

The Herald Of Christ's Kingdom

September/October 1995

The Editors' Journal

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. -Isaiah 28:9

Doctrine is to the body of Christ what the bones are to the human body. It forms the skeletal framework upon which the whole body is built. As there are small bones and larger ones, yet each is important to the function of the whole, so there are hundreds of doctrines and each is important, but some serve a more vital function than others.

In this issue of THE HERALD we will be focusing on six doctrines which the Apostle Paul calls "the principles of the doctrines of Christ." These he describes in Hebrews 5:12, 13 as the "milk," from which Isaiah in the text above says we are to be "weaned." These six are: (1) repentance from dead works, (2) faith toward God, (3) baptisms, (4) the laying on of hands, (5) the resurrection of the dead, and (6) eternal judgment.

As a mother's milk is essential for good health in the infant child, so these basic doctrines are vital to the belief structure of the Christian. Just as milk remains an important part of the adult diet, so these fundamentals of the Christian religion are not to be forgotten but to remain as a foundation for future growth. Each of these six important truths is dealt with in successive articles.

As there were basic doctrines to the nascent Christian community as it left its rich heritage of Jewish religious teaching, so there are basic concepts at this end of the age in the "harvest" church as it leaves and separates from that system which the Revelator styles "Babylon" (Rev. 18:4). Eight of these teachings which make the Bible Student movement unique and separate from mainline Christianity are discussed in the article *Present Truth*.

The doctrinal theme continues in the verse by verse Bible study. This month's study considers the second chapter of Titus where Paul urges his assistant to teach the things becoming "sound doctrine." Left untranslated, the word Paul uses becomes the title of the article: *Hygienic Doctrine*.

A New Look

You may notice a few minor changes in the appearance of THE HERALD, beginning with this issue. We have received numerous compliments on the new color cover along with the comment, "with such a lovely cover why do you hide it with an outer-wrap." The answer, of course, is to keep it clean in mailing. Now we have found a new method of mailing. As you have already noticed we are enclosing each issue in a clear plastic wrap. This not only serves the function of keeping the magazine clean in transit but also provides a place to put your address label without defacing the cover. We have increased the number of pages from 32 to 36. This will partially make up the space lost due to our more open interior format.

Tragedies

The past few months have seen their share of tragedies. The Oklahoma City bombing and the continued atrocities in Bosnia and Rwanda are just a few of them. When we see the griefstricken faces which appear on our television screens or in newspapers and magazines we cannot help but grieve with them. Each of these tragedies should be an occasion for renewed dedication in offering up the prayer we all know so well: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy *will* be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

Christ's Kingdom is the only answer for the aching hearts around us. How thankful we can be that while "weeping may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning" (Psa. 30:5). In the meantime may we each continue to be touched with the infirmities of those around us so that we, like our Master before, can be fit to be part of a truly sympathetic priesthood. Only when we see the resurrection work complete can we truly say that we have received "the end of our faith, even the salvation of souls" (1 Peter 1:9).

Our prayers remain with you, as we trust you keep us in your prayers, that we may each be faithful to our vows to the Lord and may say with the Apostle Paul, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19).

Repentance from Dead Works

Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.—Acts 20:21

Contributed

The Apostle Paul was not one to mince words when it came to warning the brethren of an impending danger in their chosen path of conduct. He felt an urgency to shake the brethren from complacency. They needed to get out of a rut and move into growth as followers of Christ. Others could say the same thing, but it would not carry the same weight as the Apostle. Others could urge a change, but it could be argued and left to the individual to decide his course of action. But Paul's life was a testimony of consecration. His knowledge of the Lord's plan was worthy of imitation. His background knowledge of Scriptures and the Law combined with the Holy Spirit was a powerful source of guidance to the early church. Those whose ears were pricked by his admonitions would be greatly blessed. Those who ignored his words would be left at a loss.

In his letter to the Hebrews, Paul is addressing Jewish Christians who had been familiar with their Laws and customs. They had accepted the Law as a schoolmaster leading them to Christ. Paul didn't have to convince them of Jewish history or the importance of the services in the tabernacle or roles of the priesthood. They were already familiar with the structure of the Jewish religion. With this background they had accepted Jesus and had chosen to follow him. These were not Jews looking in from outside the flock. They were Jews that had already converted to Christianity. These were Paul's brethren (Hebrews 13:22) to whom he made this appeal in love for their welfare. We wouldn't expect anything less from Paul. He cared.

A Proper Foundation

It is necessary to be firmly established in basic principles of truth. A proper foundation will affect the whole structure.

"With whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little." —Isaiah 28:9, 10

"What then of the man who hears these words of mine and acts upon them? He is like a man who had sense to build his house upon rock. The rain came down, the floods rose, the wind blew, and beat upon that house; but it did not fall, because its foundations were on rock." —Matthew 7:24-25 (NEB)

In 1992, Hurricane Andrew destroyed thousands of homes in southern Florida. Yet, in an area where wreckage looked like a war zone, one house remained standing . . . still firmly anchored to its foundation. When a reporter asked the homeowner why his house had not been blown away, he replied, "I built this house myself. I also built it according to the Florida state building codes. I used whatever the codes called for. I was told that a house built according to the codes could withstand a hurricane . . . and it did."

Jesus talked about the importance of building our lives upon a solid foundation. The person who obeys is like a wise man, "a man who had sense to build his house upon rock." If we build according to his code of obedience, we will not be swept away when crises hit with a hurricane-like force. The tempests of temptation and the storms of suffering will not be able to sweep us off a solid foundation of faith. Adversity may come, but because we have built according to the code of the unshakable, Jesus Christ, we can emerge with our character strengthened.

The Apostle Paul was trying to instill a similar lesson to his brethren. Jesus is the rock and foundation upon which our faith is built. Principles of truth are added a stone at a time upon this foundation; then a structure can be built. Unfortunately, the Hebrew brethren were having trouble getting the building program to progress. After laying the foundation, Jesus Christ, they appeared to continually dig up Jewish Laws and traditions they had put aside and tried to fit the stones in another way. At this rate they were not moving ahead. There must come a time, before we build, when we are confident that the foundation is good and properly laid. With full confidence in that foundation, we may proceed with our building, going on to perfection or completion. "Let us not lay over and over again the foundation truths" (Heb. 6:2 Phillips) While showing the necessity of a firm establishment on first principles and the impossibility of reclaiming such as had left these principles entirely, the Apostle assured the church that they had not rejected the favor of God. He says "But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you . . . though we thus speak" (Heb. 6:9).

Paul's words were to guard early Jewish Christians on a dangerous point and show them the uselessness of constant disputing with rejecters of first principles. Paul discouraged their spending valuable time and effort in the fruitless attempt reclaiming such. Once the principles of truth are established, settled, made plain . . . it is time to move on to deeper truths. This is not saying that we should not give first principles of truth, the milk of the word, to babes, or help a weak or stumbling brother by re-enforcing him with the power of truth which he may have let slip. Our constant aim and effort should be sensitive to such needs. This is different from trying to convince those who are willful rejecters . . . those who Paul says are impossible to reclaim.

Truth Has All The Answers

Everyone wants to think that the truth has all the answers and solutions for the world's questions and problems. It does. But only those who have been blessed to have their eyes opened are able to recognize the all-encompassing features of God's plan. The world's eyes have been blinded to these deeper things. This is not the time to expect their

understanding on these points. The rejection of truth is not necessarily the fault of the bearer of the truth, but the hearer. The Apostle Paul had experienced this as he was transferred from court to court bearing witness to the truth. The greatest orator of the early church could not convince all to whom he spoke. He almost persuaded King Agrippa to be a Christian; but he did not. (Acts 26:28). With only 144,000 in the little flock, the church will see a great deal of rejection in witnessing and even the falling away of some who have accepted the truth.

Only the Lord Reads the Heart

What does it take to convince someone of the Truth? What words can be said? What argument will answer their doubts or change the heart or prick the conscience to correct a chosen path or set of ideas? Only the Lord knows. Only the Lord calls and reads the heart. If the heart is open to the Spirit's influence, it will perform that which is intended to please the Lord. If the heart is not open to Scriptural guidance, nothing can be gained by beating on the ears of the hearer.

Jesus told His followers in Mark 6:11, "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet . . ."

The Apostle John closes his letter with an interesting thought to consider: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written everyone, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" — John 21:25.

John knew that if what was written to convince an individual was not sufficient, then even considering every act which Jesus did that was not included in the writings would not make a difference. The world still wouldn't contain or accept the accounts that should be written.

It's encouraging to note that Jesus was not accepted by all, Paul couldn't convince all, and John tells us that there is sufficient material in the Scriptures and epistles to work with in our witnessing. Beyond that, nothing can change a person's viewpoint if they are not willing to change. Fortunately, the Lord knows our efforts. He is the judge of the hearts of those who hear as well.

Repentance from Dead Works

How do other translations render this passage? New English Bible—"repentance from the deadness of our former ways;" William's—"repentance from works that mean only death;" Wilson's *Diaglott*—"reformation from works causing death;" Living Bible—"trying to be saved by being good."

Was the Apostle referring to the sins which are common among men morally? Surely the repentance from such is good. To continue in the practice of immorality would lead to the death of the New Creature. Early in a Christian's walk not only are these sins

acknowledged, but then turned away from at every moment with all possible strength the New Creature can muster in fighting the world, the flesh and the Adversary. Actions which are sinful by nature are to be left behind and progress towards righteousness is expected. However, considering the readers of this epistle being Hebrews, knowledgeable of the Mosaic Laws, it may be more likely that Paul was referring to the works of the Law. Works of the Law could not bring life to anyone.

"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." —Hebrews 7:19

No one was able to keep the Law perfectly except Jesus. What should have brought life had the Jews been able to keep it, actually became condemnation to death by the failure to keep it.

To the Jew, Religion was Life

To the Jew, religion was life. The forms of religion, the character of the traditions, the daily aspects of life were all one and the same. Where a Jew ranked in the Jewish community directly related to his effort to keep the law. But the Jew converted to Christianity had a new perspective on life. Accepting the fact that the Law could not bring life, the conversion included repentance for having relied on those works which led to death. This was not an easy step for individuals to take.

Arguments among the apostles on these points led to the decision recorded in Acts 15:28-29, "For it seemed good to the holy spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well."

Accepting these points was hard for many Jews. The discussion among the Hebrews was often centered around how the Law and their former lifestyle would now fit into their new found faith in Christ Jesus. It became such an overpowering theme, that it could easily dominate their gatherings and become a point of contention. The studies would start out on one theme and soon it would work its way into this area and continually consume the time and energy of the brethren. It brought the progress of the brethren to a near standstill. What should have been decided early in their Christian walk was holding them back from growth in other areas. On one hand was a persistent viewpoint only to be met by a stubbornness on the opposite side. It was time for Paul to wake them up to the fact that their time was being consumed on issues of the milk, keeping them from the meat necessary in their spiritual growth as New Creatures.

Strong Convictions Often Bring Intense Disagreements

Times have not necessarily changed. Discussions on matters of truth can become tense at times because the truth means so much to us. Where there are strong convictions there

can be very intense disagreement. To the Jew, religion was life. To the Christian, our faith . . . our religion is to be life, also. "For me to live is Christ . . ." (Phil. 1:21)

Paul wanted the Christians in the early church to grow and not stop on points which stunt that growth. If we find our studies constantly becoming a sparring arena for opposing views slowing down our Christian growth, remedies must be implemented to relieve the pressure and allow continued harmony and growth. How can this be done?

One suggestion is to have the opposing views presented in a symposium where there is freedom from interruption and an opportunity to express the two sides calmly and in the best light possible. Then allow for each individual to decide on the matter for himself and move on. Having exhausted the two sides of an argument, the leader can cut short further discussion for the benefit of the whole in the interest of tolerance and Christian love for one another.

Paul's aim was the growth of the brethren. It was time to move on from milk to meat. It was time to move on from the first principles, "not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works."

Faith Toward God

Have faith in God.—Mark 11:22

Contributed

On this side of the veil, when we but dimly see God and his wondrous plan and that through a mirror dimly, faith becomes the greatest commodity we can offer to God.

The scriptures unequivocally declare that without faith it is impossible to please God. This principle has been the one requisite in all God's dealings with his people from the beginning of man's experience on the earth. Adam was required to have sufficient faith in his maker to implicitly obey him, but he failed to exercise his faith. Abraham, the father of the faithful, because he believed God, left his home and dwelt in tents the remainder of his life. So great was his faith in the goodness and righteousness of God that at God's request he was willing to sacrifice his most beloved son.

Moses, through faith, left wealth and fame and fortune to cast his lot with a slave people. And, the list continues of those who pleased God only because of their great faith in him and, through their faith, obtained a good report. So it has been with the entire church down through the age. They too, like the ancients are required through faith to sacrifice everything, even life itself to obtain that future better country, that is, a heavenly, city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God the new Jerusalem of which they will be pillars in the great antitypical temple.

Faith Is Substantial

Although often baffling to many, faith is not an ambiguous, undefined feeling of well being or happy euphoria. If this were the case, when the first winds of strife and trouble assailed us we would feel that our faith had deserted us. Faith is something substantial, something real, something that grows and increases as Paul expresses in Romans 1:17: "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith," and 2 Thessalonians 1:3, "that your faith groweth exceedingly."

In Paul's great discourse on the living examples of faith he defines faith as the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This implies knowledge and understanding because something that has substance is tangible and real and requires evidence or proof that is based on logical and reasonable premises. How could we have faith in God if we did not have sufficient proof that he is good and can be trusted to carry out all that he promises?

God does not ask man to merely believe on an emotional basis. This is evident from the fact that mankind has been endowed with great reasoning abilities and is capable of deducing from the known the unknown. God always appeals to man through his sense of reason and does not ask him to suspend belief in the impossible and unfathomable. (Isa. 1:18) To become acquainted with his character and plans God has given man his two

harmonious books nature and revelation. Chiefest of these books is that of revelation the Bible. In the Bible's pages are contained the logic and evidence of his justice, love, wisdom and power and his reasonable loving plan for all. This is our basis of our faith and love toward him.

Faith Requires a Basis

Many possess the necessary proper heart condition that is a prerequisite to faith; but, as the Apostle Paul informs us, there must first be a basis for faith and that this is acquired through an external source, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). One example is shown in the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-39) whom Philip found reading from the book of Isaiah. When Philip asked him if he understood the particular passages he was reading he answered, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" Following Philip's explanation that Jesus sacrifice was the propitiation for the sins of the world, it did not take him long to see what his course should be. The eunuch now understood from the scriptures some of God's plan of salvation and he now possessed a basis for his faith. This prompted him to arise and immediately be baptized.

Faith: A First Principle

In Hebrews 6:1 faith is listed as one several first principle doctrines of Christ. Here faith toward, or in God is one of the qualifications to a relationship with the great creator of the universe. Faith must grow so that it becomes to us a shield, a protection against the wily darts of the adversary. As Paul admonished the Hebrew brethren to leave these first foundation principles and to go on to perfection, to that perfection of character that will be united with a perfect, divine spiritual body on the other side of the veil; so must we today, otherwise an immature faith foundation will not see us through the trials that will test to the ultimate every Christian's true mettle.

Paul realized that these brethren had not progressed beyond the basic doctrines that he had originally planted in them. In fact, they were continually laying again this foundation, disputing various points and making no progress toward building the necessary superstructure that was necessary to make them more than conquerors. Paul, with great love toward these brethren, explained to them in the next several verses what the outcome would be if they remained in this infant stage of faith and belief and did not press onward to adulthood and maturity in Christ.

This constant questioning whether their faith was sure and that God would carry out his promises, left them in a constant state of unrest or unbelief. Continually attempting to rebuild the foundation of their faith, it left them an open prey to being convinced to the contrary. Paul argues that persisting in this dangerous path of doubt and fear could ultimately lead them to the utter ruin of their faith and the destruction of their life in Christ. (Hebrews 4:1) Paul also warned Titus of this dangerous course in Titus 1:9-11.

Without a sound faith the Christian cannot hope to progress from faith to faith as Paul exhorts in Colossians 1:23, ". . . continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not

moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard." It is every Christian's duty and responsibility to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope.

Here again Paul depicts faith as something tangible, substantial and not mere credulity, or a readiness on slight or uncertain evidence. Such ideas come from a misunderstanding of by those who in simplicity say that all one needs for salvation is to believe on the Lord Jesus. This idea is contrary to the scriptures.

Such a belief is often based on such scriptures as Acts 16:23-28. Paul and Silas, beaten and thrown into prison for casting a demon out of a woman were found in stocks praying and singing hymns of praise to the heavenly Father. During the night a great earthquake loosed their bonds and they and the other prisoners could have gone free. Because of this the jailor, saw that Paul and Silas were truly men of God, and this prompted him to ask, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The jailor was truly convicted of sin by his own conscience, and saw his need for salvation. Paul and Silas answer to his request for salvation was, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

But most overlook 32nd verse, "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." Here was the substance, the basis, the evidence for their faith. Believing on the Lord Jesus here implied more than just saying that they would blindly believe a person that Paul and Silas professed to worship. Their faith would first need a reason to believe on Jesus whom Paul and Silas claimed was the only name under heaven by which they might be saved.

Faith's Foundations

Jesus also refers to this foundation faith in Mark 11:22. Waking into Jerusalem a few days before his death Jesus saw a lone fig tree that, although in season, had borne no fruit. He said to it, "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever." The following morning they passed the same fig tree and Peter said, "Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away." Jesus seemingly inappropriate answer to this query was, "Have faith in God."

The apostles were well familiar with the symbol of the fig tree from Jeremiah and other scriptures and they knew that it represented the national existence and privileges of Israel. Their long cherished hopes had been that Israel would be restored to its former glory and position. Their understanding of the scriptures had led them to believe that the time was at hand for such a revival of Israel's hopes and they saw in the person of Jesus the one through whom these hopes would be realized. Cursing the fig tree seemed contrary to their dreams. Were their hopes all wrong? As later revealed to Peter on the road to Emmaus, they had the incorrect understanding of the time, manner and means by which Israel and through them, all mankind would be restored (Luke 24:26).

Jesus was attempting to strengthen their faith because he knew that at his death it would be sorely tested and especially on this point In attempting to strengthen them for the days

ahead he was in essence saying, Do not doubt what I have taught you, trust me and try to harmonize what I have taught you with what may not seem to be consistent with what you believe. Faith is the substance of things not seen and requires a firm belief so that what may seem contrary to what one firmly believes will lead one to search the scriptures and trust in God's word.

Mountain-Moving Faith

Jesus follows up this exhortation on faith by showing the power that faith can have when exercised that it could move mountains. Contrary to some today who believe that literal mountains are meant, they understood the common hyperbole, of removing mountains to mean the conquest of stupendous difficulties. A great teacher of that day was called by the Rabbis, an uprooter of mountains. He was urging them to retain faith in him and all that they had heard of him and seen him do ultimately he would remove all the seeming difficulties when he sent the holy Spirit.

Jesus told them, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Coupling these two events together he would have them know that their basic faiths in the promises of God to Israel were still sure and that he could restore life to the withered fig tree and the nation of Israel, and to all of mankind, but not necessarily according to their conceptions.

They had a basic faith in the scriptures and in Jesus ability to do all that God had promised, but basic faith is not matured faith, is not perfected faith. At one point the apostles asked Jesus, "Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5). Were they expecting a miraculous increase in their ability to believe anything? No, they were asking for a greater understanding of God's word whereby their faith might be increased. They were asking for their faith to be rooted and grounded in the sure word so that whatever trials may be theirs they would have the strength and ability to overcome them.

It is faith that overcometh the world and for us it will be a strong faith that will overcome the difficult trials and tribulations associated with this Day of Temptation and, if it were possible, deceive the very elect. All faith not based on the reality of God's word and plans and has not been woven into the heart as well as the head will fail because it will not be strong enough to endure this evil day. Will we be one that can persevere when we are called upon, like Paul, to die for our faith?

The Teaching of Baptisms. . .

"Wherefore leaving the doctrine of the first principles of Christ, let us press on unto perfection not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead words, and of faith toward God, of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." -- Hebrews 6:1-2 ASV

R. E. Evans

The theme text was written as part of a severe admonition to the Hebrew brethren. An admonition that declares *the teaching of baptisms* to be a foundation doctrine for all who follow Christ, is one of *the first principles of the oracles of God* (Heb. 5:12).

An event at Ephesus, as recorded by the beloved physician Luke in Acts 18:24-19:7, makes manifest the critical nature of this-teaching. Aquilla and Priscilla "expounded unto [Apollos] the ways of God more perfectly" because he knew "only the baptism of John." "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper country, came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples," twelve in all, who had also received the baptism of John. And Paul said "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

The account, no doubt, abridges Paul's labor. He must have spent many hours teaching the Ephesians. In summary, his message is clear.

There are two baptisms: John's baptism-a baptism of repentance, for the forgiveness of sin, a baptism to righteous living; and Jesus' baptism-a baptism with a much deeper, more significant meaning. For those Ephesians, and for all who would follow Christ, the baptism of John is not adequate. They must be baptized with the baptism of Jesus!

The Baptism of Jesus

Through the virgin birth, Jesus was crowned with the glory and honor of human perfection (Heb. 2:9). He was without sin (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5); yet, Jesus initiated his earthly ministry by being baptized by John (Matt. 3:1-15).

Since his baptism was for forgiveness of sin, John recognized the anomaly and refused to baptize Jesus. He complied only after Jesus' strong insistence. Why did Jesus insist? Why was he baptized?

These were, no doubt, the questions Paul discussed with the Ephesians. He knew the answers. Through the Lord's providence, he also taught by the written word; so, those answers are preserved for us.

"Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."-Romans 6:35 ASV

The Apostle indicated that the Lord's baptism carried a meaning much different from John's baptism-a meaning with two parts. First, the immersion into the water symbolized his death as a human being. Second, his raising up out of the water pictured a newness of *life*.

Peter concisely expressed this duality in his first epistle. Jesus at the Jordan, was put to death in *flesh*, but made alive in spirit (1 Peter 3:18).

Put to Death in Flesh: Jesus' Death

Crowned with human perfection and being without sin, Jesus did not, could not, die the death brought on humankind by disobedience. He did not die the Adamic death. The likeness, the nature of his death was sacrificial.

"Who [Christ Jesus], existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."-Philippians 2:6-8 ASV

Jesus' death was voluntary. He *humbled himself*, becoming obedient even unto death. His death was sacrificial!

The Church's Death

The Apostle's understanding of the first part of baptism could have come from Jesus' own words. "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished" (Luke 12:50, ASV).

These words, spoken just a few weeks before his crucifixion, point straight to his cross-a cross he declared all who follow him must take up. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matt. 16:24, ASV).

Jesus directly challenged his disciples to participate in his baptism. "But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink? or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (Mark 10:38, ASV).

So, in Romans, when Paul described the Church's baptism as a baptism into Jesus' death, he indicated, just as did our Lord, that the baptism of Christ meant dying sacrificially. The immersion into the water symbolizes this death. It was this sacrificial death that the

Psalms declared is precious to God. "Precious in the sight of Jehovah is the death of his saints" (Psa. 116:15, ASV).

Made Alive in Spirit: New Creation

The second part of the dual meaning of baptism reveals a new creative activity by God. "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, . he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17, ASV).

Anyone in Christ is a new creature. This creation is new in contradistinction to the creation that preceded it and differs greatly from it.

In God's old creation there are two realms of life-the physical and the spiritual, the earthly and the heavenly (1 Cor. 15:40). As Jesus explained to the Pharisee Nicodemus, these natures are separate and distinct. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6, ASV).

Neither the angels nor Adam and his seed had a prior existence. The new creation, contrariwise, is brought forth by changing the nature of already existing creatures-earthly human beings elected by God for this purpose.

Firstborn Among Many Brethren

Jesus was the first to undergo this change. "For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to *be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29, ASV).

He is to have many brethren-individuals chosen from the fallen human race and changed to conform to his image. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor. 15:49, ASV).

The Apostle was even more specific about this change. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:53, 54, ASV).

The life enjoyed by all of God's previous creation is conditional. Whether heavenly or earthly, it is mortal. Those of the new creation, on the other hand, are to put on immortality. They are to be partakers *of the divine nature*. "Whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4, ASV).

The second part of the baptism of Jesus, the raising up out of the water, symbolizes this *newness of life*.

Baptized into Christ: One Body

So, the dual meaning of baptism applies not just to Jesus but to all who follow him. The immersion into the water pictures a going into death—a sacrificial death. The raising up out of the water illustrates the quickening as a spirit being—a partaker of the divine nature.

Jesus is not only the firstborn of this class, he is preeminent. "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18, ASV).

The Apostle taught that whosoever is baptized into Christ Jesus is baptized into one body. They become a body member of the Christ, a body whose head is Jesus (Col. 1:18). "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit.. For the body is not one member, but many" (1 Cor. 12:13, 14, ASV).

Altruistic Baptism

John's baptism was one of repentance. The Jews baptized by John were concerned about their own sins. They were focused on self. Their baptism was egocentric.

Unlike those repentant Jews, Jesus was baptized as the Lamb of God for the sins of others (Isa. 53:7, 10; John 1:29). He was baptized for the benefit that would accrue to others. His baptism was altruistic. ". . . but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26, ASV).

In his first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul coined a phrase that described the altruistic nature of the baptism of Jesus. "Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?" (1 Cor. 15:29, ASV).

The *dead* in this phrase is used as a collective noun to denote the whole of humankind (Matt 8:22; John 5:25; Rev 20:12, 13). Baptized for the *dead, therefore*, is a baptism for all the human race, for Adam and his seed in its entirety. So, this phrase of Paul's is a very apt description of the altruistic baptism of Jesus. He was baptized for the sin of the world. He was baptized for the dead and dying human race.

The prophet's declaration that God's word will not return to him void (Isa. 55:1 1) bespeaks of an underlying purpose for all that God does. The new creation is not excepted. Paul confirmed this to the Ephesian brethren. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works" (2:10, ASV).

Jesus and all who follow him are God's workmanship, created for good works—they are baptized for the dead.

The Release of the Sins

It was these good works that Peter had in mind on the day of Pentecost. "And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every

one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the 3000 Jews who heeded his message and gladly remission [release] of your [the] sins; and ye received his word (Acts 2:41) were baptized to shall receive the gift of the holy Spirit" (Acts release the fallen creation from sin. 2:38, ASV).

Peter was entreating those Jews gathered around him that day to be baptized with Jesus' baptism, not John's-be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ. Jesus was not baptized for remission of his own sins, for he was without sin. So, when Peter told those Jews to be baptized with Jesus' baptism, it did not concern the remission, or forgiveness, of their personal sins. The Apostle was telling them to be baptized for the deliverance of humankind from sin, to be baptized for the setting at liberty the fallen creation (Luke 4:18). Peter anticipated the phrase coined by Paul. Peter was instructing those Jews to be baptized for the dead. The

The Church's Challenge

The event at Ephesus revealed that the new creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15) is contingent on Jesus' baptism. The baptism of John, the baptism to righteous living, is not sufficient! In the Gospel Age it is not enough just to live a *good life*. The Christian must be *put to death in flesh, but made alive in spirit*. It is crucial, therefore, for all who desire to be of the new creation not to be as the twelve Ephesians, nor as the Hebrews. They must not be ignorant of *the teaching of baptisms*. They must be baptized into Christ Jesus. They must be baptized for the dead!

The Laying On Of Hands

When Paul placed his hands on them, the holy spirit came on them, and they speak in tongues and prophesied. (Acts 19:6 NIV)

By Leonard Griehs

In the early days of the church, Paul took special steps to assure that the teachers he left with his churches would be properly fitted for their work. In Acts 20:28, he told the elders at Ephesus to "take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the holy spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God." Paul knew that for them to be effective, they must have a deep knowledge of God, and consequently would have a danger of being caught up in the evangelistic work at the expense of their inner life. He told them of their duty to both feed the flock and warn the flock. As Paul was leaving, he warned them of both external and internal problems in the church of future days, and cautioned those elders to beware of false prophets who would arise to try to lead the church at Ephesus astray. In verse 33, Paul exhorts them to self sacrifice and self-denial in their ministry to the church. We then read in verses 36 and 37 that "when he had thus spoken he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him," and sent him off to his work. This scripture perhaps best conveys the idea of the significance of the laying on of hands. The Ephesian elders were endorsing Paul's commitment and wishing him God-speed on his journey to Greece.

Their laying on of hands conferred a special association with Paul and a special recognition of him in the work of God. elsewhere in the new testament, we find this to be the most common use of the ritual.

Why was it done? There are seven instances recorded in the new testament of the laying on of hands. They supply the entire testimony of God respecting this early practice. As is so often the case, however, a few examples of a similar practice in the Hebrew Bible will help us to better understand this ceremony.

Old Testament Instances

In the Hebrew Bible the ceremony was used to impart a personal blessing by God's recognized spokesperson. In Genesis 48:14-16 NIV, we read, "But Israel reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim's head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left hand on Mannaseh's head, even though Mannaseh was the firstborn. Then he blessed Joseph, and said . . .the Angel who has delivered me from all harm, may he bless the boys; may they be called by my name and by the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac. . ." Here Israel (Jacob) delivered a blessing upon his sons from his deathbed, indicating that they would prosper in the promise he was given from God through the wrestling angel. Jacob recognized that the promise would be channeled

through his sons, and that they were each to play a special role in God's promise to bless all the families of the earth. He indicated God's choice for each son in the unfolding of the divine plan and gave them special abilities to assure their proper role.

Another instance of this kind of blessing occurs in Lev. 9:22, where "Aaron lifted up his hand toward the People, and blessed them . . ." Following the sacrifices of the sin-offering, Aaron raised his hand over the people to show God's acceptance of the Israelites. Aaron knew that the success of the sacrifices meant that God was pleased and had chosen to be with the children of Israel for another year in the journey toward the promised land.

A second use of this ceremony is recorded at the end of the book of Deuteronomy, when Moses recognizes Joshua as the one God had chosen to lead the children of Israel into the promised land. We read in Deuteronomy 34:9 that "Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him." At first reading, it might appear that Moses was passing on his authority and wisdom to Joshua. However, it was God, not Moses, who authorized Joshua for this great work. Joshua 1:2-5 says, "Moses, my servant is dead; now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all the people. . .there shall no man be able to stand before thee all the days of they life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." Moses foresaw God's choice for the rest of this great work, and by laying his hands on Joshua, recognized the continuity of the task that lay before him and indicated God's blessing upon him..

Another use of the ceremony appears In the worship of the tabernacle, where the sacrificer laid hands on the animal before it was slain, "And he(the sacrificer) shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him." This indication that the animal represented the person making the sacrifice was important in that what was done to the animal represented what would be accomplished by the worshipper. Later in the sacrifices we find the ceremony occurring with the "scapegoat," where the sins of the people were transferred by the laying on of hands upon the goat before it was sent into the wilderness. "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel . . ." (Lev. 16:21) an identification with the subject of the ceremony.

In summary, the laying on of hands in the Hebrew scriptures showed a blessing upon the recipient to carry on the work of God in executing the plan, or to associate the purveyor with the subject in a work that was to be done.

New Testament Instances

In the New Testament, we find the laying on of hands associated with three different concepts: healing, conveying the gifts of the spirit, and endorsing a worker chosen by God to begin a great work. The first two uses fall exclusively within the possession of Jesus and his apostles in the work of forming the church, a concept similar to the execution by God's patriarchs of conveying a blessing for the continuation of the work in

building the nation of Israel. The third concept closely resembles the Hebrew ceremony of association with the one receiving the laying on of hands for a special work.

Healing

Jesus and his apostles healed through laying on of hands. (Matt. 9:18; Mark 5:23, 6:5, 8:22-25; Luke 4:40, 13:13; Acts 28:8) Through this ceremony the divine power (holy spirit) passed from Jesus and his apostles to the beneficiaries for a specific purpose. Paul, also commissioned as an apostle, used his power to heal others (Acts 28:8), but was apparently God did not allow him to heal himself. This suggests that the purpose of the healing was as a sign to followers, not a way to escape the perils of the flesh. While we cannot deny that some today use "healing" to eradicate illness, we find that God authorized the use of healing for Jesus and his apostles as a sign that He was with them in building his church.

Gifts of the Spirit

In addition to the theme text, two other scriptures describe this practice: "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the holy spirit" (Acts 8:17-19); "Stir up the gift of God that is in thee, by the laying on of my hands" (2 Tim. 1:6).

The special gifts of the spirit, mentioned in I Cor. 12 were conferred through the laying on of the hands of the apostles. (They came spontaneously only in exceptional cases, as in Acts 2:4 and 10:45). In Acts 8:13-21, Simon Magus was unable to confer the gift he possessed to others and was reproved by Peter for offering money to obtain this power. The ability to pass on the gifts resided in the apostles alone. Even Philip, who was able to perform signs and great miracles, could not confer the gifts of the spirit, but needed to send for the apostles to do this. These incidents support Paul's statement in I Corinthians 13:8, that these "gifts" would fade away with the deaths of the apostles. However, those gifts of faith, hope and love which Paul declared would abide forever were not miraculous gifts, but "fruits" as he describes later in this same passage.

Endorsing a Worker For God

Four events show the most common use in the New Testament was to indicate consent for and identification with one chosen for a work.

"Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbyter."—1 Tim. 4:14

Timothy was very special to Paul. When Paul lay in his prison cell in Rome, months before his death, it was Timothy he called upon to help him. Others deserted him, but Timothy stayed faithful to Paul to the end, enough so that Paul referred to him as his "son" (2 Tim. 4:9-13. Paul had selected Timothy as his closest associate. Paul and Barnabas would part ways, but Timothy never leave. Paul had likely been present at

Timothy's baptism and had laid hands on him to grant him the gifts of the spirit. When Paul went to Jerusalem (Acts 21:15-19), Timothy was already a close associate.

At Jerusalem, James, the half-brother of Jesus and leader of the Jerusalem church, recognized the special role Timothy would play in Paul's ministry and convinced the other apostles that they should give their special endorsement to Timothy. They did not choose or authorize Timothy, but merely recognized him as the one chosen by God for a special work with Paul, a knowledge conveyed to them through a special "prophecy" from the Lord.

"Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them" (Acts 6:6). Deacons were representatives of the church in Jerusalem who would be responsible for the more mundane matters of the church: administering to the poor, taking care of the widows, arranging for the distribution of food among the brethren. The office was created as a special support to the church which still exists today.

These deacons were not being commissioned to preach through the laying on of hands, nor were they given the gifts of the spirit. They were especially selected to execute the arrangements of the church. One of those selected, Stephen, would later become the first of Jesus' followers to die in his footsteps. The laying on of hands showed approval for those chosen in executing the task at hand and showed association with them in that work.

"In the Church that was at Antioch . . . the holy spirit said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work where unto I have called thee. And when they had laid their hands on them, they sent them away." (Acts 13:1-3)

This at first sight seems strange, for Barnabas and Saul had been doing a work at Antioch for over a year! When this command came for Peter to lay hands on them, it was not to commission them for work, but to recognize their ordination by God for a special work and a personal association with that work. (See Acts 9:20-29 and 11:26). The laying on of hands denoted representation, just as in the case of the old testament offerers who laid hands upon the animal before it was slain, indicating that it represented them. Thus the congregation at Antioch associated themselves with these two representatives entering the field work. Later Paul and Barnabas returned to the church at Antioch to give a special report of the work done (Acts 14:26, 27; 15:3). It was a way for the brethren at Antioch to give their special blessing to these two early missionaries and tell them "God speed; you are representing us in your work."

"Lay hands hastily on no man, and be not partaker of other men's sins." (1 Tim. 5:22)

When Paul sent a letter to Timothy, he was wrestling with many problems in the infant churches Paul described this in most solemn words: "Besides those things that are without, there is that which presseth me daily, the care of all the churches" (2 Cor. 7:5, 6). Although Paul was a great evangelist, he had little time to solidify the churches. He

depended on others to do this pastoral work. His admonition to Timothy cautioned the young disciple about being too hasty in endorsing the work of others in the church and to assure that they were supporters of the message that Paul had preached. Paul said there were many who would usurp the teachings he had brought to the church. If Timothy showed his support of an individual through the laying on of hands, he was associating himself with the teachings that person proclaimed. What a lesson for our own day in the choosing of those who would represent us before the congregation! Paul cautioned Timothy, "be sure that any you endorse represent your own thoughts, for you are associating yourself with him."

Application to Today

The custom of laying on of hands to indicate representation is generally not practiced in today's church. Those churches that do practice the ritual have changed from the custom followed in both the old and new testament. Rather than showing association and identification, the practice has become part of an ordination process in authorizing one to preach. However, this was not the practice of the early church. Laying on of hands, which is no longer used to impart a gift of the spirit, and which no longer is used to indicate representation, is perhaps best avoided by those attempting to follow the admonition of scripture. The misunderstanding has caused confusion which is better done without. Many use it today to imbue subjects with supposed supernatural abilities or to give power in a kind of apostolic succession process. Perhaps the better way is to pray in the congregation for one who enters a work. In this way we assure that it is God who is recognized as the authority to choose whom he may for his great work of salvation.

The Resurrection of the Dead

My soul cleaveth to the dust, quicken thou me according to thy word.—Psalms 119:25

By Robert Davis

The ransom is often called the most fundamental doctrine of the Bible, the hub to which all scripture in spoke-like fashion attach. However, the full operation of the ransom requires that a resurrection take place, making the latter doctrine even more fundamental. The resurrection would be the rim of the wheel, without which the hub and spokes would be useless.

Carrying the analogy further, the plan of God represented in the wheel is essentially made up of many elements that connect the death of Christ with the hope of eternal life. Paul makes this point in 1 Corinthians 15, the "resurrection chapter": "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ is not raised; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (vs. 16-18). The ransom, even the whole plan of God, is inoperative without the resurrection.

Christ's victory over the grave became the first true resurrection in the history of creation and provided a guarantee to the Church that God indeed has the power to resurrect. Many have endured terrible suffering as followers of the Lord. What good would all this have been if the dead rise not, otherwise Paul states in 1 Corinthians 15:32: "let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die". It's Christ's resurrection that gave comfort and assurance to the Church as they struggled through their darkest hour: "if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more. . . ." (Rom. 6:8-9).

The Sleep of Death

The Bible does not detail the mechanics of a resurrection, unless something can be drawn from the symbolic language of Ezek. 37:7-9. However, threaded throughout scripture is the thought of renewed life after death often called the resurrection. The death condition is metaphorically called a sleep (John 11:11-14, Acts 7:60, 1 Kings 2:10). Christ's return is pictured as the morning because it is the beginning of a new day of God's beneficial rule (Mal. 4:2) and a time when everyone arises from the sleep of death (1 Thes. 4:16). The sleeping saints are initially aroused and are with Christ at the resurrection and judgement of the world (Rev. 20:1-5, Mat. 25:31-32).

The Soul Not Immortal

The symbology of sleep communicates the correct understanding of the death state, unconsciousness (Ecc. 9:10, Psa. 146:4, Psa. 6:5). By this symbology the scriptures offer an rebuttal for the false doctrine of the immortal soul. The Bible never equates

immortality with the soul of common man, only with the saints, and then only as a gift for faithfulness (Rom. 2:7, 1 Cor. 15:53-54). This proper understanding of death forms the basis for a good understanding of how the resurrection operates.

Adam was the only human formed from the elements of earth (Gen. 2:7). Eve was apparently created using biological material from Adam, perhaps in a method akin to genetic engineering (Gen. 2:21). The remainder of mankind came through procreation. The combination of Adam's body with the breath or spirit of life created a synergism of a living soul. Death mirrors this creation process. The spirit departs from the body, returning to God from whom it came, and the body returns to its earthly elements, resulting in the elimination of the soul (Job 34:14-15, Eccl. 12:7).

Possibly the spirit that returns to God contains the unique "data" of each individual can be compared to computer information on a removable disk. The resurrection of an individual could be a recreation after the pattern of Adam. The original body had passed to dust so a new one, either spiritual or fleshly, would be created. The individual again comes to life when the (unique?) spirit is returned to the body and he becomes a living soul again. Whatever the exact process is, we know the resurrected fleshly body will be in its intended perfected state. Job intimates that the flesh will be fresher than a child's and will have the beauty and vitality of youth (Job 33:25).

Resuscitation Is Not Resurrection

The resurrection is different from the miraculous resuscitation to life that performed by Jesus, Peter, Elijah, and Elisha. In these cases no recreation of the body was necessary since it had not returned to dust and without the application of the ransom they soon returned again to the sleep of death. The Bible never called any of these miracles a resurrection. When Jesus heard of Lazarus' death he announced that he was going to awaken him (Greek: *exupnizo*, to arouse out of sleep) (John 11:11). Upon arriving at Bethany Jesus told Martha that Lazarus was going to raise again but Martha mistook his meaning by saying: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:23-24). Jesus indicated that he was going to revive Lazarus from the dead while Martha mistook him to be referring to **THE** resurrection, an event commonly held among the Jews to be the raising of all the dead at the last day (the culmination of this present evil day).

The Greek word for resurrection used in the New Testament is *anastasis* (Strong's 386), literally meaning "a standing up again." Also, the word is translated once each from the Greek words *egersis* (Strong's 1454) and *exanastasis* (Strong's 1815). The Old Testament writers understood the being more deeply considered during the Hellenistic period with the realization that the resurrection would a single, dramatic event. The developing Rabbinical schools during this time no doubt focused upon the resurrection teachings of the Old Testament.

The scripture reveals two sects of Jewish thought regarding the resurrection during Jesus' ministry. The Sadducees constituted a small minority of politically-minded upper class

Jews that did not believe in any resurrection at all (Matt. 22:23) while the Pharisees (who Paul called the most exact of all sects, Acts 26:5) believed in a future resurrection of the just and unjust (Acts 24:15). The majority of the people held the Pharisaic opinion, as is common among Jews today. While the Jews before Christ understood that the resurrection would include the just and the unjust, they did not comprehend a spiritual resurrection.

There is only one mystery that is called such in scripture—it is the mystery concerning the Church, true and counterfeit. Christ brought life and immortality to light by revealing the mystery God had planned long before (Eph. 3:5, Rom. 16:25); that God will call a body of faithful people to receive the almost incomprehensible blessing of the immortal divine nature (1 Peter 1:4). The Christ, head and body, is the only part of God's creation that was planned "before the foundation of the world" (with the one exception concerning the spilling of the blood of the prophets—Luke 11:50). Therefore, the development of Christ and the Church was the primary objective for the creation of the earth and maybe even the universe. It is conceivable that the main objective of all God's creation is to develop a close-knit family of beings existing on his plane.

The resurrection is the time when this long planned-for creation of the body of Christ occurs. Thus the resurrection has a spiritual component for the church as well as a natural component for mankind. Revelation details a first (spiritual) resurrection and intimates a second (fleshly) resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6).

The First Resurrection

The contrast drawn between the Church's resurrection and the resurrection of the "the rest of the dead" is the Church's immunity to the second death. They received the immortality of the divine nature and became incapable of dying a second time. When one considers the wonders of God's creation, from the creation of this massive universe with its complex and unfathomed laws to the birth of a child who will develop into a highly complicated organism in the likeness of God, one is amazed that God has the power to even surpass all this by the creation of another immortal divine being like himself! Truly Paul's words are not lost when stating that he was seeking "the POWER of his resurrection" (Phil. 3:10).

The resurrection of the world is accomplished by the death of a perfect man Jesus to cancel the penalty of death brought upon all by the sin of the perfect man Adam (1 Cor. 15:21, 22, Rom. 5:17-19). They are raised with the same selfish, indifferent heart they died with so a period of rehabilitation is required.

Resurrection of Just and Unjust

The first and second resurrections are also called the resurrection of the just and the unjust for this reason (Acts 24:15). In John 5:28, 29 Jesus states that the just will come to a resurrection of life since they have already proven worthy of life through faith, while

the unjust will come to judgement. (The KJV has "damnation" but the Greek word *krisis* conveys more a thought of trial than of condemnation.)

This judgement is illustrated in Matthew 25:31-46. Here all nations are gathered before the returned Lord Jesus Christ and all his holy angels in a judgement setting. The "holy angels" give strong reference to his glorified body, the saints (compare Jude 14, 15; Rev. 20:4; 19:11-14). Therefore, the good people that receive everlasting life are not the saints, but rather are the ones who performed well in the judgment day, which can last up to a thousand years (Psa. 90:3-4).

Apparently even though the path to righteousness will be straight and broad like a highway and Satan's deceptive, corruptive influence will be removed (Isa. 35:8-9) life in the Millennial Age will not be totally easy, for there are still many in adversity that require help. The statement "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" in Revelation 20:5 shows how mankind will not inherit eternal life until they had successfully passed judgement.

Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:12-54 presents a wonderful defense of the belief in the resurrection of the dead. He stresses the human-to-spiritual resurrection because he was speaking to those that had the heavenly hope and also because it was a new concept. The idea of a common man, Jesus, or his common followers obtaining the nature of the divine must have been totally foreign. The Jews had nothing like it, and the pagan Romans and Greeks could only conceive of Kings as ones who could approach divinity status (perhaps this is why the Greeks rejected the resurrection of the dead, Acts 17:31, 32). Paul states the existence of a spiritual body, just as much of a body as our natural bodies, but different in glory. He also illustrates varying degrees of glory which implies various levels of glorification given to the saints (compare Luke 19:12-19).

Jesus' Resurrection Body Not of Flesh

Many fall into error by believing that Jesus rose from the dead in his body of flesh, not discerning Paul's words regarding the necessity of having a spiritual body to gain immortality (1 Cor. 15:48-50, 53). In verse 39 Paul implies that as birds, land animals, and fish all have bodies adapted to the element in which they live, so likewise the spiritual body must be adapted to the spiritual realm. Paul clearly states that the resurrection of the dead (the first resurrection) requires the putting off (not the transforming of) the fleshly body and putting on the spiritual body. He says that Christ was made a life-giving spirit in verse 45. The primary proof offered for the fleshly resurrection of Christ is his appearance to Thomas in his crucified body after his resurrection.

Jesus allayed the disciple's fears of seeing a spirit, or ghost, by identifying himself as not being one. The key to understanding the nature of Jesus at that moment was in the comment "a spirit hath not flesh and bone as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39).

The scriptures use blood as a symbol of life. Jesus gave his life for the world; the crucified flesh of Christ did not have the life that was already given for the ransom. The Bible says that the life is in the blood (Gen. 8:4, Lev. 11,13-14, Deut. 12:23). The term "flesh and blood" is always used in scripture to describe living natural man (Matt. 16:17, Gal. 1:16, Eph. 6:12). The only other time "flesh and bone" is used (Eph. 5:3) the phrase is omitted by pre-sixth century manuscripts. Given these facts Jesus was probably telling us that the body in which he had appeared is not the living body of Jesus but only used as graphic evidence of his resurrection for Thomas.

The Resurrection of the Saints

The resurrection of the saints happens soon after the return of the Lord: "for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16-17). The three events described—the Lord's return, the raising of the sleeping saints, and the raising of the living saints—from their scriptural context, could all happen in short order or could be stretched out over years. The common misconception of the rapture assumes the former, but other scriptures indicate a period of time occurring between the raising of the sleeping and living saints. For instance some argued with Paul that the resurrection was past (2 Tim. 2:18) but how could they have attempted this claim if it was commonly held that all would be instantaneously "raptured" at the event?

The spiritual resurrection is the doorway to a face-to-face relationship with the Father and the Bridegroom. If our hearts burn for this experience then we must burn off the dross of the heart as John says in 1 John 3:2, 3: "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. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"—Matthew 5:8.

Eternal Judgment

Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come. - Revelation 14:7

Contributed

Although the scriptures expressly state that God is the judge of all (Heb. 12:23), this is in a general sense, for they also attest: "For the Father does not even judge any one, but has given all judgment to the son" (John 5:22 Diaglott). Even here two exceptions exist as evidenced by additional testimony from Holy Writ. These exceptions are Lucifer and a class Paul calls "the elders" (Heb. 11:2). These claims shall be substantiated subsequently.

Directing our attention again to the supreme judge, the Father, we note some scriptural designations which he has caused to be written regarding himself. These establish the basis for all his judgments: "For the righteous Lord loves righteousness . . ." (Psa. 11:7); "For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth. He loves righteousness and judgment . . ." (Psa. 33:4, 5); "Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee!" (Psa. 71:19); "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face." (Psa. 89:14); "The works of his hand are verity [truth] and judgment; all his commandments are sure" (Psa. 111:7).

Seven Judgments

Having established this basis, we read in Proverbs 2:8, "He keeps the paths of judgment, and preserves the way of his saints." There is more than one path of judgment. Within the revealed divine arrangement we note seven distinct classes of beings, all intelligent, who are judged eternally by or through divine power. The righteous class of spirit beings who did not sin during Noah's day could be considered an eighth class or category. However, for purposes of this study, these are not included. The seven classifications (though we only have space to consider three), and the order which we understand their judgments occur, are as follows:

1. Lucifer
2. The elders of Hebrews 11
3. Our Lord Jesus Christ
4. The elect church
5. The great multitude
6. The fallen spirits
7. The world of mankind.

Each of these seven had a path of judgment separate and distinct from the others, excepting the elect church and the great multitude who walked the same path of judgment until the path of judgment of the elect church is complete. The remainder of the spirit

begotten become the great multitude (Rev. 7), having missed their opportunity of joint-heirship with Christ (Jer. 8:20; Matt. 25:1-13; Rom. 8:17). These experience "great tribulation" to prove them fit or otherwise for service *before* the throne (Rev. 7:14, 15; 1 Cor. 3:15).

The Judgment of Lucifer

Lucifer, one of the morning stars (Job 38:7; Rev. 22:16), depicted symbolically as the prince of Tyre, was "full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty" at the time of his own creation (Ezek. 28:12). God anointed him as the "cherub that covereth," entrusting to him the care of Eden, "the garden of God" (Ezek 28:14, 13). Perfect in his creation, Lucifer was originally without stain, without spot, without sin, "until iniquity was found in thee" (Ezek. 28:15).

When was iniquity found in Lucifer? We believe it was not at the time he was placed over the garden but after Eve's creation, yet prior to her temptation. Lucifer's position as "caretaker" was by God's appointment (Ezek. 28:14), and all of God's works are perfect (Dent. 32:4). Additionally, as Paul points out in Heb. 7:7, the "lesser is blessed by the better." Why would there be a cherub placed over Eden if it was not intended by God to be a blessing to the earthly creation? A fallen spirit, though more powerful than a perfect man, would not be "greater" than a perfect man if he had the loss of divine favor. Lucifer was intended to be an angel of blessing, but he corrupted himself and became, instead, "a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that bites the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward" (Gen. 49:17).

What induced Lucifer's fall? Apparently circumstances coupled with ambition. God had stated: "It is not good that the man shall be alone: I will make a help meet [suitable] for him" (Gen. 2:18).

Upon the woman's creation, Lucifer likely recognized a pair of propagating, intelligent dependents were in his care. If he could be their master instead of God, then he could, among other things, "be like the Most High" (Isa. 14:14). The conception of such ideas gave birth to the sin of rebellion. Here the rebellion was developed in the mind of Lucifer. Similarly, our Lord during the forty days in the wilderness, was presented with terms or conditions whereby he could also rebel. Jesus refuted each of the suggestions as inappropriate, thus incurring no blemish to his perfection. But the seeds of rebellion were conceived in Lucifer's mind. Their growth was rapid and the stain of iniquity became complete. Lucifer: "son of the morning," had fallen into sin.

The Fall of Lucifer

How could Lucifer have fallen in sin before he tempted Eve? Is not sin complete only when the conceived notion comes into being and the act is performed? "No!" The deed or act is only the outward manifestation of the notion inside. Two scriptural references manifest the divine mind on this matter. Matthew 5:27, 28

clearly establishes the sin of adultery as occurring in the mind even though the woman was never physically touched. Isaiah 14:12-15 points out Lucifer's *heart* aspirations: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God . . ." It is here, without any reference, mention, or inference to the fruit tree episode, that God declares of Satan, "Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell [*sheol*, destruction], to the sides of the pit." Why? Because he sinned, and sin brings death (Ezek. 28:16; Rom. 6:23; James 1:15). Thus Lucifer had sinned in his heart prior to tempting Eve, an act which only outwardly manifested his sin.

Our Lord Jesus, as the Logos, witnessed Lucifer's fall, and so states in Luke 10:18, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." And fall he did! The scriptures seem to indicate Satan's "casting out" (he had already fallen from divine grace) was simultaneous with the sentencing of Adam and Eve. We read in Genesis 3:14, "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." Satan, no longer known as Lucifer, a "son of the morning," is now identified with a serpent. The curse spoken to this earthly serpent had far greater significance, for it symbolized Satan, the adversary of God.

From the scriptures we see Lucifer was judged directly by God many centuries before our Lord Jesus was given "all power in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). We also see that the path of judgment for Lucifer was not only short in duration, but occurred while he was "the anointed cherub that covereth" over Eden.

Judgment of The Elders

The elders of which Paul wrote in Hebrews 11:2 span a period from shortly after Abel's birth to the death of John the Baptist (Matt. 11:11, 13; 23:35; Heb. 11:4). These elders, men and women, believed God and thus pleased him, for "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6). These lived in faith and died in faith, "not having received the promises" of God "but having seen them afar off embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. "For they," continues Paul, "that say such things plainly declare they seek a country" other than the one which was their current host. "And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country," that is, one given them by appointment from heaven: "wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11:13-16).

Imagine a city being prepared for them! And why not? For they "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again [1 Kings 17:20-22; 2 Kings 4:32-37]: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance." Thus they did endure by faith "that they might obtain a better resurrection," inheriting the city prepared for them.

What kind of city is prepared for these people of such faith? A "holy city, the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven" wherein they shall be "judges as at the first and counselors as at the beginning" (Rev. 21:2; Isa. 1:26). These elders will not own the city, for the city is a government represented by the glorified Bride of the Lamb, the Church of the Firstborn (Heb. 12:23; Rev. 2:2, 9, 10). "The Law shall go forth out of Zion," representing our Lord Jesus with his associated Bride as the Lawgiver (Isa. 9:6, 7; Jer. 23:5, 6; 33:15, 16), "and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," the earthly city or government (Micah 4:2). Herein shall many come "from the east and the west" and "from the north and the south," "and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom" to be taught and to learn how to love the Lord their God with all their being, and how to love their fellow men as they love themselves (Matt. 8:11; Luke 13:29; Matt. 22:36-40) .

The judgment of these elders consisted of (1) recognition of and faith in the only true God; (2) living their life in obedience to God and his righteous principles; and (3) enduring the opposition and persecution which are sure to come from living their faith. Their trial was during their lifetime as they walked through "the valley of the shadow of death" until death seemingly swallowed them up in victory. But thanks be to God, he had found a ransom! (Job 33:24). Therefore, the bonds of death were not to hold them forever; only until the days of their appointed time in death were up and their change should come (Job 14:14). God will call each from the grave through the voice of his Son and they shall answer him (Job 14:15). Because all these, having obtained a good report through faith, having had so complete and thorough a testing as to assure God of their everlasting obedience to righteousness, yet not having received the promise, nor a full reward for their faith and righteousness, God shall grant them a better resurrection than the remainder of mankind. They shall come forth perfect and at that time receive the fruition of their hopes (Heb. 11:39, 40, 6, 35, 8-10).

Thus the path of judgment for the elders during their lifetime was a trial of faith based on works under severe conditions and by it they received a more noble reward than their fellow man, being judged directly by God.

Judgment of the Fallen Spirits

The fallen spirits are just as their appellation states, angels who have fallen. Genesis 6:1, 2 provides us a rather succinct account of their fall: "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair: and they took them wives of all which they chose." These actions look rather innocent. What would be wrong with God's sons taking to themselves wives? It is when we note the united testimony of the scriptures that we discern the truth of what really transpired here. The "sons of God" were not human sons, for Adam had lost his sonship because of disobedience (Luke 3:38). Consequently none of Adam's progeny had sonship with God either (Psa. 51:5). Therefore "sons of God" refer to the heavenly host (Job 1:6; 2:1)

Both Jude and Peter have written upon this subject. Jude 6 reads: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness until the judgment of the great day." 2 Peter 2:4, 9 we read: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [Tartarus, Diaglott] and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; . . . for the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust until the day of judgment to be punished." In short, the heavenly host had no authorization to materialize as men, take women as wives and propagate. Those that did sin; they were disobedient just as Adam was.

Disobedience is sin irrespective of who does it: However the path of judgment of the angels is manifestly different than for man, as represented in Adam. Adam was condemned to death, extinction, for his disobedience, whereas the angels did not receive a death sentence at that time. They were held in "chains of darkness," in reservation for the day of judgment. It was then that the final stage of their trial begins.

The Diaglott interlinear rendition of the Greek for 2 Peter 2:4, 9 and Jude 6 show the restraint was intended to keep the fallen -spirits until the day of judgment. That thousand year day is here. Are they judged wholesale while restrained, or are they given liberty as part of their judgment, to see if any have repented? Through the ages the wicked spirits have exercised an influence of evil over the nations (Dent. 18:10-12; 1 Sam. 38:7; Dan. 10:2, 12, 13); even opposing God's spirit-begotten children of the Gospel age (Eph. 6:11, 12). Even though they were restrained they still had a measure of activity, often in hours of darkness (1 Sam. 28:8).

The Four Winds

The harvest of the Gospel age concludes the selection of the spirit-begotten ones as permanent members of the church, the Lamb's bride. In Revelation 7:1-4 we learn of the four angels holding back the four winds of the earth until the completion of the sealing of God's servants in their foreheads. The restraint of these winds prevents the whirlwind of anarchy until the church is complete. These four winds may represent forces in the financial, social, political, and religious realms of society, all under Satan's control, much as is a marionette in the hands of a puppeteer. He is the god of this world and prince of the power of the air (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; See also Matt. 12:24; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Thus the wicked spirits are also under Satan's direction (Matt. 25:41). Once the four winds are no longer restrained, the whirlwind, resulting from the activities of the still-fallen spirits, as well as the pouring out of the last of the plagues (Rev. 16), will completely destroy this present social order.

Are they judged wholesale while restrained or are they granted liberty? We have seen from Revelation 7 that the spiritual powers are held in check until the church is complete, in selection, and then they will be loosed. Thus there appears to be no final decision regarding their judgment while restrained. So, when are they judged? Paul says the church shall judge angels (1 Cor. 6:3); not the righteous ones who never sinned, but the

unrighteous ones. It appears the full church in glory shall have the power of judgment with her head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The destruction of these wicked spirits, we believe, is to be immediate upon the finality of their sentencing, for no mention is made of preserving this evil host until the end of the kingdom, as Satan will be temporarily preserved for the purpose of a final test upon man. These wicked spirits are referred to in Revelation 11:18 with the phrase, "and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth" (See Rev. 7:1-3; 20:2, 3).

Supportive of this view of the wicked spirits being destroyed early in the judgment day are the responses given to our Lord Jesus when he cast out devils at his first advent. "Art thou come to destroy us?" (Mark 1:24). "I adjure thee by God, that torment [torture] me not" (Mark 5:7). What a blasphemous accusation being made of our Lord, that he would torture, instead of annihilating them at the right time! "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" (Matt. 8:29). They anticipated judgment, but not at that time.

Therefore, from the scriptures, we perceive yet another of God's diverse methods of righteous judgment: different from how he dealt with Lucifer, the elders of old, and even how he now deals with those he has begotten with his spirit; and lastly, the world of mankind.

This last path of judgment, in contrast to the former two, will be by our Lord Jesus Christ. Praise God he is able to judge righteously (Acts 17:31).

Present Truth

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.-2 Peter 1:12

By Carl Hagensick

The phrase "present truth" clearly means that body of truth which is revealed at any given period of time. The New International Version translates it, "the truth you now have" while the Revised Version reads, "the truth that you have."

In the days of Jesus and the apostles a great flood of interpretations were introduced. Most of them were new to their listeners. Even the officers of the scribes and the Pharisees marvelled at the way Jesus taught, exclaiming, "never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). So radical were the teachings being presented that even after his death witnesses were sought who said, "this Jesus of Nazareth . . . will change the customs which Moses delivered us" (Acts 6:14).

These teachings formed the hub of the new Christian religion. They were present truth to the readers of Peter's epistles.

Corruption soon entered in and Paul was led to say, "the mystery of iniquity doth already work" (2 Thess. 2:7). On his final journey to Jerusalem he warned the elders of Ephesus that after his death grievous wolves would "enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves men shall arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29, 30).

Within a few centuries there were vast differences between the truths Jesus taught and those being proclaimed by his professed followers. So bad did conditions become that John the Revelator prophesied of the Dark Age church that God would require nothing of them other than that they reject the teachings of the system which he called "that woman Jezebel" (Rev. 3:18-29) .

From time to time through the history of the Christian church great reformers rose upon the scene and brought the old truths back to light. Most centered their ministry upon one gem which they had rediscovered, though some found even more. Three such jewels were brought to light during the great Reformation: justification by faith, the supremacy of the Bible, and the priesthood of all believers.

However the Reformation spawned a great growth of humanism as well. By the end of the eighteenth century the Christian faith had reach a low ebb. The nineteenth century saw two significant events: the rise of the second advent movement, spurred on by the prophetic interpretations of William Miller, and a renewed dedication to Bible study, resulting in such works as concordances and Bible dictionaries.

This was the religious climate which gave birth to the Bible Student movement. The leading light of this movement was Charles Taze Russell of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. Moving from a deeply religious youth through an adolescent period of rejecting formal Churchianity, he came near the brink of agnosticism. He renewed his Bible studies. Out of these studies, rejecting the creeds of the past, grew a reform movement with more fundamental changes of biblical interpretation than any of those which preceded it.

The purpose of this article is to examine the unique differences between the truths brought back to light by these studies and those being taught in the churches, noting what Bible Students considered "present truth."

The Nature of God

One of the hallmarks of most Christian religions is the doctrine of the trinity, that there is one God who exists in three persons-the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Opposing this view has been the Unitarian belief in one God only, with Jesus being, as the Jews of old believed, the son of Joseph and Mary; and the Christadelphian viewpoint that Jesus originated as the Son of God only when he was born on earth, having no pre-existence as the Logos.

The Bible Student position is still closer to the Arian concepts of the fourth century, Jesus is, as he himself claimed to be, the Son of God (John 9:35-37). A son is of necessity younger than his father. As the Logos, or Word of God (John 1:1), he was the first and only direct creation of God (Prov. 8:22 RSV; Rev. 3:14), and is thus spoken of as the "firstborn of every creature," who was used as God's agent in creating all things (Col. 1:15-17).

When Jesus was born of the virgin Mary he "emptied himself," or surrendered the spiritual nature, to become fully human (Phil. 2:5-8 NAS). There never was a blending of two natures, a unique God-man being, but a spiritual being who divested himself of that nature to become human, and then died as a human to never again claim the body of flesh which he freely gave for "the life of the world" (John 6:51).

Having completed his earthly sacrifice at Golgotha, he was raised after three days as a spiritual being far above the nature he had before he became a man; raised to God's own nature, the divine (John 17:5; Eph. 1:21; 4:10; Phil. 2:9-11).

This distinction of natures is a central theme of interpretation in the Bible, for it also indicates that any human who would ascend into the heavens must likewise fully surrender his human nature (1 Cor. 15:35-50).

The Nature of Man

Contrary to the common fundamentalist belief in the inherent immortality of man, Bible Students believe that man is mortal and that immortality is conditional. No Scripture is found to suggest that man has a soul, much less an immortal one. Rather the Bible's

statement is simple, "And the LORD God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man **became** a living soul" (Gen. 2:7).

Inherent immortality belongs to God alone (1 Tim. 6:16). Jesus opens up a way for others to achieve immortality (2 Tim. 1:10), but it is conditional and must be earnestly sought (Rom. 2:7).

God alone having inherent immortality suggests that the immortal state is an essential attribute of his nature, the divine, which was achieved by Jesus at his death and is a goal of his true footstep followers (2 Pet. 1:4), a goal they will attain only at the death of their mortal bodies (1 Cor. 15:51-54).

The Nature of Death

Holding that man is inherently immortal poses a problem for sincere Christians-what

to do with a man after he dies. For the righteous the answer seemed simple, raise him to heaven. The wicked are assigned, according to many Christians, to a hell of eternal punishment. But man is not painted in blacks and whites. He appears in shades of gray. There is a lot of good in the worst of men and a lot of bad in the best of them. There are many noble non-Christians and many ignoble Christians. Then there are the babies who die, too young to have intelligently accepted Christ as their Savior, but too innocent to have committed crimes worthy of a fiery inferno.

The essential mortality of man handles these questions with ease. When a man dies, he dies-he goes out of existence, not eternally but awaiting the resurrection of the dead (1 Kings 2:10; John 11:11)

In the Bible death is described as a sleep. When a man goes to sleep he anticipates awakening in the morning. So it is with the sleep of death. We weep when our fellow man now dies in this night time of sin, but "joy cometh in the morning," when he is awakened from that sleep to live once more (Psa. 30:5).

The resurrection is a reuniting of body and breath, a recreation of the human soul (Gen. 2:7). Even the words "resurrection" and "regeneration" (Matt. 19:28) imply a new life, but if man is inherently immortal he already has life. These words only retain their natural meaning with the concept of death being defined as oblivion, lack of existence. While others may hold that the "soul" never dies, the Bible clearly states, "the soul that it sinneth shall die" (Ezek. 18:4). "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

Simply put, a living soul is biblically described as the union of body and breath. Death is the opposite. The soul dies by the dissolution of body and breath, and the soul is raised by reuniting body and breath.

The Philosophy of Atonement

Many Christians express belief in substitutionary atonement but the phrase means different things to different people. All agree that in the Bible salvation is centered around the crucifixion of Jesus. The scriptures describe that act as a "ransom" (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45; 1 Tim. 2:6). In the latter text the Greek word translated "ransom" is *antilutron*, literally meaning a corresponding price.

The correspondency here is not directly between all mankind and Jesus, but between Adam and Jesus (1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:12-18). Adam's sin in the garden of Eden was before any progeny were born to him and Eve. All of their descendants were consequently born in sin and shapen in iniquity (Psa. 51:5; Rom. 3:10). The death sentence was inherited by each generation of mankind.

Thus Jesus, dying also without progeny, but with the potential of producing descendants, corresponds to Adam. As Adam's death affected the entire race, so Jesus' ransom affects the same (Rom. 5:15, 16).

Since Jesus' death was for Adam it covered his transgression. However men have committed many sins which cannot be attributed to this inherited human weakness. The effect of living in a sinful world has produced many sad consequences. Man has begun to think of might as right, of black as white. These scars of living under the Adamic penalty will not be removed miraculously by the ransom. "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before the judgment; and some men, they follow after" (1 Tim. 5:24).

The Bible clearly states that all men, both Christian and non-Christian, shall be raised from the dead (John 5:28, 29). It is also dear that it is only in the name of Christ that one may be saved (Acts 4:12). Being raised from the dead is a result of the "free gift" of Christ's life, but maintaining that life requires not only acceptance of the Redeemer but compliance with his laws of righteousness. This is the function of Christ's kingdom. It will provide a highway leading men from sin to holiness (Isa. 35:8-10).

The philosophy of atonement also explains the reason for the long delay between the death of Jesus and the resurrection of the dead which that act guarantees. The delay is for the selection of a church, the bride of Christ, to share with him the work of uplifting the race, not only from the grave, but out of a condition of sin to one of righteousness. These are to share his throne in his kingdom reign (Rev. 20:4; 2 Tim. 2:12). They, along with him, will form a sympathetic priesthood, a royal priesthood (Heb. 5:1-6; Rev. 20:6). Their experiences now will prepare them for their future work of being the educators of mankind.

Consecration

The acceptance of Christ as a personal Savior and a dedication to the principles of righteousness are seen by nearly all Christians as an essential to salvation. For many, however, this means no more than a simple belief: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:3; 8:3,7). Many Christians connect this with the concept that once one has been saved there is no chance of losing that salvation: "once in grace, always in grace."

Quite to the contrary, the Bible's view of belief is not mere passive acceptance. It includes an active commitment to the service of God, a complete consecration of one's life to doing God's will (Psa. 40:8). Consecration is seen as a voluntary surrender of one's benefits under the ransom, the prospects of an earthly resurrection; thus one is in "jeopardy" of losing life forever if unfaithful to one's consecration vows (1 Cor. 15:30). Even Paul did not "consider to have made it his own" (Phil. 3:13 *RSV*), but feared that he himself might become a "castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27). It is little wonder that the Christian is admonished to be faithful "unto death" (Rev. 2:10).

The Christian commitment is not only to faithfulness but to learning from each of life's experiences those lessons which will be helpful to him in his future work of blessing the human race. They are assured that they will have no temptation "but such as are common to man" (1 Cor. 10:13). Commonality of temptation with their fellow men will qualify them to work side by side with their Master in his kingdom, for he has become a sympathetic high priest by the experiences he shared with his fellow man (Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:15, 16).

The Second Advent

It is understandable that the Bible Student movement, being an outgrowth of the adventist movements of the late nineteenth century, should have a deep interest in prophesy, especially with those concerning the return of the Lord. The adventist vision inspired an excited anticipation of this which event.

The Advent movement owed its growth to the intense speculation about the return of Christ fanned by William Miller between about 1829 to 1844. There was great disappointment when Jesus failed to return in the flesh to consume the world by fire. After he failed to appear new dates were set with the same expectations, all to be met with similar disappointments.

In the early part of the eighteen seventies, new interpretations were given to both the object and manner, as well as the time of that long-looked-for event.

THE MANNER: Noting such scriptures as John 14:19, "yet a little while and the world seeth me no more" and John 6:51, "the bread that I give is my flesh which I shall give for the life of the world" Bible students began questioning the concept of Christ's return in a literal fleshly body.

This was further bolstered by noting the many scriptural admonitions to "watch" for that event because it would come "as a thief in the night" (1 Thess 5:2-4). It was additionally noted that in his post-resurrection appearances Jesus used a variety of bodily forms. Some of these were unrecognizable even to those closest to him, as when he walked with two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus. It was concluded, therefore, that his second presence would be invisible and only made manifest to the watchers by the "signs of the times" (Matt. 16:3).

THE OBJECT: The prevailing concept as to the object of his return was to either consume or purify the earth by world-wide fire. For some, the earth had served its purpose since all the saved ones had been transported to heaven. For others, the purging fire was to be followed a thousand years later by raising "the rest of the dead" (Rev. 20:5).

In marked contrast the testimony of Acts 3:21 called attention to the fact that the return of Jesus was to be connected with "the times of restitution." The fact that earth was not to be destroyed by fire was attested to by such texts as Isaiah 45:18 where, speaking of the earth, the prophet writes, "he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited" and Ecclesiastes 1:4, "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever."

The thousand year period, or Millennium, was perceived as being the day of resurrection when "the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped" (Isa. 35:5), a time when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4). Further research showed that the phrase "and the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" was not found in the ancient manuscripts. This removed a barrier to the concept that the Millennium was for the upbuilding and education of the world.

THE TIME: William Miller had predicted the Lord would return in **1844**. Subsequently various other dates were established and as they failed, the entire concept of date-setting became an embarrassment to the Christian church. Time prophecy became a major focal point for reexamination. Noticing the correlation between the "days of Daniel" prophecy (Dan. 12), the "double of Israel" predicted in Isaiah 40:2; Jeremiah 16:18; and Zechariah 9:12, as well as the termination of a 6000-year period from the days of Adam, led the Bible Student movement to the conclusion that the Lord returned in 1874. This seemed confirmed as the various details of the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew 24 answering the question "what shall be the sign of thy coming [Greek, parousia, presence]?" (v. 3) became increasingly fulfilled by world events.

The Role of Israel

While many Christian churches, particularly the fundamentalists, saw the reemergence of Israel as being prophesied in the Bible, they viewed it as a field for conversion to Christianity. In marked contrast, the Bible Student groups perceived a unique role for the Jewish people after the completion of the church. They particularly noted the words of Romans 11:25 predicting that "blindness in part" would happen to Israel "until the fullness of the gentiles would come in." Therefore they did not see the conversion of Israel as a priority for the present but they believe God had planned that Israel's eyes would be opened to their Messiah at some time after "the fullness of the gentiles had come in."

Such texts as Isaiah 1:26, "and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning" were taken to mean that at about this time the ancient men of faith of Israel-Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others-would be resurrected to lead a converted Israel to become the earthly representatives of Christ's kingdom on the earth. They foresaw that Israel would have a traumatic period of trouble before this conversion, leaving but a "remnant" of faithful Jews to become "as a dew from the Lord" (MIC. 5:7). This relationship between the earthly and heavenly phases of the kingdom was supported by, among other Scriptures, Isaiah 2:3, "for out of Zion [the spiritual phase of the kingdom] shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem [Israel under their restored ancient prophets as the earthly phase of the kingdom]."

Church Organization

While certain other church groups practiced congregational forms of government, the Bible Student movement sought to go back to the forms of the early church. In the early church elders were "ordained" in every church (Acts 14:23). The word here translated "ordained" is the Greek *cheirotoneo* (Strong's 5500) which means literally "to stretch forth the hand." While such a word can be used equally for pointing to (or appointing) certain individuals, or the "laying on of hands" (1 Tim. 4:14), it more likely refers to selection by a voting process. Professor John Mosheim in his *Ecclesiastical History*, thus states that in the early church "the assembly of the people . . . chose rulers and teachers, or received them by a free and universal consent, when recommended by others" (p. 21)

Each congregation of Bible students is autonomous, selecting whom they will for their leadership. The congregation's recognition of the candidate's manifestation of the holy spirit in their lives replaces accreditation from theological seminaries, for it is the spirit of the Lord that is biblically the power that authorized or "anointed" one to preach (Isa. 61:1). Each congregation was to select their own order of service with no dictates from a centralized headquarters. Joint cooperation between congregations was encouraged and larger national organizations were formed only for printing materials, but not as arbiters of truth.

Noticing Jesus' admonition in Matthew 10:8, "freely ye have received, freely give," and comparing this with the various fund-raising policies of Christendom in general, a by-word of the Bible Student movement is its advertisement, "Free Seats! No Collections!" The leadership, or elders of the movement, serve voluntarily without pay and, in most instances, the congregations meet in modest rented quarters rather than using funds to build elaborate church structures.

These eight areas of difference are only a general review of this late nineteenth century movement. It was not viewed as a reform, for indeed the changes were so vast that it was totally separate from mainline Christianity. As Jesus said in a parable, when comparing his work and that of John the Baptist to the various Jewish reforms of the time, "No man putteth a piece of cloth onto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved" (Matt. 9:16, 17).

Hygienic Doctrine

If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness.—1 Timothy 6:3

A verse by verse study in the second chapter of Titus

Titus served as Paul's emissary for many years, accompanying Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem before being sent on specific missions to Corinth, Macedonia, Crete, and Dalmatia (present-day Yugoslavia). The epistle to Titus is written during his ministry in Crete, a large Mediterranean island some 65 miles south of the Peloponesian peninsula of Greece with a hundred organized cities.

The gospel probably found early roots there since Jews from Crete were in Jerusalem when Peter and the other apostles spoke on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11)

The epistle gives specific instructions from Paul to Titus on how to establish a church there and "to set in order the things that are lacking" (1:5). The first chapter deals with the selection of leadership for the churches, the second with the establishment of sound doctrine and the third with the maintenance of high Christian character need for the latter was specially stressed by Paul since the Cretans had a reputation for a life style of excess. Paul quotes the Greek poet Epimenides of Knossos, "The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies" and verifies it as accurate with the assertion, "this witness is true" (1:12, 13).

Sound Doctrine - Verse 1

"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine."

Doctrine is the subject of this chapter. Dr. Paul Brand, in his book *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*, likens Christian doctrine to the bone structure of the human body. It forms the rigid skeleton of beliefs which are fleshed out with extended interpretations and covered with skin to give us a complete moral code of conduct. All doctrines are not abstract intellectual concepts. A doctrine is simply a teaching. It can be a statement of the inner workings of God's plans or it can be a teaching of how to live the Christian life. Both alike are doctrines.

It is not uncommon to hear the word "sound" in our text used as if it had the meaning of "accurate, correct, or pure." The Greek word here translated "sound," *hugiano* (Strong's 5198), is the same word from which we derive our English word "hygiene." It bears the same meaning as the English, "pertaining to health, to be healthy." Except for the Pastoral Epistles it is used of physical health in all other biblical passages.

Perhaps the best translation would be "wholesome" as in 1 Timothy 6:3, "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness." It is significant that these "wholesome" (or hygienic) words are here combined with "the doctrine that is according to godliness," to godly living.

Paul, however, is not merely admonishing Titus to preach sound doctrine, but "the things which become," or befit, sound doctrine. He is describing the effects of wholesome teaching.

Four Classes - Verses 2 to 6

That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things. That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

The "aged men" here are to be distinguished from the "bishops" of chapter 1 (v. 7) and those of 1 Timothy 3. Here the term apparently means just what it says, those of older age. The first four items on the list for the aged men—sobriety, gravity, temperateness and a wholesome faith—while applicable to all, were particularly suited for the Cretan disposition. The latter two—charity [*agape* love] and patience—may have more direct reference to the disposition of the elderly (often through physical deterioration) to a certain crankiness. As Matthew Henry notes in his commentary: "Aged persons are apt to be peevish, fretful, and passionate; and therefore need to be on their guard against such infirmities and temptations."

The first three admonitions to the older women seem likewise related to the Cretan problems of excess, stressing a life of holiness and the avoidance of alcoholic excess and busyboding. The closing exhortation to this group is implied to the older men as well: to teach by precept and example the younger generation how to live a godly life.

Evidently the situation in Crete was not that different from that in nearby Corinth in that there was a tendency for the younger women to be assertive. Hygienic doctrine for them was largely related to domestic living, submission to their husbands as heads of the household, chastity, and attendance to their responsibilities in child raising.

A Living Example - Verses 7 and 8

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Paul had given a similar example in his epistle to Timothy: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12). Our conduct speaks so much louder than our words. A teacher cannot teach what he does not know. This was even more important in the community on Crete where the general life style was so different from that of the Christian.

Four ingredients of his teaching are emphasized: "unconspicuousness, gravity, sincerity, and sound speech." The word here translated "unconspicuousness" has more than thought of undecaying, that which is permanent. The Christian life style is not like a garment that is put on for holy days only, but must be worn in the daily concourse of life. His gravity would contrast sharply with the levity that was such a large part of the island life style. The sincerity was to show that the same principles which Titus was teaching to others were principles he applied to himself, that he was not a hypocrite. The word translated "sound" in this passage is closely related to that of the first verse of the chapter and has much the same meaning, "wholesome, upbuilding." It is just this kind of Christian teaching, then or now, which cannot be gainsayed and if taught by one who himself lives the same principles leaves its opponents speechless, "having no evil things to say of you."

Servants and Masters - Verses 9 and 10

Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

Not content with advice to the seemingly all-inclusive classes of older and younger men and women, Paul singles out one class for special admonitions. Society in New Testament times was not all that dissimilar from pre-Civil War America, though the conditions of servants was somewhat more elevated than that of the American slaves. It is probable that Paul speaks only of servants in this epistle because most of the believers were of this class, whereas in his epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians he also admonishes the masters of the servants (Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1).

It appears from this passage that some of these servants served in more than menial capacities and were, what we might call in our day "white collar workers." This may be why he stresses that they do not purloin, or embezzle, from their employers, but show strict accountability—"good fidelity." In this way they are "adorning" the gospel, showing its fruitage in their lives.

Taught by Grace - Verses 11 and 12

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

Herein lies the secret of the "sound doctrine" which Titus was to commend to the Cretans, the real teacher would be "the grace of God that bringeth salvation." Being saved was not a matter of current attainment to Paul but a process which must be applied to purify the life. A condition of the salvation of which Paul speaks is a recognition of our own unworthiness. "Repent and be converted" was the clarion call to the prospective believer. Appreciation for what God has done for us must beget a determination to clean up our own lives. Elsewhere the same apostle writes, "I . . . beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Eph. 4:1).

Our society today is not that different from the hedonism which prevailed in Crete. We, too, live in a materialistic world where every sort of pleasure is within our grasp. Thus the admonition is timeless, to deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts."

It is not enough, though, to cleanse our lives of ungodly pleasures. We must replace them with a new style of life. If we fail we will be like the man of whom Jesus spoke who swept an ungodly spirit from his mind only to find it replaced by seven spirits even more wicked (Matt. 12:43-45). The three ingredients of our new life are to live "soberly, righteously, and godly." The first of these graces is basically that of self-discipline or restraint. Professor W. E. Vine says that it "it suggests the exercise of that self-restraint that governs all passions and desires, enabling the believer to be conformed to the mind of Christ."

Righteousness goes beyond soberness. If soberness is basically a negative grace, eschewing evil thoughts, words, and deeds; then righteousness is its positive counterpart, replacing the former activities with those which are governed by strict standards of justice.

Godliness is the third progressive step. According to Vine, it "denotes that piety which, characterized by a godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him." It is an added dimension to that of righteousness as love is an added grace to justice. Christ is spoken of as "the mystery of godliness" (1 Tim. 3:16.) His life added a whole new dimension to that required of the Israelites by God's law—the dimension of sacrifice. Since "God is love" (1 John 4:8), then godliness is living a life motivated by love. That apostle says again in 1 John 3:16, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

This godly life is not a matter for the future, but Paul urges Titus to ask his hearers to do it in "this present world," this "present evil world" (Gal. 1:4). The true Christian challenge is to live a godly life in an ungodly world.

The Incentive - Verses 13 and 14

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Such a radical change in life style requires motivation. Here we have it supplied. It is the anticipation of the second advent of Christ. It is at that time that the judgment of the saints is made manifest. It is then that they are redeemed from "all iniquity" and presented as a "peculiar people," or as the American Standard Version better phrases it, "a people for his own possession." The earmark of these followers would be that they would be "zealous of good works."

Verse 13 is sometimes used to support the concept of the trinity. Kenneth Wuest, in his *Expanded Translation of the Greek New Testament* draws attention to Granville Sharp's rule of the Greek which states that when two nouns are joined by the conjunction *kai* and only the first is preceded by the definite article both refer to the same thing. That is true in this verse. His conclusion, with which we disagree is: "that the Savior, Jesus Christ, is God, thus teaching his deity."

This conclusion, however, is based on the premise that God referred to in this verse is Jehovah. This is highly interpretative. The word for God, Greek *theos*, is also used of Jesus, as well as of angels, ancient judges of Israel, and even Satan, "the god (*theos*) of this world." It is the Son of God, and not God himself, who have a "glorious appearing (Greek, *epiphania*) predicted in the scriptures—the second advent of Jesus Christ. It is the hope of this appearing to which Paul refers in the epistle to Titus.

The Commission - Verse 15

These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

In this final verse Paul summarizes his commission to Titus. Not only is he to deliver the messages of "that which becomes sound doctrine," but he is to exhort, or urge, their following and to rebuke those who go astray. The "liberty" of the gospel was very attractive to the early witnesses of the Christian faith, especially for the Jews who had been under the bondage of the Law. Therefore it was necessary that strong admonitions be given in establishing new churches that the object of the gospel, to produce a character likeness to both God and Christ, be realized.

The hierarchical establishment of the early extension churches, such as those in Crete, was not meant to be a model for the age. Professor Mosheim, in his *Church History*, notes that as the individual new congregations developed they were to become autonomous from the churches which sponsored them and became responsible for their own selection of leaders and the maintenance of order and discipline. This made it even more important that, in the establishment stages, that there be sufficient education in sound doctrine, hygienic or wholesome teachings which would prepare them for the greater independence there were to have later.

While the age of Titus is not known, he may well have been about the same age as Timothy. Certainly he did not carry with him apostolic authority. He was an emissary of Paul and was not acting on his own initiative. Knowing this Paul admonishes Titus to not

let himself be despised by those whom he was sent to serve. It brings to mind the similar words he wrote in his letter to Timothy, "let no man despise thy youth" (1 Tim. 4:12).

Hygiene Promotes Health

Sound doctrine, then, consists of those wholesome teachings about the Christian life which are meant to keep the body of Christ, his church, in the best of health. They are the health food of the new creature. In other of Paul's writings they are contrasted with earthly teachings and striving over words and endless genealogies which breed strife and contention. How important it is for all God's children to be daily nourished by those doctrines of truth which can be applied in the Christian life and keep them strong in the Lord!

News & Views

PBI Meeting

The general membership meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute (PBI) was held on Saturday, June. 3, 1995 at the Mission Evangelical Church in Wausau, Wisconsin. Following is an abbreviated report of the meeting, submitted by James Caudle, PBI Secretary.

The meeting was called to order by the chairman, Tim Thomassen, opened with prayer; and the report of the election, held prior to the meeting, was given. Elected to serve as the board of directors for the fiscal year 1995-1996 were: James Caudle; Francis Earl; Alex Gonczewski; Carl Hagensick; Loyal Petran; David Rice; Tim Thomassen. The secretary reported a slight decline in the membership during the fiscal year, from 167 to 164. There was one new member added during the year, three members died, and one resigned.

Officers were elected for the fiscal year 1995-1996 as follows: Board Chairman, Tim Thomassen; Vice Chairman, Alex Gonczewski; Secretary, James Caudle; Treasurer, Loyal Petran. By consensus of the Board, it was resolved to amend the bylaws and, if necessary, the operating guidelines, to establish the offices of Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer, and to provide the criteria for each office. Appointed by the board to serve in these offices were: Assistant Secretary, Francis Earl; Assistant Treasurer, Leonard Griehs. T. Jones was appointed as the Nominating Committee Chairman for the 1996-1997 election of directors.

The editorial committee for the 1995-1996 year was appointed by the Board as follows:

Carl Hagensick (Managing editor); David Rice (Asst. Managing editor); Francis Earl; Richard Evans; Leonard Griehs (News & Views editor). Additionally, Arlene Jones was appointed as copy editor.

A vote of appreciation was given to the many volunteers who assist in the production and distribution of the Herald.

We request that you be diligent in renewing your Herald subscription. Please check the mailing address on your cover to determine when your subscription expires and be sure to renew. This saves us much time and expense. Also, don't forget that the Herald makes an excellent gift for a Christian friend. A subscription form is included elsewhere in this issue.

Books Reprinted

The Portland Area Bible Students have reprinted some out-of-print books that are valued treatises from Bible students of the past. The reprinted books, with a description of each, are given below:

Great Pyramid Passages, by John and Morton Edgar. John and Morton Edgar were among the first to explore the Great Pyramid and to write about the meaning of the passages. They were frequent lecturers on the pyramid in the early 1900s. (1000 pages), \$10

Faith's Foundations, by John, Morton and Minna Edgar. Contains the writings of the Edgars on a variety of devotional and doctrinal subjects.(361 pages), \$7

Pilgrim Echoes, by Benjamin Barton. In 1906, Barton engaged on a pilgrim trip to the British Isles. He spoke in the U.S. and Canada frequently until his death in 1916. This is a reprint of many of his discourses and studies. (511 pages), \$7

Notes on The Song of Solomon, by Anton Frey. Largely a verse-by-verse commentary with an appendix of symbols. (74 pages), \$3

Our Wilderness Wanderings, by Anton Frey. A series of discourses on Israel's wanderings and their application to the church. (43 pages), \$2

Notes on the Revelation of Jesus Christ, by Anton Frey. A compilation of the notes of C.T. Russell on Revelation, with some supplied notes by Frey. (252 pages), \$6.50

Thy Word Is Truth. A reprint of two books originally published in 1905 as references for colporteurs. The first is topically arranged with scriptures and quotes and the second is a compilation of scriptures by topic arranged by J.A. Bohnet (184 pages), \$5

Any who are interested in purchasing copies of these may write to the Portland Area Bible Students, PO Box 23232, Tigard, Oregon 97281-3232.

1996 International Convention

Hungary in 1996! The French Committee of Bible Students has recently engaged the excellent facilities at Miskolc (pronounced Mish-koltz) University, in Hungary for the 1996 International Convention. This lovely campus is located near the green, rolling hills of the countryside, 110 miles northeast of Budapest. College dormitory housing is more than sufficient for the entire convention, and prices are much lower than ever before. With the added bonus that Hungary is easily accessible from Poland, Romania and Ukraine, the convention should be large. Speakers from both India and Australia will be added to the convention. The convention dates are Sunday, August 4 through Friday, August 9, 1996. The total cost for a couple staying in the university dorm for seven nights and taking all 18 meals would be about \$150 per person. The cost at a near-by three-star hotel would be about \$265 per person. Bus transportation to and from the Budapest airport and Miskolc will be provided by the convention at an additional price. If you are considering attending the convention, please send a note to Michael Nekora, chairman of the North American committee, advising him of this. You will then receive information directly as further details become available. The address is: Bible Students International Convention, 1425 Lachman Lane, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272.

Report of India Trip

Dear Brethren

Here is my report on our recent trip to India. Since many brethren are interested in such things, I am submitting this to you for publication.

-Michael Brann

Four brethren from the United States visited India from May 8 to May 23. We visited several major cities in South India where a majority of brethren are concentrated: Madras, Coimbatore, Erode, Conoor, Podanur, Trichi, Manapparai, Mysore, Bangalore. The Indian General Convention was held in Erode May 12-14, with about 400 in attendance. There were two public meetings held, with the video *For This Cause* being shown at one of them.

Accommodations are quite different for most of the attending brethren when compared to the United States. Some stay in local hotels but many sleep on the floor of the main auditorium or up on the roof under the stars. They bring a simple mat or blanket and roll it out. One evening a few wanted a private study in Revelation on the rooftop. By the time we finished, we had to walk very carefully in the dark so as not to step on anyone as they lay on the roof and floor sleeping!

After the convention, we visited brethren in their homes and apartments. We were usually chauffeured around on the back seat of motor-scooters or autorickshaws for brief visits. Often we would discuss a

The overall view I have is that the brethren are spiritually healthy. Yes, there is much poverty, they have little in the way of Bibles and Bible study aids, but they have a sincere desire to learn the truth, to apply its principles in their daily lives, and are bold in proclaiming it to friends, neighbors, and coworkers. Many who are young and studying and have consecrated suffer persecution from the majority-Hindus and other Christians. They are usually passed over with the better jobs because of their beliefs. Often in school they are treated with contempt. Still they persist in the faith and testify to the grace of God in their experiences.

Although the brethren have little earthly goods, it is extremely rare that any ask or expect to obtain any money or gifts from visitors. In fact, we were somewhat embarrassed to receive so many little gifts from them—food, garlands of flowers, sandalwood, and other items which they so generously and lovingly offer. What they do request, if asked, is literature: Bibles of various translations, tabernacle charts, concordances, Bible dictionaries, cassettes of hymns, tracts and other Bible Student publications. They also enjoy visits from foreign brethren.

Editor's note: The report from Michael was quite lengthy *so* it has been edited for critical information. Anyone wishing to receive a copy of the entire report can contact the News & Views editor.

Around The World

Israel

With the opening of peace talks between Israel and Syria, there is a good chance to end 50 years of Arab-Israeli conflict. If vast obstacles can be overcome, there could be a comprehensive regional settlement. Peace between Israel and Syria would unlock peace between Israel and Lebanon, open up trade and diplomatic relations between Israel and the rest of the Arab and Moslem world and stimulate investment into the capital-starved economies of the region. Islamic extremists would lose some of the fuel that feeds their cause and Iran and Iraq would increasingly be marginalized by an unfolding new geo-political order.

-Financial Times, 6/20/95

After years of relying on its own weapons, Israel looks abroad for its armaments. A few months ago, the Israeli army decided to use surplus U.S. made weapons. This marked the end of an era. The decision signaled the profound erosion that has taken place in Israel's tradition of relying as much as possible on home-produced weaponry for its armed forces. Ze'ev Borten, a former director-general at Rasfael, the government owned armaments-development company, says that Israel is "going all the way in the other direction, toward total dependence. The military believes it can get almost everything it needs from America." "We aren't deserting the concept of self reliance because we want to. We simply realize that we have no other choice," says Reuven Pedatzur, professor of political science at Tel Aviv University.

- *Wall Street Journal*, 6/27/95

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and German Ambassador Franz Berele recently signed an annex to the Israel-German Social Benefits Agreement, which will allow Israeli citizens to have years spent in labor or concentration camps in eastern Europe counted toward German pensions or survivor's benefits.

- *The Jerusalem Post*, 5/95

Activists in Gaza are offering to organize staged demonstrations of 30 to 40 children for foreign journalists, according to a reporter for the Turkish newspaper Hurriyet. Correspondent Sabati Karakurt, who was recently in Gaze, said two men showed him the business cards of foreign journalists who had used their services. In addition to rock throwing children, they offered the Turkish journalist a demonstration of uniformed men for \$300. They also offered to set up an interview with Hamas or Islamic Jihad members, who would stand in a darkened place and discuss their activities.

- *The Jerusalem Post*, 4/95

A group of prominent Israeli rabbis and Halachic authorities headed by Israel's former Chief Rabbi Avraham Shapira and Supreme Rabbinical Court Judge Hagagon Rav Shaul Yisraeli have issued a statement declaring that "absolutely no Jew or government has the right or authority to declare, act, sign or agree to any concession of Israel's exclusive right and sovereignty over the Temple Mount." The rabbis were reacting to rumors which have been circulating that the Israeli government intends to relinquish part of the Temple Mount to Jordan and to the statement that "earthly Jerusalem" belongs to Israel whereas "celestial Jerusalem" belongs to Jordan. The statement says, "although our exile has lasted close to 2000 years, Jews never stopped coming to Jerusalem throughout the entire exile, and in our time we have merited that it has returned to Israeli rule. The holiness of the place and the Jewish right over it are eternal."

- *The Jewish Press*, date unknown

Jerusalem's mayor, Ehud Olmert, has unveiled the program for the city's 3000th anniversary celebrations which begin September 4, 1995 and will continue through December, 1996. The celebrations are supposed to mark the approximate time when King David and his men conquered the city. The program has elicited a very negative response from the European Union, Britain and the Vatican, which threaten to boycott the event.

-The Jerusalem Dispatch, May/June, 1995

Jerusalem today faces threats from its powerful spiritual appeal. Population growth, burgeoning traffic, rampant land speculation, development fever, and the Arab-Jewish political battle for control are all conspiring against its spirituality. Almost every element in Jerusalem's landscape is under attack. On the Mount of Olives, city officials recently refused to approve plans formally designating most of the area for preservation. In open spaces within the city and on its perimeter, plans for about 30,000 new apartment developments could erase the last remaining images of the Biblical landscape.

- Washington Post, 5/15/95

In the Annual Report on *Anti-Semitism in the World*, compiled by Tel Aviv University, the World Jewish Congress, and the Anti-Defamation League, it has been noted that violence against Jews is increasing worldwide, particularly violence with intent to kill. The report cites a growing collaboration between fundamentalist Moslem groups and the extreme Right, especially in Europe. For the third year in a row, Britain remained the most violent country regarding anti-Semitic and racist attacks, with nearly 50 incidents. Meanwhile, the former Soviet Union continues to grow more anti-Semitic, the Jews being blamed for post-communist economic hardships.

- submitted by Elva Lanowick

Christendom

In a move with potentially historic consequences, Pope John Paul said that he was willing to seek an accommodation with other Christian denominations on the future role of the papacy. The Pope made his offer in a 115-page encyclical "Ut Unum Sint" (That They May all Be One). In the document, the Pope said he realized that agreement between religions was an immense task, but he urged them to begin a dialogue. The Pope did not spell out his vision of a new role for the papacy but recalled that in the early church it acted as a moderator to resolve disagreements and preserve unity. Papal primacy -- recognition of the Pope's supreme authority over any unified Christian Church -- has been one of the most thorny issues. The Pope made clear that he would not accept a symbolic papacy without teeth and that Rome would have to hold the primary place among Christians because St. Peter, the first Pope (?), died there.

-Reuters News Service, 5/30/95

Scientists have dealt a blow to the idea that modern humans arose simultaneously in different parts of the world. Analyzing a gene on the Y chromosome of 38 men from all over the globe, they found no variation-and thus concluded that humanity's ancestors formed a small, concentrated population as recently as 270,000 years ago. Earlier studies reached the same conclusion by looking at a different sort of genetic material in women.

-Time, 6/5/95

A panel of the Church of England recommended that the phrase "living in sin" be abandoned and that the unmarried couples, heterosexual and homosexual, be more readily welcomed into Anglican congregations. Noting that "cohabitation is now common behavior before marriage," it said the church should have a more positive approach which involves a genuine recognition that some people choose cohabitation as a way of expressing their deepest commitments. About one-third of those who attend religious services in Britain attend the official Church of England.

-Washington Post, 6/7/95

Book Review

Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid. By Piazzzi Smyth. 664 pages.

In the third millennium before Christ, Egyptians built the Great Pyramid at Giza using mathematical and scientific laws which were not believed to have been discovered until the time of the Greeks in 700 B.C.E. or later. These laws displayed such sophistication and intricacy that men still search for the full explanation of how those early builders could have known such secrets. The Great Pyramid has stood at the margin of the great Sahara Desert as a silent witness for more than 4000 years. Although the pharaoh in whose reign the Great Pyramid was built, namely Khufu (Cheops), had a mortuary temple built adjoining the east side of the Pyramid and had three small subsidiary pyramids erected close to the base of the Great Pyramid, the classical historian Herodotus states that Cheops was buried elsewhere "in a subterranean region on an island there surrounded by the waters of the Nile."

Because no pharaoh was actually buried in the Great Pyramid, there has been great speculation by the scientific community as to why it was built. The empty sarcophagus inside is uninscribed and undecorated, and is too large to allow it to pass through the entry passage, suggesting that the sarcophagus was placed in the chamber during its construction, not when Cheops died. In fact, the Egyptian writers of the time refer to the chamber as "the Chamber of the Open Tomb."

Current fascination with the Great Pyramid occurs within the scientific community of university intellectuals researching the advanced mathematics of the ancients and also

occurs among the followers of the occult who claim to have achieved greater wisdom and personal power through contact with and study of the pyramids.

Bible students have long contended that the Pyramid was not built to house any pharaoh, indeed may not even have been built by the Egyptians at all, but perhaps by the Bible character Shem, one of Noah's sons that descended from the ark following the Biblical flood. These students have contended that the Great Pyramid was built to be a visual display of God's plan of the ages, and many books have been written suggesting the meanings of the various passages and features of the structure.

Piazzi Smyth (1819-1900) was one of the first to write on this subject in 1880. His publication became a talking point for many Bible students in the religious fervor of the early 1900 reformation in America. Smyth was Astronomer-Royal of Scotland. Smyth actually built on concepts introduced in the 1850s by a London bookseller, John Taylor. Smyth was convinced that the pyramids had a sacred origin and he and his wife traveled to Egypt in 1864 to verify the measurements of the structures. When he reported his findings in the title publication, he analyzed the "three keys" for grasping the mystery of the pyramids-pure mathematics, applied mathematics, and various revelations from the Bible.

Although his work went through stages of applause, revilement and reaffirmation, Smyth's many accomplishments provided the first systematic analysis of the ancient structures with modern scientific equipment. He was the first to unearth the rocky outcrop upon which the pyramid rested to obtain more accurate measurements of its perimeter.

Whether a reader focuses on the purely scientific of the pyramid or the purely religious, Smyth's work is a must for any serious archaeology student or Bible student. The original 1880 publication is almost impossible to find. However, the work was republished in 1978 in a limited edition by Crown Publishers. Although out of print, the diligent researcher can sometimes find a copy in used bookstores under the revised title, "The Great Pyramid Its Secrets and Mysteries **Revealed.**"