION:
ACTS 13:46 - "I will go to the gentiles",
ACTS 18:6 - "I will go to the gentiles",
ACTS 28:28 - "The salvation of God is sent unto the gentiles"

THE EPISTLES WRITTEN AFTER ACTS 28:

- 64 EPHESIANS - PHILIPPIANS - COLLOSSIANS - PHILEMON
- 65 I TIMOTHY - TITUS
- 66 II TIMOTHY

NOTE: Some of the dates in this chronology are only approximate, and may vary by as much as two or three years.

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MANNER (continued from page 3228)

est hearts; and purging all our sins.

Yes, and beyond all of this, sweetening our bitterest cup, conquering our greatest enemies, and triumphing over death and the grave.

Such is the manner of Divine Love.

THE OBJECT OF THIS LOVE

That we should be called the Sons of God.

The best Greek texts add the words, “and such we are.”¹

Here again is no interference on the part of man. God will have none of his intrusions here. He bestows, and He calls. Called to Himself; called to His rest; called to His glory. What a wondrous call! What manner of love!

May we have an ear to hear that call, and a heart filled with that love, shed abroad within it by Divine grace and power.



1. [Editor] *Perceive what manner of love the Father has given us, that we may be called children of God! And we are!* (CLNT)

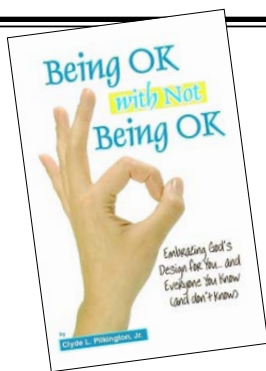
*When all of life is over
And the victory has been won
We will see the hand of Jesus
In everything that's done.*

*When all the mountains tumble
And the seas be tempest
tossed*

*We know He has a purpose
And nothing will be lost.*

*When all of God's creation
Are crying out to Him
They'll see the face of Jesus
And a new life they'll begin.*

Susan Lovelady



(#1985) 134 pp., PB, \$9.²³
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by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

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