

# The Herald Of Christ's Kingdom

*March/April 1993*

## **EDITORS' JOURNAL**

*"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." 1 Corinthians 11:26*

Sunday, April 4, 1993 on our calendar will mark the 14th day of Nisan on the Jewish calendar and the appropriate time for the annual memorial of the death of Jesus of Nazareth.

While many Christians commemorate Jesus' death weekly, and others at periodic intervals, it seems appropriate to celebrate this event annually. After all, the symbol was introduced at the celebration of the Jewish Passover, which was observed annually.

In introducing the symbols of bread and wine, Jesus was bringing the Passover picture to its conclusion and introducing himself as the fulfillment, or antitype, of the Passover lamb.

*Even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. (1 Cor. 5:7)*

Much has been written on the importance of this simple supper; and we rejoice that it is so, for this is the only event of his life which the Lord asked his followers to commemorate.

Too much appreciation cannot be expressed for that greatest of all gifts, the gift of life itself, provided at the highest of costs, the death of the Son of God.

### **MEMORIAL MEDITATIONS**

Five articles in this issue of THE HERALD will develop this theme of the Lord's death.

*The Travail of His Soul* deals with the role of Jesus at his first advent as the suffering Messiah, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 53.

*Foregleams of the Messiah* shows the time correspondencies, down to the day and the hour, between the annual observation of Passover and the crucifixion of Christ.

*In the Shadow of the Cross* outlines the various places in the Old Testament where even the figure of the cross was indicated as being the instrument of Jesus' death.

*Many Saviors-One Redeemer* describes the relative roles played by Jesus and his Church in God's plan for the salvation of man.

*The Lord's Prayer* is not the model prayer Jesus taught to his disciples but the one he offered just before he entered the Garden of Gethsemane. This article is a verse by verse study in John 17.

While these five articles deal in depth with some of the aspects of Calvary, they touch just a little of the central theme of redemption with which the Memorial is concerned.

### **ALSO IN THIS ISSUE**

*Echoes from the Past* will continue in this issue with a condensation of a discourse entitled *The*

*Easy Yoke*, by the late Stuart Sowers, presenting the thought that the basis of Jesus' illustration of the yoke is not taken from the figure of an ox yoke but the yoke of a milkmaid, a personal yoke.

*Bearing One Another's Burdens* is also a discourse condensation, dealing with practical ways and means we can be of spiritual assistance to our brethren in Christ.

*Archaeology and the Bible* and *The Question Box* have been omitted from this issue because of lack of space.

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

As this issue of THE HERALD concerns itself with the Memorial, future issues will frequently emphasize various aspects of a particular topic.

Since May 14 will mark the 45th anniversary of the nation of Israel, the next edition of journal will concentrate on that subject with articles on the extent of the promised land, what lies ahead for that nation, both in the immediate future and, more distantly, their role in the Kingdom of God.

The verse by verse study for the May-June issue will be, in Isaiah 40, the commission to *Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people*.

Future issues are currently being planned on *Heroes of Faith* and *Prophecy*. The editors welcome the suggestions of our readers as to special topics they would like to see probed in depth.

For that matter, it is our desire that our readers communicate with us on all of their reactions to THE HERALD and their suggestions for improvements.

## Bearing One Another's Burdens

Homer Montague

*"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ."—Galatians 6:1,2*

The Apostle Paul is here addressing brethren, New Creatures in Christ, for their upbuilding and edification. As New Creatures, these have the same earthly body—the same appearance, customs and habits—but are no longer reckoned according to the human nature.

The world may discern that they have different tastes and ideals that seem a little peculiar but does not ascribe this to any actual transaction which has occurred from the divine standpoint.

We still come in contact with others of Adamic stock and communicate with them through our human body. We have certain obligations with regard to human affairs. We are to "provide things honest in the sight of all men." (Rom. 12:17) "He that provideth not for his own hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." (1 Tim. 5:8)

Transactions at work or in the store are obviously on the human level, though spiritual principles must guide. All true Christians can attest that having the New Creature do exactly what it should is an arduous task.

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Galatians 5:17

### **Materialism**

It is most necessary that we focus upon how to live in the midst of comforts and material advantages and yet maintain the ascendancy over our flesh.

Despite the economic problems which presently exist in our land, we live at a time and in a country that has far better temporal conditions than those who live in other parts of the world, and surely far better now than those which were experienced by the early church.

We have much more wealth, better homes and furnishings, and travel facilities, with roads, trains, buses, and airplanes. This has made the world a much smaller place, and we can be with distant brethren in one day or less, from one side of the world to the other.

We have conveniences in our times, including telephones and electrical appliances which quickly do the work that formerly had to be completed in a laborious manner by hand.

There are a hundredfold more things which relate to the earth that can attract our attention, our ambition, our desires.

### **Stress and the Christian Warfare**

As New Creatures, we are fighting a warfare against the world, the flesh and the adversary, and we are to control the old will of the flesh, to keep that dead. We can't relax our efforts, because like the sparks which fly upward, the old human will is prone to resuscitate itself, if it were possible, and to follow its own pursuits.

As we come to understand more perfectly the will of God (and the scriptures tell us it relates to our sanctification) we will certainly work to keep our bodies under control, even though the flesh will balk and fight against this effort.

Furthermore, we as well as the rest of mankind are living in times of great stress. There are concerns in our lives that don't necessarily relate to the New Creature, such as bereavement, handling finances, problems that may engulf members of our natural family, physical or mental sufferings which we may encounter, a sudden disaster which comes upon us, and various perplexities associated with daily life.

### **The Error of the Unsettled**

"Ye therefore, beloved (the Church), seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." (II Peter 3:17)

The word "wicked" comes from Strong's 113; a better term is "unsettled." There are presently some theories and teachings which might attract our attention and potentially lead us astray.

Testings and siftings have come upon the Church during the Gospel age and throughout the harvest even until now. If we do not resist them steadfastly, we could be led away with the errors of the unsettled, through sympathy with them or by actual participation if we permit features of nominalism to attract us, and begin to embrace some of its errors or inducements.

"If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one." (Gal. 6:1) The word "fault" comes from Strong's 3900, "*paraptoma*;" and, although we generally think of it being connected with some trespass or sin, it also has the meaning of "deviation." Now, for the consecrated and spirit-begotten who have been enlightened by the Harvest Message, a return to worship in Babylon would at the very least be a deviation from our truth heritage and has a more serious potential if one should remain there.

The phenomenon of nominal inducements has been most pronounced among younger Christians, but there are those who have been in the way for a much longer period of time

who find devotional and reverential aspects of worship in the sectarian systems appealing.

### **Restoration vs. Prevention**

We would like to reverse the order of that passage in Galatians 6:1,2 for a moment to consider that one's being overtaken in a fault or deviation, and need for restoration, might be prevented if such a one had received earlier assistance in having their burdens borne.

To the extent that we are mutually supportive in striving to edify and build up one another, we should be attuned to clues, especially in our home ecclesia, which indicate that individuals are not deriving an increasing level of spiritual satisfaction as would be expected among the consecrated who appreciate the beauties of the divine plan.

### **Pleasing Ourselves**

Romans 15:1,2 also expresses the thought of bearing one another's burdens: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

Those who are strong in the faith must sacrifice a personal preference if by some means they would be able to assist those who need additional counseling.

An example of this might be a preference by those most spiritually mature to exercise themselves upon the strong meat of the Truth exclusively when there may be a number in their fellowship who require more of the milk of the Word. In helping to please our brethren for their good, let us take the time and effort to assist them spiritually at the level in which they find themselves so that they will progress to assimilate the stronger food which might be preferred by those who are more able to partake of deeper truths.

### **The Body Supports the Body**

As we grow in Christ, we note that we must grow in knowledge and in grace. The concept of bearing one another's burdens implies the development and practice of sympathy on our parts toward others of the body as we see that they have such needs.

In the natural order of things, the human body is sympathetic to the needs of all its members. For example, if one should be eating a piece of food, and should choke upon it, immediately the head or the brain which governs the other parts of the body would send a signal so that all of the various members might be marshaled in order to prevent injury to the body as a whole. The feet would be instructed to rush into the kitchen, the hands to remove a glass from the cabinet, the fingers to turn on the faucet so that it might be filled with water, and then the mouth would open and swallow the liquid so that the choking would cease.

In similar fashion, if you are walking and slip on a waxy floor, immediately the brain would instruct the arms to position themselves in a certain manner to break the fall so that no vital organs might be injured.

### **The Care of the Body of Christ**

When we come to the body of Christ, we are directed by the Head to demonstrate special care for all of the members. We quote John 13:34,35, the words which Jesus gave to his disciples prior to his crucifixion: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

I Corinthians 12:12-14 expresses it this way from the pen of the Apostle Paul: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For the body is not one member, but many."

This concept of having a mutual concern for the body, a mutual sympathy, is to be internalized and practiced if we are actually becoming transformed in the way in which our Master desires.

### **Practical Helps for the Spiritual Body**

One of the practices which the Lord's people have adopted during this harvest period, is that of reading the morning Manna. This has provided many benefits spiritually and has helped to give us a sense of focus for the day. The text and comments for May 23 are appropriate: "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet." (John 13:14)

"This would signify that the members of Christ's body should have a mutual watch-care over one another's welfare; to keep each other clean, holy, pure, and to assist one another in overcoming the trials and temptations and besetments of this present evil world, arising from the three sources of temptation, 'the world, the flesh and the devil.' Only as we cultivate the various graces of the spirit,—meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love—can we hope to be especially helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and to get rid of defilements of the world, and the flesh."

These comments emphasize the mutual responsibility we have as part of the body to be solicitous of the needs which each one of us has.

### **Noting the Needs of the Body**

As long as we are sojourning here in this fleshly tabernacle, we will not be perfected in the divine bodies that will be ours beyond the veil. Hence, being a New Creature does not eliminate certain emotional requirements associated with our humanity, especially as we react to certain stresses and problems which we, as well as others in the world who are not part of the body, face on a continuous basis.

Truly, we need to develop and manifest sympathy to all who have needs.

For some there has been a desire for a greater sense of spiritual or emotional bonding than is presently being experienced.

In other cases, there have been difficulties to maintain a fully consecrated lifestyle in the face of certain pressures; and because some of the circumstances which presently surround us were not widely prevalent during the earlier Harvest ministry, we do not find any specific advice in that writing for dealing with such matters.

Within our fellowship, the utilization of outside professional counseling (even if the practitioners of this discipline are not consecrated Christians) has been advocated as a means of helping to alleviate these problems.

Not to seem overly simplistic, and certainly not to denigrate the skills of trained counselors, consider carefully the familiar adage, "an ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure." To the extent this concept is employed spiritually, we might have far less seeking of outside help among the brotherhood.

### **The Ecclesia as a Support**

The home ecclesia, or congregation, is a very special arrangement which God has provided to help strengthen and sustain his people throughout the age. It is an environment which should produce a sense of mutual warmth and nurturing, and facilitate the meeting of both individual and group needs so that there is optimal spiritual growth and development.

Certain principles can be adapted to fit current problems experienced among us. In the book *The New Creation*, under the caption "Order and Discipline in the New Creation," a variety of meetings are detailed which would be most helpful in order to strengthen the body and upbuild it in the most holy faith.

It is indicated in these writings that, strange as it may seem, growth in knowledge is liable to detract from devotion, and as Christians we are not to be all head and no heart, neither are we to be all heart and no head.

It is also emphasized that the qualities of devotion should not be neglected, otherwise our love for and interest in the Truth will degenerate. Instead of having our heart appreciation develop with a desire to please, honor and serve the Lord, there would be a tendency towards mental philosophy which can encourage combativeness, destructiveness, ambition, strife and vainglory.

### **The Testimony Meeting as a Support**

We can see the wisdom of the suggestion that not only should devotion be a part of each meeting, but that there be a separate, regular devotional meeting for up-to-date

testimonies which can encourage participation, enjoyment and comfort with regard to the experiences, favorable or unfavorable, that we have had.

This kind of environment is extremely comforting because it enables us to discern that we are not alone, and in fact it fosters sympathy and helpfulness as we recognize the Lord's providences in the lives of our brethren so that we may be comforted and look for similar evidences of his leadings in our own lives. In the world today, support groups are available to assist individuals who are afflicted with problems. In many cases participants are heard to say, "If only there had been somebody there to help me before—when I needed support—I wouldn't have this difficulty now." We can appreciate that attempt by the world of mankind to deal with the enormous problems faced by individuals who have difficulty in coping with life.

For the brotherhood, we would suggest that the cultivation of regular testimony meetings in the ecclesia, when carefully structured, allows for expression through prayer, hymns, scripture readings and other approaches and is really the equivalent of a spiritual support group which has the added advantage of having the spirit of a sound mind, the holy spirit, to lead us in divinely approved directions.

Unquestionably, there needs to be a balance in terms of the meetings and studies that we have in our ecclesias, and of course we need personal study as well. If we are involved in helping to bear one another's burdens, in addition to a regularly scheduled testimony service we should find special sweetness in our doctrinal studies because the Holy Spirit will enable us to derive great peace and joy as we rehearse the truths found in the Harvest Message.

### **The Brotherhood as a Support**

With the experiences that the brotherhood faces at this point and time, when we come across those who need our help, if we (especially at the ecclesia level) are nurturing, sensitive, sympathetic and concerned with the welfare of all the body, then we may be instrumental in helping to afford some relief and there will be less of a likelihood that those individuals who are sorely afflicted will seek comfort from sources apart from the ecclesia.

We would note that this matter of sympathy as it relates to bearing one another's burdens was exemplified in the life of the Master during his sojourn here.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin."—Hebrews 4:15

During his ministry, Jesus demonstrated this not only by his teachings but also by his example in helping many of the poor, groaning creation. Being in the Truth is not merely our understanding of the doctrines, doing great works, or rejoicing in the hope of our future personal exaltation in glory with our beloved Head.



Since the Church is being prepared to bless mankind and help effect the ministry of reconciliation, the experiences that we have now with our brethren and with mankind should assist in making us tenderhearted and compassionate, so that we will have attained the necessary qualifications to be wise and qualified merciful priests in God's kingdom.

"Dear brethren and sisters, let us more and more be worthy of the name Barnabas — Comforter of the brethren. Let us have the Holy Spirit abounding in us more and more, for this is the Lord's good pleasure; that with it dwelling in us richly we may be all sons and daughters of comfort in Zion, representatives of our Father, and channels of the Holy Spirit, as well as of the Truth." (*Daily Heavenly Manna*, August 10.)

## THE TRAVAIL OF HIS SOUL

*"Yet it pleased the LORD to braise him; he hath put him to grief. when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide hurt a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. - Isaiah 53:10-12*

**ISAIAH 53** has been titled *An Ode to the Suffering Messiah*. This scenario of the afflictions of the Redeemer is not only sensitively penned, but is also the basis for a depthful study of the philosophy of the ransom and the sin offering. The purpose of this treatise is to examine in depth only the last three verses of this remarkable prophecy.

### "IT PLEASSED THE LORD"

While it is tempting and perhaps permissible to re-translate the first phrase as the *New International Version* does, *it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause hurt to suffer*, the Hebrew word more frequently does carry the thought of the *King James Bible*, *it pleased the Lord*.

Obviously the pain and suffering of the Messiah was not pleasurable as we consider pleasure, but how Jehovah must have delighted in both the willingness of his Son to accept the suffering and of the knowledge that this would permit the highest exaltation to die suffering one for such faithfulness. It is no coincidence that the same word translated *pleasure* in this passage is translated *delight* in Psa. 40:8

*I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.*

How humbling to us as the beneficiaries of such suffering to note the *delight* of the Son and the *pleasure* of the Father in providing *diem*! What an attitude of mind and heart it evokes in us! With what *delight* and *pleasure* should we enter into such a *fellowship of sufferings*! (Phil. 3:10)

### WHEN... THEN...

Although the primitive particle can be properly translated as the *NIV* and others *though* *he make his* soul an offering for sin there seems a peculiar appropriateness to the *King James* translation when he *makes his* soul an offering for sin, for it gives a time correlation between two important thoughts.

WHEN he makes his soul an offering for sin . . .

THEN he shall see his seed.

THEN he shall prolong his days.

THEN the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

The last three clauses are dependant upon the Messiah making his soul an offering for sin.

To provide a ransom for all, Jesus needed to provide a price corresponding to Adam, an *anti-lutron*. This he indicated he was willing to do when, at the age of thirty, he turned himself over unconditionally to the heavenly Father at Jordan.

If he had died immediately, there would have been a sufficiency to redeem mankind from Adamic transgression. The three and a half years of suffering, of *bruising*, of putting to grief, were not essential to the ransoming of the human race, but it *pleased the* Father and was the Son's *delight* to prolong his days in order to accomplish two further goals.

(1) *He would see his seed.* Jesus died unmarried and childless. Ironically, it was this very fact that enabled him to become *the Everlasting Father*.

Had Jesus merely given his life for that of Adam, the race would have been raised, but Jesus himself would not have been resurrected for he would have given his life for theirs. The prolonging of his days provided ample time to die according to a prescribed plan of the Father, earning the right therefrom to divine life. It was no less true of him than of *us*, *be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life*-the crowning life, immortality. (Rev. 2:10) Thus not only would mankind, *his seed*, be brought to birth but, alive on the divine plane, the exalted Messiah would *see his seed*.

(2) *The pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.* Again the word *pleasure* is the same Hebrew word, only in its noun form, and contains both the thought of *delight and purpose*. These two words are related. God delights in his purposes because his purposes are for the blessing of others-all the families of the earth.

In order to accomplish this *pleasure* of the LORD it would require more than merely the death of a Redeemer, but would also necessitate the education of the redeemed so that they can maintain their new life. This can only be accomplished **WHEN** he makes his *soul an offering for sin*,

## ISAIAH 53:11

The eleventh verse is traditionally subdivided into three phrases covering five actions.

(1) *He shall see of the travail of his soul*-the suffering Messiah would comprehend and willingly enter into the sufferings prepared for him.

(1 a) And *be satisfied*-the thought here is not mere satisfaction, but that, in considering the results of the travail, it was worth the price. This same thought is picked up in Heb. 12:2

*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*

The key word in this verse is the little word *for*. The English word *for* has many different meanings, while the Greek has several different words to distinguish these meanings. To illustrate a few of these meanings consider the following phrases:

- "Can I do that for you," meaning can I do that **instead** of your doing it. The Greeks would use the word *anti*.
- "I can work for an hour," meaning that I can work **during** the period of an hour. The Greek language would use *dia*.
- "He reached for an apple," meaning that he reached out **towards** an apple. Here the Greek would be *eis*.
- "I work for \$8 an hour," meaning that I work for the **equivalency** of \$8 an hour. The Greeks would use the same word as in the first example *anti*.

Going back to Heb. 12:2, while we might be inclined to use the word *eis*, or even *dia*, Paul chose *anti*-instead of, or as of being of equivalent or corresponding value.

It is in this latter sense that we suggest Paul uses *anti*. The thought he wants to convey is that Jesus weighed the value of the *joys set before them and* found them to correspond well to the price of *enduring the cross*. In other words, it was worth the price. He saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied that it was a worthy price to pay for the benefits to be derived.

(2) *By his knowledge*--the knowledge gained through the travail *of his soul*, the personal knowledge of human sin and suffering and their consequences.

(2a) *Shall my righteous servant justify many*--this practical knowledge of the needs of sinful man will enable the Messiah to sympathetically assist mankind to a better way.

Two texts by the Apostle Paul illustrate this well:

*For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted-Heb. 2:16-18*

*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.-Heb. 4:15, 16*

Professor W. E. Vine, in his Expository Dictionary of *New Testament Words*, under the term *Mediator* notes the following qualification for being a *Mediator between God and man*: "the salvation of men necessitated that the Mediator should Himself possess the nature and attributes of Him towards whom He acts, and should likewise participate in the nature of those for whom He acts (sin apart); only by being possessed both of deity and humanity [though not necessarily at the same time-author] could He comprehend the claims of the one and the needs of the other."

## **MY RIGHTEOUS SERVANT**

The connection with the "righteous servant" doing the justifying should not be overlooked. Two passages from the book of Job illustrate why the adjective *righteous* is so appropriate here.

*If there be a messenger with Him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man His uprightness [the righteousness of the interpreter, the Redeemer], Then He is gracious unto him, and saith 'Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a Ransom.' His flesh shall be fresher than a child's; he shall return to the days of his youth: He shall pray unto God, and He will be favorable unto him; and he shall see His face with joy: for He will render unto man His **righteousness** [again the righteousness of the Redeemer.]Job 33:23-26*

*There the righteous [Christ] might dispute [defend the accused] with Him [God]: so should I be delivered for ever from my judge [the law of God].-Job 23:7*

It is the righteous *life* of Christ and not the death on Calvary's **hill which justifies many**. (See also Rom. 5:16-19.)

## **BEARING INIQUITIES**

(3) "**For he shall bear their iniquity**"-the bottom line of salvation is this concept of the Messiah bearing the iniquity of mankind. The first use of this word *iniquity* in the Bible illustrates its meaning.

*And Cain said unto, the LORD, My punishment [Heb. avon, iniquity] is greater than I can bear. -Gen. 4:13*

Through death Jesus did take on the punishment of mankind for their sin, but the word has an even deeper significance which covers the side-effects of Adamic sin - guilt and a mind-set which needs correcting. These iniquities also need correcting, as David realized after his sin with Bathsheba:

*Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. -Psa. 51:2*

The removal of iniquity by the Redeemer includes both-Adamic sin AND its side effects.

### **AN ALTERNATE VIEW**

Correct as are the three statements listed above, other Biblical scholars with equal exactitude divide the eleventh verse of Isaiah 53 into two statements, by altering the punctuation thus:

*He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied with his knowledge; my righteous servant shall justify many for he shall bear their iniquities.*

This links the *knowledge* with the *travail of his soul* and the act of *justifying* with that of *bearing iniquity*. This linkage seems more logical, though basically imparting the same thought as the more traditional translation.

### **ISAIAH 53:12**

*Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. -Isa. 53:12*

The opening word *therefore*, connects it, as effect and cause, with the previous verse. The reward of the suffering Messiah in verse 12 is based on his willingness to endure the sufferings of verse 10 for the purposes of verse 11.

The reward is broken out in two parts: receiving a portion with *the great* and sharing that portion with *the strong*. The *great* [Hebrew, *rab*, from whence *rabbi*] seems to refer to Jehovah himself. He alone is the great *rab*, or head of the universe.

Receiving this reward, the Messiah divides it anew with *the strong*, his associates, his bride, the Church of Christ.

This, however, is not the end of the dividing process. Isa. 33:23, prophesying of the Millennium, picks up the thread:

*Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail: **then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey.***

The lame here is all mankind, each of who eventually receives his share in the spoils of ultimate victory. How harmonious is this with the reward of *the sheep* in the parable of The Sheep and the Goats.

*Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.-Matt. 25:34*

## **THE SPOIL**

What is this great spoil? The word itself suggests *loot* or *booty*, the gains of war or pillage-an odd term for the benefits of life. Yet it is not so odd if we consider the history of life and death.

Life was originally possessed as a God-given privilege by Adam and Eve in Eden. It became forfeited through sin. That sin was as a result of the Adversary's temptation through the serpent. Thus Satan is spoken of as having *the power of death*. (Heb. 2:14) Man's rights to life became Satan's booty or spoil.

When Satan is bound at the end of the present world of sin and evil in preparation for the coming Kingdom of the Messiah, this spoil is taken back from him.

*Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and **spoil his** goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. - Matt. 12:29*

It is this spoil of the Adamic birthrights which is recovered from the Adversary and divided, first with the *strong*, the Church, and eventually with the lame-mankind.

## **FOUR PRE-REQUISITES**

This great reward of returning the spoil of human life to man is available to the Suffering Messiah upon meeting the four conditions specified in this closing verse of Isaiah 53.

(1) *Because **he hath poured out his soul unto death**-yielding his own life blood to blot out Adamic transgression, not just instantaneously, but poured out as a drink offering, drop by drop to the very last dregs, learning the sympathetic understanding necessary to deal with mankind in its experiences with sin, evil, and death*

(2) *Because . . . **he was numbered with the** transgressors-even to the extent of dying unjustifiably upon a cross. It was thus that he not only carried away mankind's sin, but removed the Jewish curse of the law as well. (Gal. 3:13)*

(3) *Because . . . he bare the sin* of many-not merely Adamic transgression, but its side effects as well-providing both the legal satisfaction of the ransom-price and the practical benefits of the sin offering.

The word *bare* in this verse is a different word than that translated *bear in* the preceding verse. In verse eleven the thought of the word is "to carry," as a load; while here it means "to lift up."

Through purchasing the race he carried away the sin of the world. The sin-offering additionally enables him to *lift up*, or lighten men's burdens as they travel along *the highway of holiness*.

(4) *Because . . . [lie] made intercession for the transgressors* -- the work of the Messiah is not finished with redemption and the deliverance of the redeemed from the grave.

*Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.-Heb 7:25*

While this is especially true for the Church, it is also true for mankind in the provision of the Mediator. He makes such *intercession* initially by presenting the merit of his sacrifice on man's behalf, but continuously as well, by interposing himself as a Mediator between man's continuing mistakes and the interdiction of divine judgment.

With such a portrait of the finished works of the suffering Messiah, the prophet Isaiah closes his ode. Can we respond with anything other than the hymnist's words:

*Hallelujah! What a Savior!*



## **FOREGLEAMS OF THE MESSIAH**

*"For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. "-1 Corinthians 5:7*

A condensation of the book by the same title by Charles Redeker

For centuries the Jewish people, unable to resist the onslaught of such powerful enemies as Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome, could take consolation only in the writings of their own prophets and sages. These spoke of a time when God's messenger in the person of the Messiah would usher in universal peace, righteousness, and justice. From the first century B.C. onward, a strong Messianic excitement manifested itself; by the first century of the Christian era it reached a feverish level. Whether by priest or scribe, or common Jew in the marketplace, this anticipation was evident. Every major event was eagerly looked upon from this standpoint, arousing hot debate and serious discussion.

### **MESSIANIC PORTRAYALS**

All of this made it possible for various pseudo-messiahs to appear on the scene (both then and at later periods in Jewish history) and gain wide support. The long-suffering and patient waiting of the people had been worn thin by what seemed like endless harassment and persecution at the hands of gentile conquerors. Hence it was almost inevitable that the people would turn to promising Jewish individuals in the earnest hope that perhaps they represented the long-sought messenger of God.

Whether truly inspired by a genuine love for their people or merely unscrupulous opportunists, such would-be messiahs began to surface by the score. Appearing early in Palestine were Judas of Galilee, A.D. 6.; Theudas, A.D. 44; Benjamin the Egyptian, A.D. 55.; Menachem,

A.D. 67.; and Simeon Bar Koldiba, A.D. 135. In later times David Alroy arose in Mesopotamia in A.D. 1147, David Reubeni in Turkey in A.D. 1500, and Shabbetai Tzevi (also in Turkey) in A.D. 1626. It quickly becomes apparent upon examining their lives that these individuals' traits and characteristics were vastly different from those of the more familiar Jesus of Nazareth, who was hailed as "the Christ"-the Anointed One or Messiah-by his followers about A.D.29.

All of the aforementioned individuals, and numerous others that could be cited, endeavored to fulfill the Messianic hope by political or military means; all, that is, except one. Most also succeeded in obtaining the sympathy and backing of the rabbis or other prominent Jews of their day; again, with at least one outstanding exception. Most significant of all, however, is the fact that none of these individuals, except one-Jesus of Nazareth has been able to lay any claim to fulfilling the Old Testament Scriptures pertaining to the Messiah, either in respect to the teaching of the Passover type or in general terms. Thus, for the great majority of these men, their only bid for fame lay in

their abortive efforts to free their people from the yoke of the oppressor, ending always in frustration and despair.

## **JESUS-CONTRASTS AND CONTRADICTIONS**

Jesus, on the other hand, presented some intriguing contrasts and contradictions. He was commonly acknowledged as a prophet of God with high moral standards and with teachings firmly grounded in the Old Testament; yet his doctrine aroused the overwhelming opposition of the religious leaders, instead of their approval. He was not at all interested in creating a military force nor even in calling for political action. Most puzzling of all, he espoused pacifist teachings, which included loving one's enemies. Was it possible that a person with such unexpected traits could be the long sought for Messiah of promise? Clearly we need to take a closer look at Jesus of Nazareth to see if he could indeed fulfill the typical and prophetic forecast.

## **EXAMINING THE CORRESPONDENCES**

This investigation into the credentials of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah will be unique, inasmuch as it will revolve almost entirely about the Passover picture. This leaves a vital question to ponder. Do the incidents in the life of Jesus hold up under close scrutiny to reveal an unmistakable fulfillment of the type, or do we still need to look for another?

We begin this by recalling the Lord Jehovah's original instructions to Moses concerning the Passover lamb in Exodus 12:3-8:

*In the tenth day of this month [Nisan] they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers. . . (Exod. 12:3)*

## **THE TENTH OF NISAN**

It is evident from the Gospel accounts that Jesus' last days were intimately linked with the celebration of the Passover. This event brought him to the holy city along with hundreds of thousands of Jews, and during its hectic activities they would witness his death. Nisan was the month of the Passover. It was the Jewish practice to select the sacrificial lamb on the tenth day of this month, permitting it to be purged prior to its being eaten.

In the twelfth chapter of John, we are informed that *six days before the Passover* Jesus came to Bethany, where his friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus resided; *on the next day* he was hailed as *King of Israel* as he entered the city of Jerusalem. *Six days before the Passover* would have been the ninth day of Nisan, assuming it was the holiday or feast of Passover on the fifteenth day to which reference was being made. The *next day*, therefore, would have been the tenth day. It was on this day, according to the account, that Jesus presented himself to the people, who collectively represented the national Jewish house, and who joyously hailed him as their king. In the antitypical events of this tenth day of Nisan, then, we appear to have a clear correspondency to this first portion of the Old Testament text.

## A LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH

*"Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. . . " (Exod. 12:5)*

The position of the New Testament in regard to the nature of Jesus is that he was *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners* (Heb. 7:26), born into the world as a perfect human being, untainted with sin. This is predicated on the belief that his human life was begotten by the Father, Jehovah God, thus bypassing the detrimental hereditary effects of birth to sinful, fallen parents. The possession of such perfect human life would appear as a necessary correspondency to the requirement of the Paschal lamb: *a male of the first year* [in the prime of life], and *without blemish* [evidence of imperfection].

The Bible declares that all mankind, with the exception of the first man Adam, has been born into this world in an imperfect condition. None has been able to escape the condemnation in Adam which, through heredity, has been passed upon all. (Ps. 14:2,3; Rom. 5:18,19) Thus no ordinary human being, born into a sinful and condemned race, could have been without blemish, whether physical, mental, or moral. Only by his miraculous birth was it possible for Jesus to fulfill this aspect of the Paschal type, and to do so in the fullest sense. It was absolutely necessary that Messiah exhibit full perfection of human nature to carry out his role as man's Redeemer.

## THE FOURTEENTH OF NISAN

*And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it . . . " (Exod. 12:6)*

According to John's Gospel, Jesus was put to death on the Day of Preparation, just before the feasting on Passover itself - (the 15th day) began. John 18:28 indicates that after his arrest and false accusing by Caiaphas, he was led into Pilate's judgment hall *early* [in the morning]. John 19:13,14 adds that it was the *preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour*. Jesus' accusers, however, refused to enter the judgment hall *that they might not be defiled but might eat the Passover*, showing that the Passover proper had not yet commenced and preparations were still being made for its celebration.

What day was the *preparation of the Passover* mentioned in this text? We agree with most Bible commentators that reference was being made to the fourteenth of Nisan on which the lambs were being slain in the Temple, preparatory to the feast that began after nightfall on the (beginning of the) fifteenth day. Thus it was on this preparation day, reckoned as starting in the evening of the day before, that Jesus was seized, condemned to death, crucified and finally expired.

## **THE HOUR OF THE SLAYING OF THE LAMB**

*" . . . and [they] shall kill it in the evening [margin, literal Hebrew, between the two evenings]. (Exod. 12:6)*

The final point of correspondency concerns the hour when the lamb was slain. To determine the exact hour of Jesus' death, we again turn to the Gospel accounts. There is complete agreement that he expired on the cross about the ninth hour (3 P.M.-Matt. 27:46-50; Mark 15:34,37) and that darkness covered the land from the sixth to the ninth hours (12-3 P.m.). Thus it was toward the closing portion of the fourteenth day, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon (the ninth hour by common reckoning), that Jesus completed his earthly course.

If our conclusion as presented earlier regarding the exact timing of the slaying of the Paschal lambs is correct [that is, if *between the two evenings* indicated the closing portion of the day (about 3 P.m.)], then indeed we have here a remarkable time correspondency. The relationship appears to be perfect. Since time is such a vital feature of the Passover type, we cannot help but consider this fulfillment to be of major significance.

The correspondence of Jesus with the Passover lamb thus included the slaying on the fourteenth day, on which great stress lay in the Old Testament accounts and the correct time sequence of events within that day. Such a precise relationship appears far beyond the possibility of chance or choice; it strongly suggests the intervention of divine Providence in foreseeing events and in providing the beauty and order of this type-antitype arrangement.

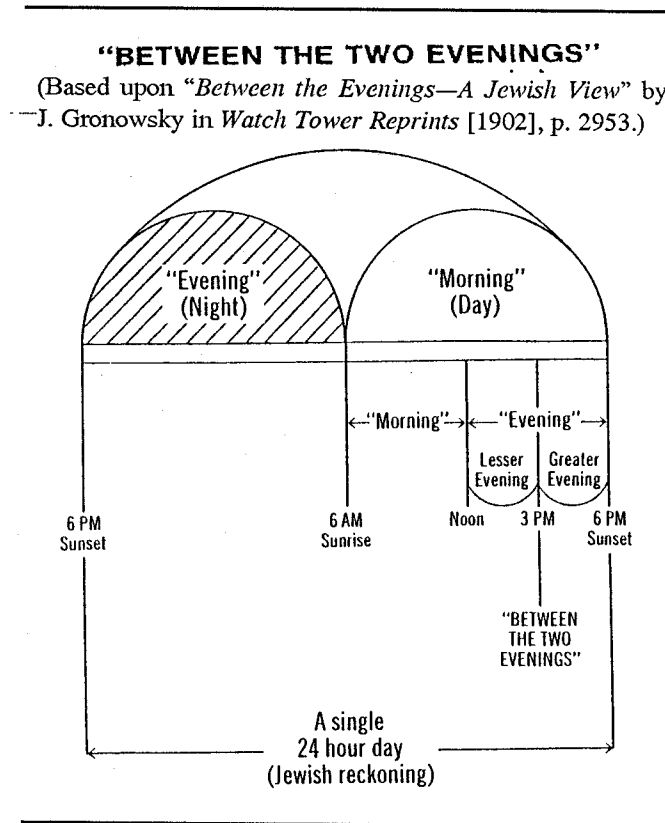
All four points bearing upon Jehovah's original instructions to Moses concerning the Passover lamb have now been covered. In each it has been possible to trace a corresponding occurrence in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, especially in the circumstances that surrounded his death. The similarities have not been merely of a vague *or* general nature but have been quite specific in their application. We can only conclude that in each of the areas investigated 6 PM so far we have found a fulfillment of the Passover type. On this basis, Jesus' credentials as the Messiah appear both valid and impressive.

## **MESSIAH'S UNFOLDING ROLE**

Two profound questions need to be addressed concerning the role of Jesus as Messiah and his future work. Both require careful contemplation before acceptance of his position as Redeemer and Deliverer of Israel (and the world) is possible. The first is, Why was it necessary for the Messiah to die? And the second, Why has there been such a long delay in the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom if Jesus of Nazareth truly was the one of promise?

## "BETWEEN THE TWO EVENINGS"

(Based upon "Between the Evenings-A Jewish View" by -J. Gronowsley in *Watch Tower Reprints* [1902], p. 2953.)



In the broader picture of the Passover, Israel in bondage to Egypt under Pharaoh depicted all mankind groaning under the exactions of its taskmaster, Satan and his empire of sin and death. Just as it was necessary for God to raise up Moses for the work of deliverance, so will a much grander Deliverer be needed to lead mankind across the Red Sea—picturing Second Death (Rev. 20:12-15) and out of the clutches of the Adversary. The Bible reveals that the resurrected Christ will be given this honor. Thus the culmination of all Jewish hopes was not to be realized in a dead Messiah but in line with earlier expectations, in a Deliverer vested with divine power and authority.

In the type, it was the offering of an innocent lamb that saved the firstborn and made possible the final exodus from Egypt. In the antitype, as revealed throughout the teaching of Scripture, an atoning sacrifice was first needed to satisfy the exacting demands of divine Justice. Jesus' death as a voluntary sacrifice is scripturally regarded as the vicarious atonement for Adam's original disobedience in Eden, which ultimately will

release Adam (and all mankind condemned in him) from sin and death. (Rom. 5:8-12,15-19) This was the reasonable and necessary first step in God's program of redemption. By faithfully carrying out till's role as the *suffering servant*, Jesus is to be highly rewarded with the more stirring role of the Deliverer who leads mankind back into harmony with the Creator.

With this background, the death of Jesus as the Messiah may be seen as not being a drawback at all. He had come not in vain to the hour of destiny, to the focal point of so many prophecies, to the hour of expectation. He had, in fact, come as the Messenger of God for this one grand purpose-to give his life. (Matt. 20:28) Thus was carried out in reality the most fundamental part of God's plan of salvation, entailing the providing of the "ransom" price for man's redemption. And Jesus himself, as the willing and obedient servant of God, suffered no permanent harm, being raised a glorious spirit being and now exalted at the right hand of God. (Phil. 2:8-11)

### **SHARING WITH MESSIAH**

One final aspect regarding the Messiah pertains to the seeming long delay in the establishment of his Kingdom. Sages and prophets have long spoken of that glorious day when Messiah would reshape all existence and usher in the Age of Righteousness. All nations would come to the Lord's house, to be taught of his ways and receive abundant of blessings; and *they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks . . . neither shall they learn war any more.* (Isa. 2:2-4) Yet almost two thousand years have elapsed since Messiah's first appearance. Degradation, injustice, poverty, illness, and death continue to ravage all mankind. When, if ever, will Messiah's sacrifice affect life on earth in the blissful way the prophecies portray? The Bible furnishes the answer to this enigma. There is a very valid reason for the delay in establishing Messiah's Kingdom. An essential intervening step in the plan of God must first be carried out. God has been selecting and preparing a spiritual family (pictured in the Passover type as the *firstborn-the church of the firstborn*-Heb. 12:23) which is destined to share in administering the blessings of Messiah's Kingdom. The subjects of that kingdom will be the remainder (and vast majority) of mankind. Not until the full number of the antitypical firstborn class is complete can the blessing phases of God's plan for earth's teeming masses begin to operate.

### **JOINT-HEIRS WITH CHRIST**

For almost two millennia now, the *high calling of God in Christ Jesus* has proceeded. It is an almost incredible legacy of becoming *heirs of God and joint heirs* with Christ. (Rom. 8:17) (Christ is simply the Greek equivalent for Messiah, and signifies "the anointed one.") Called out of every nation, kindred, and tongue, there are not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble. (1 Cor. 1:26-30) Yet, while unrecognized by the world, they have been responding to God's call, they have been believing in Messiah and his work, they have been witnessing to others, and they have been developing the character likeness of their Lord.

With the prophetic end of the age now upon us, this calling must soon cease and the entire Messiah class, head and body, will be complete. Then at last will Messiah's Kingdom be inaugurated, and the promised blessings flow to all the families of the earth. What a grand prospect lies just before us!

## Memorials of Men

The world's great men have always sought very different means of perpetuating their memories. In whatever way, they would remind their followers of their merits and their greatness. It surely has not been by a reminder and commemoration of their death-especially if, as in our Lord's case, it was a death of ignominy and shame, a death as a malefactor and a criminal. Another, more probably, would have left instructions for medals to be struck commemorating some of his mighty works; such, for instance, as the awakening of Lazarus, or the stilling of the tempest on the sea, or the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, while the multitude strewed the way with palm branches, and cried, Hosanna to the King, the heir of David! But our Lord chose as his remembrancer that which was, in his and in God's estimation, his mightiest work-his sin-offering on our behalf; and that which his real followers, and they alone, would appreciate more than any other feature of his mission.

*C. T. Russell*



## **THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS**

"God forbid that É should glory, save in the cross of our Lard Jesus Christ. " Galatians 6:14

The cross is the symbol of Christianity. Jesus' death on the cross of Golgotha makes it so. As á symbol it bursts suddenly on the scene. Though crucifixions had been practiced for centuries, they --were -associated with sinners and not with saints. They were ugly instruments of torture and death, not the, precious sign of redemption.

Jesus introduces the symbol even before his death. For instance, in listing the requirements of discipleship, he includes the phrase and take up his cross. Evidently this cruel manner of death had already become an idiom for bearing shame and scorn.

### **HISTORY OF CRUCIFIXION**

The word for cross in the New Testament, stauros, referred to an upright stake. Nelson's Bible Dictionary identifies this stake with the posts in the stockade fences that surrounded ancient cities. It was customary in Old Testament times to hang dead victims for public display on the city walls. This happened, for instance, to King Saul. (1 Sam. 31:8-13)

The classic Greek historian Thucydides and also Herodotus refer to crucifixion as being practiced by the Persians. This appears to be confirmed in Ezra 6:11 where King Cyrus declares: Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this.

Most historians agree that the gallows which Haman constructed for the execution of Mordecai was an execution stake. (Esther 5:14) This seems particularly clear when comparing the same Hebrew word used in Esther 2:23.

The execution of Jews by the Babylonians is decried by Jeremiah in Lam. 5:12: Princes are hanged up by their hand: the faces of elders were not honored.

Alexander the Great hung 2000 people on crosses after the destruction of Tyre. The crucifixion of 800 Pharisees at Bethone by the Jewish ruler Alexander Jannaeus is recorded by Josephus. It was not until the time of Constantine, in the fourth century, that crucifixion was abandoned by the Roman Empire. At the same time, Constantine made it the official symbol of Christianity. .

Under Mosaic law, the hanging of a dead man on a tree was considered the utmost hi public shame, and indicated that the man was cursed. (Dent. 21:22, 23) It was this law that caused the Israelites to hang the corpse of the King of Ai. (Joshua 8:39) This forms the basis for the use of the cross in the death of Jesus. (Gal. 3:13) By 'dying as the lowest felon under the law, he took its extreme penalty, thus nailing it to the cross. (Col. 2:14)

However, in addition to this principle of removing the curse of the cross, there are other allusions to the cross, even its shape. We will only take the space here to examine five of these allusions.

## **PHARAOH'S BAKER**

The first recorded instance in the Scriptures of a man hanging on a tree is found in Gen. 40:19-23. The victim is unnamed. He was an Egyptian. The incident occurs at the end of Joseph's imprisonment. He was asked to interpret two dreams, one of a baker and the other of the Pharaoh's butler. In the interpretation, Joseph predicted that the butler would be reinstated in three days but that in three days the baker would be killed and his body hung on a tree. In three days Joseph's interpretations proved to be true.

Joseph is often a figure of Jesus. Here we find him positioned between a baker (dealing with bread) and a butler (dealing with wine.) One is killed, the other has his life preserved. Note the similarity with Jesus at the last supper. At its conclusion, he introduces a new symbol in memorial of his death bread and wine. These were the same two elements served by the men in prison with Joseph.

There the baker died, while the butler lived. Of the two elements introduced by Jesus, the bread (baker) pictured his body to be broken for mankind, while the wine (butler) showed forth his blood as the blood of the new covenant, which would eventually produce life for all.

In three day's time, the baker was hung on a tree. The next day after the last supper, Jesus was crucified and remained dead for three days--a remarkable parallelism.

## **ABRAHAM AND ISAAC**

It is generally agreed that the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham prefigured the sacrifice of Jesus by his father, God. We would like to note one element in the record of this event.

On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. He said to his servants, 'Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.' Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together.-Gen. 22:4-6 **ÍV**

The scene is graphic. Father and son slowly trek up Mount Moriah. With the wood strapped across his back, Isaac carries the fiery coals in a bucket. On the way, he notices the lack of a sacrifice and queries his father. Abraham assures him that God will provide the necessary animal. Serenely they continue onward. And as we watch them, highlighted in the setting sun, we notice the shadow the young lad casts -- tall and upright, with the wood stretching beyond both shoulders -- the shadow of a cross. How similar to Jesus, whom he prefigured, carrying the wooden crossbar of his cross to the place of his death.

## AARON, MOSES AND ÇUR

In Exodus 17 we read of á battle between Israel during their wilderness wanderings and the people of Amalek. One feature peculiar to this particular battle is given in verses 9-12:

And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow É will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took á stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

The rod of Moses--held aloft when Israel crossed the Red Sea --once again proves to be the element of victory. There are many ways to extend a rod, but the fact that it took two men, Aaron and Hut, to hold up Moses' hands suggests the thought that he held it over his head, perpendicular to his body. To the fighting troops below, looking up to the mountain heights where Moses stood, they would see in bold silhouette the outline of a Ô-shaped cross.

It was blind credulity that led the Emperor Constantine to believe a vision in the sky of á cross and hear the words, "By this sign, conquer." But it was faith for the Israelites on the battlefield against Amalek to see á similarly shaped form of á cross and, in truth, conquer by that sign. Christ giveth the victory.

It is of further interest to note the two men selected for the task of upholding Moses' arms, Aaron and Çur. Aaron was the progenitor of the priestly clan which would represent God in Israel, and Çur was the grandfather of Bezaleel (Ex. 31:2), the craftsman who built the Tabernacle. Thus, the cross is supported by both the typical features of the Tabernacle and the priesthood which served in it.

## THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

Another foregleam of the Cross of Christ is seen in ancient Israel's annual day of atonement sacrifices. After the death of the bullock, and presumably after the death of the goat, the blood of the, animals was taken into the Most Holy of the Tabernacle and sprinkled on the mercy seat eastward, and before the Mercy Seat. (Lev. 16:14)

Once again, the graphic picture is before us. The freshly killed blood of the sin offering, in the shape of a cross, stands out in marked relief on the golden background of the mercy seat, foreshadowing that great atonement for man's sin on Calvary's cross.

## THE PASSOVER

Although the Christian cross appears in various shapes over the pages of history, the two most common representations are the Ôshaped cross and the traditional cross with the lowered cross bar. Both of these form the letter "t" the one a capital "Ô" and the other a lower case "t." Our letter "Ô" finds its equivalent in the Hebrew alphabet with the letter "tau," which has a far different shape --

The two uprights of this Hebrew letter with the strong crossbar joining them on the top forms á shape that is very prominent in the picture of Israel's passover in the land of Egypt. On that fateful night when á11 the firstborn were in danger of death, the death angel passed over the homes of those Israelites who had sprinkled the blood of á lamb on the two sideposts and the upper door post of their houses. (Exod. 12:7)

Throughout the land of Egypt on that very special night the eye beheld countless houses etched with the letter "tau" in blood, professing their faith in the blood of the lamb. That lamb is identified for us by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 5:7: For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

## THE FOREHEAD MARK

In Ezekiel, chapter 9, we read of á man with a writer's inkhorn who was to set á mark in the foreheads of those who sigh and cry for the abominations done in Jerusalem. (Ezek. 9:4) This is the basis for the prophecy in Revelation, where the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. (Rev. 7:1-3) That seal is identified in Rev. 14:1 as being the name of the Lamb and his Father's name. (ÍÉV; RSV)

In the Ezekiel account the word translated mark is the Hebrew tav, á word that is directly connected with the Hebrew letter tau. As on the night of the Passover; so with the repentant ones of Jerusalem and with those who are saved from the four winds in Revelation, it is the mark of the cross, the sign of Christ's sacrificial love that led to his death for our sins, that provides the seal of salvation.

On a hill far away  
Stood an old rugged cross,  
The emblem of suffering and shame.  
And É love that old cross  
Where the dearest and best

For a world of lost sinners was slain.  
So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,  
Till my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross,  
And exchange it sonic day for a crown.

## ONE REDEEMER-MANY SAVIORS

*"And the Redeemer will come to mount Zion . . . with the LORD. "-Isaiah 59:20*

God is our savior. He plainly says:

*I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour. - Isa. 43:11 (See also Isa. 45:21 and Hos. 13:4)*

Jesus is our savior.

*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a **Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.**-Luke 2:11*

Obadiah sees multiple saviors on Mount Zion.

*And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom, shall be the LORD 's - Obad. 21*

Nehemiah also uses *saviours*, in the plural, to describe the work of the judges of Israel. (Nell. 9:27)

In harmonizing these verses one of the beautiful secrets of God's word can be found-a central principle of the Creator's method of working amongst men maybe seen.

Little problem exists in seeing how God may claim to be the only savior and yet have Jesus also styled as a savior, for Jesus acts as an agent for God. *I must work the works of him that seat me.* (John 9:4) The Psalmist, referring to Jesus as the *arm* of Jehovah, says much the same thing:

*O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.-Psa. 98:1 (See also Isa. 59:16; 63:5)*

As the delegate of his father, Jesus can easily claim the same title, because he is doing the same work. In fact the Hebrew word translated "saviour" in the Old Testament (*yasha'*) is the same root as the name Joshua, or in the New Testament, Jesus. The proper definition of the name Jesus is "Jehovah saves," as can be seen from a careful study of Numbers 13:16. There the prefix *Je* [for Jehovah] added to the name of the spy *Hosea* [meaning *Savior*] changes it to *Joshua*, Jehovah saves. It is this same principle which answers the challenge of Obadiah 21, *saviours*, in the plural, on Mount Zion. A parallel picture in the book of Revelation identifies these saviours.

*And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. -Rev. 14:1*

The members of this group of 144,000 are identified in verse 4 as those who are *virgins*, those who *follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*. These expressions are elsewhere found in reference to the Church of Christ. (Matt. 25:1-13; 16:24) Most students of the Bible agree that this designation in Revelation applies *to* the church.

Combining the Obadiah and Revelation references we see that the *saviors* which appear on Mount Zion are 144,000 in number and represent the church. But why are they called *saviors*? For the same reason that Jesus is so called. Because they are doing the work of the Great Savior, God himself, as his agents and are therefore authorized to use his name and title.

TITLES:

- OF JESUS
- OF THE CHURCH

There are many descriptive terms used in the Bible of the work of Jesus. Some of these are exclusive to Jesus alone. Others are shared by his church. In these contrasting roles we get a clearer picture of the part Jesus plays in man's salvation and that which he shares with his bride, the church.

**REDEEMER:** The title Redeemer, for instance, is used only of God and Jesus. It refers to the payment of a purchase price. The Hebrew word *ga'al* particularly applies to the redemption made by the next of kin. It is easy to see how it applies to Jesus, who was born of a woman to give him that unique kinship with the human race whom he was going to redeem. In Isaiah 47:4 it is also applied to God.

*As for our redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel.*

God was the redeemer in that he supplied the price by giving his only begotten son. And Jesus, as that son, was the redeemer because he willingly paid the price of his perfect human life.

**RANSOM:** Again we have a title applicable to Jesus alone. The word in the Greek signifies a corresponding price. Jesus was the only one who had the corresponding perfection to that which Adam had before he sinned. No one else could perform this function.

*None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.-Psa. 49: 7*

The identity of the ransom is spelled out in 1 Tim. 2:5, 6:

*For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

**SAVIOR:** This term has a wider application and is applied not only to the Church prophetically in Obad. 21, but also to the judges of Israel in Neh. 9:27.

The word in the original language does not apply so much to the thought of purchase as it does to deliverance. The act of delivering mankind focuses upon the activities with the human race after the purchase price has been applied. It is not the satisfaction of justice that is emphasized but the bringing of men back from the grave and delivering them from the effects of a lifetime of sin by educating them in the laws of righteousness.

**JUDGE:** In Obad. 21 we see that the activity of the *saviours is to judge* the mount of Esau. This activity of judgment is ascribed, first of all, to Jesus in John 5:22

*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.*

On the other hand, the same work is also ascribed to the church.

*Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? (1 Cor. 6:3)*

There is no conflict here. Jesus is the master judge, but he delegates judgment work to his church as co judges. Christ and his bride act as one. They do the same work. The same title applies to both.

**KING:** Again we have a title applicable both to Christ and die church. In the parable of the talents, it was Jesus who went into a far country and *received a kingdom.* (Luke 19:15)

This same honor is also promised to his church in 2 Tim. 2:12:

*If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.*

While Jesus is the "King of kings," he shares his throne with his bride as co-regents.

**PRIEST:** The term "high priest" is used frequently in the book of Hebrews in reference to Jesus alone. While usually used in connection with the Melchizedek priesthood, it is also used of him as the antitype of the Aaronic order. (See Heb. 5:5)

While the term "priest," relating to the Aaronic priesthood, is not specifically used of the church, the thought of Christ being the "high priest" suggests that he has under priests, as Aaron had. It seems reasonable that these under priests represent the church.

The church shares with him the title of priests of the Melchizedek order, for this describes a combined king-priest, a reigning priesthood. With this in mind, note the following texts from Revelation.

*And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Rev. 1:6)*

*And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. (Rev. 5:10)*

*Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years (Rev. 20:6)*

## **THE PRINCIPLE**

Noting, then, that while there are certain roles played by Jesus alone, many others are shared with his Church. What is the lesson for us? Namely, that while God is the great first cause and prime mover at all times, he is not an exclusive God; he delights to share his works with his Son, and with his Son's bride.

There are still other functions God shares with mankind. Just one example of this is the work of creation. God, of course, is the great Creator. This, too, he shared with his Son, for *without him was not anything made that was made.* (John 1:3)

But, beyond this, he shared the work of creation with the creatures. God could have chosen to create individuals separately and uniquely. Instead he chose the method of procreation, a process where the continuation of life would be shared by the beings he created.

In these shared roles we see the greatness of God. He chooses to share the joys, and the responsibilities, with his created being: first of all with his own Son; secondly with the church, the bride of Christ; and, to a lesser extent; with mankind as well.

## **PREPARATION**

The roles that are shared with the church particularly concern us, for it is our privilege to eventually share these duties if we are faithful. These tasks are not light; they require training and preparation. Even as a doctor must study for years to prepare for his chosen profession, so must the church study for such future roles as "saviors" and "priests."

The role of priest, as pertaining to Jesus, is beautifully spelled out in Heb. 2:17, 18

*Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. "*



And again in Hebrews 4:15, 16

*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need .*

Compassion is the main requirement here of the priest, the ability to relate present experiences to the work of training others who have had similar experiences. This was what Jesus had to learn during his brief life on earth. This is what the church must also learn during its earthly sojourn.

What a meaning this gives to our lives! What a purpose! Our trials become a part of our training for a great and future work, that of sharing with our Lord in the blessing of all the families of the earth.

The Apostle thus informs us that the experiences of the church will be the same experiences that all of us must go through. The only difference being that the church goes through these experiences first to learn the lessons to be shared in Christ's kingdom with others who have had similar testings, trials, and experiences.

*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. (1 Cor. 10:13)*

With such a prospect before us, let us carry forward along life's path. Let us greet each new experience, whether joyful or sad, with the firm conviction that this too is for our good. It is a part of our training to be like our Master, a faithful and sympathetic priest in that kingdom for which we pray: *Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.-John 17:1*

A verse by verse study in John 17

Jesus was a man of prayer. Thus many of his prayers could properly be titled "the Lord's prayer." Perhaps least deserving of that name is the one commonly called "the Lord's Prayer." That prayer was a model of prayer for his disciples to follow. Of all Jesus' prayers, the longest recorded one is that found in John 17.

Following the last supper, Jesus and his disciples walked around the walled city of Jerusalem to the Garden of Gethsemane in the Kidron valley. It is at this juncture, having arrived at the brook Kidron, that the small band huddles together while Jesus prays.

Following this prayer he and three of his disciples cross the brook into the garden (John 18:1), where he spends time in personal communion with his heavenly Father. Jesus had said that:

*All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.*

Concern for his disciples and the scattering that would follow his death forms the main burden of this prayer. Probably it was to assure his disciples of this deep concern that Jesus offered this prayer in their presence. While prayer is deeply personal and offered to God and not to the audience of hearers, it is appropriate that the subjects of a prayer be aware of its content.

The prayer itself divides into three natural subdivisions. The first (verses 1 through 5) deals with *His* own glorification. The second section (verses 6 through 19) shows his concern for his disciples. The conclusion of the prayer (verses 20 through 26) relates to the future of the gospel work.

### JESUS' GLORIFICATION

***These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. (vs. 1-3)***

Here we have not only a request for glorification but also a statement of the purpose for which it is requested and a description of how he desired to use such an exalted office.

He specifically states that the reason he desires glorification is *that thy Son also may glorify thee*.

No higher motive exists for desiring to be glorified by God than to reciprocate with the use of such exaltation to return his glory.

Jesus then proceeds to describe how God will be glorified by the eternal life bestowed upon those God has provided. He prefaces this remark by stating the basis for having such hopes: God has given his son power over all flesh.

This *power over all flesh* was given to Jesus as a result of his faithfulness in laying down his life as *a ransom for all* (1 Tim 2:6)-a corresponding price for father Adam and the entire human race.

The desire to glorify God by using his resurrected life to give eternal life to others is echoed as a desire for his followers by the Apostle Peter:

*As the outcome of your faith you obtain the salvation of your souls.*-1 Peter 1:9 RSV

In this text you will notice that the word *your* before souls is in italics, meaning that it is not supported in the Greek. Without that word, the text reads: *As the outcome of your faith you obtain the salvation of souls*. The Christian's faith, just as their Master's, is not so much to obtain the salvation of their own souls but to use that salvation to achieve the salvation of others as well.

## **JESUS' CLAIM TO GLORY**

***I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.***-(vs. 4, 5)

In a few hours Jesus would repeat these words regarding the completion of his task as his last expression as a human being: *It is finished*. (John 19:30) This ability to regard his ministry with the knowledge that he had done what God had sent him to do gave Jesus the assurance of his glorification.

The Apostle Paul expresses a similar assurance in 2 Tim. 4:7-*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith*.

In Jesus' case he knew that the four-fold nature of his work on earth was: (1) to provide a ransom, (2) to gain a sympathetic understanding of the human experience under sin, (3) to teach and instruct men about his coming kingdom, and (4) to select and train his disciples to be the nucleus of the church. He was able to scan his life, particularly the three and a half years of his consecrated ministry, and assess that he had indeed accomplished these objectives.

As a result of this evaluation he prays that the Father will return him to the same nature and position he held before as the Logos. In fact, his reward was to be much higher, but he holds no personal ambition and merely requests his former position.

Noting this attitude, the Apostle Paul states in Phil. 2:5-11 RSV

*Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

### **CHRIST'S CARE FOR HIS DISCIPLES**

In his prayer Jesus proceeds to tell how he had finished the work given him concerning the selection and training of his disciples.

*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. (vs. 6-8)*

It was the custom in Bible times for the parent to select the bride for his son, as demonstrated by Abraham sending his servant Eleazar to find the bride for Isaac. Jesus expresses confidence in his Father's selection of his bride, his disciples, in the words: *thine they were, and thou gavest them me.*

Jesus had fulfilled his responsibility to the disciples, not only by teaching them God's words and message, but by informing them that these teachings were not his own but received from his Father. Thus they could know that Jesus was indeed the one sent by God the Jewish Messiah. It was this belief, expressed first by Nathanael (John 1:49) and affirmed strongly by Peter (Matt. 16:16), that formed the foundation for the new religion Jesus introduced-the Christian faith.

Now he turns to the burden of his prayer, his concern for the care of his disciples after his death.

## JESUS' PRAYER FOR HIS DISCIPLES

*I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and throe are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. (vs. 9 11)*

Having expressed his conviction that he had done his part for his disciples while on earth, he now asks God, his Father, to do his part in caring for these same followers in the future. Although he was buying the entire world with his death as a ransom, he limits his present concern to his immediate followers, the church.

Recognizing the family principle of joint-ownership, he stresses this personal connection with the statement: *I am glorified in them.*

Certainly his own blameless life required no further glorifying by the church, but rather he saw deem *as an* extension of himself. *Their* faithfulness in following his precepts would redound to his own glory. They would complete him in the same sense as a good wife fully complements her husband, as Eve was a *help meet* [or fit] for Adam.

Recognizing the stresses his death will put upon his followers, Jesus commends them to the watchcare of his Father now. Having heard and been troubled over their strife as to who would be the greatest, he may have feared that divisiveness would be a strong temptation. Therefore his prayer was especially for their unity.

The statement *that they may be one, even as nee are* incidentally sheds great light on the unity between the Father and the Son. Since lie desires the same type of unity for his church, it indicates that the unity lie possesses with his Father is a unity of spirit, of purpose, and not organic.

His assertion that he was *no longer in the world* does not imply that the request for the Father's overruling was only for the short term of three days which he would spend in the grave; Jesus recognizes the long term need of his church for the Fatherhood of God even after his resurrection when he will be able to take a part in the ongoing care of his church.

## JESUS' PART IN THE CARE OF HIS CHURCH

*While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world (vs. 12-14)*

Once again the Master asserts his assurance that his role concerning the church had been accomplished. Even the one who was lost-Judas, the son of perdition was no failure on Jesus' part, since his defection was predicted in Scripture.

In an interesting contrast Jesus mentions a two-fold effect his church will experience as a result of his earthly ministry. On the one hand it would enable them to have his *joy fulfilled in themselves*, and on the other hand its result would be that *the world hath hated them*.

The two are not contradictory. The joy of his followers is to be like him and with him in the heavens. As he was hated of men so must they be if they would be like him. Hatred was there because he was *not of the world*, so the animosity of men toward his followers also would demonstrate *that they are not of the world*.

Jesus further elaborates:

*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.-John 3:19-21*

## **GOD'S PART IN THE CARE OF THE CHURCH**

***I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. (vs. 15-17)***

Having just completed an intensive three and a half year ministry living amongst humans infected with sin, Jesus saw the value of the experience. As the prophet Isaiah had predicted of him:

*He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. (Isa. 53:11)*

Appreciating this knowledge, he desired the same for his church. Therefore he prays not for their deliverance **from** the world, but that they will be kept from evil while in the world. Protection would be necessary because, like himself, the transformation process of the Spirit had separated them **from** the world. The hatred of those who were of the world would result. The effect of this hatred was the evil from which Jesus desired the church to be kept.

Protection would be through a process of **sanctification**, *sanctify them through thy truth*. The Greek word translated sanctify, *hagios*, contains both the thought of purifying or making holy and the setting aside, or consecrating, for holy purposes. It here describes

the process of changing the mind-set of the Christian from secular to religious purposes, The Apostle Paul describes this process in Romans 12:2 --

*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

This transformation can be accomplished only through the study and absorption of God's Word, the Bible-thy word is truth This does not mean that dissertations on the Word of God are not valuable to determining truth. It does mean that such teachings are only of value insofar as they reflect the Scriptures on a given subject. Consider the nobility of the Bereans which Paul praised:

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. (Acts 17:11)

## **THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH**

**As thou hast** sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. (vs. 18, 19)

With his imminent departure his followers would face new realities. No longer under his direct instruction, they would need to use their own initiative and learn from the mistakes which would inevitably result. They must learn to deal with him as an invisible reality in their life instead of as a constant visible companion. No longer would they be restricted to Judaism; they would be his emissaries in the entire world. Yet their example would continue to be, as it always had been, the life of their Master. I sanctify myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Jesus had once said My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. (John 7:16) His consecration was prophesied in the words: Lo, I come . . . to do thy will, O my God (Psa. 40:8) He not only preached these concepts, he lived them. This example was his heritage to his followers so that they also might be sanctified through the church.

## **PRAYER FOR FUTURE BELIEVERS**

*Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me, through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. (vs. 20-24)*

The burden of Jesus' prayer here expands beyond his immediate followers-them also which shall believe on me through their word Here he looks forward to the intervening 2,000 years of the Gospel age when the calling of his bride, his church, would be completed.

Then he prays for the unity of his people. This unity will be a witness to others as well: *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.* The glory to be shared with the church was the honor of being begotten with God's holy spirit. The function of this spirit was to unify his followers. As through the sanctification of that spirit they would be drawn into his likeness and thus closer to him, they would also be drawn closer to each other.

Their lives would be a witness of the protecting power of God's providences, and thus as the world witnessed this love of the Father they might recognize that these, like their Lord, were sent of the Father.

Finally, having committed his followers to God's protective care while separated from them, he prays for the time when he would be reunited once again-that they may *be with me where I am.*

This was the time John spoke of later in one of his epistles:

*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*  
(1 John 3:2)

He concludes this section of the prayer with the statement that he had been loved from before the foundation *of* the world. It is not coincidental that he was also spoken of as the Lamb slain from the foundation *of* the world. (Rev. 13:8)

It was the love of God for his Son which sent him to die, for the Father knew that the glorification of his Son to an even higher position would be the result. Similarly, God's love for the church brings it into and through the evils of association with a sinful world so that there might be an eventual exaltation to the same nature as the *Son-joint-heirs with Jesus.* (Rom. 8:17)

## **STILL THERE'S MORE TO FOLLOW**

***O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.***  
(vs. 25, 26)



Acknowledging that his ministry did not convert the world -- indeed it was not intended so to do -- he indicates that this will be a future reality. Not only had he declared his Father's name and character for three and a half years, but he affirmed that he, in the future, will *declare it*. That future declaration will be in the 1000-year kingdom for which he taught his followers to pray: *Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.* (Matt. 6:10)

Then would come the time when the love binding him to his church would bind him to all mankind as well. Then the unity of the Son, and the Father and that which he desired for his church would be a universal reality. Then the vision of the Apostle Paul will become a reality:

*That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.-Eph. 1:10*

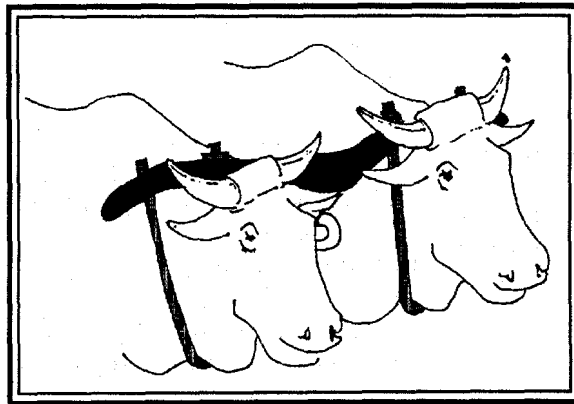
## THE EASY YOKE

*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.-Matthew 11:29, 30*

Condensed from a discourse by Stuart Sowers

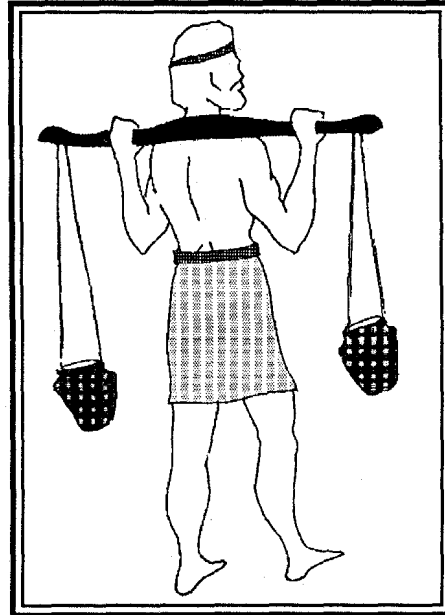
Our Lord's words are frequently paraphrased - *I invite you to take my yoke and share it with me, become my yoke fellow. You will find that the yoke is easy and the burden seems light. This is because I am yoked together with you to help bear the burden when the going is rough and the load becomes too heavy for you.*

The familiar lesson regarding these scriptures relates to a yoke involving the load to be pulled by the cooperation of two animals. A strong top bar fits over the animal's neck and shoulders and bows underneath securing the yoke to the animals. The usual lesson from these verses teaches that none can make their calling and election sure unless they become yoke fellows with Jesus to walk together with him in the narrow way- neither the apostles nor the little flock.



## A "PEOPLE YOKE"

An additional lesson to consider, based on these scriptures is from a different viewpoint. The thoughts presented will be based on another type of yoke—a *people yoke*.



A *people yoke* is a beam placed across the shoulders, extending out and down with two strong cords attached. The burden can be divided in half and the weight balanced between the two cords. When the bearer bends his knees he can rest the load on the ground and resume carrying his load when he straightens. When properly designed, the yoke applies no pressure on the vertebrae, and the weight of the load is upon the strong neck and shoulder muscles.

Jesus was a carpenter's son and was probably familiar with the *people yoke*. In Matt. 11:29,30 Jesus may have suggested the following: I invite you to take the yoke I have taken and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart. The yoke I have taken is an easy yoke for me and a burden attached to it is a light burden. And why do I ask you to learn of me? Because my yoke will be easy for you and the burden attached to it will seem light only if you learn of me—only if you become meek and lowly of heart as I am."

## THE YOKE AS A SYMBOL

What is the symbolic meaning of the word *yoke*? A yoke implies servitude and bondage to someone or something, suggesting the absence of liberty to determine one's own course of action. Mankind does not like servitude, bondage or lack of freedom. In our day the cry for freedom and the demand for liberty have been expressed by all nations and is becoming more intense each day.

In considering our Lord's statement to *take my yoke*, a simple invitation is being offered. This is not a command and there is no deception involved. Jesus encouraged all who would take his yoke to count the cost. *Take my yoke* respects the free will of an individual and encourages a voluntary response. Jesus also uses this concept when he invites one to *take up the cross*. We take up the cross according to our own free will. These are not duty decisions and they are not fear decisions. The straight gate and the narrow way should not be entered from a sense of duty nor as a result of fear. Our Lord is pleased with a clear understanding and a voluntary acceptance to his invitation to *take my yoke*.

## **THE YOKE OF JESUS**

How did Jesus take his yoke and what was his yoke? In Heb. 10:7 the apostle Paul quotes Psa. 40:8, *Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God*. This expresses the full meaning of the yoke that Jesus took. Jesus freely accepted the will of the heavenly Father and voluntarily served according to divine leading. Jesus' yoke was to serve God. When our Lord said, *Lo, I come*, he was saying, *I take this yoke*. Jesus came of his own free will. He was delighted to do the will of the Heavenly Father and he *took* the yoke.

How does one take the yoke of Jesus? By following Jesus' example, we approach the heavenly Father and say, *I come to do thy will O, God*. God does not place this yoke upon us until we choose to take his yoke of our own free will. However, upon reaching this condition of accepting God's will, one has first responded to the drawing power of God and has recognized and accepted Jesus as their Savior. Thus, a proper understanding and attitude develops prior to *taking the yoke of Jesus*.

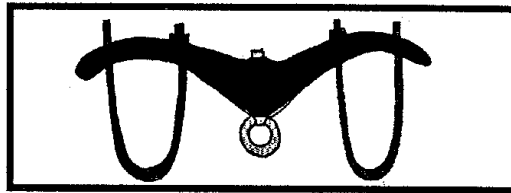
## **"LEARN OF ME"**

In verse 29 of our text Jesus added the phrase *learn of me*. Concerning this lesson of the *people yoke*, learning of Jesus (that is following his example) is necessary for the yoke to be easy and the burden light. In reviewing the last three and a half years of Jesus' life, we can readily see that Jesus had many difficult experiences. He endured the contradiction of sinners, wept in sympathy for those who sorrowed at the death of Lazarus, and undoubtedly experienced heartfelt anguish for the trials of his disciples. In the garden of Gethsemane Jesus said, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death* which reflects a severe trial for our Lord. He was nailed to the cross and endured the pain unto death. These experiences were not easy and his burden was not light. How do we harmonize Jesus' words when he said, *My yoke is easy, my burden is light?*

## THE "EASY" YOKE

The Greek word for *easy* might be better understood if we consider how it is used when Peter says ....

*ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* (1 Peter 2:3) The word *gracious* or *chrestos* in the Greek language is the same word our Lord used for *easy*. Another example of the word *chrestos* is used by Paul in Eph. 4:32-*And be ye kind one to another. . . The word kind is the Greek word chrestos.* Again, in Luke 6:35, *Love your enemies, do good and lend and hope for nothing again.. for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.* The Greek word *chrestos* is translated *kind*. Therefore, by using these examples we conclude that our Lord is saying *the yoke that I have taken of my own free will is gracious and kind; it is not unpleasant or harsh. The yoke is fitted to my shoulders and designed especially for me by my heavenly Father.*



## THE LIGHT BURDEN

The meaning of the word *burden* can also be better understood by considering it's application in other scriptures. Gal. 6:2 says, *Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.* However, in the fifth verse, *every man shall. bear his own burden,* seems to contradict the thought of verse two. This is easily explained because two words with different meanings are being translated *burden*. The word *burden* is suggesting the thought of something heavy in verse two, while Gal. 6:5 is referring to a bill of lading or an invoice. The Greek word is *phortion*. Strong's concordance suggests that the literal meaning of *phortion* describes a task or a service involving an agreement. The light burden of Jesus was his agreement to fulfill the details of the heavenly Father's will beginning with his baptism at Jordan and even unto death at Calvary. Jesus delighted to do his Father's will.

In Matt. 11:27 Jesus was at Caperna when he addressed the weary and heavy laden. The people of that city were not impressed by the miracles Jesus had performed, nor by the words he had spoken. Jesus knew that some of the people present were sincere and honest in their labor and in their attempt to keep the Law. They were weary and their burden was heavy. The Law was their bill of lading or agreement to be fulfilled-their *phortion*. They were striving to do the impossible by keeping the Law. Contrast the easy yoke and light burden to which Jesus refers.

In John 14:15 Jesus said, *If you love me you will keep my commandments.* Jesus was addressing his true followers. Keeping his commandment of love is the light burden that is carried upon the easy yoke. Additionally, Jesus referred to a new commandment to *love*

*one another even as I have loved you.* This is the light burden, the *phortion*, which is carried upon the easy yoke, *chrestos*. John said in 1 John 5:2,3-*By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.* Therefore, keeping God's commandments is not a heavy burden.

The experiences of die Christian are a result of keeping his commandments and carrying out the agreement-to take his yoke, for the burden is light. *Though he were a son, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered.* The sufferings of Jesus were not the easy yoke or the light burden, but the results of the fulfillment of his agreement to do the will of his heavenly Father. Thus, Jesus was permitted to prove his faithfulness by the things which lie suffered and he delighted to do his Father's will. As Jesus suffered and endured, so also must each true follower of Jesus be developed through experiences to prove their faithfulness.

## **LEARNING OF JESUS**

The key point of our lesson is this-the yoke will be easy and the burden will be light only if we learn of Jesus. We must become meek and lowly of heart. The *people yoke* of our lesson is designed to be placed across the shoulders. As we have learned, the easy yoke is gracious and kind. When the weight of the load is attached to the yoke, the strong shoulder muscles support the load so there is no pain upon the vertebrae. Our heavenly Father perfectly designed each yoke.

However, should a bump or blemish develop on the shoulder and under the yoke, the yoke would no longer be easy to bare. This bump symbolizes pride or a shortcoming. If a weight or burden is attached to the yoke, a degree of discomfort would result depending on the severity of the bump or blemish under the yoke and a trying experience would result. The yoke that the heavenly Father designed for us to carry out our agreement is easy and the burden is light if we become like Jesus. The more we can develop the mind of Christ, die easier becomes the yoke and the lighter the burden. *For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.* (1 John 5:3)

*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart:and you shall find rest in your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* (Matthew 11:29, 30)

## Notice of Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute will be held (D.V.) on Saturday, June 5, 1993, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Reports will be rendered and matters discussed concerning the activities of the Institute. There will be an election of Directors to serve during the coming fiscal year.

The Institute's affairs are committed to seven brethren elected *from* among the Institute's membership. Those now serving are:

James Caudle, Bellingham, WA  
Chester Czohara, Sierra Bravo, CA  
Frances Earl, Adelphi, MD  
Alex Gonczewski, West Suffield, CT  
Loyal Petran, Racine, WI  
Tim Thomassen, Albuquerque, NM  
James Webster, Haverhill MA

The list of final nominees will be published in the May-June issue of THE HERALD for the prayerful consideration of the membership prior to the meeting.

Your brethren report that a Christian spirit dwells among us, and we believe that the Lord has blessed our association in this ministry. While willing to continue in this service, we recognize that our reelection is not essential to the work of the Institute. Selfishness, even in the Lord's service, is not appropriate. We want to see the word of the Lord proclaimed with the greatest efficiency, and it is always possible that those involved with the intricacies of any work may not see the opportunities that are apparent to others. Changes in office can be beneficial, and we are ready to stand cheerfully aside if the membership feels that others are better fitted for this service.

## NEWS AND VIEWS

Editor:  
Len Griehs  
141 Westbrook Dr.  
Feasterville, PA 19053

### • WE NEED YOUR HELP:

By now most subscribers have read THE HERALD in its new format. Responses have been overwhelmingly positive. The Lord has blessed the effort and all editors trust that the readers have been edified. However, there is one matter in which we are asking readers for help.

At the last joint meeting of the editorial committee and the board, approval was given for omitting the name of the author from articles. There were several reasons for the request, which was made by the editorial committee: to allow contribution of articles by some who wished to remain anonymous; to avoid the appearance of bias because some editors have articles in every issue or several articles in one issue; to prevent favoritism toward or prejudice against a particular view expressed in an article because of the author. We are always glad to make the name of the author of every article available on request

There has been some objection to this change in policy, so we would like to solicit the opinion of our readers in deciding what we should do. Would you prefer to see the names of the authors on the articles? Please drop a post card or note to Carl Hagensick, Managing Editor, 2929 Hillside Lane, Darien, IL 60561 to express your view.

### • PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

From August 13 to September 1, PBI director Loyal Petran was on a Pilgrim trip to Great Britain and Ireland. The trip agenda was arranged by the Bible Students Pilgrim Service group. This is Loyal's summary of his trip.

"We arrived on Friday, August 14 and were met by Bro. Charles Aldridge of Memphis who drove us to Gainsborough House (the Bible Student Retirement Center), 100 miles west of London. Saturday we were guests at Bro. Albert Hudson's home in Milborne Port. (A.O. Hudson is editor of the English publication, *Bible Study Monthly*). Sunday afternoon the little chapel at Gainsborough was filled with friends from the center and neighboring villages. On Monday, we traveled to the High Leigh Conference Center to attend the Free Bible Students Conference. The theme of the conference was Occupy Till 1 *Come*. Attendance was about 88 persons. Subjects studied included: the land of Israel, our Lord's return, Psalm 46, Romans 11:1 and the Call and Work of the Church. This was a week long remembered time for quiet reflections, warm fellowship, spiritual food from the Lord's table. Sunday afternoon a bus load traveled to the Midlands and North. We stayed at the home of Derrick and Margaret Nadal through Thursday. On Tuesday, Bro. Derrick and I visited a shut-in brother who was 102. In the evening we had a meeting in a



community hall in the Leicester-Coventry-Corby area. On Wednesday, we enjoyed a Bible study with Sr. Margaret Wood in Sheffield. Thursday evening several friends came for a Bible study in I Timothy. On Friday, we flew to Belfast, Northern Ireland, where we were met by John and Belle Thompson. We stayed with Victor and Jean McIlveen until Monday, August 31. While there we had two Bible studies, one on Psalm 119 and the other on the five charges given by Paul to Timothy. On Sunday, we drove to the home of Sr. Madge Bartley for a morning study and afternoon discourse. A noon banquet was served for about 30 friends. On Monday we flew back to High Wycombe and to the home of Bill and Doreen Simmons. We spent the evening in uplifting fellowship. Tuesday morning Br. Simmons took us to Gatwick Airport for our flight home. Yes, we were tired, but happy and blessed, by our new friends in Christ."

## ISRAEL COMFORTED

In the last News & Views, a preview was given of a trip to Israel to show "Israel: Appointment with Destiny" to Jews with a Messianic faith. The trip took place *from* October 28 to November 12. By all accounts, the trip was a success. Two members of that trip were asked to recouse their journey. Here are edited versions of their accounts.

"The trip involved a number of showings and presentations of *Israel: Appointment with Destiny* in English, Hebrew and Russian, as well as a fact-finding mission. One thousand copies of the Hebrew version were distributed among the Jewish people and we also had the opportunity to discuss these hopes with them. We also went to several places that usually are not included in a tour. Metulla, an Israeli town near the Lebanese border, was a special place. The mayor of Metulla helped to establish the Good Fence in 1976. It is a place where Christian Arabs from Lebanon can come for work, medical help, and food and water. In Shiloh we went to see the excavations and the possible site of the Tabernacle during the period of the Judges. We also visited Hebron and the excavated town of Susiya, which existed from A.D. 135 to the 8th century. In Jerusalem, the special places we visited were the Temple Institute, where Jews are making instruments for the Third Temple when it will be set up. We visited the City of David excavations, Warren's Shaft, and the Spring at Gihon. One morning when we were at the Galilee, I awoke and walked down to the pier to see the beautiful sight of the sunrise over the Galilee. Besides two showings in English in the Galilee area, there was a showing in Samaria and Jerusalem-. At the Ben Yehuda mall in Jerusalem, we were able to hand out 400 Hebrew versions of the video presentation within 15 minutes! There were articles from interviews of Bro. Ken Rawson in the Jerusalem Post as well as an advertisement for our premier showing in Jerusalem. At that showing, the *room* was so full the brethren could hardly even enter the hall. The Lord indeed blessed this opportunity of service! "-(Karen Earl)

"Can you imagine a trip in your lifetime to the Holy Land to comfort Israel? Seventy-six consecrated brethren from the United States, Canada and Germany made the trip with the unified purpose to comfort Israel. We were given the privilege of comforting Israel as a nation through the video *Israel: Appointment with Destiny*. The oral presentation encouraged the Jews in their heritage of the Torah and the Prophets; that they should possess their land; that they should strengthen anti-missionary laws. The video mentioned

was presented as a gift. The tour through Israel produced memorable emotions: Paul's Caesarea; Elijah's Mt. Carrel; the Jezreel Valley; Meggido; Capernaum; the Jordan River; the Sea of Galilee; Kibbutz Nof Ginosar, where the Baush's live; the ruins of Caesarea Philippi; Mt. Hermon and the Golan Heights; the Dead Sea; Jericho, Qumran, the place the Isaiah Scroll was found; Masada; En Gedi, David's hiding place; Bethlehem; Shiloh; Mt. Gerizim; Ariel, Kfar Etzion and Gusa; Hebron and the Cave of Machpelah, the burial place of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In Jerusalem's old city, we toured the Via del la Rosa, Damascus Gate, Jaffa Gate, David's Citadel and the ancient Herodian tunnel that runs beneath the Western Wall. Outside the walled city we toured Gethsemane, Golgotha, the city of David, the spring of Gihon, the Valley of Hinnom, Mt. Zion, Mt. Scopus.

We trod where the ancients trod and where our Lord and the Apostles trod. Yet all this was secondary to the purpose of comforting Israel. How successful we were can be assessed by our major showing in the LaRomme Hotel's auditorium November 10, 1992. Two hundred were expected but since Netanyahu (he is the potential Likud leader who could be the next prime minister of Israel) was on the same program 400 were thought possible. Twelve hundred showed up. It was standing room only. The Lord overruled and the mission to comfort Israel was a blessed success. (*Leonard Wesob*)

## **BUSY IN ISRAEL**

Excerpt from a letter written by Lev and Hava Bausch from Israel

"Just before his 'passing, Jack Campbell and his wife Connie got into contact-with Emek HaShalom and Herman Bezner. Upon Jack's passing Connie handed us a map she had been sent and urged us to look them up. We had some free afternoons and took the chance to really try to find Emek Ha-Shalom. Upon driving up the treelined road to a little clearing bordered by machine sheds, Herman's companion Joseph came out to meet us. Soon Herman, aged 92, came out. Joseph, who must be in his late 60's translated for him since Herman speaks only German.

We talked warmly and shared for some hours together and were very surprised by the things we heard. Herman and his family read the writings of Charles Russell and left the Methodist Church in Germany when Herman was 18. He told us that Hitler persecuted the Bible Students as well as Jews, and all of Herman's family was exterminated by the Nazis. Only Herman escaped, ran away to Austria and helped set up a small retreat for hiding Bible Students in the southern Austrian Alps. It was never discovered by the Nazis.

In 1962 Heiman came to Israel to comfort the Jewish people. After several years the government said he was a missionary and was forced to leave the country. So he returned to Germany for a short time . . . a number of prominent Israelis spoke out on his behalf and he received permanent residency status.

We asked Herman what he spoke to them about and he said Israel's prophetic destiny, the coming Kingdom and rulership of Christ as Messiah Remember, Israelis go clear in there

tó him. We asked him what reactions he got from all these Israelis and he said they had many questions and were very open always and that they keep coming. They also built an octagonal shaped meeting hall to seat over 100 where they can speak to groups.

They have no telephone and can hardly leave the place there due to all their groups and visitors. They don't even have a watch dog, yet they are located not far from the camp where those Arabs surprised and savagely killed those soldiers. But they are not afraid. At times, they say, the army helicopters fly over them at night to see if all is alright there. Isn't it amazing that the Bible Students have had a beautiful center in Israel for over 30 years and most of the movement has not even known about it! Pray for Herman and Joseph, who are so dedicated to Israel but seem to be running out of strength."

## **AROUND THE WORLD**

### **UNITED STATES:**

The election of Bill Clinton and Al Gore, both Southern Baptists, may alter U.S. policy toward Israel. Both have long records of pro-Israel statements and actions. Gore stated recently that Israelis have a right to live in the "administered" territories and that "Jerusalem must remain undivided and open and accessible to peoples of all faiths." Clinton has spoken often of his Jewish boyhood friends. He criticized the Bush administration for what he called its "bullying" tactics in dealing with the former Israeli Prime Minister. One particular statement made by Clinton should be of interest to all students of prophecy: "I have believed in supporting Israel as long as I have known anything about the issue. It may have something to do with my religious upbringing . . . For the last several years until he died, I was very much under the influence of my pastor at a small Baptist church He was a close friend of Israel and began visiting even before the state of Israel was created. And when he was on his deathbed, he said to me that he hoped one day I'd have a chance to run for president, but that if I ever let Israel down, God would never forgive me. If I'm elected I will never let Israel down!"

### **GERMANY:**

The Government of Germany has quietly signed an agreement to pay millions of dollars to European Jews who survived Nazi persecution but were never compensated or received minimal compensation. The agreement was signed in November at a time when Germany has been swept by right-wing radical political demonstrations and actions against Jews. A spokesman estimated that as many as 50,000 European Jews from countries other than Germany would be eligible to file claims. (*New York Times*, 11/7/92)

## **RUSSIA:**

The once powerful Red Army has been demobilized from Eastern Europe. About 750,000 soldiers have been discharged, the majority with no housing or jobs. Morale in the army is at an all-time low, with suicides reported daily. Pro-democracy Russian army General Nikolai Stolyarov, who is not a Christian, is convinced that the army needs Christian values to overcome its morale and ethical problems. Stolyarov said he has the defence minister's support to introduce Judeo-Christian values. Russian society in general has been experiencing a spiritual revival that has touched the Russian army. Stolyarov has been working with American Christian ministries to provide spiritual aid to the army. He approved the purchase of over a million Bibles in the Russian language to be distributed to every member of the army. (*Washington Post*, 11/14/92)

## **JERUSALEM:**

"The first Zionists hoped a Jewish State would make the Jewish people resemble all others and thus cause anti-Semitism to disappear. They were wrong . . . Instead of erasing anti-Semitism, Israel itself has become the world's Jew, its favorite scapegoat. And anti-Semitism, often masquerading as anti-Zionism, is now global; it can be found even in countries where there are no Jews .... Not surprisingly, it has found fertile ground in the former Soviet Union. Russian anti-Semitism, used by the Soviets to foment hostility for the West and Israel, is now back to its traditional, pre-war form . . . nothing is done to prosecute publishers of virulently anti-Semitic publications . . . The themes are hardly new. They contain a mixture of medieval myth and modern libels. Jews are described as ritual murderers of Christian children, and rulers of the world through an Elders of Zion cabal." (*Jerusalem Post*)

## **IRAN:**

Six former Soviet republics and Afghanistan joined Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey to create a huge Moslem economic bloc linking Europe and Asia. "Today the aspirations of 300 million people who share a common heritage and culture have been realized," said Pakistan Prime Minister Sharif after the signing. The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) will be the biggest economic bloc behind the European Community. The treaty of Izmeir was amended to expand ECO membership from 3 to 10. Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati said he hoped the expanded body would lead to an Islamic common market. Sharif dismissed fears that an enlarged ECO, grouping 25 percent of the world's Moslems, would emerge as an Islamic bloc. (*Reuters News Service*)

## **SOMALIA:**

Who had heard of this country a month ago? Yet its geographical importance is notable: it is just south of the Persian Gulf, a strategic entry into the Middle East. It is perhaps gratifying to see the leaders of the U.S. turning some of the immense resources to the task of saving starving children. Surely God looks with some favor upon any nation which at least tries to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and heal the sick of other countries. But there is so much more that needs to be done. Unfortunately, limited resources prevent such causes. Yet it is intriguing to think what good could be accomplished if ten times the might and food supply could be brought to bear in places like Ethiopia, Kenya, Bosnia, Armenia, India, Pakistan, Haiti, Jamaica, Costa Rica, El Salvador. Think of that good, and then remind yourself that such power and resources do exist. In Psalm 72:1-17, God promises "he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight . . . . All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed." Today it is human military power. Tomorrow it will be the might of God. Today, limited resources straining to fill empty bellies and to patch broken bodies. Tomorrow, unlimited blessing flowing from the cornucopia of heaven. (*Christadelphian Watchman*)

## **IN CHRISTENDOM:**

Singer Sinead O'Connor was quoted as saying: "I think organized religion is a crutch because it's controlling. Organized religion tells you what to believe, tells you how to behave . . . . It's an abuse to tell a child that God sees everything and knows what you think about and that you are going to be burnt in hell." (*Media Update*, Vol. 11 , No. 3)

## **THE RELIGIOUS MEDIA:**

NavPress and Moody Press have announced new book lines for non-Christians. The imprints Pinon Press and Northfield Publishing will address spiritual concerns without traditional Christian terminology. (*Baptist Bulletin*, 9/92)

## **THE ENVIRONMENT:**

A sudden decline in the world's frog population has scientists not only baffled but alarmed. Jay Savage, a professor of biology at the University of Miami, has spent much of the last 40 years studying amphibians, mostly in Central America. In 1964, he discovered a species of toad native to Costa Rica. The golden toad lives underground, and emerges for an annual explosive breeding season. Since 1964 scientists have watched the toads gather for their yearly ritual. In 1988, however, only one adult male was found. Two years later, there were none-and none since. The disaster is being repeated among other species as well. An Australian frog species swallows its fertilized eggs, gestates them in its stomach and then regurgitates froglets. It has not been seen since 1981. In the United States, frogs are in decline throughout the West. Almost one-third of North America's species of frogs and toads appear to be in trouble. What is killing the frogs?

The major reason appears to be the human destruction of the frogs' habitat. Shopping centers, drained wetlands, etc. No one puzzles as to why Southern California is virtually barren of most of its native frogs. What would happen if frogs died out? One consequence may be a field day for insects; amphibians provide a far safer method for keeping insect populations in check than any chemical insecticide. Bangladesh, where native frogs, have been nearly wiped out to appease the French appetite for their legs, appears to be reaping the consequences. It has increased numbers of mosquitoes and malaria. If frogs are eliminated from the earth, it will be the first cataclysm of nature caused exclusively by man.

#### \* **BOOK REPORTS**

Wastefulness and mismanagement are threatening to create a water crisis in the 1990s similar to the oil crunch of the 1970s, concludes Sandra Postel in her book *Last Oasis: Facing Water Scarcity*.

The earth holds many times the amount of water required to meet the need of all human and animal life on this planet, and the supply is constantly being replenished naturally, unlike oil and other fossil fuels. The problems: purifying water polluted by modern manufacturing, and distributing water to drier areas, which also happen to be the fastest growing areas.

"Water scarcity will affect everything from prospects for peace in the Mideast to global food scarcity, the growth of cities, and the location of industries," Postel says.

Despite water-saving drip irrigation systems pioneered in Israel and other efforts, the book points to a looming crisis in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia, for example, is depleting its ground water resources to produce subsidized wheat which costs King Fahd's government four times what it would pay on world markets.

"By the end of the 90's, water problems in the Middle East will lead either to an unprecedented degree of cooperation or a combustible level of conflict," the author concludes.

The book should hold the interest of Bible students who believe the Middle East will be descended upon by those "seeking a spoil" in the time prophecy of Ezekiel 38. Many natural scientists and water experts have indicated we will approach a worldwide water crisis before the turn of the century. Israel leads the world in converting impure water to potable water. If this is the "spoil" sought by Gog, then Postel's position may be prophetic.