



Diakrisis (Australia)

'But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern [diakrisis] both good and evil', (Heb.5:14)

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teaching, informing and equipping the church.
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* Conference Feb/2023 *

'Charismatic Confusion'

Sydney Feb.23rd (Sat)
9.30am - 4pm

Topics: *The History of the Pentecostal Movement; The Baptism With the Spirit & Filling; Tongues; Healing; the Gifts...The effect on the Gospel...and more...*

See P.20

Editor's Comment

Recently, the author has been reminded of the need for Christian discernment and teaching in what is orthodox doctrine. Today there is increasing bias and lying from the secular media, yet the willingness of the populace to believe it. At the same time there is the increasing willingness for Christians to believe things totally at odds with historic orthodoxy, scholarship and sound biblical doctrine.

The media and social media have become the devil's playground in which the thoughts of the populace can be formed and manipulated. The U.S. Media has shown obvious bias and untruths against political conservatives. The war in the Ukraine has seen some of the most blatant fake media reporting in history with copied and pasted misinformation to make a scene look like a one way narrative. Both Russia and Ukraine have engaged in propaganda, but the western media has the most shocking accounts. Pictures of bodies, planes flying over Ukraine cities with air raid sirens added in, fires in cities, were often faked and edited from other events. Even the Australian ABC *Media Watch* has acknowledged some of this.

The same has been seen in the Covid narrative - too often a one way reporting. Only recently have previously squashed voices of doctors and medical experts, now been able to speak out with facts that prove previous 'conspiracies' as true, contradicting the Government medical 'experts' and media narratives. Enquiries are now showing much of the Covid narratives were lies and overreactions.

Arguably Christians should be more discerning? Yet today just as people so quickly believe whatever the current media narrative is, so many Christians follow Internet sites and ministries that are just as deceptive. Christians are being convinced of new doctrines that are just not historic or orthodox or often rely on human logic rather than scripture. Christians also rely more on media or social media sites for devotions and teaching. Some Christians read or hear something that is ear tickling and then run with it, peddling it to others (see P.17 of this newsletter for a sophisticated example of this). The scriptures specifically warn of itching ears and 'fables': ***'the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables'*** (2Tim.4:3,4).

Spiritual discernment requires us to not only be *sceptical* of teaching that seems *new* or *extra biblical*, but to rigorously *test* it with study of the scriptures. Many beliefs widely accepted today are actually not orthodox or are *read into* the scriptures. Many affect how the Gospel is understood and presented.

Statistics show that the Bible is being read less and less by Christians. But in times which are so deceptive could we not need to read and study our Bibles prayerfully *more than the time we engage in the media*, internet or social media? As much as this author has written and loves books and literature, increasingly there too is a need to see that the Bible is to be read more. It is the *only* media which has *eternity* written into it, the *only truth* that is trustworthy, and the *only truth* that *sanctifies* and trains for Heaven (Jn.17:17).

Terry Arnold

The New Birth - The Mystery of and Misunderstandings

Ask Christians today what ‘born again’ means and you will get a confusing variety of answers. Some say we are born again when baptised, others say when we make a decision for Christ, and some give a list of things to do before one can be regenerated. Is there an order of salvation for being born again?

The term ‘born again’ is one of the most misunderstood and wrongly taught terms in modern Christian vocabulary. Yet the scriptures are clear in what it is and is not, and its effects (Jn.1:12,13; 3:1-21; 1Pet.1:23; 1Jn.5; Tit.3:5). However, there is a certain amount of *mystery* in the concept of being regenerated or born again. It is entirely a spiritual event effectual by the Spirit of God deep within a person. Thus it is not something we can easily describe except by *its effects* on the person regenerated.

What Does ‘Born Again’ Mean?

The meaning of the Greek words for ‘born again’ (*‘gennethe anothēn’*) are literally translated *‘born’* and *‘from above’*. It is a new or second *birth* and *from above*. It is entirely a spiritual and celestial rebirth, not anything earthly (Jn.3:12).

The Reformers and Puritan literature have many helpful definitions which accurately describe the scriptures that use the word ‘born again’ and its synonym ‘regeneration’. *‘Regeneration is a mighty and powerful change, wrought in the soul by the efficacious workings of the Holy Spirit, wherein a vital principle, a new habit, the law of God, and a divine nature, are put into, and framed in the heart, enabling it to act holily and pleasing to God, and to grow up therein to eternal glory’*. (1) The above theologian saw faith and regeneration occurring at the same time. Others simply described regeneration as an act of God giving faith to the sinner. In their literature many Puritans used other words interchangeably with the regeneration. Indeed, the Westminster Confession often uses the terms conversion and regeneration interchangeably.

Regeneration or being ‘born again’ is a secret inner act of God in which He imparts new spiritual life. Essentially when one is born again, they are supernaturally regenerated in heart from being *dead* in sin to their spirit being *made alive* to God. This affects their very soul, mind, will and emotions. Some when they are regenerated seem to be aware of this immediately, others more slowly, even though it is an instantaneous work of God. (2)

In this second birth we are made a *‘new creature’*, in a new creation, with a new life (Gal.6:15; Rom.6:14). *‘If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away behold, all things are become new’* (2Cor.5:17). This new life is no longer under captivity to the law but in a new life of the Spirit (Rom.7:6).

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(1) Charnock, *‘Regeneration’*, P.89

(2) The Greek tenses in John 1:13 show aorist indicatives, referring to a snapshot of something done *once* in time. Other passages show perfect and perfect indicatives, again something done *once* in time in the past, with results (effects) to the present (Jn.3:8; 1Pet.1:23; 1Jn.3:9; 5:1).

What Does Born Again Not Mean?

Being born again is not being baptised in water or any *outward* work, but rather an *inner* regeneration. It is a sovereign work of *grace*. *'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God'* (Jn.1:12.13). The scriptures never teach man can choose to be born again. The work is entirely *'of God'* (vs.13).

The new birth here is *'not of blood'* - it is not human, not from race or religion.

The new birth is *'not of the will of the flesh'* - it is not of personal desires. Within the heart of man is the sinful nature, the 'agent' to which man's will is tied. Our best state in the flesh is *'filthy rags'* (Is.64:6). We were 'dead in sins', 'slaves' to sin and carnal in motives (Eph.2:1,5; Col.2:13; Rom.6:16-22; Mk.7:21-23).

The New Birth is *'not of the will of man'*. Man's unsaved nature cannot will or make a decision to choose God when it is *'dead in sins'* (Eph.2:1,5; Col.2:13).

Regeneration is a *spiritual* thing, not a physical thing, not from any outward ordinance. When Jesus instructed Nicodemus *'you must be born again'* He pressed the distinction between the physical and the spiritual. Yet Nicodemus mistook the *spiritual* language for *physical* childbirth: *'How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?'* (Jn.3:4). Jesus answered, *'That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit'* (vs.6). One birth is *'earthly'*, the other *'heavenly'* (vs.12).

Nothing man can do can bring about regeneration to life in Christ. It is a sovereign act of grace by God alone. This creation of God makes the will willing to respond to God and his message. The new birth is a *'new creation'* (2Cor.5:17). We cannot create ourselves. God has to create and quicken a new spirit. *'For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ'* (2Cor.4:6).

The Necessity of the New Birth

Jesus stated *'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God...You must be born again'* (Jn.3:3,7). The phrase *'verily, verily'* (or *'truly, truly'*), is stating the *necessity* of this regeneration. The pronoun *'you'* is plural - Jesus was speaking to more than just Nicodemus. It is necessary that all people be born from above to enter Heaven. Jesus then repeated the same: *'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God'* (vs.5). (1)

(1) The phrase *'born of water'* is interpreted by many commentators as spiritual cleansing from sin which Ezekiel prophesied: *'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you...I will cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you...'* (Ezek.36:25-27). The water symbolizes spiritual cleansing, as the new heart and new spirit shows new spiritual life.

Another interpretation of *'born of water'* is that it refers to the waters of child birth (vs.4-6).

A third view is that it refers to water baptism. However, this introduces a physical act which contradicts much scripture and arguably the verse following: *'That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit'* (vs.6).

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The urgency here is because man is ‘*dead in sins*’ and must be ‘*made alive*’. ‘*And you has he quickened [made alive], who were dead in trespasses and sins...Even when we were dead in sins, has quickened [made alive] us together with Christ, by (grace you are saved;)...For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God*’ (Eph.2:1,5,8).

This corruptibility in unregenerate man cannot go into an incorruptible Heaven where there is no sin and a perfect holy righteous God. ‘*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever*’ (1Pet.1:23). The spirit of the person must be regenerated and be as the ‘*spirits of just men made perfect*’ (Heb.12:23). The Puritan William Whately (1583-1639) in describing the new birth, stated ‘*If Christ should come, and die, for one man, ten thousand times; all those deaths should profit that one man nothing at all for his salvation, unless he be made a new creature*’. (1)

The Mystery of the New Birth

Exactly what happens in regeneration is mysterious to us, but not to God. God’s intentions are clear in scripture - to open the persons heart, regenerate them in spirit and so justify, sanctify and raise them to glory (Rom.8:28-30).

Although we know that we who were spiritually dead have been made alive to God and ‘born again’ (John 3:3,7; Eph.2:1,5; Col.2:13), yet we don’t understand the spiritual nature of how this happens except that which we experience and read in Scripture as to its *effects*.

Jesus himself described this mystery: ‘*The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or where it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit*’ (Jn.3:8).

The words ‘*spirit*’ and ‘*wind*’ here (vs.8) are the *same Greek word* (‘*pneuma*’). The ‘*wind*’ here is clearly referring to the Holy Spirit and this new birth. Similar references are found in Job 33:4 and Ezekiel 37:9-14. Ezekiel was told to ‘*speak to the wind*’ and the breath of God then made dead bones come alive (vs.9,10).

No one can tell where the wind comes from and where it goes. But you hear and see the *effects* only. Sailors know how strong the wind is by the effects upon the waters. Scales of wind velocity have been developed by the various visual effects upon water. So too, no one can explain the mysterious working of the Spirit in this new birth except by the *effects* upon a person.

Because regeneration is entirely an act of God, it occurs (as the Greek tenses show) in an instant of time and happens only once. As with child birth, the new birth occurs at a definite time. Yet most people do not know exactly the time when it happened. This is so because often there is a ‘drawing’ time when God sovereignly induces the person to come. ‘*No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day...no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father*’ (Jn.6:44,65).

The mystery of regeneration is also that the action is *passive* on mans part. In

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the key passages when the Bible speaks of the born again event, the Greek voices for the verbs are *passive* (Jn.1:13; Jn.3:3,5,6,7,8). Indeed it is God alone who opens the heart to be made alive to His truth. The classic example of this was Lydia ‘*whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul*’ (Acts 16:14). Paul states that God has ‘*made us alive together with Christ*’ (Eph.2:5; cp. Col.2:13). James says ‘*of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth...*’ (James 1:17,18). Peter says it is God alone who ‘*according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*’ (1Pet.1:3).

The famous hymn ‘*And Can It Be*’ well expresses this mystery of regeneration. ‘*Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature’s night; thine eye diffused a quickening ray; I woke, the dungeon flamed with light; my chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose, went forth, and followed thee...*’ Indeed the unsaved person’s heart is ‘imprisoned’, ‘bound in sin’, and *willingly so*. But when God sends a ‘*quickenning ray*’, a life giving call, the person ‘wakes’ from the deadness of sin, now with a heart and will ‘free’ to receive the things of God and salvation!

Sadly in modern evangelism, new techniques, invitation systems and an emphasis on what man can do, have attempted to produce the new birth by mechanical means. Yet the new birth is a spiritual, sovereign act, a monergistic work of God to the one who is dead in sins.

When Jesus addressed Nicodemus He gave no commands or methods to be born again, but simply stated a fact - that no one can enter into the kingdom of God unless this regeneration is given to him. Again, the verbs in this passage are all Greek *passive* voice on mans part and active only on God’s part.

The Modern Confusion With The New Birth

Every Christian denomination has a doctrine of regeneration, yet most teach it with a *backward order of salvation*. Many teach it as a plan of acceptance of salvation by praying certain prayers or performing certain actions. Yet none of these new modern measures have anything to do with the scriptures that refer to being born again. None of the scriptures that teach regeneration and being born again detail anything about how this is accomplished, except that the instrument is through the Word of God. ‘*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which live’s and abides forever*’ (1Pet.1:23). Again, ‘*being born again*’ here is a Greek perfect passive - an act entirely of God once in time, with man passive.

It seems to be lost on modern evangelism that this work is all ‘*of God*’ and passive on mans part. No doubt in many aspects of salvation we are co-workers with God - in sanctification and perseverance, etc. But in the work of regeneration we play no active role. As in Ezekiel chapter 36-37 when God gave life to dead bones, so regeneration is entirely a work of God. ‘*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them*’ (vs.26,27).

Theologians refer to an ‘ordo salutis’ (Latin for ‘order of salvation’). Most theologians in history have regeneration before or at the same time as any response to any call to saving faith. The logic of this should be apparent - the ‘*dead in sins*’ (Eph.2:1,5; Col.2:13) cannot do anything any more than a dead person can come back to life. The person ‘dead in sins’ is physically alive but spiritually a corpse with no spiritual life in him whatsoever. His heart is depraved, ‘*deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*’ (Jer.17:9). Such a person cannot and will not seek or receive spiritual things unless the Spirit of God regenerates him. ‘*The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*’ (Rom.8:7); ‘*the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*’ (1Cor.2:14); ‘*no one can come*’ unless ‘*drawn*’ (Jn.6:44). John says ‘*Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is [has been] born of God*’, not ‘*will be born of God.*’ (1)

However, scripture is not as clear as to the exact timing of this and theologians vary on whether a person is born again *first and then has faith*, or whether at the *same time*. Arguably any order does not preclude the regeneration taking place at the same time as our response to the Gospel and receiving faith. Thus some cite passages that connect regeneration with the Word of God preached in the Gospel: ‘*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever*’ (1Pet.1:23); and ‘*of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures*’ (James 1:18); ‘*the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word*’ (Acts 10:44).

Though many read these scriptures as faith and regeneration occurring at the same time, yet others cite these passages as people being born again *in response* to faith. Many evangelicals see the person is born again after they believed because they see the *effects* of this and conclude that regeneration must therefore have come after saving faith. But a closer look at any such passages arguably does not clearly show any order of faith. If faith is before regeneration then who gave the person the ability to believe when they were ‘dead in sins’? Where would that gift of faith come from? One would have no need of being regenerated and made alive if one was already capable of believing without aid.

The example of Lydia may be the closest the scriptures come to an order of salvation. She was hearing the message of salvation but did *not respond until the Lord ‘opened her heart’* (Acts 16:14). She ‘*heard*’; then the Lord ‘*opened her heart*’; and she responded to the preaching. Whether the act of God opening her heart was *beforehand* or at the *same time* as the response may well be a mute argument, since the opening of any heart is a mystery as to how and when it occurred.

A study of the Reformers, the Puritans and great preachers of last centuries will show that the orthodox and scriptural position was that a person must be born again

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(1) Here a perfect indicative passive - literally ‘*have been born of God*’ - a past one time event with results (effects) to the present and the person passive to an action by God.

before any faith, or at the same time, but never the reverse. The reverse violates the very necessity to be born again and the scriptures that speak of the unsaved man being 'dead in sins' (Eph.2:1,5; Col.2:13).

It must be understood that some can hear the Gospel over and over again, but unless the Spirit of God arrests them, opens and regenerates their hearts, they will be left in the deadness of their sins. But in conversion, as the Word is preached, the Spirit takes the Word of God and applies it to a heart opened in regeneration.

What Do We Do To See People Born Again?

Nowhere in scripture when the Gospel is spoken of or represented, is there any command to be born again. Some will point to John chapter 3 and Jesus telling Nicodemus that he '*must be born again*' as an imperative. Yet the Greek has no imperative but an indicative here - a statement of fact only. The Gospel message is first *believe* in Jesus Christ and you will be saved. It is this author's view that to emphasise the concept of 'born again' in the Gospel may well confuse what the person must do - *believe* in Jesus.

When one truly believes in Christ and what He has done for them *they are born again*. But they were not born again because of anything they did, but only as the Spirit has quickened them. We cannot desire, will or do anything to be born again of ourselves any more than a baby cooperates in child birth.

So, what do we do to see people born again?...*Preach the Gospel!* - Preach Christ crucified for sin to satisfy a righteous holy God who demands justice; that God has punished Christ as our substitute instead of us for sin. We call on the person to believe in Him. The Gospel is not about doing anything to be born again. The born again experience is God's mystery of creation in His own time.

Our work in seeing people born again is to preach the Gospel and thus use the instrument God has provided. '*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever*' (1Pet.1:23). As the Word is heard, we pray that the Spirit unlocks the heart as He did for Lydia, and gives the willingness, the power to understand and respond.

This work of the Spirit is not done by outward man made methods to get decisions. It is an inward call of God. Our work is to present Christ and what He has done for a great dilemma - the man dead in sins; *that Christ has died in our place as a substitute to pay the penalty of our sin and satisfy the wrath of God upon our sin. God has been propitiated by the sacrifice of Jesus for us.* Salvation is *believing and receiving him by faith. 'That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation'* (Rom.10:9,10).

Proofs of Being Born Again - The Effects

There are many proofs of being born again as described in scriptures. When Lydia had her heart 'opened', she showed the effects of this when she '*attended to*

the things spoken by Paul (Acts 16:14). Other results of regeneration will be seen in the *'fruit of the Spirit* - *'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control* (Gal.5:22,23); and that *the born again will suffer and survive persecutions, trials, testings and temptations*' (Matt.10:22).

More effects of being born again are especially found in the epistles of John:

The born again will have a heart to put Christ first. 'Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God...' (5:1; see also Matt. 10:37).

The born again do not practise sin but show repentance. 'Whosoever is born of God does not commit [habitual action - practise] sin...because he is born of God' (1Jn.3:9); *'We know that whosoever is born of God sins not; but he that is begotten of God keeps himself, and that wicked one touches him not'* (1Jn.5:18).

The born again Christian no longer has a heart to sin. He hates it, fights and groans under it. The power and lordship of the practise of sin is broken.

The new birth produces holiness. The born again seek holiness in living. The born again do not accept the worlds standards. 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world...' (1Jn.2:15,16); *'Every man that has this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure'* (1Jn.3:3).

The born again love the brethren. 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren...' (1Jn.3:14). The born again have a distinctive love for the brethren. Fellowship will be a priority.

The born again will 'know' Christ in a personal way. However, there will be many who will claim to know him from works done but who were never regenerated. They will say *'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name and in your name have cast out devils? and in your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity'* (Matt.7:22,23).

Regeneration, being a sovereign work of God alone, is a teaching hard to accept by many today. Many will try with logic to reconcile this sovereign act of God with the responsibility of man to believe and repent. Yet both are true. Sadly, this failure to accept both truths and to add man's logic has led to a reversal of theologies including in the order of salvation, and with new practises to match.

The biblical teaching of regeneration will not tolerate the pride of man. No one can boast that they had anything to do with this act of God and salvation (Eph.2:8,9). Charles Spurgeon once said *I should not have sought Him unless there had been some previous influence on my mind to make me seek Him...I saw that God was at the bottom of it all, and that He was the author of my faith, and so the whole doctrine of grace opened up to me...I desire to make this confession, 'I ascribe my change wholly to God'*. (1)

Regeneration is a work of amazing love. There can be great joy and security in knowing that God has started a work which He will complete in us. He loved us first before we loved Him (1Jn.4:19).

The doctrine of regeneration truly gives all glory to God!

Terry Arnold

(1) C.H. Spurgeon's *Autobiography*, Vol.1:168-69

A Fresh Look At Revelation - Part 18

In **Part 1** (chapters 1-4 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2019) the intent was to show that the book of Revelation *is to be understood* at least as far as *what John saw and described*. *What is figurative and what is literal can be determined by the language and referencing to other scriptures* ('scripture interprets scripture').

The *timing and the order of events* in the first three chapters are presented as events in John's day *with a divide in time and order at chapter 4* (see 1:19).

In **Part 2** (chapters 4,5 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2019) we continued to explore *what is 'literal' or 'figurative' and why*. This was done by searching the same *symbols, signs and wording* elsewhere.

In **Part 3** (chapters 6-8 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2020) we saw the first of three distinct judgements beginning with seven '*seals*' (ch.6), all increasing in intensity.

In **Part 4** (chapters 8,9 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2020) we saw the second set of seven judgements begin the *Trumpet Judgements* and an increasing intensity in three last graphic '*woes*'. A perfect God has a perfect judgement!

In **Part 5** (chapters 9,10 - *Diakrisis* November/December 2020) - The sixth trumpet judgement brings a more severe judgement - *death*. Over half the earth's population is destroyed in divine judgements! Those left alive are unrepentant.

In **Part 6** (chapter 11 - *Diakrisis* January/February 2021) - the 'two witnesses' preach and the antichrist arises amidst signs and wonders, the likes of which have never been seen before since the first coming of Christ.

In **Part 7** (Chapter 12 - *Diakrisis* March/April 2021) - Symbols, signs and figurative language refer to Israel and the great battle between God and evil. The war in Heaven becomes a war on earth against God's elect nation and his saints.

In **Part 8** (Chapter 13 - *Diakrisis* May/June 2021) - The antichrist and the false prophet arise with their 'mark of the beast'. They are given power by God to do great signs and wonders. Authority is given to the beast to slaughter the saints. There will be false worship of the beast. Prophecy will reach a climax...

In **Part 9** (Chapter 14 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2021) - Chapters 12-14 are an interlude before returning to the judgements. A literal 144,000 Jewish evangelists from the *tribes of Israel* (7:4-8) preach a final '*everlasting Gospel*' to the world. Their redemption then comes with worship and singing a '*new song*' (vs.8,9).

Armageddon is foreshadowed with God's fury to be finally poured out in full.

In **Part 10** (chapter 15 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2021) we see an introduction to the final horrific '*vial*' (bowl) judgements. The angels stand ready.

The saints stand in awe and sing in worship to a majestic holy God, but a God of wrath who has warned of such judgements (Joel 2:28-32; Zech.14:1; Mal.4:1-5).

In **Part 11** (chapter 16 - *Diakrisis* November/December 2021) the seven angels, by the authority of God, pour out the final vial (bowl) judgements upon the earth. God dries up the Euphrates to bring his enemies to a final battle. The will of God upon the earth will be '*done*'. The unrepentant depravity of man is shown.

In **Part 12** (chapter 17 - *Diakrisis* January/February 2022) there is a parenthesis between chapter 16 and 18, pausing to look at what happens during the 7th vial (bowl) judgement. It is a description of the end time world wide false religion.

In **Part 13** (Chapter 18 - *Diakrisis* March/April 2022) is a further description of the 7th vial (bowl) judgement and the commercial aspect of a future city called Babylon which is destroyed. This description matches Old Testament prophecies, dual prophecies both for the Babylon of old and the one described in Revelation.

In **Part 14** (Chapter 19 - *Diakrisis* May/June 2022) is a most terrifying chapter with God judging the nations at the battle of Armageddon and avenging the righteous; the antichrist and false prophet are cast into the Lake of Fire, all necessary judgements with the triumphant return and reign of Christ. But it also includes the marriage supper of the Lamb and a crescendo of praise and worship in Heaven. This fearsome chapter should be a warning to the unrepentant. To the believer who has received Christ as Lord and Saviour, the admonition is to fear God and to worship Him in spirit and in truth!

In **Part 15** (Chapter 20:1-4 *Diakrisis* July/August 2022) we looked at the issue of the Millennium, whether a literal or figurative '1,000 years'. The issue is one of *hermeneutics* - how we *interpret* scripture. The *literal grammatical* method has many proofs and is arguably more logical and consistent with scripture.

There is much detail in this chapter describing the binding of Satan, Christ's millennial reign, a final rebellion, and the final judgement of Satan and the lost.

In **Part 16** (Chapter 20:5-15 *Diakrisis* Sept/October 2022) details two resurrections separated by '*a thousand years*' - '*the resurrection of life*' and the '*resurrection of damnation*' (Jn.5:28,29). The latter is at the fearsome great white throne judgement, which ends in the '*second death*' in Hell where the antichrist and false prophet are and into which 'Hades' and 'the last enemy 'death' are thrown. The Lake of Fire will demonstrate God's wrath and glory (Rom.9:22,23).

The only way to escape the latter judgement is to be found in the '*book of life*'. God has promised to '*not blot out*' (Rev.3:5) the names of those who receive the Gospel, who believe and confess Jesus Christ as Lord of all, and that God has sent Christ to satisfy His justice with a finished sacrifice as a substitute for our sins.

In **Part 17** (chapter 21:1-22:5 - *Diakrisis* November/December 2022) the final

city of the 'New Jerusalem' is described, a culmination of hundreds of passages about Heaven in the Bible. Its breathtaking beauty are described with its dimensions, the materials, the inhabitants and the glory within. It is a resting place of love, joy, peace and holiness for the saints face to face with the Godhead.

Part 18 (Chapter 22:6-21)

Vs.6 'And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done'.

This is a repetition of Revelation 3:14; 19:11; 21:5 and ascribed to the One whose '*sayings*' ('*lógos*') are '*faithful and true*'. This book is not just writings of John but a testimony from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself and through '*his angel*'.

Vs.7 'Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keeps the saying of the prophecy of this book'.

The *imminency* expressed in '*I come quickly*' is repeated often in scripture, in this book (2:5,16; 3:11), and three times in this chapter alone (vs.7,12,20).

The word '*quickly*' ('*tachú*') has the idea of swiftness, suddenness, rather than indicating any time frame; hence the result is imminency, since no one knows the exact time. The early church understood that the coming of the Lord could be '*at hand*' (1Pet.4:7) and '*draws nigh*' (James 5:8), and that the current church age is '*the last days*' (Heb.1:1,2). The idea of imminency also abounds in the early church fathers writings (Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, The Didache, Epistle of Barnabas, The Shepherd of Hermas).

In the last days there will be '*scoffers*' to which Peter replies by preaching the sureness of our Lord coming for his '*beloved*' (2Pet.3). Imminency is a doctrine in itself and is important for the motivation of believers to live godly holy lives (1Jn.3:3; Rom.13:11-14). We are to *watch* and keep *looking* for His coming (Matt.25:13; Phil.3:20).

The person who '*keeps*' (or guards) the '*prophecy of this book*' will be '*blessed*'. It is a book that Christians should read not infrequently, especially if one can see that many end time signs have no doubt increased and intensified. '*Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand*' (1:3).

Vs.8,9 'And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then said he unto me, See you do it not: for I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God'.

John now states that he '*saw*' and '*heard*' the things he has reported, following which he falls down at the feet of the angel in the position of worship. As in Chapter 19, John was likely overcome with the scenes and sounds he had witnessed. The angel responds sharply '*see that you do it not*' ('*horáo me*') before explaining that he is a '*fellow servant*' (Heb.1:14) of John and his '*brethren the*

prophets and all who *'keep the sayings of this book'*. The angel rightly instructs him to only *'worship God'* (Ex.34:14; Matt.4:10).

Vs.10 *'And he said unto me, seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand'*.

Unlike other books where the writer was told to *'shut up the vision'* (Dan.8:26), and *'shut up the words, seal the book, even to the time of the end'* (12:4-10), John is told not to seal the *'prophecy of this book'* because *'the time is at hand'*. This book is to be read, studied and understood as best we can.

Vs.11,12 *'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still'. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be'*.

Verse 11 is difficult for some but if taken in context with verse 12 it appears to referring to the future judgement when the condition of the soul would be set for eternity. What state a man dies in, so will be his soul in eternity. Considering the time till death or the coming of the Lord could be short, this is a fearsome statement. The 'righteousness' referred to here must be the righteousness of God imputed upon belief in Christ and his substitutionary sacrifice (Rom.4).

Believers will be judged on service (1Cor.3:8-15; 2Cor.5:10). Unbelievers will be judged at the *'great white throne'* judgement (Rev.20:11-15) according to works outside of salvation (Rom.4:1-6; Eph.2:8,9), then punished with everlasting destruction (2Thess.1:8,9).

The only way to escape this judgement is to be found in the *'book of life'* of which God has promised to *'not blot out'* (Rev.3:5) - when we receive the true Gospel, to believe and confess Jesus Christ as Lord of all, and that God has sent Christ to satisfy His justice with a finished sacrifice as a substitute for our sins.

Again we are told the Lord comes *'quickly'* and with his *'reward for every man according to his work'*, (the latter words probably taken from Isaiah 40:10).

Vs.13 *'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last'*

With this first and last letter in the Greek alphabet, both Testaments have both God and Christ as the *'Alpha and Omega'* (Is.41:4; 44:6; 48:12; Rev.1:7; 2:8; 22:13). Christ here clearly states his deity. In His absolute sovereignty He started the plan of the events described in Revelation and He will end it. Indeed He is the *'author and the finisher of our faith'* (Heb.12:2).

Vs.14,15 *'Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right [authority] to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers [fornicators], and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever [all who] loves and makes a lie'*.

The *'commandments'* here is *'entoles'* (not *'nomos'* - law) and is synonymous with the Word of God (1Jn.2:3-7; 1Cor.7:19; 1Jn.3:22). This is more than the 10

commandments, it would include all the teachings of God, Jesus and the moral law (Rev.12:17). ‘Doing’ these commandments cannot be done perfectly by man, but rather by the perfect substitution of Christ in faith under the influence and fruit of the Spirit, against which there is no law that condemns (Gal.5:23).

The followers of Christ and His commandments have the ‘**right**’ (‘*exousía*’ - authority) to the ‘**tree of life**’ which nourishes the nations (Rev.22:1,2).

Outside of the city of God will be all those who are without Christ and His righteousness. ‘**Dogs**’ was a cultural term used for Gentiles; those of low character (Phil.3:2); or homosexuals (Dt.23:18). ‘**Sorcerers**’ (‘*pharmakeía*’) were those involved in occult, sorcery, witchcraft (Gal.5:20; Rev.9:21; 18:23; 21:8). ‘**Whoremongers**’ [fornicators - ‘*pórnos*’] were those practising sex outside of marriage between a man and a woman (Matt.15:19; 19:4-6). ‘*Pórnos*’ is mentioned 10 times in the New Testament (1Cor.5:9,10,11; 6:9; Eph.5:5; 1Tim.1:10; Heb.12:16; 13:4; Rev.21:8; 22:15). ‘**Murderers**’ were those who took the lives of others. ‘**Idolaters**’ are those who worship anything other than the creator God. ‘**Whosoever** [‘*pás*’ - ‘*all*’] **loves and makes a lie** [‘*pseúdos*’] are all those who ‘make’ falsehoods and do not have the truth of God and His Word. All are ‘**without the city**’ of the New Jerusalem and will be in the eternal Lake of Fire (Rev.21:8).

Vs.16,17 *‘I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will [the willing one], let him take the water of life freely’.*

‘Jesus’ himself here speaks of His ‘**angel**’ sent to ‘**testify...these things to the churches**’, originally the seven churches of Revelation (chapter 2). Christ is the ‘**root and the offspring of David**’ in that He was a Jew of the line of David in the tribe of Judah as prophesied (2Sam.7:12-16; Is.11:1; Ps.132:11; Mk.12:35; Rev.5:5). He is the ‘**bright and morning star**’ (Rev.2:28), the ‘**day star**’ (2Pet.1:19), a metaphor from the planet Venus which the Greeks called the day or morning star that ushered in the light of day.

Both the Holy ‘**Spirit**’ and the ‘**bride**’ (the church) give a general invitation here to ‘**come**’ to those who will ‘**hear**’ and are ‘**athirst**’. The Spirit’s ministry is to point to Christ (Jn.15:26; 16:8,14). Some misapply this verse to an invitation addressing the ‘free will’ of all to choose Christ. However, the context of this passage is to ‘**testify unto you these things in the churches**’ (vs.16). Verse 17 continues with ‘**the spirit and the bride**’. The verse refers to the New Jerusalem and to God’s ‘**servants**’ (vs.6) taking ‘**the waters of life freely**’ (cp.Is.55:1). The sovereign choosing of God (Eph.1:4,5; Jn.6:44) and the liberty of the offering of the Gospel with human responsibility is here revealed (vs.17), a divine antinomy.

Vs.18,19 *‘For I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book*

of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book'. [The KJV (from the 'Textus Receptus') has '*the book of life*'; the majority of manuscripts have '*the tree of life*']

The warning of '*if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues...written in this book*' is a most serious one echoed in other verses for the entire word of God (Dt.4:2; Pr.30:5,6). The '*plagues*' are those in chapters 9,11,15,16,18,21.

Vs.20,21 '*He which testifies these things says, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen*'.

Again, the veracity of the prophecy and the sureness of the coming of the Lord are stated. The desire of the writer is '*come, Lord Jesus*'.

The benediction of the '*grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*' (Rom.16:20) follows with a closing statement of truth - '*Amen*'.

This last chapter closes with promises as well as warnings. The promises are that we will be blessed if we '*keep the sayings of this book*' (22:7), similar to a promise in the first chapter that whoever '*reads*' it will be blessed (1:3). The book is not to be 'sealed' but read, studied, understood and kept. Why? - because of imminency of Christ's return, indeed '*the time is at hand*'.

But only the followers of Christ will have the fruit of such blessing and be in the New Jerusalem, a place of unspeakable beauty, peace, joy and comfort, beholding the king Himself. Our desire should be that of the Spirit, the angel, the apostle and bride - '*come, Lord Jesus*'!

Conclusion (Editor):

I confess this commentary series on Revelation has been a most difficult undertaking - a task the Lord laid on my heart nearly 4 years ago. I started this too because I felt inadequate in knowledge of this book, and one way to challenge that shortfall was to commit to completing the whole book. I am indebted to our sub-editor, Mike Claydon, for help with many verses I found difficult.

The warnings of verses 18 and 19 in the last chapter have arguably prevented me from expanding on many of my own thoughts and impressions of some verses. If I have written any error, may the Lord forgive me.

Sadly today many ignore the book as being too difficult. Yet it is a message *to churches* (1:4). Others allegorise it with a confusing variety of interpretations. However the book is not an allegory but an *eye witness account* of what John 'saw' and 'heard' - a summary of the ages and what is to come.

This book must surely exhort one to worship, considering that is one of the themes of the book, but also to fear God and to holy living, in preparation for his coming and judgement. In that may the reader be exhorted and the Lord be honoured and glorified.

Terry Arnold

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

'Homosexual' - a 1946 Invention?

Terry, you may be aware of a 'documentary' which asserts 'the misuse of a single word that changed the course of history'. They claim the word 'homosexual' was added to the Bible [RSV] in 1946. It's another attack on the Scriptures...I note they don't go anywhere near what the Quran says, which also explicitly condemns homosexuality (eg. Surah 26: 161-166). Thanks for any input.

(C.K. Qld)

Editor's Reply:

The premise that the translations are wrong from the 1946 RSV translation sounds like a conspiracy theory similar to the '*Davinci Code*', (which was full of historical untruths and soundly refuted by many - see '*Diakrisis*' July/Aug. 2006). The argument here centres on the translation in 1Corinthians 6:9: '*Know you not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind [homosexuals]*'.

The main words in question are the Greek '*arsenokoitai*' and '*malakoi*', translated '*homosexual*' or '*sodomites*' in most Bibles ('*sodomy*' being a synonym for what was common practise in the city of Sodom and '*grievous sin*' in Gen.18:20). The argument is that Paul invented new words here. However, the word '*arsenokoitai*' is a Greek word literally made up of two words '*arsen*' - male, and '*koite*' - to lie down (translated '*bed*'- Lk.11:7; Heb.13:4). The word before it in the same verse, '*malakoi*', is often translated '*effeminate*'.

It is not just the *words* themselves but also the *context* that here describes homosexual behaviour. '*Malakoi*' literally means 'soft ones' and was used to describe effeminate behaviour. '*Arsenokoitai*' literally means *a male lying with male*. Greek commentators also state that apart from the act itself being clearly described, this passage also details both an active and passive participant. Greek expert Zodhiates states: '*The Greeks considered one who prostituted himself for gain as a pórnos. In this sense it seems to be used in 1Cor.6:9 where malakoí, the effeminate, are also mentioned. The distinction between them and pórnnoi, fornicators, seems to consist in that the pórnnoi prostitute themselves for gain, but the malakoí, effeminate ones, do it without charge. It is in this manner that the word is used in Eph. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:10*'.

The thousands of Greek manuscripts all have these Greek words. Also '*Arsenokoitai*' follows the Hebrew phrase '*mishkav zakar*' which the Jews used for a 'male lying with a male' in sexual contact. The two Greek words '*arsen*' and '*koite*' also appear in the *ancient* Septuagint (Greek OT) in Lev.18:22 and 20:13, both which clearly condemn homosexual practise. So, where is the 'invention' of a new word here?

Continued next page >

Even if a new word was ‘invented’, where did Paul get the idea from? There are many *other verses* that say the *same thing about homosexuality* and clearly condemn it with the penalty of death or Hell. In the OT it is ‘*lying with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination*’ (Lev.18:22; 20:13). In the New Testament it is described as a ‘*vile affection*’, ‘*men with men*’, women with ‘*lust*’ toward each other, being ‘*against nature*’, ‘*unseemly*’ and ‘*error*’ (Rom.1:26,27). Such a practise of ‘*going after strange flesh*’ brings ‘*eternal fire*’ (Jude 7). The Greek word for ‘*strange*’ here means ‘*another of a different kind*’ and clearly refers to men with men or women with women.

All this evidence is apart from the obvious connection by context of ‘*fornication*’ (‘*pórnos*’) in the *same verse* in question (1Cor.6:9) and mentioned 10 times in the NT! ‘*Pórnos*’, although a general word for immorality outside of marriage, is also used in context to include homosexuality. In Christ’s era all knew what ‘*pórnos*’ meant (as quoted by him in Matthew 15:19) - sexual immorality outside of marriage, a marriage only between a man and woman, and quoted by Jesus as being ‘*from the beginning*’ (Matt.19:4-6). One can adjust or change the word ‘*homosexual*’ all one likes, but the fact is that man with man and woman with women in ‘*pórnos*’ is against God’s natural order of creation (Gen.1:27; 1Tim.2:13) and the distinction between male and female, which if violated, is an ‘*abomination to the Lord God*’ (Dt.22:5).

This ‘*documentary*’ in question is based upon the testimony of a woman described as a ‘*straight conservative Christian*’ who was ‘*kicked out of her church for standing up*’ for LGBT members, and another man who is a ‘*conservative gay Christian*’. The contradiction here between ‘*conservative*’ and ‘*LGBT*’ should be obvious.

This documentary is an unscholarly fable. As the serpent once said ‘*has God said that*’ (Gen.3:1), so this is a subtle attack on the veracity of the Word of God which has stood against same sex practises for 2,000 years. Underlying the same-sex movement is also the *attack on the family*. But we have been warned that ‘*the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables*’ (2Tim.4:3,4).

Aramaic Primacy?

Excerpts from a text sent to many, including the editor:

‘...*The Bible has been interfered with...over 2,000 years. The Devil has changed verses to fit in with his agenda to offer ‘easy believism’. The result is Christian believers that are not saved. When we compare the original Aramaic New Testament to modern Bible versions, we discover the serious deceiving verses that support the Devils’s definition of a ‘Christian’. A comparison of Acts 16:31... ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...’ (KJV) with the Aramaic which says: ‘entrust in our Lord Yeshua The Messiah and you shall*

live...'. Note the original Aramaic does not have words 'believe', or 'saved'...The Bible never said 'believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved'.

(G.C. NSW)

Editor's reply:

This is a case of peddling something from the Internet or fringe writings, then couching this new teaching within some truth (ie. 'easy believism').

The 'Aramaic primacy' movement states the original scriptures were written in Aramaic, not Greek. The movement was popularised by the Assyrian George Lamsa (1892-1975). The Aramaic is said to come from the Peshitta text which was used in the east by Assyrian churches.

Firstly, the writer has *misquoted* and *added* to his own *Aramaic Bible* by inserting the words '*Yeshua the Messiah*'. The two main Aramaic to English Bibles do not have this, but rather '*the Lord Jesus Christ*' (Lamsa) or the '*Lord Jesus Messiah*' (Murdoch). Amazingly, the writer has not realised that these words are as much Hebrew as they are Aramaic in use.

There are *serious* problems with the 'Aramaic primacy' view:

The Originals

The earliest Peshitta Greek manuscript is from the *late 5th century* (Codex Phillippis). Arguably Aramaic was *spoken* by Jesus and the apostles (as well as other languages), but until the 5th Century the *written scriptures* were in *Hebrew and Greek*. Papias (60-130AD), as quoted by Eusebius (Church History, Book 3, Ch.39.15,16), writes that Matthew '*composed the logia [the word] in Hebrew style*'. There is *nil evidence* for early Aramaic scriptures.

Early NT fragments were in Greek (such as the P52 AD 125 John Ryland's fragment of John's Gospel). Today there are about 5,800 Greek NT manuscripts, but only a few hundred Aramaic. *No early Christians mention anything about original Aramaic scriptures*. Many of the scripture quotations in the NT are also from the *Greek Septuagint* (OT Greek translation).

The reason why the NT was written in koine Greek was because that was the common ('*koine*') language of the day. The language spread from the Roman Empire to Spain, Africa and to much of Europe. Most in the west did not speak Aramaic but *both east and west spoke Greek*. The Hebrew and Greek scriptures, not any Aramaic, are what made the *canon* of listed books.

The New Testament of the Aramaic Peshitta had 22 books, *missing* 2John, 3John, 2Peter, Jude and Revelation. The Syrian East church did not accept the 5 books for many years. Its Gospels text also *lacked* John 7:53-8:11 and Luke 22:17,18.

There is substantial evidence that the Peshitta was a *translation* from Hebrew and Greek. It contains words that are not Aramaic but *transliterated* into Aramaic from their Greek origins. The Greek 'εὐαγγέλιον' (Gospel), 'ἐπίσκοπος' (overseer/bishop), 'παράκλητος' (comforter/advocate), and other words are Greek words and ideas, needing to be transliterated.

The Aramaic Dialects Differ

The Aramaic classic dialect of the first century is *different to* the Aramaic in the Peshitta. Scholars can tell by the grammar that the Peshitta is at the earliest 4th Century Syriac. The two eras used separate alphabets, different parts of speech. Particles borrowed from the Greek are common and only occur in translations from Greek. For example, ‘*Gar*’ (γὰρ) and ‘*de*’ (δέ) are used with the same construction in the Aramaic Peshitta as in Greek writings.

Aramaic primacists claim that Hebrew was not a living language in use among the common people. However increasing evidence refutes this. The many documents from the Dead Sea Scrolls (250 BC-50 AD) show Hebrew was in use for centuries. Coins from the period are also inscribed with Hebrew.

The Attack on the KJV (and Greek)

Not to be content with an Aramaic *translation*, the writer’s disregard for the KJV in Acts 16:31 by stating ‘*believe*’ is mistranslated, is astonishingly inept. Firstly, ‘*entrust*’ (Aramaic) and ‘*believe*’ (KJV) are synonyms. The Greek word ‘*pisteúo*’ can be translated as *believe, to trust, commit, to have faith...*and is translated as such in the KJV Bible! (‘*Trust*’ Lk.16:11; 1Thess.2:4; ‘*commit*’ Jn.2:24; Rom.3:2; 1Cor.9:17; Gal.2:7; 1Tim.1:11). Secondly, the KJV and other translations make it clear that ‘*believing*’ can be ‘*in vain*’ (1Cor.15:2; James 1:26), and must be *with the heart* (Rom.10:10).

The writer declares ‘*the Bible never said ‘believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved’*’. But perhaps he should look at his own Aramaic Bible and read Mk.16:16; Lk.8:12; Jn.3:16-18; Rom.10:9 - where it states just that!

The Lamsa’s Aramaic Bible also has serious translation issues, with Jesus’ last words being translated as ‘*my God my God for this I was spared*’ instead of ‘*my God my God why have you forsaken me*’ - as it is in *all Greek manuscripts*. Lamsa here chose a newer meaning of an Aramaic word rather than classic Aramaic. He also denied that Jesus is quoting Psalm 22:1 here. However, Jesus was not ‘*spared*’, but rather *left* to suffer the high cost of atonement for our sins, accused of God as sin-bearer (2Cor.5:21; Gal.3:13).

In Matthew 19:24 it is said the ‘*camel to go going through the eye of a needle*’ is ‘*corrected*’ in Aramaic to the camel being a ‘*rope*’, supposedly because of an Aramaic word. The problem is that all early manuscripts and quotations from the church fathers have ‘*camel*’, not ‘*rope*’, proving that the Aramaic translation is again spurious in this place.

Such *new* ideas on Aramaic primacy (and a similar ‘*Hebrew roots*’ movement) are unnecessary and without solid foundation in history, in manuscripts and textual scholarship. In the 5,800 NT Greek manuscripts, there is no major doctrine of the Bible that is questionable as a result of the 1% *minor* differences that exist between the *majority* of manuscripts.

‘*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*’ are the accurate words of God. We dare not add or detract from this imperative written by the Spirit!

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

Hi Terry, I would like to thank you for all the work and effort you have put in on teaching and pastoring. I have the time now to study and read and appropriate God's word more fully. Thankyou for your books 'Free Will or Free Agency' and 'Calvinism & Arminianism - Out of the Maze'. By God's grace thru faith our household came to understand the Doctrines of Grace. We appreciate your explanations and faithfulness to His Word. All the best to you, Beth and family...

(M.R. Qld)

Terry's Itinerary

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