The word "interpretation" has become a much abused word in our day, to the extent, one may say rightly, that human speculative theology has introduced confusion into man's understanding of the Bible. As a matter of fact, the Simplicities of the Christian faith—the terms of admission into the New Covenant, the essentials of Christian worship, the excellences of Christian character and life, need no interpretation (but need only to be exemplified in the lives of the saints): these matters are made so clear in the New Testament that "wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein" (Isa. 35:8). Still and all, the word "interpretation" is legitimate, and the process itself is equally so, provided the correct norms are followed. Moreover, the correct norms or principles are too obvious to be questioned by anyone except an utterly biased person.

Note, therefore, the following important matters, by way of introduction:

1. What interpretation does *not* mean. C. A. Sillars, writing in *The Christian* some time ago, stated this side of the case in simple terms, as follows:

> Let's begin by saying what interpret does not mean. It *does not* mean to change the original truth. It does not mean to add or subtract. It does not mean that any man or group has the right to alter the truth of God as revealed in the Bible. It does not mean that a man may obey the Biblical injunctions he likes and disobey the ones he finds hard to accept.[1]

There could hardly be any statement of the case any clearer than this.

2. Correct interpretation, in any case, must have its basis in correct translation, from the original Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament) texts. If the translation is erroneous, the interpretation is bound to be so. Unfortunately, untold confusion has been introduced into Christian faith and practice by the substitution in the early

centuries of our era of *transliteration* for *translation,* con-
fusion which probably will never be cleared away because
of the rigidity with which denominational clergy and peo-
ple cling to their respective traditions. (*Transliteration* is
the transfer of the letters, *translation,* the transfer of mean-
ing, from one language to another.) Take, for example, the
Greek word *presbyteros* (transliterated *presbyter* in eccle-
siastical Latin, but translated *senior,* as it should be, in the
Latin of the Vulgate). (The Romans were notorious for
taking over the Greek words, letter by letter, into the
Latin.) Now *presbyteros* in Greek, classical or Koine, never
did mean anything but "elder" or an "elderly" man: it
should be so translated wherever it occurs in the New Tes-
tament. However, in Tim. 4:14, we read of "the laying on
of the hands of the presbytery"; translated, however, it
reads "the laying on of the hands of the eldership." This is
the only passage in which the word *presbytery* occurs in
the English New Testament, and it is a *transliteration,* not
a translation: where *presbyteros* occurs in other New Tes-
tament passages, it is translated "elder" as it should be.
Another example is our word "bishop," which derives from
the Greek *episcopos,* from *episcopeo,* "look out over,"
"oversee," "exercise oversight," etc. The Greek word means
literally an *overseer,* supervisor, that is, in the sense of
jurisdictional authority, the authority of governance, and
hence is also rendered *ruler* in some passages (cf. Rom.
12:8; 1 Tim. 3:5, 5:17; Heb. 12:7,17; 1 Pet. 5:1-5, etc.).
Now the word "bishop," like "presbyter," is a translitera-
tion, and not a translation, from *episcopos* in the New Tes-
tament Greek, to *episcopus* in ecclesiastical Latin, to *ebis-
copus* in vulgar Latin, to Old English *bisceop,* finally to the
modern English *bishop.* Translated, the word wherever it
occurs in the New Testament would be rendered "over-
seer," for this is precisely what it means.[2] Incidentally, the
term "pastor" or "shepherd" comes from the Greek *poi-
mén,* and the verb form *poimaino* means, "I shepherd"

84

(the spiritual flock). In Acts 20:17-35, the three words, "elder," "overseer," and "tender" or "pastor" of the flock (vv. 28, 29) occur explicitly or implicitly as designations for the same kind of ministry: in churches of the apostolic age, a local congregation had as many pastors as it had elders or overseers (cf. Eph. 4:11-12). Had churchmen followed the apostolic injunction to hold the pattern of sound teaching (2 Tim. 1:13, 2:2, 3:16-17), Christendom would not be cluttered up, as it is today, with hierarchical systems and self-constituted prelates who have succeeded only in keeping alive sectarian speculative creeds and unscriptural practices. These were the gentlemen who divided Christendom: how, then, can we logically expect their kind to bring about reunion?

Another notorious example of the substitution of transliteration for translation—one which has kept the Christian world in confusion for centuries, and is still doing so—is that of the Greek verb *baptizo*. In the Greek, classical or New Testament, this word never did mean anything but "dip," "plunge," "immerse," or figuratively, "overwhelm" (as in reference to Holy Spirit baptism: Acts 1:5, 2:1-4, 10:44-48, 11:15-18, 15:7-11), and is never rightly translated anything else. In the original it never did mean "sprinkle" (the Greek word for this act is *rhantizo*) or "pour" (the Greek word for which was *cheo*). Certainly it never had any such innocuous meaning as "to administer baptism"—to attach such import to the word is to take it out of its original setting altogether. It signified one, and only one, action, namely, a *dipping*. Unfortunately for us, the Greek *baptizo* (like the words *presbyteros* and *episcopos* cited above) was never translated into Latin; had it been translated, it would have been rendered *mergo* or *immergo*. But instead of translating the word, the Latin Fathers, including Jerome in the Vulgate, simply transliterated it as a first conjugation Latin verb, *baptizo (-are, -avi, -atus)*, whence it was again transliterated into English

85

(Anglicized) as "baptize." Had the verb been translated, as it is in Alexander Campbell's version of the New Testament, *Living Oracles,* it would read "immerse" (or, in a few instances, "overwhelm") in our current English versions.

Not so long ago, I purchased a book entitled, *The Authentic New Testament,* a translation by the eminent Jewish scholar and linguist, Hugh J. Schonfield. (In the Introduction to this book, we are told that Dr. Schonfield spent some thirty years working on this, his own modern version of the original Greek text.) On perusing this work, lo and behold! I discovered, to my amazement, that the Greek *baptizo* is rendered throughout by the word "immerse," that is to say, it is actually translated. The following, for example, is Schonfield's translation of Matt. 3:1-6, 13:17,—

> At this period John the Baptist made his appearance, proclaiming in the wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" . . . Then Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the vicinity of Jordan flocked to him, and were immersed by him in the river Jordan as they confessed their sins . . . Then Jesus arrived at the Jordan from Galilee to be immersed by John. But John stopped him and said, "I need to be immersed by you, yet you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Never mind that. It is of more consequence that one should do one's whole duty." So John let him have his way . . . After his immersion Jesus at once rose up from the water, and lo, the skies were parted, and he saw the Spirit of God descend like a dove alighting on him, while a voice from the skies declared, "This is my dear Son with whom I am well satisfied."[3]

(It will be noted that for some strange reason this author did not translate the epithet, *Baptistes,* which is applied to John. Campbell, however, did translate it as it should be, "John the Immerser.") Note also Schonfield's translation of the first few verses of the sixth chapter of Romans:

What are we to say then? Are we to continue in sin that mercy may be magnified? God forbid! We who have died so far as sin is concerned, how can we still live in it? Can you be ignorant that those who have become associated with Christ by immersion, have become associated by it with his death? Through this association with him by immersion we are thus united with him in burial, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by means of the Father's glory, we too should conduct ourselves in newness of life. For if we have become identified with the manner of his death, surely we should be with his resurrection also . . .[3]

The foregoing are glaring examples of the obfuscation of New Testament teaching by the substitution of transliteration for translation: the obfuscation becomes doubly apparent when the passages as transliterated are compared with what they would be if correctly translated.

3. As stated above, human theological jargon has caused untold confusion in the interpretation of New Testament teaching, confusion — and accompanying apostasy — from which in all likelihood Christendom will never recover. This compounding of confusion, in flagrant disregard of the apostolic injunction to "hold the pattern of sound words" (2 Tim. 1:13), that is, to call Bible things by Bible names (cf. 2 Tim. 2:2, also 1 Cor. 2:13—"combining spiritual things with spiritual," that is, interpreting spiritual truths in spiritual or Spirit-inspired language), came about in two ways, generally speaking: (1) through the use of Greek metaphysical terms to "explain" Biblical doctrine, and (2) through the projection of the concepts and practices of the ancient pagan mystery "religions" into institutionalized Christianity. Speculative churchmen initiated these apostatizing trends as early as the second century, and by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, they had so distorted New Testament teaching, that the church of the apostolic age was hardly recognizable in the creeds and

rituals of the medieval hierarchies.

Under the first-named of these categories of corruption, we have fallen heir to such terms—not one of which is to be found in the New Testament—as "homoousianism," "homoiousianism," "heteroousianism," "soteriology," "ecclesiology," "eschatology," "transubstantiation," "consubstantiation," "substance," "accident," "form" as distinguished from "spirit," "ecumenicity," "historic episcopacy," "apostolic succession," "unconditional election and reprobation," "total depravity," "original sin," "eucharist," "premillenialism," "postmillenialism," "existentialism," "confrontation," "kerygma," "demythologizing," "open membership," "closed membership," "open communion," "closed communion," etc., etc. One of the latest and most intriguing of these innovations is the phrase, "the substantive thing done." Dr. C. C. Morrison, for example, uses this phrase to try to explain—but actually to explain away—the Scriptural design of the ordinance of Christian baptism: immersion, he tells us, is not "the substantive thing done" in this particular ordinance.[4] Where in Scripture do we find such a phrase as this? What theologian coined it in the first place? Whoever it was, he should be given a prize for hitting a new "high" of absurdity in theological lingo. Baptism, in New Testament teaching, is simply an act of faith on man's part, an act in which human faith and Divine Grace hold solemn tryst; the act in which the penitent believer testifies, in this visible act of obedience, to the facts of the Gospel, namely, the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 6:1-9, 6:17; 1 Cor. 15:1-5; Col. 2:12). Hence anything short of a visible burial and resurrection, in and from water as the element, vitiates the ordinance completely.

Under the second of the categories named above, that of the projection of the superstitious beliefs and rites characteristic of the ancient pagan mystery "religions," into the Christian faith, we have fallen heir to the esoteric practices

("ecstatic" and "orgiastic") associated with "sacramentalism," "sacerdotalism," "shamanism," dogmas of "miraculous conversion" and "second blessing," "trances" and other emotional extravagances of so-called "holiness" cults. (The tendency seems always to have been prevalent in humankind to regard "heartfelt religion" as something too mysterious to be understood, rather than as something to be done, to be put into practice in everyday living, as the Bible clearly teaches: *e.g.,* Matt. 7:20-21, 24-27; Matt. 25:31-46; Gal. 5:16-25). Thus sheer primitive magic was taken over by churchmen in the early Christian centuries, only to result in the prostitution of New Testament Christianity. Today, in many sects and cults professing to be "Christian," we have only the carry-over and the embodiment of pagan superstitions in Christian vestments. These various apostasies from the apostolic teaching as found in the New Testament continue to produce untold confusion in Biblical interpretation.

4. Interpretation, in the true sense of the term, is the business of bringing to light the meaning of Scripture, in whatever text or texts may require such "explanation." The technical name for the "science" of interpretation is *Hermeneutics,* from Hermes, the messenger of the gods, and the interpreter of the will of Zeus. Correct interpretation is simply allowing the Bible to "explain" itself by the correlation of all passages bearing on a given subject. One may want to know, for example, what the Bible has to say about *faith;* he should, therefore, using his Concordance as a guide, study all the passages in which the word "faith," or its equivalent, occurs; by this method he will understand, from the viewpoint of Scripture, what faith is, how it is obtained, and how it manifests itself. In the same way one may acquire a correct understanding of what the Bible teaches about other subjects, such as repentance, confession, baptism, the spiritual life, judgment, heaven, hell, immortality, etc. And let me say here, most emphatically,

that *the Bible itself is far more intelligible than the massive tomes which theologians have written about the Bible and its great themes.*

We are now ready to suggest the following general rules or principles of correct interpretation, as follows:

1. *The A B C's of correct interpretation* of any Scripture passage are four in number, best stated, perhaps, in question form thus: (1) *Who is speaking or writing?* There are many instances in the Bible in which persons speak, that is, men or women; there are some in which the devil (or devils) do the speaking; there are some, as in the Epistles, in which the author is addressing his words to a specific group of Christians or to Christians generally; and there are innumerable passages in which God is represented as speaking, two or three times directly from Heaven, but usually through chosen human instrumentalities. (2) *To whom are the words of the given text directed?* For instance, a grievous fallacy occurs when one overlooks the fact that all the New Testament Epistles are addressed only to those who have already become Christians, members of the Body of Christ. It is the design of the Book of Acts to tell alien sinners what to do to be saved, and that of the Epistles is to tell Christians what to do to keep saved, "to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). (3) *Under what Dispensation were the words spoken or written?* Failure to distinguish between Dispensations—Patriarchal, Jewish, Christian—often results in egregious errors of interpretation. For instance, we frequently hear the question, "Why can't we be saved like the thief on the Cross?" The answer is obvious: Because Jesus lived and died under the Mosaic Law, in the Jewish Dispensation, and by the shedding of His blood on the Cross, He abrogated the Old Covenant and at the same time ratified the New (John 1:17; Eph. 2:13-18; Col. 2:13-15; Heb. 9:11-28, 10:10-14, etc.). Now as long as a man is still living he has the right to dispense his property per-

90

sonally, as he sees fit; however, after his death, his property must be allocated according to the terms of his will. So it was with our Lord. While He was on earth, in His incarnate ministry, He had, and frequently exercised, the right of extending the forgiveness of sin to whomsoever He saw fit, as in the case of the penitent thief (Luke 23:43; cf. Matt. 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26, 7:47-50). But after His resurrection and return to the Father's right hand of sovereignty, He left His Last Will and Testament, which was probated on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) by the properly appointed executors, His Spirit-guided Apostles (John 16:7-15, 20:21-23; Luke 24:45-49; Matt. 28:16-20; Acts 1:1-8, 2:1-4, 2:22-42, etc.), according to the provisions of which—faith in Christ, repentance toward Christ, confession of Christ, and baptism into Christ (Acts 2:38, 2 Cor. 7:10, Luke 13:3, Matt. 10:32-33, Gal. 3:27, Rom. 10:9-10) — forgiveness, remission, justification, etc., are granted to all obedient believers. The simple fact of the matter is that Jesus is not on earth today to forgive sins in person. (4) Finally, under this heading, *Under what circumstances were the words written or spoken?* This has much to do with the meaning of any Scripture passage. For a concrete example, take Paul's well-known injunction, 1 Cor. 14:34-35, "Let the women keep silence in the churches . . . for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church." Note the word *aischron* which the Apostle uses here, which means a "shameful," "disgraceful," "indecent" thing to do. What he was writing in this case was literally true when the words were written: it really was a disgraceful thing for a woman to speak out in the Christian assembly or in any kind of assembly for that matter. We must remember that women were not held in very high esteem in those days, especially in pagan circles. The Apostle does not say that this was a *sin (hamartia)*; rather, it was a disgraceful thing in the fact that it brought upon the church the criticism of the pagan community, Wives of pagans

would not think of creating the disturbances which women in the Corinthian congregation were causing by spontaneously bursting out into song, prophecy, "tongues," etc.: they were turning the worshiping assembly into a kind of bedlam (cf. vv. 27-31). In the eyes of the pagan community this was "shameful," "disgraceful," etc. Obviously, if the same attitude toward women prevailed in our time, the same injunction would apply. However, women are held in such high regard today that for a woman to speak decorously in the Christian assembly, or to teach as a ministerial function, is considered entirely proper. The Apostle Paul has been belabored repeatedly as a "woman hater": but this notion is completely negated by his language in Gal. 3:28—"There can be neither Jew nor Greek . . . neither bond nor free . . . no male and female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." I am reminded here of a certain preacher who, when a young woman came forward to make the Good Confession, actually escorted her outside the church building for the purpose of doing this, lest the Pauline injunction that women should keep silent in the church, be violated. Of course, this was an exception, yet it proves just how literalistic some fanatics can be in their misapplication of Scripture passages. Always the question arises in the interpretation of any text, Under what circumstances were the words elicited, and do the same conditions apply today? (Note that the daughters of Philip the Evangelist were prophetesses: see Acts 6:1-6, 21:8-9.) The solution of the problem of woman's activity in the Christian assembly belongs to the category of *custom*, and customs, as we surely know, do change, as do the attitudes on which the customs are based. Hence, in the category of custom we must put also the matter of proper attire in the worshiping assembly: the sole apostolic injunction is that immodesty and ostentation (in attire, hair-do, wearing of jewelry, ornaments, etc.) must be avoided (1 Tim. 2:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:1-6; cf. Luke 20:46-47; Matt. 6:2,5,16; Matt.

23:5-7; Acts 5:1-11). (Note the Apostle's use of *aischron,* again as "disgraceful," "indecent," etc., in 1 Cor. 11:6, and as "not proper" in Tit. 1:11, as "shameful" in Eph. 5:12.) With respect to the veiling (covering) or not veiling the head in the *ekklesia,* the Apostle again advises adherence to established custom: in the contemporary popular view, he tells us, for a woman to wear long hair was a mark of "glory" (femininity), but for a man to do so was a mark of effeminacy. The principle involved is simply this: that although customs are not matters of Divine legislation, still and all, unnecessary violation of established customs is liable to bring upon the Christian community the criticism of an outside (and unsaved) world, and may become, therefore, an unwarranted extension of a Christian's liberty in Christ Jesus. There are many things which for the Christian may be perfectly lawful, but which under certain conditions are not expedient (as, for example, those which may cause a weak brother to "stumble" or those which may bring the criticism of the pagan community on the church), that is, attitudes and acts which generally are not contributory to the propagation of the Faith. (Cf. Rom. 14:12-23; 1 Cor. 6:12-14, 8:1-13, 10:23-33, 11:2-16.) The Apostle warns, however, that all such matters (of custom) should not be permitted to be carried to the point of contentiousness (1 Cor. 11:16). We might note also in this connection the passages in the New Testament which refer to the "holy kiss" (Rom. 16:16, 2 Cor. 13:12, 1 Thess. 5:26, 1 Pet. 5:14): this was an ancient custom, and one which persists down to our time in many Eastern lands. We of the West, however, shake hands instead of greeting one another with a kiss, "holy" or otherwise. Another Oriental custom which belongs in this category was that of the washing of feet; indeed it was especially important as a feature of the mores of hospitality. According to the custom, the servant would wash the feet of the master or those of the guest when the latter came in from the dusty roads or fields (Luke 7:38;

John 11:2, 12:3). Indeed this was a necessary act in those lands where only sandals were worn. Jesus used this custom for the purpose of teaching His quibbling and prestige-seeking disciples a lesson of humility; He reversed the usual procedure: He, the Master, taking basin and water and towel, washed the feet of each of His disciples, the servants in the case (John 13:1-20). There is no evidence, however, that the Apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit to establish this custom as a Divine ordinance for the Church to maintain (1 Tim. 3:15); as a matter of fact, the custom is not even mentioned in the apostolic Letters. To sum up: In order to correct interpretation of Scripture, one must always keep in mind the distinctions between matters of faith (the facts, commands, and promises of the Gospel: 1 Cor. 15:1-4; Acts 2:38; 2 Cor. 7:10; Luke 13:3; Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 6:1-11, 10:9-10; Gal. 3:27; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19; Rom. 6:23), and matters of speculative "theology" (Deut. 29:29); between matters of faith and matters of custom, and between matters of faith and matters of expediency. Failure to recognize these distinctions is largely responsible for denominationalism, and especially for the sectarian "splinter" groups which have disgraced Christendom from the second century to the present.

2. *The method of dialectic* must be used in the interpretation of certain Scriptures, the method of first studying the given text negatively (determining what it does *not* mean), then moving to the positive conclusion as to what it does mean. Dialectic insists that the rubbish of human opinions and cliches must be cleared away before the light of truth can shine through. (1) For a clear example of this method, let us consider the meaning of the words of John the Baptizer, as recorded in Matt. 3:11. Here we find John talking to a mixed audience of Jews who had gathered from "Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about the Jordan" (v. 5). To them John said: "I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is

94

mightier than I . . . he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire." Now we ask, who could *not* have been included, of those in John's audience, in the scope of this promise of Holy Spirit baptism? Obviously, the unbelieving and the unrepentant could not have been included; it would be sacrilege to say that unbelieving and unrepentant persons ever received the *overwhelming* (baptismal) measure of the Spirit's gifts and powers. Who, then, did receive this baptismal endowment? To find the answer to this question we must read on into the Book of Acts especially. There we find, in the first place, that the Apostles, all Jews, received Holy Spirit baptism on the Day of Pentecost (Luke 24:45-49; John 14:16-17, 14:26, 15:26-27, 16:7-14, 20:22-23; Acts 1:1-5, 2:1-4): this outpouring of the Spirit in baptismal measure was to qualify them with the authority and infallibility to execute properly the Lord's Last Will and Testament (Acts 10:37-43). Again, the overwhelming measure of the Spirit's powers was also bestowed on the first Gentiles to be received into the New Covenant, Cornelius and his household at Caesarea (Acts 10:44-48); in this instance, the Divine purpose was to break down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile and to signify to the Church and to the world that both were to receive forgiveness, remission, justification, redemption, etc., on precisely the same terms (Acts 11:15-18, 15:6-12). Hence Paul could write, 1 Cor. 12:13, "In one Spirit were we all baptized [*overwhelmed, immersed, incorporated*] into one body, *whether Jews or Greeks*"; that is, the distinction between Jew and Gentile no longer existed in the Mind and Will of God. *But who among those present to whom John was preaching were to receive the baptism of fire?* All one needs to do, to know what John meant here by "fire," is to read Matt. 3:12: the verse clearly teaches that he meant the use of fire as a form of judgment, the judgment that will overtake the disobedient at the end of our age (2 Thess. 1:7-10); and we know that many who

were in his audiences at the Jordan lived and died in disobedience, and hence will suffer this ultimate judgment (Luke 3:17; Matt. 13:24-40, 25:41; Mark 9:47-48; Luke 16:24; Jude 7, etc.). Hence John's statement was a general one: to put it in simple terms, he was saying: "The baptism I administer is a baptism in water; however, the One who comes after me, Messiah, He will administer Holy Spirit baptism (John 15:26) and the baptism of fire which is to overtake the wicked and neglectful at the Last Assize" (Matt. 25:31-46, Rev. 20:11-15). (2) Another Scripture which requires the use of the dialectic method of interpretation is found in Joel 2:28 and repeated by Peter in Acts 2:17. Here we read that God promised through the prophet Joel, "And it shall be in the last days . . . I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh." Now what does "all flesh" include here? Let us ask, first, what it does *not* include. Certainly it does not include *animal* flesh. Certainly it does not include unbelieving and impenitent flesh (persons), because Jesus is the Author of eternal salvation to one class only: "unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:9). Hence, the "all flesh" of Joel's prophecy means what this phrase usually means in prophecy or in promise, namely, "all flesh" in the sense that distinction between Jew and Gentile would no longer exist (Eph. 2:11-22). (3) In this connection, note the Great Commission as given in Matthew 28:18-20, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Baptizing *them*—whom? All the people of all the nations? Of course not: Jesus Himself taught expressly that many will take the broad way that leads only to destruction (Matt. 7:13-14, 25:41-46; Luke 8:4-15). Does "them" include *infants* from among all the nations? Are infants included, as some have argued? Of course not. Infants—the innocent—are not proper subjects of baptism. By His death on the Cross our Lord purchased the redemption of the innocent unconditionally:

96

hence, to such, he tells us, "belongeth the kingdom of God" (Matt. 18:1-6, 19:13-15; Mark 9:36-37, 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17). Baptizing *whom*—then? Obviously, *all who have been made disciples, learners, followers, believers.* "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you," etc. Teaching *whom*? All who have been baptized *into* Christ, all Christians. The Great Commission envisions three activities. making disciples (by preaching, teaching); baptizing those disciples into Christ; and nurturing those Christians in the most holy faith (Jude 3:20; Col. 2:6-7). This Commission "interprets" itself: it is too simple and clear to be misunderstood by any unbiased mind. (4) In Acts 2:1, we have a case in which grammatical construction allows only one meaning. The text reads: "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place." The question arises: Who are the "they"? What is the antecedent of "they"? If we recall that the original manuscripts of the Bible were not divided into chapters and verses, and that therefore we should read the last verse of chapter 1 and this first verse of chapter 2 without any break, it becomes clear that the "they" of 2:1 has to be the "apostles" of 1:26. To go all the way back to the "one hundred and twenty brethren" of Acts 1:15 for the antecedent of the "they" of Acts 2:1, as some would have it, shows utter disregard for elementary principles of grammatical construction. Besides, the explicit statements of Acts 1:1-8 make it certain that the promise of Holy Spirit baptism was a promise made to the Apostles: this is abundantly confirmed by what follows in Acts 2:1-4.

3. *Proper correlation of a given text with its contexts* is also necessary to correct interpretation. (1) The relation of the given text to its immediate *context* is first to be considered. The business of "scrapping the Scriptures," that is, taking a passage out of its context here, and another out of its context there, and putting them together to prove a point, is a vicious procedure, but one of which clergymen

have often been guilty, in their zeal to support some pet dogma. (The classic example, of course, is the following: Judas "went away and hanged himself," "go, and do thou likewise," Matt. 27:5 and Luke 10:37.) I recall a sermon I heard some years ago which was based on the story of the conversion of the eunuch, as related in the eighth chapter of Acts. The preacher read the story, from the King James Version, down through verse 37, "And he [the eunuch] answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and there he quit reading, closed his Bible, and started preaching. He omitted the entire section which followed verse 37, verses 38-40, in which the eunuch's immersion, and his rejoicing following his immersion, is all clearly set forth. By these omissions, that is, by disregarding an important part of the context (because of his denomination's downgrading of immersion as Christian baptism), he left in the minds of his hearers a completely distorted view of New Testament conversion. I recall here another experience of this kind. On occasion, I dropped in at an evening service at a denominational church in Iowa, intrigued by the preacher's subject as announced on the church bulletin board. Again the subject was: "What Must One Do To Be Saved?" Naturally I was curious about what this particular denominational brand of clergyman would have to say on this subject. To my amazement, he used as the background for his message the Old Testament story of Jacob's wrestling with the heavenly visitant, as related in Gen. 32:22-32, and throughout his sermon he kept urging all sinners present to "take hold of God, hold on, and never let go," until the Spirit should come upon them and save them by a miraculous "call" (ecstasy, vision, trance, heavenly voice, or what not), which should be the evidence of God's pardon. This surely was taking a Bible text (Gen. 32:22-32) out of its context completely—a glaring example of utter distortion of Biblical teaching.

(2) Moreover, any given Scripture must be studied in

the light of *the teaching of the Bible as a whole*: only in this way do existing harmonies become manifest. Yet this is the point at which interpretation often goes awry. Take again, for example, the important question, "What must I do to be saved?" as addressed by the Philippian jailor to Paul and Silas (Acts 16:30). The Evangelists replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house" (v. 31). Now, should one stop reading at this point, as did another denominational clergyman in preaching on this subject, at a service which I attended, the question would be answered only partially. Here was a poor superstitious heathen man who was unacquainted with the Gospel message; hence only a general answer could be given, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." But how could this jailor and the members of his household believe on the Lord Jesus, of whom they knew little or nothing? (cf. Rom. 10:14-17). Hence, we continue to read that Paul and Silas "spake the word of the Lord unto him and all that were in his house." What was the result? The jailor "took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his immediately. And he brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God" (vv. 32-34). (Evidently, speaking the word of the Lord to the unsaved includes telling them what to do to be saved and this in turn includes telling them to be baptized: (Acts 2:37-38, 8:34-36). The point is that one cannot take just one of the cases of conversion recorded in Acts to find the complete answer to the question, What must one do to be saved? To get the complete—and correct—answer, one must examine *all* the cases of conversion, under apostolic preaching, that have been put on record. By putting all of these together one soon finds that all who came into the Church under the preaching of the Apostles and their co-laborers came in precisely the same way and on the same terms

99

(Acts 2:37-42, 8:1-13, 8:26-40; Acts 9:1-19, 22:1-21, 26:1-23; Acts 10; Acts 16:11-15, 16:16-34, 18:8; Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10, etc.). In short, by examining and putting together the incidents of all the recorded cases of conversion, one has the whole truth and nothing but the truth, namely, that the terms of admission into the New Covenant are four: belief in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, repentance from sin, confession of Christ, and baptism into Christ (John 20:30-31; Luke 13:3; Rom. 6:1-4; 2 Cor. 7:10; Gal. 3:27, etc.).

Another case in point, illustrating the necessity of correlating any particular passage of Scripture with the content of the Bible as a whole, is the story of Melchizedek, the King-Priest of "Salem," to whom Abraham paid tithes, as related in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis. This story has been booted around by critics and "theologians" as an anachronism, a folk tale, a fiction, a "literary fabrication," etc., when, as a matter of fact, it becomes entirely plausible historically and doctrinally, in the light of its defined relation to the doctrine of the Priesthood of Christ, the doctrine as set forth in the sixth and seventh chapters of Hebrews. Confusion confounded always occurs when stories of Old Testament incidents are wrested out of their entire Biblical context; that is, treated as totally unrelated to the rest of the Scriptures. As a matter of fact, the Old Testament in many instances becomes fully intelligible only in the light of New Testament teaching, and conversely, Old Testament doctrine becomes essential in many instances to the understanding of what is revealed in the New Testament. Refusal to take the Bible as a whole, as the Spirit-inspired record of God's progressive revelation of His Eternal Purpose and Plan, simply incapacitates anyone for the clear apprehension of this revelation. This incidentally is the self-imposed limitation (a kind of "mental block" or "blind spot") which has blinded Jewish scholarship throughout the ages to the overwhelming mass of

100

evidence given us in both the Old and the New Testaments to support the truth of the Messiahship of Jesus (John 5:40; Matt. 23:37-38; Acts 7:51-53; Rom. 11; Isa. 6:9-10, Acts 28:25-28, etc.).

4. *Proper discernment between the literal and the figurative* (in the form of symbol, emblem, metaphor, parable, allegory, poetic imagery, anthropomorphism, type, etc.) is absolutely essential to the correct interpretation of Scripture. This is a principle or rule which is of primary concern to us in the present textbook because it is the one to which we shall have to resort more frequently than to any other, in getting at the basic truths presented in certain sections of the Book of Genesis. However, a very simple norm will suffice to guide us into the discernment between the literal and the figurative. (A "figure" is perhaps best defined as that which represents something else by a certain resemblance or by several resemblances.) The norm of discernment is this: *If a Scripture text makes good sense taken literally, it should be taken literally, but if it does not make sense taken literally, in all likelihood it is designed to communicate profound truth in the guise of the figurative or metaphorical, that is, a truth which cannot be stated clearly or fully in prosaic (propositional) language.* For example, take some of the well-known sayings of Jesus: "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35), "I am the way" (John 14:6), "I am the door" (John 10:9), "I am the true vine" (John 15:1), etc. Jesus, in these sayings, did not mean that He was a literal loaf of bread, or a literal door to the fold, or a literal road, or a literal vine. On the contrary, He was communicating spiritual truth in metaphorical language: only common sense is needed to recognize this fact. As in His parables, Jesus used this method to convey truth far more comprehensively and with greater depth of meaning than it could have been conveyed in propositional terms. Think of all that is involved, for instance, in thinking of Him as the Door to the Fold, the Kingdom, the Church, etc. Ser-

mons and even books have been written to elaborate the
utterly inexhaustible depth of spiritual truth that is com-
pressed into these metaphors and parables. (Recall the fact
here also that the Book of Revelation, from beginning to
end, is couched in prophetic symbolism: cf. Rev. 1:1,
"signified," that is, expressed in symbols. This means that
it is not amenable generally to literalistic interpretation.)

One of our pioneer preachers and educators, D. R. Dun-
gan, suggests the following rules for recognizing figurative
language in the Bible:

> 1. The sense of the context will indicate it. 2. When
> the literal meaning of a word or sentence involves an
> impossibility. 3. If the literal sense makes a contradic-
> tion. 4. When the Scriptures are made to demand that
> which is wrong. 5. When it is said to be figurative.
> 6. When the definite is put for the indefinite number.
> 7. When it is said in mockery. 8. By the use of com-
> mon sense.[5]

Literalists, writes Dungan

> do not stop to consider that God spoke to men in their
> own language, and by such methods of speech as
> would render the thoughts of God most easily under-
> stood.[6]

While pointing up the fact that undue and unjustified
"allegorizing" and "spiritualizing" of Scripture (indulged
by such early writers as Philo Judaeus, Clement of Alex-
andria, Origen et al, and such modern writers as Emanuel
Swedenborg and Mary Baker Eddy) is to be rejected, un-
justified literalism, writes Dungan, is equally to be rejected.
We all know, of course, that both extremes have been at
times carried to the point of sheer absurdity. This writer
goes on to say:

> We have before seen the evils resulting from the Alle-
> goric method, and yet it is but little, if any, more likely
> to prevent the right interpretation than the Material
> or Literal. Either one is a foolish and hurtful extreme.

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

Much of the Bible is written in language highly figurative. And not to recognize the fact, and treat the language according to the figures employed, is to fail entirely in the exegesis. This, of course, does not imply that God has said one thing while He means another, but simply that He has spoken in the language of men, and in the style of those to whom the revelations were made. No one reading the Prophecies or the Psalms without recognizing this fact, will be able to arrive at any reliable conclusions whatever as to their meaning.[7]

Undoubtedly the inadequacy of human language for the communication of Divine thought must always have been one of the greatest problems confronting the Spirit of God in His sublime works of inspiration and revelation, and undoubtedly resort had to be taken oftentimes to many figurative devices to achieve this end. Moreover, on the necessary principle, known as the Law of Accommodation, it was necessary that the revelation be communicated to the people of each successive age in which it was delivered, in the language, both literal and figurative, which the people of each successive age could understand. Hence, we should approach our study of Genesis with this understanding, namely, that much that is revealed in the book was communicated early in the historic period, and hence necessarily abounds in the devices indispensable to making this communication intelligible to those who lived at that time. The amazing thing about it is that the subject-matter of the Book of Genesis is of such an adaptable character that even in our modern age, with a developed science and scientific modes of thought and speech, its teaching is astonishingly up-to-date. It is a revelation that seems to be suitable to those living in any and every period of human history. Nor is any wresting of the Scripture text necessary to establish this fact.

We shall now consider some of the more important figurative devices used by the Spirit to facilitate the com-

munication of Divine thought, with special emphasis on those which we shall encounter in the Book of Genesis, as follows:

1. The *Symbol.* "Symbol" is in a sense a generic term which may be used properly for various kinds of "representation." As a matter of fact, man is specified—set apart as a species—primarily by his tendency to think and to live in terms of symbols: indeed all the facets of his culture—language, art, myth, ritual, and even science (especially, in its formulas)—are products of this human predilection. Biblical symbolism embraces analogies of various kinds and is explicit or implicit in practically all kinds of figurative media of Divine revelation. Although *types* belong in the general category of symbols, the symbol, nevertheless, differs from the *type,* in the sense that the former may refer to something in the present *or* in the future, whereas the type refers only to what is in the future (its antitype). Dungan classifies symbols as *miraculous* (e.g., the "Cherubim and the flame of a sword" of Gen. 3:24, and probably in some sense the "tree of life" and the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" of Gen. 2:9,17); as *material* (e.g., the "bow in the cloud," Gen. 9:13, the symbol of God's covenant with Noah; circumcision, the symbol of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 17:9-14), which was also the *type* of the cutting off of the body of the guilt of sin under the Gospel Covenant (Rom. 6:1-11, Eph. 2:11, Phil. 3:3, Col. 2:11); and as *visional,* those experienced in a dream, in a vision, or in fantasy (daydreaming), and which are generally *prophetic* (e.g., the almond tree and the seething caldron of Jer. 1:11-14; the smoking oven and the blazing torch of Gen. 15:17; the birthright and the blessing of Gen. 25:27-34 and 27:1-40, symbols of the rights of primogeniture; and the various symbols of Joseph's dream (Gen. 37:5-11), and of the dreams of Pharoah's chief butler and chief baker (Gen. 40:9-23), and of Pharoah's own dream (Gen. 41:1-36). There is a great deal of various kinds of

symbolism in the Book of Genesis. Milligan writes:

> It is obvious that symbols are generally used for the
> sake of perspicuity; for the sake of presenting more
> clearly to the understanding the spiritual and abstract
> qualities of things, by means of outward signs and
> pictures addressed to the senses. Sometimes, how-
> ever, they are also used for the sake of energy and
> ornament; and occasionally they are used, also, for
> the sake of obscurity. It was for this last purpose that
> Christ sometimes spoke to the people in parables
> (Matt. 13:1-17).[8]

Semanticists usually differentiate *signs* and *symbols*: signs,
they hold, belong to the realm of *being*, whereas symbols
belong to the realm of *meaning*. This differentiation seems
to prevail in Scripture: "signs," in New Testament times
especially, were actual events, palpable to the senses of
spectators, and performed for evidential purposes (cf. John
20:30-31, 11:38-44; Acts 2:22; Heb. 2:2-4; cf. Exo. 4:1-9).
Biblical symbols, however, are to be understood in relation
to the truth which each may represent; that is, what it
stands for in the world of meaning.

> 2. The *Emblem*. This is properly defined, by Milligan,
> as merely a material or tangible object of some kind,
> that is used to represent a moral or spiritual quality
> or attribute, on account of some well-known analogy
> between them.[9]

The emblem is closely related to the metaphor. Emblems
differ from types, however, in that the latter were pre-
ordained and have relation to the future, whereas the for-
mer are neither preordained nor related to the future. The
beehive, for example, is an emblem of industriousness; the
crown, the emblem of royalty; the scepter, the emblem of
sovereignty, etc. Noah's dove was the emblem of purity
and peace; hence the dove was in some instances, in Scrip-
ture, the emblem of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16, John
1:32). We are justified in asserting that the unleavened

105

bread and the fruit of the vine, of the Lord's Supper, are emblems respectively of the body and the blood of Christ (Matt. 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:17-20, John 6:48-59; 1 Cor. 10:16, 11:23-28; Heb. 9:11-13, 1 Cor. 15:1-4, 1 Pet. 2:21-25). To take these various passages literally, that is, on the presumption that by some kind of priestly blessing the *substance* of the bread and of the wine becomes the actual *substance* of the body and of the blood of Christ, is to vest the Communion with a magical esoteric meaning which surely was not our Lord's intention in authorizing it. He stated specifically that it was to be a *memorial* of His Atonement (death on the Cross) and at the same time a *testimony* to the fact of His Second Coming (1 Cor. 11:23-26).

_3. The *Type*. A type, in Scripture, is an impression, a figure, a shadow, of which the very image, or the substance, is something that lies in the future, hence is known as the *antitype* (cf. Heb. 10:1). Both type and antitype are real persons, things, offices, or events. Typology is one of the most fascinating, and most rewarding, and yet most generally neglected, of all branches of hermeneutics. (1) According to Scripture, God elected the fleshly seed of Abraham (the children of Israel) to do certain things in the execution of His Eternal Purpose. Among these divinely ordained tasks were the following: that of preserving in the world the knowledge of the living and true God. (Deut. 5:26, 6:4; Psa. 42:2, Matt. 16:16, Acts 17:24-31, 1 Thess. 1:9, Heb. 10:11); that of demonstrating the inadequacy of the moral law to rescue man from the guilt, practice, and consequences of sin (John 1:17, 3:16-17; Rom. 3:19-28, 7:7, 8:3-4; Gal. 2:15-16, 3:23-29); and that of developing a pictorial outline of the Christian System which would serve to identify the Messiah at His coming and the institutions of Messiah's reign (1 Cor. 10:11, Col. 2:16-17, Rom. 15:4; Heb. 8:4-6, 9:9, 10:1-4, etc.). It is this pictorial outline, consisting of types which point forward to their corre-

sponding antitypes, with which we are concerned at this
point. (2) There are certain facts, to which we call atten-
tion here, with respect to the relation between types and
antitypes, as follows: (a) There is always some resemblance
between the type and its antitype. (b) This likeness be-
tween type and antitype is but partial; therefore care
should be exercised not to extend the likenesses beyond the
bounds of reason or even beyond those of Scripture au-
thorization. As one of our pioneer educators has written:

> To understand well the law of typology, and the
> types themselves, is a matter of much consequence in
> Bible exposition, for two good reasons. First, because
> it enables us correctly to discern and interpret the
> types in the Old Testament, so rich with instruction
> as regards the Christian faith and the Kingdom of
> God; and secondly, because it will save us from the
> very common vice of professional type-mongers, who
> create types in the Scriptures out of their own fertile
> imaginations, where none exist. It is the folly of the
> old Jewish allegorists and their Christian imitators,
> who made the Bible a vast wilderness of allegories . . .

This writer goes on to warn us that there is but one correct
and safe rule governing this subject, namely,

> that types are only to be found where the Scripture
> has plainly pointed them out. In a book so vast and so
> varied as the Old Testament we may trace a thousand
> similitudes which rhetorical liberty allows us freely
> to use as illustrations; to make these, however, types
> in the divine intention, would be quite another thing
> and an altogether unwarranted license.[10]

(c) The points of resemblance between type and antitype
were divinely preordained: this would needs be the case
for the analogy to prove out correctly. For example, it was
preordained concerning the paschal lamb that it should be
a male, without blemish; that it should be slain between
the two evenings, that is, between noon and sunset (Exo.

12:5-11); that not a bone of its body should be broken
(Exo. 12:46); so the same Divine wisdom planned the
Antitype, Christ our Passover, with these points of resem-
blance (John 1:29,36; 1 Pet. 1:19; John 19:31-37; 1 Cor.
5:7). (d) Finally, every type is a sort of prophecy. Every
lamb slain upon the Patriarchal and Jewish altars pointed
forward to the Lamb of God who offered Himself on the
Cross for the redemption of mankind (Heb. 9:23-28). The
Levitical Priesthood was designed to typify the priesthood
of all obedient believers in Christ (1 Pet. 2:9, Rev. 1:6).
The Tabernacle (and later the Temple) with its various
parts and furnishings typified, with remarkable precision
of detail, the structure and ordinances of the Church of
Christ; indeed, it might well be said to have typified the
entire Christian System (cf. Acts 2:37-42, also Heb., chs.
8 and 9). (3) The design of Biblical typology may be sum-
marized as follows: (a) Undoubtedly God's purpose in
giving to His ancient people this system of Old Testament
types was that the type should establish the divine origin
of the antitype, and ,conversely, that the antitype should
prove the divine origin of the type. (b) The writer of He-
brews tells us that what Moses did, as a servant in the Old
Testament House of God served as testimony confirming
the Divine origin and constitution of the New Testament
House of God, the Church (Heb. 3:4-6). The types set up
by Moses were designed to prove the Divine origin of the
entire Christian System. (c) The Jews of old, throughout
their history, were engaged in setting up types which they
themselves could not understand as such, because these
types required Christianity for their fulfilment (exemplifi-
cation). Hence, we must conclude that they did not set up
a system of their own origination or on their own authority,
but that it was given to them by Divine authorization and
inspiration. (d) As stated heretofore, the books of the Bible
were written by many different authors living in practically
every age of the world's history from 1500 B.C. to A.D. 100.

Yet when these various books were assembled into The Book, we have an unbroken *motif* from beginning to end, namely, redemption through the intercessory work of Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God. Hence we have types fulfilled, at times in minutest detail, in their corresponding antitypes, as explained by these different writers who as a rule had no means of communicating with one another personally. Can this positive evidence that the Scriptures were Divinely inspired (communicated to men) in a special way, be successfully refuted? I think not. (e) Preachers seldom if ever discuss the typical and antitypical relationship between the Old and New Testaments. In this respect, they are neglecting one of the grandest themes of Divine revelation, as well as the most positive evidence obtainable to warrant our acceptance of the Bible as the Spirit-inspired Book, and the most forceful means put at their disposal by the Holy Spirit for the edification of the saints and their confirmation in the faith "once for all" delivered unto them (Eph. 4:11-16, 2 Tim. 3:16-17, Jude 3).

(4) *Typology is expressly authenticated by apostolic teaching* (1 Cor. 10:11, Col. 2:16-17, Rom. 15:4; Heb. 3:1-7, 8:4-6, 9:9, 10:1-4, etc.). To repudiate Biblical typology is to flatly contradict apostolic teaching and to belie what is presented to us as the testimony of the Holy Spirit (John 16:7-15, 1 Cor. 2:6-16, 2 Pet. 1:21, 1 Pet. 1:3-12, 1 Thess. 3:13, etc.). The truth of Scripture teaching will never be grasped in any appreciable degree of completeness except by the integration of the content of every book and part within the whole. One who refuses to recognize this general—and obvious—principle of the unity of the whole Bible, thereby shuts himself off from the possibility of any adequate understanding of God's Eternal Plan. Unfortunately, that is what the destructive critics and the majority of the speculative "theologians" do.

(5) We are interested in types because we find them in the Book of Genesis. For example, the Apostle Paul tells

us that Adam "is a figure of him that was to come" (Rom. 5:14, 1 Cor. 15:45). The Apostle Peter tells us that the deliverance of Noah and his family from the world of the ungodly into a cleansed world, through water as the transitional element, was typical of Christian conversion in the sense especially that the water of the Deluge was designed to typify Christian baptism (1 Pet. 3:18-22). Not only do we have significant types, explicitly declared to be types, in Genesis, but we also have many similarities—though not Scripturally designated types—between the lives of Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, respectively, and the incarnate life and ministry of Christ. These will be pointed out as we proceed with our study of the text of Genesis.

4. The *Simile.* This is a direct, strong, vivid comparison. Jer. 4:4—"lest my wrath go forth like fire." Dan. 3:25—"the aspect of the fourth is like a son of the gods." Luke 7:32—"like unto children that sit in the marketplace," etc. Matt. 23:27—"ye are like unto whited sepulchres." Isa. 53:6—"all we like sheep have gone astray." From beginning to end, the Bible is replete with similes.

5. *The Metaphor.* (1) This device occurs repeatedly in Scripture. It is an indirect comparison, yet one that is more vivid than the simile. It is the use of a word denoting an attribute or characteristic of one thing, to explain, by way of a similitude, a like quality in another thing. It involves a transfer of meaning. It takes a known term and bends it to a richer use by contributing color and liveliness to it. It points up a similarity in objects really dissimilar, and oftentimes it serves to make more vivid the dissimilarities implicit in the analogy. (2) Again quoting Loos:

> The metaphor is the most abridged form of the simile or comparison—compressed into a single word. It abounds in all forms of human language, prose as well as poetry. As it is the most effective method of word-painting, it is peculiarly adapted to the purposes of poetry. It gives light, force, and beauty to lan-

110

guage.[11]

(3) Monser writes:

Plutarch and Quintilian say that the most illustrious metaphors in use are to be classed under four heads. First: To illustrate animate things by animate, as when God is put for a magistrate, or a shepherd for a prince or ruler. Second: To illustrate inanimate things by animate, as when the earth is said to groan. Third: To illustrate animate things by inanimate, as when Christ is called a door or the way. Fourth: To illustrate inanimate things by inanimate, as when religion is called a foundation. 1 Tim. 6:19.[12]

(4) God, for example, is described metaphorically as our "dwelling-place" (Psa. 90:1), "portion" (Psa. 73:26), "shield," "fortress," "rock," "high tower" (Psa. 18:2), "strong tower" (Prov. 18:10), "refuge and strength" (Psa. 46:1), a "husbandman" (John 15:1), "builder" (Heb. 3:4), "potter" (Isa. 64:8), "Judge" (Gen. 18:25, Psa. 58:11). Among Scripture *metaphors of Christ and His mission* are the following: "true witness" (Rev. 3:14), "refiner" (Mal. 3:3), "Advocate" (1 John 2:2), "testator" (Heb. 9:16), "surety" (Heb. 7:22), "Lamb of God" (John 1:29,36), "our Passover" (1 Cor. 5:7), "physician" (Matt. 9:12), "good shepherd" (John 10:14), "son of righteousness" (Mal. 4:2), "fountain" (Zech. 13:1), "bread of life" (John 6:48), "door" (John 10:9), "true vine" (John 15:1), "corner stone" (Matt. 21:42, Acts 4:11, 1 Pet. 2:6-7), "bridegroom" (Matt. 25:6). *Metaphors of the Holy Spirit:* "guide" (John 16:13), "Comforter" (John 14:16), "earnest" (Eph. 1:13), "seal" (Eph. 4:30), "water" (John 7:28-29). *Metaphors of the Word:* "lamp," "light" (Psa. 119:105), "fire" (Jer. 23:29), "hammer" (Jer. 23:29), "sword" (Eph. 6:17), "seed" (Luke 8:11). *Metaphors of the Church:* "city" of God (Matt. 5:14, Heb. 11:16, Rev. 21:2), "temple" of God (suggesting solidarity, stability, Eph. 2:21), "body" of Christ (suggesting fellowship of parts,

111

Eph. 1:23, 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:12), "household" (family) of God (suggesting a spiritual affinity; cf. the Greek *agápe*; cf. Eph. 2:19), "bride" of Christ (suggesting purity, constancy, Eph. 5:22-23, Rev. 21:2,9; Rev. 22:17), "pillar and ground" of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). *Metaphors of the obedient believer, the saint, the Christian* ("babe" (1 Pet. 2:2), "soldier" (Eph. 6:10-20, 2 Tim. 2:3); "pilgrim" (1 Pet. 2:11), "light" (Matt. 5:14), "salt" (Matt. 5:13), "palm tree" (Psa. 92:12, 1:3), "sheep" (John 10:27), "vessel" (2 Cor. 4:7, 2 Tim. 2:21, Acts 9:15), "steward" (1 Pet. 4:10), "jewels" (Mal. 3:17, A.V., in A.S.V., "possession"). The foregoing are the more important of the many metaphors that are to be found in the Bible. The metaphor is one of the most meaningful of all figures of speech. (5) Metaphors occur in the book of Genesis: ch. 49, in which we find Jacob's death-bed prophetic utterances concerning his sons, has many of them: v. 9—"Judah is a lion's whelp," v. 14—"Issachar is a strong ass," v. 17—"Dan shall be a serpent . . . a horned snake," v. 21—"Naphtali is a hind let loose," v. 27—"Benjamin is a wolf that raveneth," etc. A metaphor is often difficult to explain in prosaic terms, yet, paradoxically, it is rather easy to understand.

7. The *Parable*. A parable is a "likely story," a narrative in which various things and events of the natural world are made to be analogies of, and to inculcate, profound truths of the moral and spiritual realms. Parables occur in the Old Testament: notable examples are to be found in 2 Sam. 12:1-6, in 2 Sam. 14:1-24, in 1 Ki. 20:35-43, etc. We all know, of course, that Jesus is distinguished for His use of the parable as a medium of communicating Divine truth. His parables stand alone in literature for their fusion of simplicity and profundity; human genius has never been able even to begin to duplicate them. (Incidentally, the *fable* is a literary form which differs from the parable, as follows: (1) in the fable, the characters are fictitious (unreal), whereas the actors and events in a parable are taken

from real life: (2) the fable is constructed generally by the use of animals, or even plants or flowers or trees, as its characters, endowing them with powers of thought, speech and action. The fable is used, of course, to point up a moral lesson of very high order, but the actors are creatures who are incompetent to do the things that are reported of them. A fair example of a fable is to be found in 2 Kings 14:8-10.)

8. The *Allegory*. (1) This has been properly called a "prolonged metaphor." It is a *sustained* analogy, made up of a variety of particulars, the whole becoming a connected and complete story. The allegory is identifiable also by the fact that "it suppresses all mention of the principal subject, leaving us to infer the writer's intention from the resemblance of the narrative, or of the description, to the principal subject." "The distinction in Scripture between a parable and an allegory is said to be, that a parable is a *supposed* history, and an allegory a figurative application of real facts."[13] (2) The famous medieval morality plays, of which *Everyman* is perhaps the most noted, were all allegories. Another famed allegory, from the Shakespearean age, was Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. Of course, the greatest of all allegories in human literature, from every point of view, is Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. (3) We are interested here especially in *the meaningful allegory of the Covenants*, as intended, the Apostle tells us in the fourth chapter of Galatians, in the story of Hagar, the bondwoman, and Sarah, the freewoman, as related in the Book of Genesis, chs. 16 and 21 especially. We shall look into this very important allegory when we take up the study of these chapters.

9. The *Anthropomorphism*. This word derives from the Greek *anthrópos*, "man," and *morphé*, "form," and means "in the form of man." Hence, to think anthropomorphically is to think of some other form of being in terms of our own human experience. A correct understanding of the design of anthropomorphisms and of poetic imagery is essential

to the correct interpretation of many of the early chapters
of Genesis. These are devices which cause the many "hu-
man interest" stories in these chapters to glow with a rich-
ness of meaning for us, which, because of the inadequacy
of human vocabulary, could never have been achieved
through the medium of prosaic ("scientific" or "logical")
language. We must never lose sight of the fact that even
the Divine Spirit has ever been under the necessity of
revealing the Divine will to man in terms which the latter
can understand, and that recognition of this Law of Ac-
commodation to the vocabulary of the human recipients,
from age to age, will enable us to comprehend more clearly
what the content of Genesis has to say to us. Both extreme
literalists and extreme "allegorizers" accomplish nothing
but to obscure Divine revelation, and, in the long run, to
sow the seeds of agnosticism and skepticism, when there is
really no reason for doing so.

The old Greek thinker, Xenophanes (6th century B.C.)
was the first, as far as we know, to have brought the charge
of anthropomorphism against religion, and in so doing he
initiated a mode of criticism, unintelligent as it is, which
has persisted to this day. Again and again in subsequent
history this charge has been made, and effectively coun-
tered, and yet it survives, and even today it continues to
be bandied about, and urged upon men, as a plea for the
adoption of the agnostic attitude toward religion in gen-
eral. Why this is, it is not difficult to explain; it would seem
that, on the part of those who accept the charge, the wish
is often father to the thought; that is, the acceptance is
inspired by the will *not* to believe, rather than by an intelli-
gent consideration of the matter.

Xenophanes is reported to have said, in substance, that
if lions could have pictured a god, they would have pic-
tured him in fashion as a lion, and horses like a horse, and
oxen like an ox, etc.,[14] and so man, it is implied with no
more justification, inevitably thinks of Deity as a magnified

man. The holes in this argument are as big and deep as the sea. The charge becomes not an outright denial of fact, but what is worse—an utter distortion of the whole issue. In the first place, it is too obvious for questioning that lions, horses, oxen, animals in general, simply do not think of Deity at all, and indeed are incapable of doing so. Man alone thinks of God and man alone seeks to apprehend God and His ways. Even the atheist who denies the existence of God must think of God in order to deny His existence; that is, he must have some notion of what the word "God" signifies. In the second place—and this is the point at which the Xenophanean argument becomes utterly illogical, *man simply cannot think of any other form of being except in terms of his own experience*, that is, "in the form of man." The master, for example, who sees his faithful old dog lying in front of the fireplace apparently dozing, occasionally stretching, yawning, or perhaps groaning or growling, will tell himself that the old dog is dreaming. But how does he know this? How *can* he know it? He cannot know it, for the simple reason that he cannot put himself in the dog's skin, so to speak. However, common sense tells him that human experience is not to be equated with canine experience. Again, the man who would explain the world in terms of a machine is thinking anthropomorphically; that is, he is trying to explain physical reality in terms of the characteristics *which he sees* in a machine. In terms of logic, all too frequently a "science" mistakes the *a priori* for the *a posteriori*. It is always true of man that he cannot achieve a helpful understanding of any other form of being except in terms of his own experience.

Now there are anthropomorphic passages throughout the Bible, and there are several such passages in the Book of Genesis, as we shall see later. Indeed our Lord has used two terms—and two only—which make God more intelligible (congenial) to man than all the names which have been coined by scientists and philosophers (most of which

115

are utterly absurd). Jesus tells us that, as to His being, God is a Spirit (John 4:24), that is, in some sense possessing the elements of personality such as man possesses (hence, man is said to have been created in God's image, Gen. 1:26-27). As to His relations with His saints, with the sheep of His pasture (Psa. 100:3), God, said Jesus, is their Heavenly Father; hence, they should address their prayers to Him with the salutation, "Our Father who art in heaven" (Matt. 6:9). Is the term "Father" anthropomorphic? Of course. But this does not obviate the fact of God's existence. This term, "Father," makes God understandable; it makes Him congenial to His people. Not only do they address Him as their Father, but they do so because He is really their spiritual Father, as in a general sense He is the God and Father of all mankind (Heb. 12:9—"the Father of spirits"). All the Freudian gobbledygook about the "father-image" is simply a proof of the obtuseness of agnosticism and skepticism. The God who is not truly Father in His attributes is not a God to be desired at all, except possibly by a certain type of intelligentsia. By his very emphasis on the universality of the "father-image," Freud acknowledged that it is only the meaningfulness of the name "Father" that a really existing God could ever satisfy the religious aspirations of mankind.

There are numerous anthropomorphisms in the Book of Genesis. (Note especially Gen. 3:2-13, 4:9-15, 6:5-7.) These are so simply and realistically presented, and filled with such human interest and appeal, that they serve to point up most vividly the vast difference between the Biblical God and the truly anthropomorphic deities of the old pagan polytheisms. The pagan deities were too numerous to mention; they were characterized by sex distinctions (gods and goddesses); they were pictured in pagan mythologies as guilty of every crime in the category—lust, rape, incest, treachery, torture, deceit, and, indeed, what not? (See Plato's criticism of the tales of the immoralities

116

of the gods, in the *Republic*; see also these actual tales in the Homeric epics; and read especially the *Ion* of Euripides.) Whereas these *many* pagan divinities were, in most cases, *personifications* of natural forces or human attributes, the God of the Bible is not in any sense a personification—He is, rather, pure *personality* (Exo. 3:13-15); and the difference between *personification* and *personality* is, in this case, the difference between the vagaries of the human imagination on the one hand, and the inerrancy of Divine revelation on the other. (Of course, crude anthropomorphic notions of God still exist among the vulgar: we still hear expressions bandied about in the marketplace, such as, for example, "the Man upstairs," etc. The persistence of such notions can be attributed only to supine ignorance.)

The anthropomorphisms of Genesis give us an understanding of our God which all the speculations of science and philosophy can never give us. Biblical anthropomorphisms, by the very purity of their conceptions, provide for us a profound insight into the "heart" of the God whom we worship, the God and Father who gave His Only Begotten Son for our redemption (John 3:16). Moreover, the Biblical anthropomorphisms serve a purpose which no other figurative device could possible serve: they make our God *real* to us in a way that no other way of speaking can even approximate.

10. *Poetic Imagery.* At this point we must look at a word, the careless uncritical use of which has caused untold confusion in the area of Biblical interpretation—the word "myth." This is one of the most ambiguous words in the English language. What does it mean? It has come to mean just about all things to all men, with certitude for none. (1) According to the dictionary definition, the function of a myth is to account for the origin of natural phenomena (including especially the astronomical), of ethnic groups, and of social institutions; hence, myths are usually classi-

fied as cosmogonic, ethnogonic, and sociogonic, respective-
ly. Astronomical (celestial) myths are generally solar,
lunar, or meteorological. (2) In common parlance myths
are generally looked upon as purely imaginary fabrica-
tions, that is, *sheer fictions*. (3) By many persons the myth
is regarded as a literary device which embraces practically
all forms of symbolism. Under such a view, however, the
fact is often overlooked, that a symbol, in order to be a
symbol, has to be a symbol *of something*; that is, it must
point to a referent that has some measure of real existence.
Hence, if a symbol is in some sense a myth, the myth can-
not be a sheer fiction.

(4) It is my conviction that the term "myth" is not
legitimately usable in the sense of a sheer fiction; that con-
fusion is to be avoided only if the word is used to designate
the *personifications* both explicit and implicit in the ancient
pagan polytheisms. These certainly were, in every legiti-
mate sense of the term, mythological systems. Much of this
pagan mythology, it will be recalled, centered around ideas
of the "Sun-father" and the "Earth-mother" (*Terra Mater*).
Dr. Yehezkel Kaufmann, in a most interesting book re-
cently published, lists the chief characteristics of the gods
of the ancient polytheisms as follows: (a) They are sub-
ject, in the last analysis, to a primordial realm or fate,
which allocates, both to the gods and to men, their respec-
tive "portions" in life. (The Greek word *moira*, "portion,"
had this exclusive meaning, and is found throughout all
Greek literature.) (b) They are personifications of "sem-
inal" forces of this primordial realm in which there are
manifold powers or "seeds," such as water, sky, light, dark-
ness, life, death, etc. (They are sometimes personifications
of virtues and vices, as Athena, for example, was the god-
dess of wisdom.) (c) Their genealogy occurs through what
men would call natural processes (cf. the *Theogony* of
Hesiod, a Greek poet of the 8th century B.C.); hence sub-
ject to powers and differences of sex. Pagan mythologies

abounded with goddesses as well as gods. (d) They are wholly anthropomorphic, subject to all temptations and passions to which men are subject (only more so *because they are of the divine order* rather than of the human); hence, as stated heretofore, they are guilty of every crime in the category—incest (Zeus' consort was Hera, his sister-wife; in Rome, they were Jupiter and Juno), rape, murder, deceit, treachery, torture, kidnaping, and indeed what not? As a matter of fact, these ancient systems simply reeked with all forms of phallic worship, ritual prostitution, and like perversions. After calling attention to the chief features of these pagan "religions," Dr. Kaufmann contrasts the God of the Bible as follows:

> The basic idea of Israelite religion is that God is supreme over all. There is no realm above him or beside him to limit his absolute sovereignty. He is utterly distinct from, and other than, the world; he is subject to no laws, no compulsions, or powers that transcend him. He is, in short, non-mythological. This is the essence of Israelite religion, and that which sets it apart from all forms of paganism.

He then goes on to say, with respect to the store of Old Testament narratives that these narratives

> lack the fundamental myth of paganism: the theogony. All theogonic motifs are similarly absent. Israel's God has no pedigree, fathers no generations; he neither inherits nor bequeaths his authority. He does not die and is not resurrected. He has no sexual qualities or desires and shows no need of, or dependence upon, powers outside himself.[15]

(Parenthetically, and regrettably, it is apparent that the statement above, "He does not die and is not resurrected," is a reflection of the typically Jewish rejection of the death and resurrection of the God-Man, Christ Jesus. Cf. Jn. 1:11 —"He came unto his own, and . . . his own received him not.").

119

The whole issue here may be summed up, I think, in one transcendent distinction, namely, the God of the Bible is pure *personality* (Exo. 3:13-15), whereas the gods of the pagan mythologies were *personifications*. In his comprehensive treatment of this subject, Dr. Kaufmann is emphasizing the obvious, namely, that mythology, in the legitimate sense of the term, is conspicuously absent from the Old Testament Scriptures. (And to this, I might add, conspicuously absent from the New Testament writings as well.)

However, we are all aware of the experience of "thoughts that lie too deep for words," of ideas which the vocabulary of man is inadequate to communicate. (Indeed, in ordinary life, there are words, especially those which name qualities, which defy definition, except perhaps in terms of their opposites. For example, how can I describe "red" or "redness" in such language that others can know they are seeing what I see? The fact is that I cannot describe redness—I experience it. Of course, the definition could be provided by physics in terms of vibrations, refractions, frequencies, quanta, etc. But about the only way one could define "sour" is by saying it is the opposite of "sweet," or define "hot" by saying that it is the opposite of "cold," etc. Such is the woeful deficiency of human language (Isa. 64:4, 1 Cor. 2:9-10). Why, then, should we be surprised that the Spirit of God should have to resort to something more than propositional language to reveal God's thoughts and purposes to man? We read in Rom. 8:26-27, that oftentimes in prayer it becomes necessary for the Holy Spirit to take the "unutterable longings" of the soul of the saint whom He indwells (1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19) and bear them up to the Throne of Grace "with groanings which cannot be uttered." Need we be surprised, then, that the Spirit should have resorted to the richness of *poetic imagery* at times in order to communicate the ineffable; paradoxically, to describe the indescribable? I might add

here that this is precisely what Plato meant by the *mythos:* in his thinking the *mythos* was the "likely story" designed to be *instructive;* the use of poetic imagery to communicate truth so profound that it cannot be communicated in any other way. We do have just such instances of poetic imagery in the Bible (although this figurative device must not be confused with *apocalyptic symbolism:* they are similar in some respects, but not identical). The sooner we abandon the use of the word "myth" in Biblical interpretation, the sooner will confusion in this area of human thinking be dissipated. We shall call attention to instances of this type of poetic imagery as we proceed with the study of the text of Genesis.

The following comment by Dr. John Baillie about the Platonic *mythos* sets forth clearly what I have been trying to say *in re* the function of poetic imagery in Scripture:

> When Plato warns us that we must be content with a "myth," he is very far from meaning that *any* myth will do, or that one myth is as good as another. No, all readers of the *Republic* know that Plato entertained the very strongest opinions about the misleading tendency of some of the old myths and that he chose his own with greatest care. If we tell a myth, he would say, it must be "a likely story *(eikota mython)"*—a myth that suggests the right meaning and contains the right moral values. The foundation of myth and apocalypse, then, can only be the possession of some measure, however small, of true knowledge.[16]

However, I am inclined to repeat, for the sake of emphasis, that the ambiguity of the word "myth," as it is currently used, makes it quite unsuitable for use in the interpretation of Scripture.

11. *Prolepsis.* This, although an explanatory device, is not figurative in character. However, we shall mention it here because it occurs frequently in Scripture, and for some reason Biblical critics seem to know little or nothing about

121

it, or else they choose to ignore it, because it upsets their preconceived norms of determining "contradictions." (1) A *prolepsis* is a connecting together, for explanatory purposes, of two events separated in time, in such a way as to give the impression that they occurred at the same time. A notable example is to be found in Gen. 2:2-3. God rested on the seventh-day period at the termination of His creative activity, but He did not *sanctify* (set apart as a memorial, Deut. 5:15) the seventh week-day as the Jewish Sabbath until many centuries later, as related in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus. Hence the Sabbath is not even mentioned in the Book of Genesis. Cf. Gen. 3:20—Adam named his wife Eve when she was created, but she was not the mother of a race at that time—she became that later. Cf. also Matt. 10:2-4, "and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him." Matthew wrote this account some thirty years after the calling of the Twelve. But in this passage he connects the calling and sending out of Judas with the betrayal of Christ by Judas as if the two events had happened at the same time, when as a matter of fact they occurred some three years apart. (2) A prolepsis is also defined as a kind of anachronism which sometimes appears to be a contradiction but actually is not from the writer's point of view. In this sense it occurs when a writer mentions a long-standing place-name in two separate passages, in one of which he gives the origin of the name, but in the other mentions an event which occurred there at a different time. For example, Gen. 28:10-19. Here we read that Bethel ("house of God") was given its name by Jacob on his flight to Paddan-aram because of the heavenly visitation which he received there in a vision. However, in Gen. 12:8, we find that long before this, Abraham is said to have built an altar at Bethel on his arrival in the Land of Promise. There is no contradiction here. It is obvious that the writer in giving us the account of Abraham's arrival in Canaan simply used the name by which the place had

come to be known generally by the people of the land. A similar case occurs with reference to Hebron. It was originally called Mamre, it seems, but later acquired the name of Hebron; hence, because it was known by the name Hebron when Genesis was written, it is so designated in the earlier record (cf. Gen. 13:8, 14:13, 23:2, 35:27). As a matter of fact, the writer seems to use the two place-names interchangeably. (Other apparent anachronisms will be treated in this textbook wherever they are encountered in our study of the text of Genesis.)

We conclude here with a word of caution with reference to the use of the term "figurative." It seems to be a common fallacy among those who apparently are out looking for grounds on which to reject clear Scripture teaching, to assume that to explain a text as "figurative" is equivalent to "explaining it away," that is, rendering it meaningless. Nothing could be farther from the truth. *Being* is the first category of all human thinking. A thought must be a thought about *something;* a proposition must be a proposition about *something;* a sentence must be a statement about *something*. So a "figure" in Scripture must be a figure *of something;* a sign must point *to something;* a symbol must be a symbol *of something*. (A symbol of nothing would be utterly meaningless.) All this means that to say that a passage must be interpreted figuratively is to enhance its meaning, rather than to nullify it. If Heaven is to be described figuratively as "New Jerusalem," "the holy city," "the city that lieth foursquare," the city that is "pure gold," with foundations "adorned with all manner of precious stones," with "the river of water of life . . . in the midst of the street thereof," etc. (Rev., chs. 21 and 22), how then can eye see, or ear hear, or the genius of man conceive what the Reality will surely be? Heaven cannot be described in human language; it must be experienced in order to be "understood." But the same is true of Hell (Gehenna), is it not? If hell is described figuratively in

123

Scripture as "eternal fire," (Matt. 25:41), "outer darkness" (Matt. 8:12), "the weeping and the gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 22:13, 25:30), "the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone" (Rev. 19:20, 20:10,14,15), "the abyss" (A.V., "bottomless pit": Rev. 20:1,3), "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:48, cf. Isa. 66:24, Rev. 6:16-17, Heb. 10:31, Deut. 4:24, Heb. 12:29)—if all this is figurative language, I repeat, may God deliver us from the reality to which it points! To try to belittle these expressions as figurative is certainly not to "explain them away"—rather, it is to multiply their significance a thousandfold!

Permit me to terminate this section of our textbook by quoting, with respect to all figurative devices in Scripture, what J. W. Monser has written, so forcefully and so exquisitely, about types, as follows:

> Thus, these types become a confirmation to us of all that the spirit of man is interested in, as respects our holy religion. We fit the type to the antitype as a glove to the hand or a ball to its socket. The exterior fits into the interior. As you prove a criminal's steps by fitting his boot into the tracks about your doorway, or his guilty shot by the mold of his bullet, so are we enabled, by a comparison of these types, to declare to the world that we have not followed any cunningly devised fables when we made known the power and coming of our Lord Jesus. He alone answers to the typical photographs. All the qualities foreshadowed in the sacrifice and the priest unite in him. Remove him from consideration, and while you rob humanity of the most essential help and the sublimest gift conceivable, you cast an element of confusion into all God's previous work. Promise, prophecy, and type are equally void and chaotic. The tabernacle and the temple become meaningless, the outer court a butcher's yard, and the daily sacrifice of the Jew a burden greater than

any sane man can bear. The Garden of Eden, the expulsion of Adam and Eve, the curse pronounced upon the serpent, the premature death of man, all these are mysteries, unless we recognize in each event the providential hand of God. Such is the unity of the Divine Purpose, that, look at what portion of it we will, there meets us some allusion to, or emblem of, our common salvation. The Scheme of Redemption is one gorgeous array of picture-lessons. The nation who typified it was a rotating blackboard, going to and fro, and unfolding in their career the Will of the Eternal. Let us not despise the day of small things.[17]

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON PART TWO

1. Discuss the validity of *interpretation* with reference to the Bible.
2. What is the science of Biblical interpretation called?
3. State what "interpretation" does not mean.
4. Distinguish between *transliteration* and *translation*.
5. Cite examples of the confusion caused by failure to make this distinction between transliteration and translation.
6. What two influences especially, in the first few centuries of our era, tended to corrupt Christian doctrine?
7. What is meant by the phrase, "calling Bible things by Bible names"?
8. What is meant by the phrase, "permitting the Bible to interpret itself"?
9. State the four A B C's of Biblical interpretation.
10. What is a Dispensation in Biblical terms?
11. Give an example of the importance of making proper distinctions between Dispensations in interpreting Scripture.
12. Cite two or three examples to show the importance to correct interpretation of knowing under what circumstances the content of a passage of Scripture was elicited.

GENESIS

13. Explain what is meant by the method of dialectic in interpreting Scripture.
14. Give some examples of the necessary use of this method, citing appropriate Scripture texts.
15. What are the two general contexts to be considered in the interpretation of a Scripture text?
16. Cite examples of the confusion caused by failing to correlate any Scripture passage with the teaching of the Bible as a whole.
17. What general principle is to be followed in distinguishing the figurative from the literal in Scripture interpretation?
18. What are some of the indications of figurative language in the Scriptures?
19. What is meant by a *symbol?*
20. Into what three classes does Dungan put Biblical symbols?
21. Show how Divine revelation is affected by the inadequacy of human language.
22. Explain what is meant by an emblem?
23. How do emblems differ from types?
24. What is meant by type and antitype? How are they related?
25. What was the design of the Old Testament types?
26. Show how those who deny the validity of typology contradict Scripture teaching.
27. What Scripture authority have we for accepting the validity of typology?
28. Mention two types in the Book of Genesis that are explicitly declared to be types, in the Scriptures themselves.
29. What is a simile? Give examples.
30. What is a metaphor? How does it differ from a simile?
31. Give some Biblical examples of metaphors of God.
32. Give some Biblical examples of metaphors of Christ and His mission.

.126

33. Give some Biblical examples of metaphors of the Holy Spirit.
34. Give some Biblical examples of metaphors of the Word of God.
35. Give some Biblical examples of metaphors of the Church.
36. Give some Biblical examples of metaphors of the Christian.
37. Give some examples of metaphors which are to be found in the Book of Genesis.
38. What are the characteristics of a parable?
39. How does a parable differ from a fable?
40. What are the characteristics of the allegory?
41. What important allegory is to be found in the Book of Genesis?
42. What is an anthropomorphism?
43. Why are anthropomorphisms necessary to the human understanding of God?
44. What was the saying of the ancient philosopher Xenophanes about anthropomorphisms.
45. What are the fallacies in his argument? What is the half-truth in it?
46. What were the characteristics of the anthropomorphisms of the ancient pagan polytheisms?
47. Where do we find anthropomorphisms in the Book of Genesis?
48. How do Biblical examples of anthropomorphism differ from the anthropomorphisms of the ancient pagan "religions"?
49. Explain why anthropomorphism is necessary in any human attempt to "understand" God and His ways.
50. What is meant by saying that the Biblical anthropomorphisms serve to make God *real* (congenial) to us?
51. What are the two terms which Jesus used specifically to make our God real to us?

52. What, according to the dictionary, is the function of myth?

53. What are the four classes into which myths are usually categorized?

54. What were the characteristics of the ancient pagan mythological systems?

55. What was the character essentially of the gods and goddesses of these systems?

56. How does the God of the Bible differ from the mythological deities?

57. Explain the significance of the distinction between personification and pure personality.

58. Explain the significance of the Name by which God revealed Himself to Moses.

59. On what grounds do we say that mythology, in the legitimate sense of the term, is conspicuously absent from the Bible?

60. Explain what Plato meant by the *mythos*.

61. To what extent may we recognize the validity of the *mythos* in Scripture?

62. Why the necessity oftentimes of resorting to *poetic imagery* in communicating Divine thought to man?

63. What essentially is meant by this term, *poetic imagery?*

64. If we should find poetic imagery in Scripture, what would be its function?

65. Is poetic imagery to be identified with sheer fiction?

66. Is poetic imagery closely related to apocalyptic symbolism?

67. Just how can the ineffable be revealed to man?

68. What is a prolepsis?

69. Give two examples of prolepsis which occur in the Book of Genesis.

70. What is the fallacy often implicit in the popular use of the term "figurative"?

71. Can we have figures that are not figures of something, or symbols that are not symbols of something?

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

72. Explain what is meant by Monser's statement that "the Scheme of Redemption is one gorgeous array of picture-lessons."

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1) *The Christian,* published by the Christian Board of Publication, St. Louis, Mo.

2) See *The Oxford English Dictionary.*

3) Hugh J. Schonfield, *The Authentic New Testament.* A Mentor Religious Classic. Published by the New American Library of World Literature, New York, 1958.

4) See *The Christian Evangelist,* St. Louis, Oct. 27, 1954, and *The Christian Century,* Chicago, Mar. 5, 1958.

5) D. R. Dungan, *Hermeneutics,* p. 11. Standard Publishing, Cincinnati. (Out of print.)

6) Dungan, *ibid.,* pp. 79-80.

7) Dungan, *ibid.,* pp. 81-82.

8) R. Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption,* p. 72. Christian Publishing Company, St. Louis.

9) Milligan, *ibid.,* pp. 71-72.

10) Charles Louis Loos (one-time president of Kentucky University), in his Introduction to *Types and Metaphors of the Bible,* by J. W. Monser. Published by F. L. Rowe, Cincinnati, 1936.

11) Loos, *ibid.,* x.

12) J. W. Monser, *op. cit.,* p. 161.

13) D. R. Dungan, *op. cit.,* pp. 258-259.

14) See *Elegy and Iambus,* Vol. I, pp. 182-215. Translation by Edmonds. Loeb Classical Library, Published by the Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1931. See also fragments from Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies.*

15) Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel,* pp. 60, 61. Translation by Moshe Greenberg. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1960.

16) John Baillie, *And the Life Everlasting,* p. 243. Scribner's, New York, 1936.

17) J. W. Monser, *op cit.,* pp. 38-39.