

## **Brief Treatment: What is Truth?**

by Timothy R. Nichols

In the beginning, the worlds were framed by the Word of Yahweh, and to this day they are upheld by the Word of His power. When Yahweh spoke, everything came into being just as He commanded it to be, and Yahweh named it...until the third day, when He continued speaking the creation into existence, but ceased to name the things that He made. When Yahweh made Man, He set him over the world, to have dominion over it, and gave man the responsibility to name truly, acting as Yahweh's image in the world. Initially, man performed this task well. Yahweh also set a tree in the midst of the garden and told Man the truth about it; but the serpent lied to our parents, and they departed from the truth and believed the lie that they could become as God through disobedience.

Yahweh had told them they would die if they disobeyed, and He did as He said: Man and all his dominion was subjected to death and futility. But Yahweh also promised that one day a Man, a son of Eve, would crush the Serpent, and they anxiously awaited the birth of Eve's son.

Eve's first son was Cain, and rather than clinging to the truth he made war on it, preferring murder to repentance. Cain was a harbinger of things to come, and the rebellion eventually spread through Eve's many descendants so that all the vast human family was at war with Yahweh, except for one man, Noah. Yahweh said that He would not strive with man forever, and in due time He acted, saving Noah and his family and destroying that world with a flood.

In the new world, Yahweh gave Noah and his family the responsibilities Adam had, and further responsibility as well. But human nature had not changed, and they turned again to the lie, and worshiped the creature rather than the Creator, turning away to a variety of idols. Worship of Yahweh once again became a rarity.

Yahweh reached into that idolatrous world and called out one man, Abram. Yahweh promised Abram — and confirmed it with an oath — that He would be a blessing to the world, become a great nation, and inherit the land of Canaan from the Nile to the Euphrates. Abraham lived in that land of idolaters as a wandering nomad, building altars to Yahweh everywhere he went, beacons of truth in a land given over to lies. Abraham's son Isaac continued his father's work, as did his son Jacob in turn. But Jacob was a mixed blessing to his neighbors, and his idolatrous sons did not stand for truth, but were a curse to those around them. They even turned on one of their own, their brother Joseph, and sold him into slavery in Egypt. There Joseph became a blessing to his masters, and Yahweh eventually exalted him to a station second only to Pharaoh. When Yahweh brought famine in Canaan, the family moved to Egypt, where, through Joseph, a place for them was provided. Upon arrival, Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and his sons took over the care of Pharaoh's flocks and herds, and once again became a blessing to their neighbors.

Growing in Egypt as in a womb, Jacob's family became a mighty nation. For fear of them, a later Pharaoh reduced them to slavery and brought upon Egypt Yahweh's curse, as He had said

to their father Abraham, “I will bless him who blesses you, and him who curses you I will curse.” Yahweh destroyed Egypt and gave her wealth to Israel, bringing the new nation out of Egypt and into the wilderness with a mighty hand. Through the scorching desert, Yahweh gave them water and food, and brought them to His holy mountain to worship and enter into covenant with Him.

Even as Moses was on the mountain receiving the covenant, Israel was building an idol for themselves, a golden calf, and began to worship it instead of Yahweh. So Yahweh sent Moses down to rebuke and punish them, and when they had been chastened, Yahweh entered into covenant with them. They swore, “All Yahweh has said, we will do,” and Yahweh in turn promised to bless them if they obeyed and discipline them if they did not. But they were a hardhearted and faithless people, and when they disobeyed Yahweh slaughtered them by the millions. Of that perverse generation, only two — Joshua and Caleb — obeyed, and thus survived Yahweh’s judgment. But the next generation believed Yahweh’s promises, and were a nation of heroes. Through faith they received the land that was promised them, and Yahweh Himself fought beside them. After a lengthy campaign, Yahweh gave them rest from all their enemies, as He had promised.

Subsequent generations again and again would fall away from worshipping Yahweh and turn aside to idols. Each time Yahweh would give them into the hand of an oppressor and they would return to Him in desperation, only to defect again after He rescued them. Again and again Yahweh’s messengers appealed to them: “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts,” but they would not hear. At length Yahweh spoke by the prophet Jeremiah, promising the harshest lesson yet to befall the nation: they would be carried away into Babylon for seventy years of captivity. After being restored to the promised land, they worshipped no more pagan idols, but Yahweh alone, and devoted themselves to studying the Scriptures He gave them.

The nation grew into a greater maturity than it had ever known before, but their sinful desires found outlet through twisting the truths in the Scriptures to justify and legalize their wickedness. Thus the nation, outwardly devoted to the worship of Yahweh, became a mixture of good people who loved and worshipped Yahweh, and evil people who offered the right sacrifices, said the right prayers and sang the right songs, but their worship was a lie, because they did not know Him.

Out of that nation John the Baptist called those who loved Yahweh to be baptized and prepare for the Messiah, and into that nation Jesus was born: the Word of Yahweh made flesh, the Truth in bodily form, the Son of Eve for which God’s people waited, and He fulfilled Israel’s destiny to bless the world, as God had promised Abraham. All those who learned the truth from the Father recognized Jesus, because He was the Truth sent from the Father, but the nation as a whole did not recognize Him. Not knowing the Father, they killed His Son with lawless hands, but by allowing them to do this, Jesus purchased the nations with His blood and crushed the Serpent forever. Yahweh vindicated His Son, raising Him from the dead, and after a season of ministry, brought him to heaven to sit at His right hand, until His enemies are made His footstool, a promise for which we eagerly pray: “Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Before He left, he spoke to his disciples, saying “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Therefore go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to do all that I commanded you, and know that I am always with you, even to the end of the world.”

They obeyed, taking the truth to the ends of the earth, and many were killed, as Jesus was, for telling the truth. Others received the truth with joy, and we are among them. In our turn we offer our testimony of the truth, knowing that we will be treated as harshly as they were. We accept this temporary resistance because we know that all authority has been given to the Son. The time will come when the Father mocks those who rebel against Him and subdues the world to His Son, and every knee will bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord.

Then we will be glad to have stood for the truth, and we will rejoice for those who have received it from us, because the Truth will sit on David’s throne forever; at last, everyone will know that Truth is not a *what*, but a *who*, and His name is Jesus. Then the nations will stream to Zion, and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as water covers the seas.

Amen.