

But peppered all over the book are doctrinal errors. The error of immortal soulism, expressed in the first book, appears on page 175 of this book. The author believes that Jesus is God (p. 175), as does the author of the foreword (p. 8). He believes in a supernatural agent of evil, Satan (pp. 45,90,111,150,160). Again the idea that the literal universe will one day be dissolved and replaced by a new one crops up (p. 30 and elsewhere).

He also makes mistakes in his interpretation of the seed of Abraham (p. 176), saying that the seed of Genesis 15 are those that trust in the same God as Abraham. But it is clear from this chapter that the natural descendants of Abraham, who went down into Egypt, are the seed in question (v. 13). The author clearly does not appreciate the hope of Israel and the teaching of the apostles in the New Testament.

The second section of the book deals with the current search for extraterrestrial life. Apart from the doctrinal errors, there is much that we can agree with here and material that could be used in preaching work. The search for extraterrestrial life consumes vast sums of money, which could be used to feed the hungry and provide healthcare for the sick. Politicians propose to

send men to Mars in the hope of finding evidence of life that once lived on the planet. Other topics that the author considers in this section include life on other planets, UFOs and the analysis of radio waves from outer space for messages from intelligent life out there. For over forty years now the radio waves have been analysed for messages from such beings, but with no success.

There follows a critique of science fiction and a chapter on the rebellion of modern man against God, which is likened to a modern-day Tower of Babel.

In summary, these two books need to be read with care. The geocentric view adopted throughout is refreshing and is a fair reflection of the Scriptures. There is some material that could be made use of in preaching. But the doctrinal errors and the unbalanced view of the age of the earth mean that a recommendation is not warranted.

Editor's note

As the issues raised in this review have previously been thoroughly aired in *The Testimony*, it is not proposed to publish further correspondence about them.—J.N.



Correspondence

Comments on articles appearing in the magazine are always welcome, and should be addressed to the editor in whose section the article appears.

The covenants and Israel today

I very much appreciated the [editorial](#) in the February issue of *The Testimony*, particularly in its drawing attention to the fact that it is only by being “in Christ” that Jews, as well as Gentiles, can be counted as “Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise”.

Alongside this there are numerous verses which indicate that being a descendant of Abraham (and Jacob) *of itself* is no sinecure. There are John’s words to the Pharisees and Sadducees: “think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father . . .” (Mt. 3:9). There is the response of Jesus to the Jewish leaders’ claim that “Abraham is our father” when he said: “If ye were Abraham’s children [implying they were not], ye would do the works of Abraham” (Jno. 8:39); they did not, and as a result the kingdom

of God was to be taken away from them “and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof” (Mt. 21:43). There are Paul’s words: “he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly”; and, “they are not all Israel, which are of Israel” (Rom. 2:28; 9:6); and the whole thrust of the contexts in which these, and other like verses, occur.

Now it seems to me that, amongst other things, one of the consequences of all this is that the Israelis of the present time have no Divine right to the land they occupy, nor to adjacent land on which they may have designs. They have no right under the Abrahamic covenant because “circumcision” of itself “availeth” nothing (Gal. 6:15). They have no right under the Sinaitic covenant, even if they were obedient to it, because that has been superseded. It follows that neither of these covenants has any bearing on questions about whether the Israelis should acquire more

land or surrender 'land for peace'. And they have no right under the new covenant because, for the most part, they have rejected the terms on which it is based, namely, acceptance of Jesus as Son of God, Saviour and Messiah.

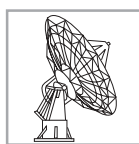
Undoubtedly Israel exists as a sign of the age, proof that God has not made "a full end" of Jacob (Jer. 30:11), and also in order that there will be representatives of the scattered people in the land, to be confronted by the King when he comes. But none of this justifies its present political objectives, nor the often aggressive methods it uses to achieve them, no more than the roles other nations, such as Assyria and Babylon, have played in God's purpose justify *their* methods; and I suggest we should be wary of giving the impression that we condone those objectives and methods. Secular Israel will not attain to any aspect of the promises to Abraham by violence.

Truly "God hath not cast away His people" (Rom. 11:2), but, for the most part, they are still cut off from the olive tree. They can, of course,

be grafted in again by that same faith and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as is required of Gentiles, and be reckoned again as "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29). If any Israelis are in that happy state today no doubt they will confess they are still "strangers and pilgrims", with "no continuing city" here, not even Jerusalem as presently constituted, but "seek one to come", "whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:13; 13:14; 11:10). They will be totally non-political, conscientious objectors to military service, as we are, and will eschew all violence, loving their enemies, even if they happen to be Palestinians.

Tony Fitzgerald
Shirley

I appreciate Brother Fitzgerald's kind comments on my February editorial, but perhaps should remind readers that its purpose was to comment on the present unity of all believers in Christ, rather than the present position of Jews outside Christ, which is the theme of his letter.—T.B.



Science

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Man's quest for life on Mars

Malcolm Edwards

AFTER THE recent Mars landings of British and American spacecraft, man thinks he now has the technology to settle once and for all the age-old question of whether or not some form of primitive life exists there. Speculation is already stirring up atheistic comment, with one correspondent in a national newspaper stating: "Should life be discovered on Mars we can throw away the Bible".

Most of us would expect that, like previous Mars explorations, the current landings will produce negative results, unless, of course, microbes from earth travelled with them as stowaways, which is always a possibility. Nevertheless, whether or not life exists somewhere else than on earth does not really affect God's plan with His Creation on this planet, and what He may do elsewhere in such an immense universe is

entirely His prerogative. But in any case, if life is discovered on Mars it would rather negate the long-held view of some evolutionists that the spontaneous generation of life on earth was such an extremely rare happening that it is unlikely to have occurred anywhere else in the universe. How then would they explain its discovery on a neighbouring planet?

It is this potentially embarrassing improbability (for evolutionists) that has led to the growing theory that life on earth must have originated from Mars. Indeed, several meteorite specimens have been found on our planet in recent times that are said to have come from Mars. One in particular, listed as AHL 84001, has been the centre of much scientific debate on whether it contains fossilised microorganisms which originated from the Red Planet.