

Home Page

Bible Errors

The Watchtower, April 1, 1920, p. 103

“That it contains some mistakes is freely admitted. Even the Bible contains some.”

The Watchtower, April 15, 1928, p. 126

“Sometimes a member of a class will refuse to engage in the canvassing for the books because there are some mistakes in the books, and says his conscience will not permit him to put books in which there are mistakes into the hands of the people. Of course this is another method that the enemy adopts to confuse the minds and furnish an excuse for not being faithful to the Lord. As every one knows, there are mistakes in the Bible...”

(done)

It is the conclusion, therefore, of the Editorial Committee—and in this the officers of the Society concur—that the Society is the channel the Lord is using to carry on his work; that it has a divine commission, a work to perform, and which it is endeavoring, by the Lord's grace, to perform. If others have a different view, let them enjoy that view, but let us dwell together in peace. There is no occasion for controversy. We have no quarrel with any one who holds a different view.

While we may admit that there are many others who have truth and transmit it and who are not working in harmony with the Society, yet with frankness, but with all reverence and love, we must say that we believe the Society is the Lord's channel through which he is carrying on his specific work and that there is no other channel for the Lord's specific work. Therefore the Society does not recognize competition and has no controversy with any one who takes a position different from this stated. It merely states its position and grants the privilege to each and every one to take his own course. If any other body of Christians feel that they have a commission from the Lord to do a certain work, then with zeal they should press forward in that work. We are not, therefore, chargeable with the original thought that the Society is the channel, because, as shown by the above quotations from Brother Russell's pen, that was his thought long years ago; that he organized the Society with that thought in mind, and we are concurring in his conclusion.

THE FINISHED MYSTERY

It was the thought of Brother Russell to have the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES issued in seven volumes and in 1886 he announced this fact. Following his death the Society caused to be prepared and published Volume VII, "The Finished Mystery," as one of the series of seven previously announced by Brother Russell. The doctrines therein set forth are in exact harmony with those announced in the other six. That it contains some mistakes is freely admitted. Even the Bible contains some. By mistake we mean a misunderstanding or misapplication. It does not contain any erroneous doctrines. It does attempt to carry—and, we will be pardoned for saying, succeeds in a measure at least—the message which seems to be contemplated by the commission given to the six described in Ezekiel 9. The Society in its annual official meeting adopted it as Volume VII of the series of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES when, by an overwhelming majority, it required each officer to be elected to state that he accepted it as Volume VII: It was therefore in exact harmony with this that any ecclesia subsequently would ask its prospective elders and officers: "Do you accept the Seventh Volume and are you willing to teach it?" If he said, No, he was not disfellowshipped; no burden was put upon him. But he was told in kindness, We prefer to have some one to teach us who is in harmony with the Society and its work. This was no excuse or justification for any brother, elder or servant, to take offense and withdraw from the class. The proper course would have been and is to remain and strive to dwell together in peace in the study of God's Word.

By way of illustration, there are yet a number in the classes in various places who do not understand the vital doctrine of justification and consecration and who cannot properly apply the doctrine. There are many who are unable to give the clear distinction between the ransom and the sin-offering; and yet no one would think of disfellowshipping them because they are unable to do these things. On the same line of reasoning, it would be wholly improper to disfellowship one because he could not accept everything stated in the Seventh Volume. Let love be the controlling force, directing the actions of each one. It is readily to be seen that should a class elect one as elder who is out of harmony with the Society and opposed to the Seventh Volume such would at once create disorder instead of establishing order, unity and peace; and this of itself is conclusive proof that such a course would not be pleasing to the Lord. Our getting into the kingdom does not depend upon a clear vision of all the teachings of the divine plan; but it manifestly does depend upon the pure condition of heart of each one. God has promised to exercise his power in behalf of none other except the pure in heart. (2 Chronicles 16:9) Our conclusion is, therefore, that where the majority of the class accepts "The Finished Mystery" as the Seventh Volume it should be entitled to elect its elders in harmony with it; and that is a question for the ecclesia alone to determine and not for the Society, nor the minority.

THE V. D. M. QUESTIONS

Some have taken offense because those who stood for office have been asked the question: "Have you answered the V. D. M. questions and have you passed that examination?" No one in present truth has occasion to take offense at any other person for the asking of these questions. Brother Russell established the V. D. M. questions and expressly stated that he did so in order to ascertain who had the qualifications to teach; that he expected a time to come when there would be a great demand for teachers of the divine plan and then "we will want to know where we can lay our hands on them"—was his language.

The Scriptural qualifications set forth for elders (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9) among other things provide that an elder must be "apt to teach". How could an ecclesia better determine the qualification of a teacher than to submit to him questions such as the V. D. M.? Since the ecclesia is the exclusive body to determine who shall be its elders, it is entirely proper that this question be propounded to aid the members of the ecclesia to determine whether or not its elders are qualified to teach. Any one standing for office who would refuse to answer the question would show, it seems to us, an improper disposition and an unwillingness to aid the class.

It has been charged by those who oppose that the Society has made these questions tests of fellowship. This charge is wholly without foundation. We quote from THE WATCH TOWER of 1918, page 70, relating to this subject: "This does not mean that such persons who would not answer the foregoing questions in the affirmative should be disfellowshipped. On the contrary, they

covering of man's sin which excuses a sinner, as some have wickedly said.

The broad facts of history show that the world of men have not had an opportunity of knowing good. Darkness fell on the race; and during the passing of the centuries it has grown more intense, helped greatly thereto by the false and foolish teaching of the clergy.

The time of trouble now come on the world brings God's judgments on the nations for their neglect of God. Especially is this the case with those nations which have professed to be Christ's. The day of judgment under the reign of Christ will prove every man. Also

he who, against knowledge, has allowed himself to do evil, will find then that he has a harder task set him to work up the way of life than he who has kept himself under some restraint.

Thus both nations and individuals have responsibility; but by the ransom sacrifice of Christ God has first of all made provision for all men to be delivered from the bondage of the law of sin and death, so that in that day of judgment no man will find himself hindered or hurt by reason of the original weakness born in him through the fall of the first Adam.

AN INTERESTING QUESTION

QUESTION: Is it proper for those who have been in the truth only a short while to go out and sell the Society's books? Some insist that only those who have been a long time in the truth and are thoroughly posted on the Scriptures should engage in the service work. What is the proper course?

ANSWER: Satan adopts many subtle methods to deceive. It seems strange that any one who is consecrated to the Lord should even think that a brother must be thoroughly posted on the Scriptures before he could engage in the service work. Every one who loves the Lord should delight in proclaiming the Lord's good name, and whether he has been in the truth one year or twenty years would make no difference. If he loves the Lord he will be anxious to do something and should be given the opportunity.

Knowledge will not gain the approval of the Lord, but faithful devotion to the Lord will gain his approval. "Knowledge puffeth up, love buildeth up." Love means an unselfish devotion to the Lord. One who stays at home or attends class and digs deeply into the Bible with the thought of expressing his wisdom, is not one that has real love for the Lord's cause, but one who is anxious to shine. Let all the brethren who are consecrated to the Lord and who love him, actively engage in the service work.

Sometimes a member of a class will refuse to engage in the canvassing for the books because there are some mistakes in the books, and says his conscience will not

permit him to put books in which there are mistakes into the hands of the people. Of course this is another method that the enemy adopts to confuse the minds and furnish an excuse for not being faithful to the Lord. As every one knows, there are mistakes in the Bible and there never has been a book written yet that is perfect that has been written by any human hand. The Lord will take care of our infirmities if we use our best endeavors to serve him.

Those who engage in the service work are not supposed to stand on the street and preach; nor to give a technical explanation of the Scriptures. They are to get the message into the hands of the people and let them read. Those in the class who do not wish to engage actively in the service should not discourage those who wish to engage in it, and those who really love the Lord should not permit any one to discourage them but should go on in the service putting the books into the hands of the people and letting them read.

Some complain that there are mistakes in the *Studies in the Scriptures* and therefore they should not be put out. This is wrong. The *Studies in the Scriptures* contain a statement of the divine plan, and those in present truth who have been in the truth for any length of time got their knowledge from the *Studies in the Scriptures*. Others will be able to do the same thing.

Do not try to hide behind some excuse to hinder the service. Do with your might what your hands find to do and the Lord's blessing will continue with you richly.

LETTERS FROM AFIELD

A SECOND SERVICE WEEK DESIRABLE

MY DEAR BROTHER RUTHERFORD:

Loving greetings! After reading your new book, *Creation*, and now the *Year Book* for 1928 containing the wonderful report of the work for the past year, I feel that I must write you in order to let you know of my gratitude to our heavenly Father for all these good things of his providing.

It is very evident that *Creation* has come along at the right time, when the clergy in this country are more openly denying the Bible as Jehovah's revelation to man. I am sure that this book will be well received by the common

people, as I find the majority of these still believe the Bible to be God's Word and are getting disgusted with the clergy in their attacks upon it.

The attractive cover of *Creation*, and also the beautiful colored illustrations, will help considerably in getting it into the hands of the people.

I would also like you to know what a blessing the *Year Book* has been to me in considering the daily texts and comments up to date and also in reading of the progress of the Lord's work throughout the earth. It is truly marvelous to see how the Lord is blessing the remnant as they sing forth the honor of his name.