

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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## The Memorial

*"This do in remembrance of me." - Luke 22:19.*

ALL Christians should commemorate with deep devotion the anniversary of our Lord's death.' To those who have been taught the deep things of God there is more than the remembrance of this event, there is a wondrous privilege.\*

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\* The 14th of Nisan this year, as previously announced, falls on Thursday, April 11, beginning at sundown, at which time it is appropriate to keep the *Memorial*. - *Ed. Com.*

An important event in the history of the Israelites was memorialized by some outward ceremony or ritual. This was intended to deepen the impression and to prevent the occurrence from fading from the memory. Too often and too soon the freshness of an experience fades from the mind. For this reason God saw the necessity for constant reminders by outward observance to instill in the minds of the people any prominent feature of his eternal purpose.

## THE PASSOVER AS A MEMORIAL

The feast of the Passover was instituted on such a basis. Here was a mighty and most striking deliverance of God's people by God's power. They must not forget it (Exodus 12:24). An annual ceremony must be established. Thus was the feast of the Passover most carefully outlined by the Creator, together with specific instructions that it should be perpetuated.

Obviously, as time passed this feast became a reminder only of some act in remote history. But always linked with this reminder was the name of Jehovah - his greatness and his watchful care for his own. Jehovah's name and his greatness were inseparable from this feast.

*"I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."*

This and similar exhortations were "that they might observe his statutes and keep his laws" (Psa. 105:45).

With God there is no hidden future -- all is known to him. He saw his Son Jesus as the great Passover Lamb. His Plan included that greatest of all deliverances followed by the blessing of all the families of the earth. The human family was to be freed from sin and all its concomitants terminating in death. What a deliverance! Abraham saw it by faith and rejoiced. Joseph, the husband of Mary, had just a glimpse when he was told by God that the child should be named Savior.

## **THE ATTITUDE OF THE DISCIPLES**

Jesus himself knew that he was the great Passover Lamb for the world. He tried to convey this thought to his disciples but they were so trammelled with earthly ideas of a kingdom with great pomp, power, and glory that they heeded not his words. Here is a lesson for us. Are we so attached to the affairs of this life that we fail to appreciate all that our Heavenly Father would have us know concerning the Memorial?

When the disciples inquired of the Master where they were to keep the annual Passover, he gave them instructions and on the Day of Preparation they had carried out his orders. No other thought, so far as we can gather, was in their minds but the partaking of the legal Passover. Jesus had other intentions. He was about to leave them. He wished to have an intimate, loving, farewell Supper -- something for them to remember; something for them to look forward to. They were not aware that they were on the threshold of the greatest event in human history! Illimitable results would follow this act.

Do we see any parallel today to this? Are we ignorant of what our Heavenly Father has stated of our relationship to him and to his dear Son? Is it possible that we see only a reminder of a past event, of the great Gift and the great Sacrifice? If the Memorial is only a reminder of the past and not a stimulus to the future, then we are as the disciples at the First Advent.

## **WHO CAN UNDERSTAND?**

We believe we are nearing the end of this Age. All the called, chosen, and faithful of the Lord should be enjoying a deeper insight into the meaning and import of this last meal of our Redeemer with his loved ones. Jesus knew that his disciples would not be able to understand the deep things that he knew and had in his mind. But he longed to convey as much as possible at that time. Symbolism is a powerful means of conveying a profound thought. He must convey to them the understanding that they were to have a share with him in a great undertaking to establish his Father's name in the earth, and to have a part in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth. Further, he must convey to them the fact that to reign with him they must suffer with him. His pathway must be their pathway, his suffering must be the precursor of their suffering; his glory would include their ultimate glorification. No human mind can grasp this. Only those begotten of God can do so. This act of begetting is entirely the result of the work of God; consequently, it may be said that only those to whom the Father reveals the great truth contained in the Memorial can fully and really enter into its height and depth, its length, and breadth.

## **JESUS THE PASSOVER LAMB**

It should be understood that the meal partaken of by the Lord and his disciples was not the Passover *Feast*, for it was yet the 14th day of Nisan.\*\* Feast day was the 15th. It is not reasonable to think that Jesus would break the Law. Luke records that Jesus definitely stated that he would "not eat thereof." If it was not the Passover Feast, what was it? Jesus saw himself as the lamb to be slain. Within a few hours he was to die; therefore he instituted a simple ceremony that would live in their minds because it was of the deepest significance to them. He was chosen and begotten of God; they were chosen, and later to be begotten of God. He was the Son of God; they were chosen and privileged to be sons of God. They were his brethren; he was their elder Brother. How his heart must have yearned over them! How great his desire to do all that he could to help them.

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\*\* The Passover lamb was eaten on the 14th; the Feast of the Passover commenced on the 15th and continued until the 21st.-Ed. Com.

Surely we can see what a very intimate, family atmosphere must have pervaded that sacred, very private, but very far-reaching event. He was to leave them; but he would see them again. A place in heaven he would prepare for them and eventually spend eternity with them. All that he thought and did for them, he thinks and does for us.

When he broke the bread and said, "This is my body which is *given for you: this do in remembrance of me*"; and when, after pouring the wine, he said further: "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is *shed for you*," he uttered great truths that they did not yet understand. The word "remembrance" that he used conveys the thought of "waiting for." What were they to wait for? Soon they would know, and then they would continue the Memorial feast annually "until he come." This the faithful followers of the Lord do, and have done for the last nineteen hundred years. Now our hopes are high, for we are nearing the time for his glorious return in power; and his first act is to gather together all those who are the chosen and begotten of his Father. In all conditions and circumstances, in peril and in danger, in sickness and in health, this simple feast has been kept.

### **INCREASED LIGHT**

Very soon our Heavenly Father rewarded the faithful followers of the Lord by giving a deeper insight into the real significance of the bread and wine. It was the privilege of that faithful servant Paul to reveal the hidden meaning of the symbol used at the Lord's last Supper.

There is no evidence that Jesus ate of the bread or drank of the wine - rather the words go to show that he would wait for the time of the establishment of the Kingdom. In simple and expressive language, but with impelling force and power, the Apostle demonstrates that we enter into that breaking. When we partake and assimilate the bread, and it becomes part of us, this symbolizes that we are one with our Head and united to all other members of that Body. Paul in essence says, here is a mystery kept hid from the ages, that Christ is not composed of one person but is composed of many, all of whom become one! Christ is one, but comprises many members (1 Cor. 12:12).

Evidently the great Apostle found it necessary to give the foundation of his interpretation of the symbol used in the Memorial and we find him saying, "For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered to you." Paul was anxious that his fellow-members should see and know that the partaking of the emblems was more than a reminder of a sacrificial life and work finished at Calvary. For him, for them, and similarly for us, it is an entering into a covenant or agreement with the Lord Jesus and with his Father. Note the words of Jesus and see what a flood of light is thrown upon them by this understanding.

*"And I covenant for you, even as my Father has covenanted for me, a Kingdom."*

Here was a loving intimacy, a sweet fellowship that had never before been extended to members of the human family. Did the disciples appreciate these words when they were spoken? Have we appreciated them as much in the past as we do now? A greater knowledge of our loving Heavenly Father, accompanied by a wider experience of his purpose and way should endear this ceremony to us more and more. Our relationship to our Heavenly Father and to the Lord should be quickened and enhanced.

## OUR ATTITUDE

Our Father, at this Memorial season, would have us carefully and prayerfully examine our relationship with him and his purpose. Frequently we quote, "Now are we sons of God." How have we become sons? Could we take this relationship of our own volition? Can we attain to this position by a demonstration of faith or of works?

Is it a natural growth or development? John declares it to be a privilege or position given by God (John 1:12). Paul asserts that only those led by the spirit of God are his sons. To all those who have the assurance of being sons of God, what an intimate, reverential, homely feeling becomes associated with the partaking of the feast. Our Heavenly Father has invited us to enter into a Divine arrangement; he has provided all that is necessary to enable us to keep ourselves in his love, and guarantees to us that we shall be with him and with our Lord for ever. How hallowed then is this time of remembrance! How grateful we should be to him who has kept us from falling and promises to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy!

## OUR PREPARATION

This knowledge that, by the grace of God, we are in a special relationship to him; that he has undertaken all on our behalf; that he will never leave us nor forsake us, will not puff us up. If rightly exercised we shall approach this Memorial with the deepest gratitude, with the truest humility, and with the sincerest honesty of heart. *"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me."*

*"Cleanse thou me from secret faults."*

*"Therefore if a man purge himself from these things [dishonoring to God] he will be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, fit for the Master's use, prepared for every good work."*

If this be the attitude of our hearts toward God; towards this time of the Memorial, happy will be our lot! Further, if we fully apprehend what our Father has done for us through the gift of his dear Son, and with faith and with gratitude live in harmony with his definite promises, how blessed we shall be as we once more partake of the emblems so lovingly introduced and used by our Head and Elder Brother.

*"For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."*

*- A. J. Lodge, England*

## Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead?

*"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you,  
that God should raise the dead?" - Acts 26:8.*

THE caption of this article is the title of a book by Oscar Cullmann, published a few years ago by The Epworth Press. According to the author, it "is the translation of a study already published in Switzerland, of which a summary has appeared in various French periodicals."

In his preface, the author goes on to say, "No other publication of mine has provoked such enthusiasm or such violent hostility.... My critics belong to the most varied camps."

This criticism, he indicates, is due to "the contrast, which, out of concern for the truth, I have found it necessary to draw between the courageous and joyful primitive Christian hope of the resurrection of the dead and the serene philosophic expectation of the survival of the immortal soul." This contrast, however, he insists, is to be seen between the teaching of the New Testament and that of Plato. There is, he says, "no reason for denying a radical difference between the Christian expectation of the resurrection of the dead and the Greek belief in the immortality of the soul. . . . The fact that later Christianity effected a link between the two beliefs, and that today the ordinary Christian simply confuses them, has not persuaded me to be silent about what I, in common with most exegetes, regard as true; and all the more so, since the link established between the expectation of the 'resurrection of the dead' and the belief in 'the immortality of the soul,' is not in fact a link at all, but renunciation of one in favor of the other."

We congratulate Brother Cullmann on his decision not to be silent on a matter of such importance, and trust that the Lord will supply him with the necessary grace to continue witnessing faithfully to this fundamental tenet of the Christian faith. Would that others might follow his example.

Regular readers of this journal are informed as to our own views. However, in view of the fact that in recent months, our Subscription List has been substantially increased, we take pleasure in submitting below a number of paragraphs on this and related subjects, condensed from an article written by Charles T. Russell, in 1895 - seventy-three years ago.

### WHAT IS THE SOUL?

According to the inspired record of man's creation, found in Genesis 2:7, we learn that the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed [Heb. *blew*] into his nostrils the breath [Heb. *wind*] of life [Heb. "lives," plural -- *ie.*, such as was common to all living animals]; and man became a living soul [i.e., a sentient being]."

The body was formed first, but it was not a man. It had eyes, but saw nothing; ears, but heard nothing; a mouth, but spoke nothing; a tongue, but no taste; nostrils, but no sense of smell; a heart, but it pulsated not; blood, but it was cold, lifeless; lungs, but they moved not. It was not a man, but a corpse, an inanimate body.

The second step in making man was to give vitality to the properly "formed" and in every way prepared body; and this is described by the words "blew into his nostrils the breath of life." When a healthy person has been drowned and animation is wholly suspended, resuscitation has, it is

said, been effected by working the arms and thus the lungs as a bellows, and gradually establishing the breath in the nostrils. In Adam's case it, of course, required no labored effort on the part of the Creator to cause the perfect organism which he had made to breathe the life-giving oxygen of the atmosphere.

As the vitalizing breath entered, the lungs expanded, the blood corpuscles were oxygenized and passed to the heart, whose valves in turn propelled it to every part of the body, awakening all the prepared, but hitherto dormant, nerves to sensation and energy. In an instant the energy reached the brain, and thought, perception, reasoning, looking, touching, smelling, feeling, and tasting commenced. That which was a lifeless human organism had become a man, a sentient being: the "living soul" condition mentioned in the text had been reached. In other words, the term "living soul" means neither more nor less than the term "sentient being" or "being capable of sensation, perception." Moreover, even though Adam was perfect in his organism, it was necessary for him to *sustain* life by partaking of the fruits of the trees of life. And when he sinned, God drove him from the garden, "*lest* he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree [plural, *trees* or *grove*] of life, and eat, and *live forever* [i.e., by eating continuously]" (Gen. 3:22).

Our Redeemer "poured out his soul [being] unto death," he made "his soul [being] an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:12, 10); and it was the *souls* of Adam and his posterity that he thus bought with his precious blood - by making his soul (being) an offering for sin. Consequently, it is the souls that are to be awakened, resurrected - not the bodies, which are buried and which go to dust.

Here is another common error - many suppose that the bodies buried are to be restored atom for atom, but, on the contrary, the Apostle declares, "Thou sowest [in death] not that body which shall be." In the resurrection God will give to each person (to each soul or sentient being) such a body as he pleases (1 Cor. 15:37, 38).

As the bringing together of an organism and the breath of life produced a sentient being or soul, so the dissolution of these, from any cause, puts an end to sentient being-stopping thoughts and feelings of every kind. The soul or sentient being ceases; the body returns to dust as it was; while the spirit or breath of life returns to God, who imparted it to Adam, and to his race through him (Eccl. 12:7). It returns to God in the sense that it is no longer amenable to human control, as in procreation, and can never be recovered except by divine power. Recognizing this fact, the Lord's instructed ones commit their hope of future life by resurrection to the Father and to Christ, his now exalted representative (Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59). So, then, if God had made no provision for man's ransom and for a resurrection, death would be the end of all hope for humanity (1 Cor. 15:14-18).

But God has thus made provision for our re-living; and ever since he made known his gracious plan, those who speak and write intelligently upon the subject (for instance, the inspired Scripture writers) as if by common consent, speak of the unconscious interim between death and the resurrection morning as a "*sleep*." Indeed, the illustration is an excellent one; for the dead will be totally unconscious of the lapse of time, and the moment of awakening will seem to them like the next moment after the moment of their dissolution. For instance, we read that speaking of Lazarus' death our Lord said, "Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth*, I go that I may *awake him out of sleep*." Afterward, because the disciples were slow to comprehend, he said, "Lazarus is dead" (John 11:14). Were the theory of consciousness in death correct, is it not remarkable that Lazarus gave no account of his experience during those four days? None will claim that he was in a "hell" of torment, for our Lord calls him his "friend"; and for the same reason if he had been in heavenly bliss our Lord would not have called him from it, for that would be an unfriendly act. But as our

Lord expressed it, Lazarus *slept*, and he awakened him to life, to consciousness, to sentient being, and that as a favor greatly appreciated by Lazarus and his friends.

The thought pervades the Scriptures, that we are now in the Night as compared with the Morning of the resurrection. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psa. 30:5).

The Apostles also frequently used this appropriate, hopeful, and peaceful figure of speech. For instance, Luke says of Stephen, the first martyr, "*he fell asleep*"; and in recording Paul's speech at Antioch he used the same expression, "David . . . *fell on sleep*" (Acts 7:60; 13:36). Peter uses the same expression, saying (2 Pet. 3:4), "the fathers *fell asleep*." And Paul used it time and again, as the following quotations show:

"If her husband be dead [Greek, *fall asleep*]" (1 Cor. 7:39).

"The greater part remain unto this present, but some are *fallen asleep*" (1 Cor. 15:6).

"If there be no resurrection, . . . then they also which are *fallen asleep* in Christ are perished" (1 Cor. 15:13-18).

"Christ is risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that *slept*" (1 Cor. 15:20).

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all *sleep*" (1 Cor. 15:51).

"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which *are asleep*" (1 Thess. 4:13).

"Them [that] *sleep* in Jesus, will God bring [from, the dead] with [by] him" (1 Thess. 4:14).

When the Kingdom, the resurrection time, comes, "we who are alive and remain unto the *presence* of the Lord shall not *precede* them that *are asleep*" (1 Thess. 4:15).

They "fell asleep" in peace, to await the Lord's day-the Day of Christ, the Millennial Day -fully "persuaded that he [Christ] is able to keep that which they committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim. 1:12). This same thought runs through the Old Testament as well-from the time that God first preached to Abraham the Gospel of a resurrection. The expression, "He slept with his fathers," is very common in the Old Testament. But Job puts the matter in very forcible language, saying, "O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be [over] past!" (Job 14:13). The present dying time is the time of God's wrath - the curse of death being upon all, because *of* the original transgression. However, in due time the curse will be lifted and a blessing will come through the Redeemer to all the families of the earth; and so Job continues: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come; [then] thou shalt call (John 5:25) and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands" (Job. 14:14, 15). And we of the New Testament times read our Lord's response, "all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God [calling them to awake and come to a full knowledge of God and to a full opportunity of everlasting life]" (John 5:25, 28).

### **BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT**

That the terms body, soul, and spirit are not identical and interchangeable as many assume is shown in the use of all three terms by the Apostle (1 Thess. 5:23), when he writes, "I pray God [that] your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless, unto the coming of the Lord Jesus



Christ." This prayer must be understood to apply to the Church as a whole - the elect Church whose names are written in heaven. The true *spirit* has been preserved in the little flock. Its *body* is discernible today also, notwithstanding the multitudes of tares that would hide as well as choke it. And its *soul*, its activity, its intelligence, its sentient being, is in evidence everywhere, lifting up the standard for the people -- the cross, the ransom.

In no other way could we apply the Apostle's words; for, however much people may differ respecting the preservation of the individual spirits and souls of God's people, all will agree that their bodies have *not been preserved*, but have returned to dust, like those of others.

### **"ALL LIVE UNTO HIM"**

Our Lord in contradicting the Sadducees (who denied that there would be a resurrection or any future life) said that the *resurrection* (and hence a future life) was proved by the fact that God, in speaking to Moses, declared himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Luke 20:37, 38). Our Lord suggests that this of itself is a proof "that the dead are [to be] raised," because God would surely not refer thus to beings totally blotted out of existence. Our Lord then shows that God's plan for a resurrection is fixed, and that those whom men call "dead" "all live unto Him." God's Word, therefore, speaks of them as "asleep" and not as destroyed. In saying, "I am the God of Abraham," etc., he speaks not only of things past as still present, but also of things to come as if already come to pass (Rom. 4:17).

## Daniel's Vision of World Governments

*"As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time." - Daniel 7:12.*

The vision given to Daniel which he records in chapter 7 is of four beasts which, it was revealed to him, symbolized four kings (Daniel 7:16, 17).

The following are the leading points of the Vision and of the Interpretation respectively.

### THE VISION

1. Four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.
2. The first like a lion, another like a bear, another like a leopard.
3. A fourth beast, dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly.
4. It was diverse from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.
5. There came up among them another little horn.
6. In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.
7. The same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them.
8. *Until the Ancient of Days came*, and
9. Judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and
10. The time came that the saints possessed the *kingdom*.

### The Interpretation

1. These great beasts which are four, are four kingdoms.
2. The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth.
3. The ten horns are ten kings (or kingdoms) that shall arise.
4. Another shall arise after them, diverse from the first (ten).
5. And he shall speak great words against the Most High.
6. He shall wear out the saints of the Most High;
7. They shall be given into his hand, until a time, and times, and the dividing of time.
8. *But the judgment shall sit*, and they shall take away his dominion.
9. The kingdom shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High;
10. Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.

Students of the Scriptures have long understood these beasts to represent the four world-governments -- the only four mentioned by name in the Word of God -- Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome (Dan. 2:38; 8:20; 8:21, and Luke 2:1). These four, as history shows, succeeded each other without any gap and, as the prophecies show, are to occupy the entire interval from Daniel's day to the establishment of the Kingdom of God.\*

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\*See "The ABC of Bible Prophecy" booklet. Free on Request.

The foregoing is *very* generally understood. Not so general, however, is the understanding that the first three beasts continue alive long after they lose their dominion. Nevertheless this is clear from the language of Daniel 7:12. As each beast in turn is conquered by its successor, its *dominion* is taken away but its *life* is prolonged.

Just when the lives of the first three beasts come to an end is not stated. The implication is that this occurs when both the dominion and the life of the fourth beast are terminated (Dan. 7:26, 11).

This view, furthermore, agrees very well with the parallel prophecy recorded in the second chapter of Daniel. When the stone struck the image in the feet, "*then* was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces *together*" (Dan. 2:35)

In Daniel's vision it is probable that these four beasts emerged from the sea *one after another*, each in turn being vanquished by its successor. Eventually, however, all four must have been present to his view *at the same time* since, while the *dominion* of the first three had been taken away, their *lives* had been prolonged. How is this distinction between the *life* and the *dominion* of the beasts to be understood, as it relates to the four world -- empires symbolized?

To us it seems that there is only one satisfactory explanation. It lies, as has been pointed out by an able writer, in recognizing "that prophecy regards the four empires as being as distinct *in territory as in time*: as distinct in geographical boundaries, as in chronological limits. They rise in a definite sequence; the supreme dominion of one does not in point of *time* overlap the supreme dominion of the following one, nor is the *territory* of a former 'beast' or empire ever regarded as belonging to a later one, though it may have been actually conquered. Each has its own proper theatre or body, and the bodies continue to exist after the dominion is taken away. This is distinctly stated, both in connection with the fourfold image and with the four beasts. In the first case the stone falls upon the clay and iron feet only, but the iron legs, the brazen body, the silver breast, and the golden head, are all by it 'broken to pieces *together*.' Now the *empires* represented by these have long since passed away. They (as universal empires) cannot therefore be 'broken to pieces' by the Second Advent. But the *territory* once occupied by them is still existing and still populous, and exposed to the judgments of the day of Christ just as much as Rome itself.

"Similarly, we read that the three earlier beasts did not cease to *exist* when the fourth arose. 'Their *dominion* [was] taken away, yet their *lives* were prolonged for a season and time' (Dan. 7:12). That is to say, the first three empires are regarded as coexisting *with the fourth*, after their *dominion* has ended. This proves that they are regarded as *distinct in place* as well as in time. They continue to be recognized as territorial divisions of the earth after the disappearance of their political supremacy." - H. G. Guinness.

Many years before Guinness, this had been clearly seen by the world's great mathematician, Sir Isaac Newton. In his "*Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation*," he wrote: "All the four beasts are still alive, though the dominion of the first three be taken away. The nations of Chaldea and Assyria are still the first beast. Those of Media and Persia are still the second beast. Those of Macedonia, Greece, Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt are the third beast. And those of Europe on this side are still the fourth beast. Seeing, therefore, the body of the third beast is confined to the nations on this side of the river Euphrates, and the body of the fourth beast to the nations on this side of Greece, we are to look for all the four heads of this third beast on this side of the Euphrates, and for all the eleven horns of the fourth beast among the nations on this side Greece; and therefore, in the breaking up of the Greek empire into four kingdoms, we include no part of Chaldea, or Media and Persia in these kingdoms, because they belong to the

body of the first two beasts. Nor do we reckon the Greek empire, seated at Constantinople, among the horns of the fourth beast, because it belongs to the body of the third."

This principle of identifying governments not only chronologically but geographically -- in accordance with the territory *originally* occupied-is helpful in reaching a proper understanding not only of this prophecy but of others. As above noted, it has proven a safe guide in the identification of the ten horns (or kingdoms) of the fourth beast (or empire) which must "none of them be sought in the realms of the third, second, or first, but exclusively *in the realm of the fourth*, or in the territory *peculiar to Rome*, and which had never formed part of the Grecian, Medo-Persian, or Babylonian empires."

There is yet one other point which ought to be mentioned ere we close this discussion. It is this: Not only is each world-government regarded in the prophecy as distinct in territory and in time; *each is shown also as existing before its predecessor falls*. Medo-Persia existed *before* it conquered Babylon. Greece came into existence *before* it challenged and overcame Medo-Persia. Rome existed *before* it vanquished Greece. Has this point any special significance? Indeed it has. It suggests that *before* the dominion of Rome is taken *away-before* the beast is slain and its body given to the burning flame, *the fifth world empire comes into existence*.

However, this thought, that the fifth world-empire comes into existence *before* the overthrow of the fourth, is more than a suggestion; much more than a strong probability based on the fact that each of the others is shown as existing before the fall of its predecessor. It is specifically stated in the Scripture. It is "*in the days*" of these kings, not after their days, that the God of heaven is to set up his Kingdom (Dan. 2:44).

Brethren, unless we greatly err, the God of heaven has for years been in the process of setting up this Kingdom. For more than half a century the "judgment has been sitting" and his dominion (the dominion of the fourth beast in its "little horn" stage) has been in the process of being taken away. What yet remains? We answer: "To consume and destroy that dominion unto the end." Immediately thereafter will occur that which, is described by the words: "I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame" (Dan. 7:26; 11). And then? Ah! then-the Kingdom will be given to One like the Son of Man; and the people of the saints of the Most High. That Kingdom will not pass to a sixth world-empire. It will be everlasting (Dan. 7:14, 27).

- P. L. Read

## Prophetic Periods

A WIDE distinction exists and should be recognized between *students and expositors of the Word and Works of God*, who humbly, soberly, and reverently searching into the facts of Nature and Scripture, of providence and of prophecy, reach conclusions which sanctified common sense can approve, -- and *speculators*, who running away with isolated and mysterious expressions, indulge in imaginations of their own, and become *prophets*, instead of students of Divine prophecy. No employment of human intelligence is nobler than an adoring investigation of the revealed purposes of God, "which things the angels desire to look into," while few are so puerile, as a presumptuous pretense of predicting the future, apart from such cautious and careful study of Divine revelation.

In conclusion, the author would strongly deprecate the false and foolish popular notion that all study of prophecy is unpractical - a notion too often propagated by passing, but mischievously influential allusions to the subject from pulpit, platform, and press, made by those who know little either of it, or of its effects. It ought to be a sufficient rebuke to the levity that hazards such an assertion, or admits such an idea, to recall the facts, that one third of the Bible consists of prophecy; and that our Lord and Master said, "Search the Scriptures," not a portion of them. The Apostle Peter expressly tells us that we *do well to take heed* to the "more sure word of prophecy," as to a light shining in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise. Is it unpractical to make use of a good lantern on a pitch-dark night, in traversing a dangerous road? or is it not rather unpractical and unreasonable to attempt to dispense with it? And further, a special and emphatic blessing is attached to this study in the closing book of the Bible: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep the things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:3).

It is a reflection of the gravest kind on the wisdom of God to suppose that the study of a branch of truth to which he has in his Word accorded singular prominence should have an injurious tendency, or be devoid of a directly sanctifying effect: and moreover, it is a conclusion completely at variance with all the facts of history and experience. Enoch was a student of prophecy and of prophecy that is to this day unfulfilled, and Enoch was the saintliest of men, an eminently holy and practical preacher, who walked with God three hundred years, and was not, for God took him, and before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. Noah was a student of unfulfilled prophecy, and Scripture presents no more practical preacher of righteousness than he was. All the holy prophets were students, and diligent students, too, of their own and each other's predictions, and *especially of their chronological predictions*. "The prophets have enquired and searched diligently, . . . searching what, or *what manner of time* the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow" (1 Pet. 1:10, 11). Daniel was a student of unfulfilled prophecy, yet he was not only a practical statesman, but a man of singular holiness, classed with Noah and job as one of the *most* righteous of men.

There is everything in the nature of the study to make those who pursue it both practical and holy. It imbues the mind with the counsels and judgment of God about the affairs and events of earth; it reveals what *shall be*, and thereby lessens the inordinate power of that which is *now*, bringing the spirit under the influence of things unseen and eternal, and thereby weakening that of things seen and temporal. It affords to hope much needed food, lacking which we must languish and grow feeble; and to faith and love peculiar stimulus and enjoyment. Without an intelligent acquaintance with the teaching of the prophetic Word, no man of God is or can be thoroughly furnished to all

good works, for it is part of the "all Scripture" given by inspiration, and profitable for the purpose of rendering him so.

Perhaps one reason for the prevailing neglect of prophetic expositions and preaching will be found on reflection, to lie, *not* in the fact that it is unpractical, but rather in the fact that it is so *peculiarly practical*, that few have the boldness and courage to face the ridicule, opposition, and contempt it is sure to incur in the world. Jeremiah lived on the eve and in the crisis of a day of judgment on the apostate professing people of God. He was commissioned to deliver prophetic discourses full of denunciations of coming judgment, and of *chronological statements of its proximity and duration*. We know what Jeremiah's lot was, and few are prepared to play *his* sad and thankless role in society!

So far from the study and exposition of the prophetic Word being profitless and vain, we believe it is impossible to estimate the loss sustained by the Church, or the injury done to the world, by the very general and unjustifiable neglect of it. Is it not so that where one prophetic discourse is delivered, ten thousand doctrinal and practical sermons are preached? *By what authority do we thus shelve a line of truth to which Divine wisdom has given such prominence in Scripture?* Is it not our duty to declare "*the whole counsel of God*"? Those who have carefully looked into this subject, solemnly and with good ground, believe that the "Word" we are commanded to "preach" is full of evidence that the long predicted and long delayed judgments on the Papal and Mohammedan powers, which are not only already begun, but are fast accomplishing before our eyes, are to issue, and that speedily, in such a burning of "Babylon the Great," as will light up all Christendom with its lurid glow, -- the immediate precursor, if it be not the accompaniment, of the glorious advent of the King of kings. With all earnestness and sobriety of mind they assure their brethren that it is their deep conviction that *this is the testimony of sacred Scripture*; yet multitudes of Christian teachers, without even taking the trouble of examining the subject, still preach the contrary, or imply it in their preaching; not from well-grounded conviction of its truth, but from educational prejudice, or mere force of habit. Is this right? Ought not every minister of the word study for himself the teachings of Scripture, until he is satisfied that he has attained the truth on this momentous theme?

For if we are right -- if there be unequivocal proof in the inspired volume, proof that no previous generation of Christians was in a position to appreciate as we are, that the day of Christ is at hand -- that the time for evangelizing the nations, and gathering in the church of the first-born is speedily to expire--that the long day of grace to the Gentiles is all but over, and that apostate Christendom, so long spared by the goodness of God, is soon to be cut off by his righteous severity -- that the mystery of God is all but finished, and his manifested rule about to be inaugurated -- that the great closing Armageddon conflict is at hand, and the complete overthrow of the confederated hosts of evil--if we be right in believing that scarcely a single prophecy in the whole Bible, relating to events prior to the second advent of Christ remains unfulfilled -- *if we be right*, -- then surely every pulpit in England should be ringing with timely testimony to these truths, -- surely these solemn and most momentous facts ought not, in the preaching of any of God's faithful witnesses throughout the world, to be passed by in silence. And who that has not *studied* the subject can be in a position to say that we are *not* right -- that these things are not so?

May such a spirit as the Bereans had of old be granted to the Christians of this generation, that they may diligently search the "more sure word of prophecy," and draw directly from that sacred fountain *the Truth as to the fast approaching future*, which God has graciously revealed.

- From the preface to the first edition of *The Approaching End of the Age*, written by H. Grattan Guinness, in 1878.

## Israel Today

Note to the Reader:

Below we submit the second of two installments of an article by Arthur W. Kac, M.D., in which he presents what he believes to be *The Truth About the Israel-Arab Problem*, a belief shared by our Directors and Editors.

The first installment of Dr. Kac's article appeared in our January issue, which will be furnished free, on request. - Ed. Com.

### VI ARAB HOSTILITY: ITS BASIC CAUSES

#### 1. Territory.

Arab hostility does not stem from a need of territory. The tiny state of Israel has about 8,000 square miles of territory, about the size of the state of New Jersey. The combined size of Arab lands exceeds 1,700,000 square miles. Large stretches of Arab lands are underpopulated. What the Arabs need is not land but to develop the vast territories which they have. The Arabs certainly have no fear of aggression from Israel judging from the daily hit-and-run raids into Israel territory which the Arabs have been practicing since the 1949 Armistice.

#### 2. The refugee problem.

The moral responsibility for the existence of the Arab refugee problem rests squarely with the Arab States. Had the Arab States not invaded Palestine in 1948 there would have been no refugees. Not only have the Arab States created an Arab refugee problem, they have also brought into existence a Jewish refugee group. About 180,000 Jews were forced to leave Arab countries and were not permitted to take their possessions with them. The Arab refugees can no more return to their former homes in Israel than the Jews can return to their former homes in Arab lands or war ravaged countries of Europe. Within the first four years since its establishment the tiny State of Israel had to absorb some 700,000 Jewish refugees, most of whom came penniless, which number was about equal to the number of Arabs made homeless because of the war which the Arab States had forced upon Israel. If Israel with a territory of 8,000 square miles, half of which is desert, had absorbed some 700,000 Jewish refugees in the first four years of its existence, could not the Arab States, whose countries occupy an area of over 1,700,000 square miles, have absorbed the same number of Arab refugees? They certainly could, provided they had only a fraction of love for their people that the Jews have had for theirs.

But Israel, though occupied with a superhuman task of making room for hundreds of thousands of her own people, did not remain indifferent to the lot of Arab refugees. She released the blocked bank accounts of the Arab refugees amounting to some 15 million dollars. She admitted several thousand Arabs to make it possible for separated families to become reunited. She granted citizenship to some 35,000 Arabs who have filtered into the State of Israel. She has expressed a willingness to pay compensation for lands abandoned by the Arab refugees.

The refugee issue was not the only area in which Israel showed eagerness to make concessions. She offered Egypt a road through the Negev to provide her with a link to Saudi Arabia; she was willing to give Jordan free port facilities in Haifa; she was ready to sign an agreement with Syria granting to Syrian fishermen fishing rights in the Sea of Galilee. She accepted the Eric Johnston plan for the development of the river Jordan jointly with her Arab neighbors. She offered her full share in the development of the Near East which would have been of inestimable benefit to the peoples in that region. But to all these overtures by Israel for peaceful settlement of their differences the Arab turned a deaf ear. Why?

### 3. The Arab States want one thing: the destruction of the State of Israel.

In 1954 the king of Saudi Arabia called upon the Arab States to destroy the State of Israel even if this would cost the lives of ten million Arabs. "Israel to the Arab world," he stated, "is like a cancer to the human body and the only way of remedy is to uproot it just like a cancer . . ." \* On another occasion the Egyptian military dictator government asserted in a radio broadcast that "the basic cause of Middle East problems is the existence of Israel. Any settlement based on the recognition of the continued existence of Israel cannot be approved by any Arab Government." \*\* "Egypt sees Israel as a cancer endangering the Arab people. Egypt is the physician who can uproot this cancer. Egypt does not forget that it is its obligation to take revenge, and it is mobilizing all its forces in anticipation of the hoped for day." \*\*\*

\* Quoted in The Sun (Baltimore, Md.), January 10, 1954.

\*\* Quoted in The Sun (Baltimore, Md.), February 12, 1956.

\*\*\* Saut El-Arab, the official radio station; quoted in The Jews in the News (P.O. Box 51, Grand Rapids, Michigan), Winter Edition, 1955-56.

### 4. The basic cause of Arab hostility to Israel.

#### a. Jewish achievements in Israel are a threat to the ruling classes of the Arab States.

Here is the testimony of Bartley C. Crum, one of the American members of the Anglo-American Inquiry on Palestine: "The community of interests of the kings, sheiks, and effendis in the various Arab lands is unquestionably the main factor behind the seemingly united front of the Arab states in their fight against Israel. And in this united front the Arab masses are unprotected. What we have is a class interest of state rulers, landowners, and officialdom. To them, as distinct from the multitudes of the Arab peoples, Israel's social and technical innovations are a threat because they mean lifting the masses from their ignorance and serfdom." \*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\* Bartley C. Crum, Behind the Silken Curtain (Simon and Schuster; New York, 1947), p. 230.

#### b. Hostility to Israel is a disguised form of hatred for the West.

When Richard Crossman, one of the British members of the AngloAmerican Committee of Inquiry on Palestine, asked Azzam Pasha, Secretary of the Arab League, why he objects to the Jews returning to Palestine, Azzam Pasha replied: "Our Brother has gone to Europe and to the West and come back something else. He has come back a Russified Jew, a Polish Jew, a German Jew, an English Jew. He has come back with a totally different conception of things, Western and not Eastern." \*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\* Quoted by Richard Crossman, Palestine Mission (Harper and Brothers: New York, 1947), p. 109.



Many of the other Arab spokesmen who testified before the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry expressed the same attitude. "As the roll call of witnesses continued," Crum declares, "it was evident that their antipathy was toward Westernism: that was the encroachment they fought. Was this not perhaps the basic tragedy of the Middle East? Westernism meant higher standards of living; it meant reduction in infant mortality, in disease, in poverty; it meant opening the door to some measure of freedom and happiness to the forgotten men and women of this area of the world. It was this, precisely, to which our witnesses objected. Most tragic of all, as long as they remained representatives of a feudal aristocracy which draws its power from its privileged position, supported by the toil of the Arab masses, they had to object. I felt that even on the highest intellectual levels here there was no confidence in democratic processes, and, I am afraid, little understanding of them." \*\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*\* Bartley C. Crum, *op cit.*, p. 152.

## **VII ISRAEL'S INTERNATIONAL POSITION**

The 1949 Armistice was concluded between Israel and the neighboring Arab States with the approval of the United Nations. To normalize the situation America, Britain, and France entered into an agreement in 1950 in which they declared that they will defend either Israel or the Arabs in the event either party shall attempt to change by force the provisions of the 1949 Armistice. Neither the Armistice nor the 1950 Tripartite Declaration has prevented Egypt from blockading Israel's southern port and denying to Israel's ships passage through the Suez Canal, or the other Arab States from raiding Israel's territory. In fact, Egypt continued her blockade measures in spite of a declaration by the United Nations that this is illegal.

Notwithstanding all these warlike acts and the defiance of the United Nations, the Arab countries have been supplied with arms by the countries of the Communist bloc and those of the West. This, in spite of the fact that, as is generally known, the only war which the Arab governments are interested in is a war with Israel. To a question about United States military aid to the Arab countries Faris el-Khoury, Syrian Prime Minister, made the following statement: "Why should we hesitate even if the arms are given only on condition that they are not used for aggressive purposes? American arms should be accepted and Israel should be attacked with them at a propitious hour." \*\*\*\*\* On the other hand, Israel's repeated requests to purchase arms from the West have often been denied.

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\*\*\*\*\* Israel Digest (Israel Office of Information: New York), Jan. 7, 1955.

## **VIII THE VALUE OF ARAB MILITARY ALLIANCES**

Of what real military value is an alliance between the West and the Arab States in their present condition? Edgar A. Mowrer once said: "Except for the American-backed Turks and the Palestine Jews, there is nothing in the Middle East that could resist a Soviet cavalry raid, still less a tank column." \*\*\*\*\* That this still holds true today is agreed by competent observers of the Middle East.

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\*\*\*\*\* Edgar A. Mowrer, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

In assessing the military value of the Arab States it is necessary to know a few basic facts about the Arab States. While in form of government they range all the way from a feudal monarchy, to a constitutional monarchy, to a republic, they have one thing in common-that the bulk of their peoples have no voice or share in the government. If the Arabs are ever going to do any fighting, it will have to be done by the peasants who form the great mass of the Arab peoples. And Arab peasants are the most wretched lot of people to be found anywhere in the world today. Most of them do not own any land, or enough to provide them with even a meager livelihood. Most of them are illiterate, undernourished and submerged in abject poverty. Morris Hindus, who has made a spot study of the situation in the Middle East, has this to say: "It is not the eloquent spokesman of the newly inflamed nationalism of the Middle East, but the lowly fellah [peasant], who is the central though voiceless character in the crisis that has come upon that part of the world. His physical condition alone deprives him of the first requisite -- soldierly health-for an effective military force." \*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\* Morris Hindus, *In Search of a Future* (Doubleday & Co., Inc.: Garden City, N. Y., 1949), p. 259.

## **IX THE MEANING OF ISRAEL FOR THE MIDDLE EAST**

### 1. The explosive land problem.

In her book "Land and Poverty in the Middle East," Doreen Warriner states the following: "Near starvation, high death rate, soil erosion, economic exploitation -- this is the pattern of life for the mass of the rural population in the Middle East. It is a poverty that has no parallel in Europe, since even clear water is a luxury." \*\*\*\*\*

1} Quoted by Morris Hindus, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

S. A. Morrison, a student of Middle East affairs says: "Unless there is a substantial improvement in the condition of the peasant masses, the Middle East will be ripe for an agrarian revolution. It is a land-hungry area, and the situation resembles in a dangerous way conditions in Russia prior to the Revolution of 1917." \*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\* S. A. Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

### 2. Israel has the solution.

In his book "In Search of a Future," Morris Hindus says: "They [the Jews] have demonstrated that neither the poverty nor the degradation of the land and of the man who cultivates it is beyond redemption ... However severe the feud between Jews and Arabs, the accomplishments of the Jewish colonists offer the Arab world a ready and unfailing blueprint for the regeneration of their countries -- once, of course, an agrarian reform has been achieved. The forms of land ownership which the Jews have evolved; the rotation of crops they have pursued; their tender, almost sacred, devotion to plants and trees; the acclimatization of new livestock; the importation and adaptation of new cultures; the incalculable potentialities of cottage industries; the schemes of cooperative effort, so diverse and so flexible; never-ceasing search for fresh contrivances with which to tame a sullen nature and coax out of it hidden and neglected treasures; the mastery of scientific

schemes to conserve and to enrich the soil-in all these performances, the Jewish colonists have pioneered for a renaissance not only of their own land, but for all the Middle East." \*\*\*\*\* "Had there been no Jews in Palestine, they would have had to be invented, if only to demonstrate to the Arab and Iranian leaders and peoples, as well as to the diplomats of the outside world, what self-help, creatively and energetically directed, can achieve in backward countries whose lands are as damaged as the health of the people who cultivate them."\*\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*\* Morris Hindus, op. cit., pp. 264, 265-6.  
\*\*\*\*\* Ibid, p. 265.

T. E. Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia of World War One days, and a great friend of the Arab peoples, said this: "I am decidedly in favor of Zionism. Indeed, I look on the Jews as the natural importers of that Western leaven which is so necessary for the countries of the Middle East. \*\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*\* Quoted by Batley C. Crum, op. cit., p. 292.

Richard Crossman, already referred to above, says: "Arab patriotism and Arab self-respect had been deeply affronted and would continue to be affronted by the development of the national home [i.e., Jewish National Homeland]; but if I believed in social progress, I had to admit that the Jews had set going revolutionary forces in the Middle East, which, in the long run, would benefit the Arabs." \*\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*\* Richard Crossman, op. cit., p. 167.

Edgar A. Mowrer, Newspaper Columnist and Foreign Correspondent, said, "Welcome or unwelcome, it is the Jews who, more even than French or British, have goaded Egyptians and Arabs into making the effort that alone may one day enable them to sit among the great peoples-as their ancestors did. \*\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*\* Edgar A. Mowrer, op. cit., p. 102.

Walter C. Lowdermilk, onetime Assistant Chief of the United States Soil Conservation Service, states: "I am convinced, after studying the relations of peoples to their lands in twenty-six different countries, that these colonists have done something new under the sun; they are working out a lasting adjustment of a people to their land in which all peoples of the world should be interested. \*\*\*\*\* "It [i.e., Jewish Palestine] is indeed, in my view, the most significant corner of that entire part of the world, for it is already serving as a concrete example showing how modern and scientific principles can be put to work to rejuvenate the entire Middle East and provide a better way of life and higher standards of living for the long exploited and down-trodden peasant. \*\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*\* Walter C. Lowdermilk, Problems of the Middle East (Proceedings of a Conference held at the School of Education, New York University, June 5th-6th, 1947), p. 9.  
\*\*\*\*\* Ibid. p. 7

Bartley C. Crum says: "For Palestine represents the power of a collective and unbreakable moral decision which, short of a massacre of the entire population, is bound to prevail. I did not fully comprehend the great positive influences of this moral decision until I had seen the Middle East and compared the poverty, the disease, and humiliation of Egypt with the cleanliness, the well-being, and the dignity of the people in Palestine. \*\*\*\*\*"

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\*\*\*\*\* Bartley C. Crum, op. cit., p. 290

## **X** **THE CHOICE BEFORE US**

In view of what has been said about the Arab-Israel problem, what policy should we pursue? "To determine this policy," declares Bartley C. Crum, "we have one of two paths before us. We can throw our lot with the forces of reaction who prop up feudalistic regimes in the Arab States . . .; who believe they can successfully continue the same processes of exploitation in the future which have proved successful in the past. Or we can throw our lot in with the progressive forces in the Middle East. We can recognize that there is a slow rising of its peoples, and that we must place ourselves on the side of this inevitable development toward literacy, health, and a decent way of life. I say to my fellow Americans that not only for the sake of the masses of the Middle East, but for the sake of world peace, we must encourage this development, a development of which Jewish Palestine is thus far the outstanding example, holding great promise for the future of all its neighbors. Therefore, it follows that support for the Jewish National Home is the first and logical step to take on this path toward the advancement of a democratic way of life in that area of the world. \*\*\*\*\*"

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\*\*\*\*\* Ibid, p. 291.

## **The Question Box**

In our last Question Box (January / February Herald, page 9) we promised if space permitted, to supplement our Answer to Question 2, with a few additional paragraphs from the writings of H. Grattan Guinness. These are presented, under the caption "Prophetic Periods," on page 24 of this issue.

Again, Question 4 (of the January / February Herald, page 9) related to the "little horns" of Daniel 7 and 8, a discussion of which was deferred. Preliminary to the consideration of this question it is necessary to first review what we have previously suggested was a satisfactory interpretation of the beasts themselves, on whom the "little horns" were seen, in vision, by Daniel. For the reasons outlined in the introductory paragraphs of "The Question Box" in the January-February Herald, we ask the indulgence of our regular readers, while we bring our new subscribers up-to-date with the gist of our earlier discussions, in an article captioned "Daniel's Vision of World Governments." (See page 23 of this issue).

- P. L. Read

## **The Ecumenical Movement Threatens Protestantism**

*In the current attempts at church unity, two Baptist ministers see a rising, frightening new bigotry that endangers religious freedom.*

This article by Henry A. Buchanan (chaplain of the Central Baptist Hospital in Lexington, Ky.) and Bob W. Brown (pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Lexington) appeared in the October 24, 1964, issue of "*The Saturday Evening Post*" and is used by special permission of "*The Saturday Evening Post*"; copyright 1964 by The Curtis Publishing Company.

THE AMERICAN religious system is under fire today. A legacy of the Protestant Reformation, the system that provides us such a variety of churches is being challenged and questioned by the suddenly popular ecumenical movement. Launching a zealous crusade to unite Christendom, the ecumenists have declared that a divided Body of Christ is a sin and a scandal. In fact, however, it is the ecumenical movement that presents the real danger. It could lead to creation of an ecclesiastical power structure that bears no resemblance to anything envisioned by Jesus of Nazareth. What is worse, in striving after a super church, we may destroy the heritage of diversity that has enriched our spiritual life. And still worse, Protestants may be pressured or lured into creeds and positions that will compromise their religious beliefs.

The ecumenical movement has been given a tremendous thrust by the Second Vatican Council and by Rome's overtures to the Orthodox and Protestant communions. Following the lead of John XXIII, the Vatican Council has held out to the "separated brethren" a tentative offer of "reunion." An equally powerful thrust has come from non-Catholic leaders, who entertain the hope that the church may achieve the unity which would lend authority to their pronouncements on social issues. Inside American Protestantism, meanwhile, machinery has been set in motion to unite four major Protestant bodies in this country -- the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians, the Methodists and the United Church of Christ. (The last already represents a union of two churches.) At the same time a "climate" is being created, through Protestant-Catholic "dialogue," in which it is hoped that an agreement can be reached.

With so much pressure behind the ecumenical movement, one may wonder why the walls of denominationalism do not crumble into dust immediately. The truth is that the doctrinal differences represent the honest convictions of sincere men who do not see alike on basic issues. To expect these men to dissolve their differences in the heady elixir of church union is to assume that the issues for which men have suffered and died are not really important, that Luther and Calvin and Knox and Wesley, and all their spiritual descendants down to this day, have been haggling over nonessentials. Are we not witnessing in the ecumenical movement the birth of a new and frightening form of religious bigotry--the assumption that anyone who holds out for his views is guilty of a perversely obstinate and un-Christian attitude?

What about these doctrinal differences that divide Christendom? Can honest men cast them on the refuse heap for the sake of unity? Does church union really tower like a Mount Everest over all other doctrines? Will "dialogue" dissolve disagreement on such basic doctrines as baptism, Lord's Supper, religious liberty, church government, and the role of the Virgin Mary?

To illustrate the dilemma, take the Marian controversy. The bishops at the Vatican Council can divide over such a technicality as whether the mother of Jesus should be included in the schema on the church or whether she should have a separate schema of her own. But this does not touch

the essential fact that the Roman Catholic Church has already issued two dogmas concerning Mary which are rejected by Protestants. In 1854 Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of Mary's freedom from original sin the Immaculate Conception -- and in 1950 Pius XII decreed that Mary had ascended bodily into heaven-the dogma of Assumption.

Will the Catholic Church decide now that Mary was born, died and was buried like other women, in order to make Marian dogma acceptable to Protestants? Very unlikely. Then will Protestants accept Immaculate Conception and Bodily assumption in order to get back into the church? Apparently they must, if reunion is to be accomplished. Catholic leaders have implied a willingness on Rome's part to soften Catholic views on some of the more controversial differences -- but the more conservative Vatican spokesmen are quick to point out that while new and more acceptable explanations will be given for the church's positions, there will be no surrender of what the church has proclaimed as dogma.

Will "dialogue" dissolve the difference on the meaning, purpose and method of baptism? Presbyterians and Methodists baptize by sprinkling; Nazarenes and the Church of Christ baptize by immersion; Roman Catholics baptize babies for salvation, the Christian churches baptize adults for salvation, and Baptists do not believe that baptism saves anyone. Can the various views of the Lord's Supper somehow be reconciled by discussion? To Lutherans the Communion represents the real presence of Christ, the Baptists see it as a memorial service and the Roman Catholics believe that it is a means of acquiring saving grace.

And what about some of the differences in the way men live? Take birth control, for instance. The population explosion is a moral issue. Without some sort of birth control, the increase in population will continue to exceed the increase in production of food for the already starving millions on the earth. Birth control is an issue which must be seen in theological perspective. The Roman Catholic Church has taken the position that the use of artificial means of contraception is contrary to natural law and is immoral. Many Protestant theologians hold that the concern for partners in marriage and for the children must take precedence over concern for the methods used in limiting the size of the family. The complexity of the population problem indicates the need for more than one view of the issue. We must not let one church's views dominate. We need many creative approaches to solve a problem as massive as overpopulation.

Take another practical matter: religious liberty. This is a principle for which men have suffered imprisonment and even death. When the Roman Catholic Church talks about religious liberty, it is talking about the right to preach and practice Catholicism in Communist countries such as Poland. But when Baptists talk about religious freedom, they are talking about equal rights with Catholics in Spain and Portugal.

What is the aim of the ecumenists? Protestant ecumenists talk about Catholics and Protestants reaching out toward each other, and meeting on ground which neither Catholic nor Protestant can now envision. But let us look at the facts. The Vatican Council is actually aimed at updating the Roman Catholic Church to meet the challenges of the present and the future. Roman Catholic theologians are *not* talking about a compromise with Protestants. They are talking about "the return to the one church under the one pontiff" -- the words of the theological adviser to the Dutch hierarchy at the Second Vatican Council. Some Catholic theologians do recognize the necessity for changes in the structure and outward appearance of the church, as is evidenced by the changes the Vatican Council has approved for the Catholic liturgy. But they solemnly warn Protestants against hoping for any kind of compromise. Liberal and conservative Catholic spokesmen disagree as to whether doctrine and teaching authority can change significantly in the interest of ecumenism, but they agree completely that reunion could come about only one way:

The separated brethren would have to return to the "one true church" under the successor of Peter. In the schema on ecumenism offered to the Vatican Council, the Protestant churches are not recognized as churches at all, but as "communities." Obviously, to dissolve and absorb these "Protestant communities" is the aim of Catholic ecumenists.

Many churchmen who favor a Protestant-Catholic dialogue are deceiving themselves. Through a dialogue, they seem to believe, differences can be discussed dispassionately, a common heritage can be shared, and the voice of Christendom can be heard on current social and moral issues. Advocates of dialogue seem to feel that the very fact that Protestants and Catholics -- and Jews -- have communicated is just as significant as any conclusions they might reach. This may be due to the fact that when they are honest they do not come to much agreement. We must ask whether this is a harmless flirtation which is at best a waste of time, and at worst an indulgence in self-deception by which the "broadminded" are being led to accept the basic tenets of ecumenism.

Suppose that the ecumenical movement should succeed. Suppose that all the churches unite into one, and that this one church becomes the sole repository of religious doctrine, the sole arbiter of man's spiritual destiny. Where will the discernor, the nonconformist, the individualist go? Where will a man go if he finds himself at variance with a doctrine or, worse still, the governing authority of that one church? The ultimate theological implications of the one church concept are obvious. There would be only one place for the dissenter. The one church would say he must go to hell.

If this sounds extreme, then look again at the church in Europe in the years before the Protestant Reformation, when Christendom was cloaked in a seamless robe. The pride of the papacy reached its zenith when Hildebrand (Pope Gregory VII) forced the Emperor Henry IV to stand bare-footed in the snow at Canossa on 17 consecutive days before he would permit him to resume his reign. Rome was sometimes dissolute, as in the reign of the Borgias, while priests who held a monopoly on heaven dispensed indulgences for a price. And hanging like a pall over the whole scene was the stench of human flesh burning, grim reminder of the heretic's fate.

We are afraid of a super church, just as we are afraid of a super state, and not because of a lack of faith in God. What we recognize is the fact that man cannot be trusted without checks and balances upon his power and authority -- not even in the church. The various branches of Christendom now act as checks and balances, one upon the other, and they have a purifying effect on each other. Remove this tension, and we could be back to the pre-Reformation struggle between church and state with the individual man caught in the middle. Moreover, each of the branches -- Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Nazarene, Adventist, whatever it may be -- throws a different ray of light on the Christ figure in our midst. Each one has a special emphasis and consequently shows our world another facet of the glory of God who, in His creativity, apparently set a high value on diversity.

There are indeed some things that all Christians hold in common. There are also some essential differences that divide us, and the differences are as important as those things we hold in common, for they enrich the common heritage. We can see no valid reason why agreement on the significance of Mary, for example, should be a test of whether a man is a Christian.

We must ask ourselves the searching question: What is the real purpose of the church in the world? Is the church union the goal? Is bigness the end in itself? Is power the purpose? No, the church is here so that lonely, frightened men may find a refuge and a friend, that sinful men may find forgiveness and acceptance, that bruised and crippled men may find healing and strength, that men who hunger for righteousness may band together to form a more righteous society, and



that men who thirst after godliness may dedicate themselves to a life of service. If church union would contribute to the achievement of these ends, then we would be for it. But history teaches us that "the one church" soon becomes the repository of pride and power and gives very little attention to the real needs of man.

True, the Roman Catholic Church is seeking, through the Vatican Council, to reform, renew and bring itself up to date. But it is questionable whether the reform movement would happen now if it were not for the "separated brethren" who have helped to make Rome aware of her own needs. If the "separated brethren" reunite with Rome, this influence for reform will be eliminated.

Was the Protestant Reformation a great mistake? Is the big task before us now the undoing of the Reformation? What we need to do is not to annul the Reformation but to complete it.

The American religious community, in an atmosphere of freedom not experienced anywhere else in the world, has created a multitude of sects, denominations and churches. In the struggle for acceptance on the part of the newer sects, and for continued support on the part of the older, more "respectable" churches, bitterness and acrimony have often erupted. But the churches have grown strong in this atmosphere. They have won the loyalty and support of their adherents, as they have given to individuals something distinctive with which they could identify themselves. The churches have spurred one another by criticizing, one another. And they have helped to deliver society itself from the leveling, deadening effect of a trend toward conformity. In offering man a choice, a choice between Catholic and Protestant, between Baptist and Methodist, between Presbyterian and Pentecostal, between an organized church and free thought, our pluralistic religious community has given the individual man the opportunity and the challenge to follow the Christ who cannot be confined to any one church nor yet to *all* the churches.

What we need is not more uniformity but more diversity in which the unlimited grace of God can find additional channels to reach the needs of men. Instead of one church under one human and mortal head, we need many churches. We do, indeed, worship one God, but it is highly unlikely that any one church will exhaust the wisdom and the wonder of His revelation of Himself to the world.

If we had no choice? It must never come to that. We must retain the right of choice. We will not accept the judgment of the ecumenists upon the churches.

## **Notice of Postponement of Annual Meeting**

The Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute, due to be scheduled for Saturday, June 1, has been postponed to Saturday, September 28. Plans are now under way to hold it in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

We are making this early announcement so that Institute members, who might wish to participate in conventions now being planned by Associated Bible Students in various parts of the country to be held during the summer months, will know that they need not reserve the June date for the Institute's Annual Meeting.

Further particulars as to the hour and place of meeting will be announced later.

## **Recently Deceased**

Norman B. Bartlett, Vida, Mo.  
Katherine L. Brown, Melrose, Mass.  
Anna Chimbles, Chicago, Ill.  
Bertram Cooper, West Covina, Cal.  
Jennie M. Davidson, Des Moines, Iowa  
Fred R. Fader, Moncton, N.B.  
Emil Gronau, New York, N.Y.  
Lottie L. Hastings, Los Angeles, Cal.  
Mamie B. Morris, Brinkley, Ark.  
Fred D. Noeller, Hughson, Cal.  
Elwood K. Snyder, Reading, Pa.  
Loverna Wooden, Santa Barbara, Cal.