

THE CAUSE OF RELIGIOUS ERROR

By H. S. Dow

"Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." Mat. 22:29.

The fore-going are the words of our Lord, in reply to some of the religious leaders of his day, who came to him with several questions of a religious nature trying to entangle him in his talk, and thus prove that his teachings were wrong. But Jesus answered them so wisely that they dare not ask him any more questions. In the words of our text he charged his critics with being in error, and told them why, viz: because they knew not the scriptures nor the power of God.

We think that the answer of our Lord here might explain why there is so much erroneous teaching in religious circles today: that is because many do not know the scriptures, and are not informed concerning what they teach, and that is because they do not take time to search the scriptures as Jesus commanded, and to compare scripture with scripture, and let the Bible be its own commentary, and also they do not know the Holy Spirit, which Jesus calls The Power of God or do not depend on Him, Who is the author of the Word, to interpret, or explain it. Jesus said when He the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth, He shall receive of mine and shew it unto you. John 16:13-14.

If we search the scriptures as Jesus has commanded, or study the Word as the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy to shew himself approved unto God, etc., rightly dividing the word of truth, and if we have the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth, why should we need to depend so much on men's interpretations of scripture, especially when they differ so widely in their explanations of the word of God? which doubtless is one cause of so many factions and divisions among professing Christians today, notwithstanding Jesus prayed that his followers may all be one. See John 17.

So Paul wrote Timothy to rightly divide the word of truth. Some truth has a general application that is, it applies to all people. Here for example is some "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," again, "except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." Some truth or scripture has only a dispensational application, like keeping the Jewish Sabbath, the 7th day, under the old dispensation when the breakers of this command were stoned to death. But now the old dispensation having passed away and we are no longer under the law, but under grace, the law of our country says keep Sunday the first day of the week for a day of rest and worship. And the word of God says for us to be in subjection to them that have the rule over us whether of kings as supreme or of governors sent by them. Hence we must obey the laws of our country and keep Sunday.

Now here is another command or law which passed away with the old dispensation. Thou shalt not eat swines' flesh or fish without fins or scales, these are unclean unto you. But now in Mark 7 we read Jesus said, it is not what enters into the mouth that defiles the man, but what comes out, (in his conversation), and this he said purging all meats, or making all meats clean. R. V.

Again there are local commands in the New Testament in the teachings of Jesus, e. g. Mat. 10-5. These twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded them saying, Go not into the way of

the Gentiles, and into any of the cities of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, he also told them to go barefoot, take no shoes neither two coats. So we have some good meaning folks who try to follow this command they go out on foot two by two, although I think they put on shoes—in this north country in the winter time. But even this command from our Lord was subject to change for later he told his disciples to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations.

So we can see friends if we don't study the scriptures and rightly divide the word of truth but apply truth that is meant for one dispensation to another time, or to another people, we will err as Jesus told the Sadducees in the words of our text.

Many years ago before Christ was born, Isaiah prophesied of the gospel dispensation, and among many other things he wrote, and an highway shall be there, and a way, etc., and it shall be called the way of holiness, and speaking of the plainness of the way, said, The wayfaring men though fools shall not err therein. Isa. 35-8. The apostle John also writes very plainly concerning the ability of God's people to distinguish truth from error! He says the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you for the same anointing teacheth you of all things and is truth. 1 John 2-27. In verse 20 he says ye have an unction from the Holy One, (the Holy Spirit) and ye know all things, that is, all things necessary to their spiritual welfare, and eternal salvation.

He has been telling those to whom he was writing that this is the last time, meaning The last dispensation and they had heard that antichrist shall come, he says even now there are MANY antichrists, see verse 18 whereby we know it is the last time. And in spite of this plain teaching about the spirit of antichrist, and many antichrists, many would-be, religious teachers are greatly in error on this subject, and are telling us that some big man is yet coming whom they call the antichrist who will deceive many people and make them think that he is Christ. I am wondering which antichrist they are looking for, John says that there are many. It seems very clear to some of us that John is speaking of a spiritual condition in religious circles where so many profess to have religion but have not the spirit of Christ and are "none of his." See I John 4-3; And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God, and this is the spirit of antichrist whereof ye have heard that IT should come, and even now is IT already in the world.

It seems to be a trick of the evil one, to try to get the minds of God's people off the most important need of our time, which is, to pray mightily to God, in intercessory prayer for a great spiritual awakening; for great times of refreshing on God's people, in our churches, because of a special manifestation of God's presence in our midst which will give us some spiritual fervor instead of lukewarmness, and life instead of coldness, which will break through the indifference, carelessness, and skepticism, which is so apparent on the unsaved concerning their soul needs, and we need to pray until God pours strong, pungent conviction on them, that will constrain many to seek the Lord, and we have the revival that we so sorely need.

Instead of emphasizing the need of more

prayer many preachers are talking about the antichrist, and what he is going to do, and also what the Jews are going to do when Jesus comes, and they are saying keep your eye on the Jews and what they are doing in Palestine. Well God says look unto me, and be saved all ye ends of the earth, and Paul says, let us run the race with patience "Looking unto Jesus." So it seems that many professing Christians have lost sight of the need of earnest prayer for a revival and are sort of waiting to see what God is going to do about his promises to the Jews. Well it sufficieth to say that God will deal with the Jews—according to justice.

The fact is friends, according to the teachings of the New Testament writers, God made no special promises to the Jews as a nation, which reached beyond the old dispensation. Now get your Bibles, please, and follow this writer carefully to see if what I have said is according to scripture. All of God's promises to Abraham concerning the Jews as a nation were fulfilled and terminated with the old dispensation, which Paul calls the Law, or old covenant. And after Jesus came who is the mediator, and high priest of the new covenant, all men of all nations are on an equality, and can only be saved as individuals through faith in the sacrifice and Blood of Jesus, which atones for all men who believe and obey Him. All this talk about the Jews accepting Jesus as king when he comes, and being saved is belittling and setting at naught the sacrifice and Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, for if the Jews can be saved without faith in the Blood then all men can, for God is not a respecter of persons, and to say that men can be saved without it is an insult to the Almighty who gave His Son for us to suffer, and die in our stead, to satisfy the claims of justice and the law, which said, Without the shedding of Blood there is no remission of sin. Heb. 9-22. Jesus did not die as a martyr, but a sacrifice. Abel died a martyr—Paul says the Blood of Jesus speaketh better things than that of Abel. By it we are members of the New Covenant, and have boldness to enter the Holiest of all by the Blood of Jesus. Heb. 10. There is no hope for Jews or any one outside the Blood.

Now let us notice that with the change of the old covenant for the new, with its new, and greater high priest, Jesus, who was made a priest not after the order of Aaron but after the order of Melchisedec, there was also a change of relationship between God and his ancient people whom he called Israel. So Paul says He is not a Jew which is one outwardly: neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God. Rom. 2-28-29.

Again, the apostle writes to the Galatians, Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made, He, God saith not and to seeds as of many (Jews) but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. Gal. 3-16. Hence we say, that God made no promises to Abraham for the Jews to be fulfilled after Jesus came as the Messiah in this dispensation but His promise was to one, thy seed, which is Christ. Furthermore he says, If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. 3-29. Hence, according to the foregoing scriptures, the people who are Christ's and have been circumcised in spirit or sanctified wholly, are the real Jews or heirs of the promises God made to Abraham. See