

The Herald Of Christ's Kingdom

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Shadows of the Cross

EDITOR'S JOURNAL

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.--Hebrews 10:1

It is customary for the March-April issue of **THE HERALD** to deal with material that is appropriate as meditations for the annual Memorial of the Lord's death which, this year, will be celebrated on March 30. It is with the desire that this season be spiritually rich for all of our readers as they show their appreciation for the death of Jesus and their desire to be a part of his body, that we put forth the articles in this issue on "Shadows of the Cross."

Jesus' death on Calvary is the hub around which all of the Bible revolves. The entire New Testament is based on this single event. The four gospels give the history of the three and a half year ministry that led to this death. The book of Acts and the epistles show the impact that death had on the nascent Christian church.

Not only the New Testament, but the Old Testament as well, is centered on this climactic event in the history of the world. Jesus said to the Pharisees, "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me" (John 5:46). Again, on the road to Emmaus, we read that "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). In a similar vein, the apostle Peter said, "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days" (Acts 3:24).

While many of the prophecies of the Old Testament, when speaking of the redemption of Israel, refer indirectly to the work of Christ, there were other pictures that foreshadowed the death of Christ directly. It is these pictures of the crucifixion of Jesus that form the theme for this issue of **THE HERALD**.

The first article *Messiah's Two Roles* gives an overview of the illustrations of Christ and the redemptive process used in the Old Testament. It is excerpted from a new book by Paul Mali entitled *The Bible as a Rising Civilization*.

One of the earliest indications of the death of a redeemer is shown at the time of the first recorded death in the Bible--that of Abel at the hands of his brother Cain. In *The Offering of Abel* the author looks at the origin of animal sacrifices and how these point forward to the sacrifice of Jesus for the whole world of mankind.

From time to time, one or another of our editors will disagree with a given point in an article. In this issue we are introducing a new feature in **THE HERALD** to deal with this type of situation. You will find a box in the above article under the title of *On the Other Hand* which gives that editor's alternative view. You will be noticing such boxes in future issues as well. We hope these will encourage the spirit of dialog on points of interpretation which may be open to more than one viewpoint.

Perhaps the most prominent indication of a redemptive sacrifice is shown in the well-known Bible story of *The Sacrifice of Isaac*. The sheer pathos of this narrative touches the hearts of all true Christians in its demonstration of the cost of redemption to both the Father and the Son.

A more obscure picture, also found in the book of Genesis, is the subject investigated in *The Butler and the Baker*. This article looks at the potential typical significance of the Egyptian prison experiences of the patriarch Joseph.

The same need of atonement was shown many times during Israel's wandering in the wilderness prior to their entrance into the promised land of Canaan. Three of our articles deal with this time period. *The Silver Sockets* show how the concept of a ransom was built into the very structure of Israel's tabernacle. It was in that structure that the priests of Israel offered those typical sacrifices year by year which are explained to us in the book of Hebrews. The most solemn of these annual sacrifices is examined in the article *The Sacrifice of Christ as Shown on the Day of Atonement*.

During these same forty years, Israel sorely tested the patience of Jehovah, their God. One of these tests resulted in a plague of serpents which decimated their numbers. It was only stayed with the erection of a brazen serpent on a pole which, when gazed upon, brought relief from the plague. *The Brazen Serpent* treats this event in the light of Jesus' application of it to himself (John 3:14).

Our "Echoes from the Past" feature in this issue duplicates the notes of a discourse given by Bro. F. A. Acheson at a Seattle convention in 1909. Entitled *Three Days and Three Nights* it suggests an interpretation of the "Sign of Jonah" given by Jesus as the only sign he would give to "an evil and adulterous generation" (Matthew 12:39).

The final article is our regular verse by verse study in one chapter of the Bible. It also concerns an Old Testament reference to the death of Christ. The chapter is Job 33 and the article is entitled *I Have Found a Ransom*.

Suffering Servant and King

Messiah's Two Roles

Paul Mali

Many have said Jesus is the torch for enlightening existing civilizations. But few have seen him as the torch for starting a new civilization. Jesus so often asked that his miracles and mission be kept secret. He also insisted to his disciples not to reveal he was the Messiah. Several reasons exist for this Messianic secret. For one, the miracles would overshadow and obscure his redemptive mission. For another, the miracles were to demonstrate qualities of kindness and mercy. The time had not come for these qualities to be for all people. For still another, the teachings and messages given by Jesus were more important than the miracles since miracles were temporary and teachings were permanent. Finally, the first part of the mission of Jesus was as servant. The second part of the mission of Jesus was as a king. Both parts had to be completed.

The coming of the Messiah with his mission, had been foretold in the Hebrew scriptures. The terms Messiah and Christ derive repeatedly from the Hebrew and Greek words meaning "the anointed one." Messianism was and still is a Jewish expectation. It was and still is a Christian expectation. It is the Messianic theme that binds the Old and New Testaments. Views of the nature and timing of the arrival of the Messiah varied among the prophets as well as the people. The Jews longed for the Messiah at the time of Jesus since the Jews were finding the Roman rule intolerable. They longed for the advent of a great national leader to reestablish Israel as an independent and prosperous state. When Jesus said "love your enemies" and "give the Caesar what belongs to Caesar," major disappointments resulted over Jesus being the Messiah. He did not sound like a conquering, military hero.

Christian theology has never been able to explain completely why Jesus, a Jew, should have come out of Judaism, unless of course, originally he was to be the Jewish Messiah, first for the Jews and later for the Gentiles. His rejection by the Jews has also been a rejection of the many Hebrew scriptures that foretold his arrival. We summarize here from the Hebrew scriptures a consistent and chronologically progressive series of texts which define the concept of the expected Messiah. Whoever would match the criteria of these scriptural texts would easily qualify as the Messiah.

1. A Seed--Genesis 3:15
"The seed shall bruise his head."
2. A Genealogy--Genesis 12:1-3
"In thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."
3. A Star--Numbers 24:17
"A star out of Jacob"--a great sign.
4. A Scepter--Numbers 24:17
"A scepter [a ruler] shall come out of Israel."
5. A Prophet--Deuteronomy 18:15
"The Lord shall raise up unto thee a prophet."
6. A Brother--Deuteronomy 18:15
"The prophet shall be from the midst of thee, of thy brethren."
7. A Redeemer--Job 19:25
"The redeemer shall stand at the last days on the earth."
8. An Anointed One--Psalm 45:7
"God has anointed thee."
9. A Falsely Accused One--Psalm 109:2
"They have spoken against one with a lying tongue."
10. A Messenger--Isaiah 6:8
"Here am I, send me."
11. A Peacemaker--Isaiah 9:6
"He will be the Prince of Peace."
12. A King--Isaiah 9:7
"The increase of his government shall never end."
13. A Seed of David--Isaiah 9:7
"Made of the seed of David."
14. A Governor--Isaiah 9:6
"The government shall be upon his shoulders."
15. A Counselor--Isaiah 9:6
"He shall be called wonderful counselor."
16. A Gentile friend--Isaiah 11:10
"To him shall the nations seek."
17. A Savior--Isaiah 19:20
"He shall send them a savior."
18. A Deliverer--Isaiah 19:20
"He shall deliver them."
19. A Servant--Isaiah 42:1
"My servant whom I uphold."
20. A Light--Isaiah 42:6
"A light of the nations."
21. A Despised One--Isaiah 53:3
"He is despised and rejected of men."
22. A Smitten One--Isaiah 53:4
"He was stricken and smitten."
23. A Dying One--Isaiah 53:12
"He poured out his soul unto death."

24. A Preacher--Isaiah 61:1
"Anointed to preach good tidings."
25. A Mediator--Jeremiah 31:31
"To bring a new covenant to Israel."
26. A Reconciler--Daniel 9:24
"To make reconciliation for iniquity."
27. A Sacrifice--Daniel 9:26
"The Messiah shall be cut off."
28. A Priest--Zechariah 6:13
"He shall be a priest upon his throne."
29. A Spoiled One--Zechariah 11:3
"The pride of Jordan is spoiled."

Additional Old Testament scriptures give strong evidence of the fulfillment of the Judaic Messianic expectations. He was to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2); He was to be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14); He would make a flight to Egypt (Hosea 11:1); He would make his appearance in the second temple (Haggai 2:7-9); He would work miracles (Isaiah 35:4-6); He would make a triumphal entry into Jerusalem riding upon an ass (Zechariah 9:9); He would be betrayed (Psalm 41:9); He would give a silent defense (Isaiah 53:7); He would be numbered with transgressors (Isaiah 53:12); He would have his hands and feet pierced (Psalm 22:16); They would gamble for his garment (Psalm 22:18); He would die without broken bones (Psalm 34:20).

The above Old Testament scriptural passages reveal three outstanding observations about the expected Messiah:

1. The Messiah is to be genealogically connected with the lineage of the Davidic monarch both physically and spiritually. This implies all the promise given to the Davidic lineage would be carried to and through the Messiah.
2. The Messiah is to be humiliated, mocked, rejected and killed. The Messiah, when he appears, would lose his life. But he would live his life as a suffering servant, preacher, teacher and miracle worker. He would be falsely accused, smitten and rejected by those whom he intended to serve.
3. The Messiah is to bring in a new age, an age of salvation and blessings both materially and spiritually for Jews and Gentiles. He is to be a ruler and king during this period for both Jew and Gentile. This Messiah would be a conciliatory means between God and mankind functioning as a priest and mediator.

The above observations of the Old Testament texts lead to the conclusion of a two-fold mission of the Messiah. The political (a king) and the spiritual (a suffering servant). These two different Messianic personalities have been a mystery for both Jews and Gentiles. There are those who only want to see their Messiah as a king and reject him as a suffering servant. There are others who only want to see him as a suffering servant and reject him as a king. Then there are those who see both functions. They see one person

with two missions, a suffering servant and a reigning king, but contexted in two different periods of time.

Thus, the criteria of the Messiah is clear. Summarily, only one person in history both past and present fits the above criteria in exactitude. This is Jesus of Nazareth. He would be one person with two comings. In his first advent, he came as the suffering servant to provide the redemptive price for a lost and dying world. In this period, he would teach the principles and precepts for moral and spiritual living. In his second advent, he would come as reigning king of a new era to usher in the age of peace, prosperity and spiritual regeneration.

The Offering of Abel

And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.--Hebrews 12:24

There was great anticipation east of Eden when Eve gave birth to her firstborn son. She aptly described her joy when she said, "I have gotten a man from the LORD" (Genesis 4:1). Every mother who has ever lived can relate to the pain and joy of bringing forth new life. Doubtless Eve was thinking beyond this event, back to her experience in the garden when the LORD not only pronounced her punishment for disobedience, but gave her a glimmer of hope for the future by the curse he put on the serpent. "I will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). Perhaps she felt that Cain would be the instrument that would bruise the head of the serpent as God had promised. But Cain was not the one to realize this hope. God's due time to fulfill this promise was far distant.

Some time later Eve bore another son named Abel. The two boys grew up together and prospered. Doubtless they played and fought with each other as most boys do. Cain grew in stature and strength and became a farmer of the land, while his brother Abel tended the animals and became a shepherd. This seems especially appropriate since Cain's name means "acquired" or "man of the earth," while Abel's name means "that which ascends." Based on the record, we realize that Cain was earthly minded and Abel was spiritually minded.

Doubtless their parents had described the experience of being cast out of the garden of Eden, for it was the most traumatic event of their lives. The separation from God that they experienced made them long for communion with the Almighty Creator. Over time these two young men felt a need to make offerings unto God. Perhaps this was an expression of duty love to God based on the blessings of the fruitage of both crops and livestock. Although they had to toil by the sweat of their brows, nevertheless the bounty of the earth was plentiful.

Offering Their Best

Naturally being a shepherd, Abel's tendency would be to present an unblemished animal offering. Perhaps Abel reflected on the account of Genesis 3:21 where "the LORD God made coats of skins, and clothed them" when trying to determine an appropriate offering. Why did God replace the covering of fig leaves on Adam and Eve used to cover themselves with a covering of animal skins? Was this an indication that God would have to intervene to provide an acceptable covering for the fallen flesh? Why did this covering involve the killing of animals and consequent shedding of blood? Reflecting on this experience, perhaps Abel realized that the shedding of blood was necessary for an acceptable offering.* This would be represented by the garments that God had provided his parents upon banishing them from the garden. Abel is listed in Hebrews as a hero of

faith so we can say with certainty that he was spiritually minded. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof" (Genesis 4:3,4). So each of the sons of Adam and Eve brought forth the best they had to offer. Cain brought an offering of the first fruits of the soil; Abel brought forth the firstborn of his flocks. Later, based on Jewish sacrifices, we realize that both grain and animal offerings were acceptable to God. So what was God's reaction to these offerings? "The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor" (Genesis 4:4,5).

Acceptable Sacrifices

How did Cain and Abel know whether their offerings were acceptable? The Genesis account gives no definitive answer. It is obvious, however, that all involved were aware of God's favor on Abel's offering and his disfavor with Cain's. We know that God communicated with both Cain and Abel, but the Genesis account does not tell us that he directly said anything to either of them about his acceptance of their offerings. Instead, he asked Cain, "Why are you angry?" (Genesis 4:6). At this point God's verdict on the offerings was already known.

We have a clue as to the acceptance of offerings based on later biblical events and the history of sacrifices under the law. We know that burnt offerings show God's acceptance or seal of approval. This is clearly laid out and prescribed by God himself in the sacrifices of the Tabernacle.

There is a wonderful account of the clear acceptance of an offering in the incident when Elijah faced the prophets of Baal. Elijah suggested that Baal send fire to consume their offering. Nothing happened. The prophets called continually upon Baal and still nothing happened! After repeatedly soaking his sacrifice with water, Elijah said, "Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." (1 Kings 18:37,38). It was clear to all present which offering was accepted by the true and living God. So we suggest that God used fire to signify his approval of Abel's offering. This would be an obvious way to consume the offering and show acceptance to all involved.

"Why Are You Angry?"

At first it seems as though God was surprised when he asked Cain, "Why are you angry?" (Genesis 4:6). In fact God was testing Cain; he was not cutting him off but rather giving him an opportunity to offer a more acceptable offering. God continued by inquiring, "Why is your face downcast?" (Genesis 4:6). Because God had not approved his offering, Cain was disheartened. Most likely Adam and Eve now looked more favorably upon

Abel and his offering, and this caused jealousy to erupt in Cain's heart. The Lord warned Cain of the results of the struggle of good and evil when he said, "If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it." (Genesis 4:7, New International Version) This was the first reminder of the consequences of the corruption of sin since the garden, and an extension of the statement, "the wages of sin is death."

Cain had already demonstrated his strong self will by not following the Lord's leading in bringing forth an animal offering. While speaking with God, he showed anger and distress. Despite an opportunity to make a more acceptable offering, he did not change. In Genesis 4:8 Cain's envy drives him to the murder of his brother, the first in a long tradition of killing that continues down to our day. Not only did this act show malice, anger, and jealousy, it was cold hearted. Only now was the full scope of the death sentence given in the garden coming to light. For the first time we have recorded the death of a man. The first recorded death of man came by the hand of another man, his own brother. Cain's heart was corrupted by deception when the Lord asked him, "Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9). But God knew that Cain had shed his brother's blood. As he said in Genesis 4:10, "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." God handed down a sentence for this vile crime in Genesis 3:11,12 where we read, "And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth." As a result, Cain was an outcast in the land of Nod. He was given a life sentence of being a vagabond.

We can not imagine the sorrow that our first parents must have felt at the death of Abel, their beloved son. Two nearly perfect hearts broken over the loss of both of their sons, one to death and the other to gross sin. Only now did they start to comprehend the cost of what they lost in the garden. Only now could they begin to understand the wages of sin, one son lost to the pit [*sheol*, grave], and the other banished from their sight. Only now did they have a hint of the necessity of blood to make an acceptable sacrifice. How great their sorrow must have been as they cried to God at this unexpected loss. Yet God permitted them to have this experience in the permission of evil. Even without the law, Adam and Eve knew that Cain's actions were condemned and he was banished from their presence.

A Deeper Significance

Is there a deeper significance to Abel's offering? Looking back at the scriptures, we see a pattern developing. Adam and Eve covered themselves with fig leaves, but God replaced these garments with animal skins and in doing so sacrificed the life and the blood of the animal. Abel's offering of the firstborn of his flock was acceptable while Cain's offering from the ground was rejected. Noah and the patriarchs offered animals to honor God. This tradition was expanded upon by the tenants of the law. As it says in Hebrews 9:12, the blood of goats and calves could not redeem man from sin. Finally, Christ gave his all upon the cross; it was not an animal sacrifice but a perfect human life for a perfect human

life. We can see in each of these examples, a more progressive and clearer picture of the sacrifice needed to redeem mankind from their sin-sick and dying condition.

Cain also made a mistake in assuming that since he was the firstborn, the favor of his parents would fall upon him. Since no one had yet died, the concept of inheritance did not yet exist. We see this theme repeated over and over again in the examples of Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, the Jews and the Gentiles. Each of these situations contrasted an earthly versus a spiritual inheritance, and in each case the firstborn lost his inheritance. God here illustrates the principle that he is seeking a spiritual class to become a part of his spiritual family. Once again, each of these situations is a picture of increasing clarity showing that unfruitful branches would be pruned and spiritual branches would be grafted into the vine.

We can learn many things from the lesson of Abel's offering. In order to offer a sacrifice that is pleasing and acceptable to God, we must seek and do his will. This means putting aside the tendencies and preferences of the fallen human nature. In doing so, our little all can be consumed upon the altar and be acceptable to God. Abel's offering was the second example of the necessity of the shedding of blood for the remission of sin. It was the first chapter in a long story of offerings, even down to the death and crucifixion of our Lord and Master at the hands of his Jewish brethren. The story of Cain and Abel illustrate a picture of a second group being offered a birthright, the arrangement whereby the church is invited into God's own family. What a wonderful picture of the unchanging principles of God. To God be the glory forever, AMEN.

Abraham, Isaac and Sacrifice

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.--Hebrews 11:17-19

As Memorial season approaches, let us consider another sacrificial experience of enormous proportions. God's request of Abraham concerning Isaac tested all the aged man's trust in his God. Abraham recalls God's faithfulness to him on past occasions and is encouraged to continue obedient. In later years Moses instructed his people to remember God's faithfulness to them in their time of need (Deuteronomy 8:1,2). Likewise, our heavenly Father allows memory to help us during trying experiences. As we look at the Abraham/Isaac experience, let us remember our Father's faithfulness to us.

Abraham

Not many have been asked to make a commitment to sacrifice like that required of father Abraham. Abraham was summoned by the heavenly Father for a test, the outcome of which would confirm God's covenant to establish his heavenly and earthly kingdom phases for all time.

Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born. Ishmael, his firstborn by Hagar, was approximately 14 years old. At the time of this communication between Abraham and God, Isaac was a full grown man, not a child. Josephus places Abraham's age at approximately 125. Although no definitive scriptural proof exists as to Isaac's exact age, if we consider that Isaac is a picture of Jesus in this and other experiences, it is perhaps reasonable to conclude that Isaac might have been 30 years of age. Jesus was 30 years of age when he began his full-time adult ministry.

Abraham has been styled the "Father of the Faithful." his entire life history as sketched in the Bible, was a life of faith, a life of trust in God and reliance upon the divine promises. This final test was terribly severe by any standard. Only someone in a very close relationship with God could be so trusting and yet bold in proceeding through the experience. It appears that the timing for this test was fairly abrupt, yet it prompted his swift obedience. He had a positive assurance of God's command. He knew it was not his imagination, and it certainly was not the whispering of witches or wizards, or a dream.

"The land of Moriah," specifically Mount Moriah, was to be the place of the burnt offering. We learn from 2 Chronicles 3:1 that Solomon's temple was to be constructed here, upon the very spot where Abraham and Isaac experienced this heart-rending trial. The rock upon which Isaac is supposed to have been bound was the location for the brazen altar in this temple.

The words "take now thy son, thy only son Isaac" (Genesis 22:2) gripped Abraham's heart. He had firm belief and trust that God would work out his plan of salvation and the blessing of all the families of the earth through his only authorized seed, Isaac. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said that in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." (Hebrews 11:17-19) Did Abraham tarry with thoughts of doubt concerning why God would destroy the only means by which "the seed" would be developed? No. He reasoned that God would raise Isaac from the dead to implement his purposes. What a grand demonstration of faith plus insight into the mind and heart of God!

Consider our heavenly Father's only begotten son in his heavenly preexistence, and how the entire success of the plan to save the entire race of mankind from death depended upon Jesus' total and complete submission to his father's will. If Abraham anguished over the potential loss of his only son, how much more did the Almighty experience anguish over the total experience of his son becoming flesh, suffering as a human, and ultimately being put to a shameful death. Yet the heavenly Father continued in the plan of salvation as did Abraham on the trip up Mount Moriah.

Isaac

Consider also Isaac, the role he plays, and his character. Since Isaac is a type of Jesus, we see similarities in his life and our Savior's. The name Isaac means "laughter" (Genesis 17:17). Abraham laughed at the prospect that he would have a son in his advanced years. Sarah, his wife, also laughed upon hearing this news (Genesis 18:12). Sarah laughed in joy at Isaac's birth; hence, he was named "laughter" or "joyous." How appropriate was this characteristic of **joy** as it applied to our beloved master "who for the **joy** that was set before him endured the cross, despising the same and set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2).

Isaac's peaceableness is demonstrated in his interaction with Abimelech who asked Isaac to "go from us, for thou art more mighty than we." Isaac who had accumulated considerable wealth and an entourage of servants decided to move his encampment away from King Abimelech rather than insist upon his right to co-exist. After this selfless decision to relocate himself, God blessed him with flowing water wells and a personal reiteration of the promise that "I am the God of Abraham, thy Father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake" (Genesis 26:24).

Isaac was thoroughly familiar with the promise of future blessings to come and was satisfied to wait for God to bring these to pass in his own way and in his own time. Similarly, our Master did not accept Satan's suggestion to bow down and worship him in exchange for all the kingdoms of the world (Matthew 4:8). Jesus knew that ultimately he would receive from his heavenly Father in a rightful manner the authority and power over the human race. What excellent examples to the spiritual seed of Abraham, which is

Christ, to wait on the Lord for fulfillment of his gracious promises. We should not run ahead of our heavenly Father, forcing matters to come to pass which are not what he would have for us.

Isaac was a full grown, 40-year-old man when Abraham selected a bride for him sight unseen. Isaac was not consulted. Abraham's eldest servant Eliezer was sent out to find a wife for him. Down through the Gospel Age our heavenly Father has used the holy spirit to draw to him those who have ears to hear through his son Jesus. Jesus' bride, the church, is being chosen by his father who submits them to the lordship of his son. The apostle Paul tells us, "We brethren as Isaac was, are the children of promise" (Galatians 4:28).

The Journey

Abraham rose up early in the morning and prepared for the trip. He took two of his young men along with Isaac for the journey. The account does not say whether Abraham told them where they were going. Abraham was focused upon the destination which God told him to approach and doubtless remembered the promise given earlier in his life (Genesis 12:18) of the blessings to come. While steadfastly determined to follow the path which God had marked out for him, he must have assuredly anguished over the inevitable activity of this trip. Once again, Abraham's seemingly limitless faith shored him up through this experience. Abraham must have thought that even though God would later raise Isaac from the dead, a space of time until his resurrection might intervene and change forever his life and Sarah's. Like his departure from his homeland of Ur, Abraham once again travelled a path unfamiliar in both geography and intent.

"This is the trial here. Can faith give up that much loved life, that son so long waited for, of whom it had been said "in Isaac shall thy seed be called." Is it not to leave this or that outward thing--this was done long ago, when we came out of Ur of the Chaldees--it is not the trial of weary pilgrimage, wandering from day to day without a certain dwelling place; it is not even the giving up of Hagar's son, the fruit of our own energy, to which our God now summons us. It is nothing less than to give up that life, to which God's promises have so long directed us--which he has given to be our joy, and from which he himself had bid us expect such blessings, not to ourselves only, but to others--in the assurance that as he gave it at the first, he will, though now he seems to take it from us, give it back again. Faith therefore shrinks not even here, but binds its own fruit, and gives it back to God, accounting that he, who can raise up the dead, will restore the precious life which he first quickened out of our barrenness.

"To do this, Abraham leaves his servants and the ass, even as faith, when it is tried, leaves behind it all those thoughts, which, like the servants, by their presence, might oppose the sacrifice. Thus it travels on to Mount Moriah, that is to ground chosen of God for faith that dares not choose its own crosses, or where or when it will endure suffering. But if in the journey of life, trial is appointed, so grievous as to threaten to crush that inward life which is so precious to us--be the trial, what it may, pain, contempt, or misrepresentation, or, what is far more trying to the elect, confusion of soul, inward

distraction, desolation, darkness--whatever it be, if it be God appointed, let us go onward, the spirit of sonship shall not perish. But let us take heed that we are not on the self-chosen ground.

"Self-chosen penances, self-inflicted pains, are not the sacrifice faith offers upon Mount Moriah; rather do they savor a horrid Moloch, to which even Solomon may vow, but whose worship is abomination. Great as those sacrifices may seem which are imposed by self will, much more precious are those which God calls us to. One day in which we yield our will to him is of more value than years of toiling self will. Such yieldings of our will are not safe. The life which is sprung from faith cannot perish thus." (*Types in Genesis*, Jukes, pp. 259 to 261)

It is likely that Abraham told no one the details of the trek they were about to make. The custom of the day was that the patriarch of the family made decisions in an autocratic manner and was accountable to no earthly person. Did Abraham mention anything to his beloved Sarah? No amount of the truth would have been a comfort to Sarah who did not, as the record indicates, have as large a measure of faith as did her husband.

Regarding the two men mentioned in Genesis 22:3, Jukes thinks they might represent our adversarial elements which oppose our consecration, the sacrifice of our fleshly interests for spiritual ones. Others have suggested that these servants represent earthly colleagues of Jesus, disciples or those who were the closest to him on earth. But in any event, when the situation became the most intense, the two were not permitted to follow (Genesis 22:5).

Types and Shadows

Genesis 22:4 indicates that on the third day of the trip "Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off." The ancient worthies named in Hebrews 11 all died in faith "not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

On the third day Abraham saw not only the site but more of the meaning of what was about to come to pass. He tells the two young men to stay with the ass while "[we] go yonder and worship, and come again to you." This aptly pictures our heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus as they proceed together toward Calvary. We may glean from the Scriptures that Jesus gradually learned the details of the total sacrificial experience which was to come just as the Isaac's information came incrementally.

Genesis 22:6 says Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and put it on Isaac's back. The three days of their travel represent the three plus years of Jesus' earthly ministry. The wood given to Isaac pictures the cross which Jesus physically carried to Golgotha, a symbol of the total service of Jesus to his Father and to us. The fire in Abraham's hand aptly portrays the burning trial about to engulf the offering.

Nevertheless, as Abraham and Isaac traveled "together" our heavenly Father was with his suffering servant even until his last breath. On the night before, Gethsemane proved very trying to our Savior causing him to ask for a change of this experience which might bring blasphemy upon the heavenly Father's name and character (Matthew 26:38-39; John 12:27).

Isaac's question concerning the lamb for the burnt offering did not go unanswered by his father. "And Abraham said, my son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering; so they went both of them together." Indeed the heavenly Father did provide the lamb. God sent his only begotten son into the world to be a propitiation for sins, a sin-offering. No other human being could furnish such a ransom price as Jesus Christ. A perfect man, Adam, had sinned requiring the perfect man Jesus, to offset the offense and furnish satisfaction to God's justice (Psalms 49:7; 1 Corinthians 22).

What discussion must have passed between the lips of father and son as Isaac allowed his father to bind him upon the altar for slaughter. Could not a grown man have overpowered his aging father if he so chose? Isaac was totally submissive in this act as he was in all his life. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7). We are given no evidence that Isaac commented or questioned his father beyond this point. It was imperative that this be a voluntary sacrifice to merit the efficacy desired by the Father. Jesus remained silent at the appointed time before Pilate allowing him to execute his declaration of death which would secure the divine plan. The Hebrew word translated "bound" is Strong's #6123 and means "to tie with thongs." Not only was Isaac physically bound, but a greater, more significant binding was placed upon his heart in submitting to his father's wisdom in this matter. Likewise Jesus was bound to offer himself for the sins of the world.

All of Isaac's hopes of an earthly inheritance perished at the moment he saw his father's hand with a knife about to slay him. Similarly the church shares Jesus' loss of all earthly hopes and ambitions due a perfect man as we consecrate to death all our life's ambitions, hopes, and dreams and accept the will of our heavenly Father in directing the balance of our lives, called "a reasonable service." Abraham did not need to complete the killing process; God stopped his hand. In God's eyes, the act was complete because the intentions of the participants, particularly Abraham, were perfect and pleasing to him.

We read that a ram was provided by God for the "burnt offering in the stead of his son." Location and topography suggests that a ram was a readily available animal. The ram reminds us of the two rams of the tabernacle sacrifices (Exodus 29). The first ram is a burnt offering of the Lord. Aaron and his sons lay hands upon it, it is killed and the blood is sprinkled on the altar. Moses cuts the remaining portion into pieces symbolizing the individuals in the collective body of Christ. The second ram is a ram of consecration. "Thus a ram in sacrifice became a symbol of the seed of Abraham, and an indication of a part of the process by which reconciliation of divine justice will be made on behalf of all the families of the earth, to permit of their being blessed by the messianic kingdom" (Reprints page 5180). We suggest that the lamb (Genesis 22:6,7) represents Jesus and the ram (Genesis 22:13) represents the church, the Body of Christ, who are sacrificed with

Jesus on the same altar to accomplish the blessing of all the families of the earth (Genesis 28:14).

Memorial Thoughts

This discussion of Abraham and Isaac reminds us of God's plan and purposes as well as his methodology. We are privileged to participate in his grand and loving plan to bless all the families of the earth. Only by our willing, compliant sacrifice will we be successful and hear "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21).

A Sadow of the Cross

The Butler and the Baker

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.--Galatians 3:13

Carl Hagensick

The first person in the Bible recorded to have been hung on a tree was not an Israelite. It was an Egyptian baker. The account is found in Genesis 40. Joseph had been unjustly placed in the king's prison on the false charge that he had assaulted the wife of his employer. The keeper of the prison treated Joseph kindly and placed him in charge of the other prisoners. The "king's prison" was a minimum security area where accused criminals were held pending a hearing on the charges against them.

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown has this to say of this type of prison: "Though prisons seem to have been an inseparable appendage of the palaces, this was not a common jail-- it was the receptacle of state criminals; and, therefore, it may be presumed that more than ordinary strictness and vigilance were exercised over the prisoners. In general, however, the Egyptian, like other Oriental prisons, were used solely for the purposes of detention. Accused persons were cast into these until the charges against them could be investigated; and though the jailer was responsible for the appearance of all placed under his custody, yet, provided they were produced when called, he was never interrogated as to the way in which he had kept them."

After a period of time, both the butler and the baker of Pharaoh had offended the king and were placed in the same prison. One night both of them had a dream and, when Joseph made his morning rounds, he noticed their sadness. Inquiring as to its cause, they each narrated to him their dream.

The butler related that in his dream he saw a budding and blossoming vine with three branches yielding rich grapes. He pressed them and presented them to Pharaoh in his cup. Joseph interpreted the dream to mean that the butler would be restored to favor with the king in three days.

Encouraged by the favorable interpretation, the baker then related his dream. He saw himself in vision as having three baskets of baked goods on his head and, as he walked, the birds ate all of the food in the three baskets. The three baskets, Joseph interpreted, also represented three days. But the fact that the birds, and not Pharaoh, was the partaker of their fruitage, meant that in three days the butler would be found guilty and hanged "on a tree" (Genesis 40:19).

The third day happened to be the birthday of Pharaoh, who called the two men to account. True to Joseph's interpretation, he reinstated the butler to his position and had the baker killed and hanged (see "Hanging on the Tree" below).

Joseph and Jesus

Joseph is a fitting representation of Jesus. As Joseph had a dream of his brother's sheaves bowing down to his sheaf and another of the sun, moon, and stars (his whole family) paying obeisance, so Jesus had a foregleam of his glory to come. As Joseph first must go through an exile in a strange land and there suffer abuse, so Jesus bore the infirmities of all when he came to earth. As Joseph was ultimately exalted to the second in command in all Egypt, so Jesus has been given "all power in heaven and earth" and sits on the right hand of Jehovah. As Joseph saved not only Egypt but peoples of surrounding countries from the seven-year famine, so Jesus brings a full deliverance from the famine-like conditions of six thousand-year days.

Bread and Wine

Two striking symbols also arise in this narrative. In the butler we see a servant dealing with wine. This is evident in his dream of serving Pharaoh the fruit of pressed grapes. In the baker we see the maker of bread. We meet these same two symbols on the last night of Jesus' life on earth when he introduces the memorial emblems of his coming sacrifice. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:26-28). Thus, as we see Joseph associated with bread and wine through the servants of Pharaoh, we see Jesus likewise identifying himself with the same two elements.

Jesus specified that the bread represented his body, his flesh. In John 6:51, again identifying his flesh with the symbol of bread, we find these words: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

The cup of wine, on the other hand, is identified with "the new testament," more properly translated "the new covenant." This becomes the objective of his death, to secure for all humanity a covenant relationship which will ensure life everlasting.

It is fitting in the story of Joseph, then, that the butler, or wine-taster, is given life while the bread-maker is executed.

It is also of interest to note that the settlement of the judgment with the butler and the baker was after three days. Likewise, it was three days after the "last supper," at the resurrection of Jesus, that the final significance of the two memorial symbols achieves its full reality. Likewise, the significance of the symbolic bread and wine, the development of the Christ, takes parts of three thousand years to be fulfilled.

Hanging on the Tree

Historians tell us that the method of Egyptian execution was beheading (see Wycliffe Bible Commentary). Therefore it seems the hanging of the baker on a tree was after he had been decapitated. Similarly, the Jewish law which called for criminals to be hung on a tree was only after they had already been killed by stoning. "And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear. And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance" (Deuteronomy 21:21-23). Neither the laws of Egypt nor of Israel permitted such a tortuous death as did the Roman law and as happened to Jesus of Nazareth.

The simple story of Joseph and the butler and baker show how from the earliest of times, there were foreshadows of the great atonement work to be accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth. How grateful we all should be that such an atonement was made and will never need to be repeated.

The Silver Sockets

And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.--Exodus 30:16

David Stein

Since the doctrine of the ransom is the foundation of God's plan for the redemption of mankind, it would seem logical to find some picture of it in the Tabernacle types.

Consider the following from Exodus 26:15-25 about the construction of the Tabernacle itself. Of particular interest are the silver sockets which served as the foundation of the Tabernacle: "And thou shalt make boards for the tabernacle of shittim wood standing up. Ten cubits shall be the length of a board, and a cubit and a half shall be the breadth of one board. Two tenons shall there be in one board, set in order one against another: thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the tabernacle. And thou shalt make the boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards on the south side southward. And thou shalt make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards; two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his two tenons. And for the second side of the tabernacle on the north side there shall be twenty boards: And their forty sockets of silver; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board. And for the sides of the tabernacle westward thou shalt make six boards. And two boards shalt thou make for the corners of the tabernacle in the two sides. And they shall be coupled together beneath, and they shall be coupled together above the head of it unto one ring: thus shall it be for them both; they shall be for the two corners. And they shall be eight boards, and their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board."

Each of the forty-eight boards of the Tabernacle had two tenons, cylinders of wood which plugged into two silver sockets and gave the boards a firm, unmovable foundation. Since each board had two sockets, the forty-eight boards required ninety-six silver sockets. There were four more silver sockets supporting the four pillars within the Tabernacle holding the inner vail dividing the Holy from the Most Holy. Thus the total number of silver sockets was one hundred.

The source of the silver used to make the sockets came from a special collection: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest

them. This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD. Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD. The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls. And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls."--Exodus 30:11-16

This collection which is associated with the numbering of Israel is called in verse 12 "a ransom for his soul" and in verse 16 "the atonement money." Both expressions remind us of the atonement price Jesus paid with his life. How was this "atonement money" used? The context tells us that it was to be used for the service of the Tabernacle. A more specific answer is given in Exodus 38:25-27: "And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation was an hundred talents, and a thousand seven hundred and threescore and fifteen shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary: A bekah for every man, that is, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for every one that went to be numbered, from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty men. And of the hundred talents of silver were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the vail; an hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket."

Most of the "ransom" and "atonement money" was used to make the hundred silver sockets! So they are scripturally associated with the twin concepts of ransom and atonement. The Tabernacle foundation beautifully connects with Jesus as the foundation of the church.

There is more to this lesson. We see that each silver socket weighed one talent. This weight or quantity of silver is associated with the value of a man's life. "And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king: and he said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver" (1 Kings 20:39).

This text specifically defines the value of a man's life as one talent. Thus the value of each silver socket is the value of a man's life. In the case of our lesson, the life can be none other than Jesus' life, especially as a ransom for the life forfeited by Adam--another man's life.

There is one more lesson that relates the silver sockets to Jesus. There are exactly 100 of them. The number 100 seems to be another symbol of Jesus. Further confirmation of the number 100 as a symbol identifying Jesus and the atonement he made for us may be seen in the firstborn redemption price. While they were in the wilderness, God made a change in the worship of Israel. Prior to the giving of the law, the firstborn male of each family eventually became the priest for the family. But under the Mosaic Law, God chose the

Levites as the priestly tribe. In this exchange described in Numbers chapter 3, we are told there were 273 more firstborn than Levites. Therefore a special redemption had to be made for them. Numbers 3:47 (also Numbers 18:16) specifies the redemption price: "Thou shalt even take five shekels apiece by the poll, after the shekel of the sanctuary shalt thou take them: (the shekel is twenty gerahs)."

The redemption price is exactly 100 gerahs (five shekels, 20 gerahs per shekel). So the number 100 is associated with the redemption price. It is even more intriguing when we consider that this same redemption price for a firstborn was given earlier as a lamb! (Exodus 13:13) Thus the Bible confirms that 100 gerahs equals one lamb and authenticates the symbol.

A further observation of the symbolic use of the number 100 is found in the gate of the courtyard. It contained an area of 100 square cubits (20 cubits wide by 5 cubits high). Similarly the door to the Tabernacle was 100 square cubits (10 cubits wide by 10 cubits high). In each case, the portals represent Jesus as the way into and through the narrow way.

Considering the ransom to be shown in the foundation sockets is consistent in yet another way. Each board fit snugly into the sockets by means of two tenons. The heavy silver sockets would act as a firm foundation for the Tabernacle. The boards would seem to be a good type of the individual members of the church. Our standing in Christ is two-fold. We are founded in Jesus by virtue of our justification--our standing is in his righteousness. Second, we are sanctified by his blood. Sanctification is the process by which we are set apart unto God's holy service and prepared for our station beyond the veil.

In the Bible silver is a general symbol of truth. The silver sockets not only depict the value of the ransom sacrifice--the perfect life of Jesus--but additionally suggest that this is a truth of precious importance to us if we are to honor our heavenly Father and make our calling and election sure.

Prophetic Epilogue

In Revelation 16:21 we read about mighty hailstones each weighing a talent bombarding the earth. This symbolic picture combines two symbols. Hail is water that has frozen. Water is a general symbol of truth. Hard water [ice] would seem to be a picture of "hard" truths, that is, truths that are not particularly appreciated because of the pain they cause. What truths might these be? Perhaps they would include truths associated with the value of life--the weight of a talent. By the sacrifice of his life, Jesus purchased mankind which makes him the legitimate ruler and king. The nations do not want to have their rulership terminated. But this prophecy and that of Psalm 2 indicate that Jesus, as the rightful king, will break the nations in pieces. This "hard" truth is not quickly accepted and is thus seen as a great plague.

If we make the general connection of the weight of a talent with the value of life, we might also see an extension to the truth about the value of human life in general which has been violated by rulers and governments to their shame during the whole rule of sin and death. They will have to learn the hard way that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3:16).

NEWS AND VIEWS

Pastoral Bible Institute News

Date of Annual PBI Meeting

The annual meeting of PBI Members and Directors will be held on Friday, July 23 on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown in Pennsylvania. The General Convention of Bible Students will begin on Saturday, July 24, at the same location and end the evening of July 29. Those who are interested in the Pastoral Bible Institute, whether members or not, are encouraged to attend this meeting. Contact the Institute's secretary for details concerning accommodations.

The Robert Seklemian Discourses

Our friends in Chicago just published a book containing the discourses of Robert Seklemian. Bro. Robert was a skilled story teller who made the events of the Bible come alive. We have occasionally reprinted some of his thoughts in the pages of this journal and we think our readers would enjoy having this book. It contains over 500 pages, is illustrated, and costs just \$15, postpaid anywhere in the world. We will fill orders during the next few months but will not stock the book after that.

Letters

Warm Christian greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Redeemer. We are definitely seeing the prophecies being fulfilled in our day as indicated both by the Herald and also the Dawn and all the brethren. I feel this year 1999 will bring drastic changes. Man seems to be losing control and everything seems to be falling apart with no sign of peace. How grateful we are to know our Lord will soon stop the trouble (else man would destroy himself) and bring peace, joy and life to all humanity. May we continue to pray "Thy Kingdom Come."

Ruth Colvin, Louisiana

Around the World

India indicated that it would develop missiles and atomic weapons. Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India told both houses of parliament that the Government had shunned a proposed moratorium on producing weapons-grade nuclear material and would continue to develop an intermediate-range missile system. Mr. Vajpayee reiterated that India's objective for 50 years had been a world free of nuclear weapons. But "regrettably," he added, "the international community, particularly countries that have based their security on nuclear weapons or a nuclear umbrella, have been reluctant to embrace this objective."

—*New York Times*, 12/16/98

Using Chinese supplied blueprints and technology, Pakistan is nearing completion of a center to produce a home-grown version of Beijing's M-11 ballistic missile, which is capable of carrying a nuclear warhead to a target 185 miles away. China's help on the factory is part of a secret contract the two nations signed in early 1988. A close examination of the 10-year record shows that China now is a calculating, strategic proliferator of nuclear weapons. Russia often sells weapons technology and the U.S. can't contain the technology know-how.

—*Wall Street Journal*, 12/15/98

Angola, one of Africa's poorest countries is back at war. Intense fighting between government forces and rebels of the National Union of the Total Independence of Angola has erupted, involving heavy artillery, tanks, missiles and warplanes. Since 1975, more than 600,000 people, most of them civilians, have been killed in the struggle between the former government and the modern one. Angola's bloody slide back to war is matched by an escalation of the war in neighboring Congo. Only a year ago peace seemed to be returning. The prospects for peace were welcomed as Angola has turned out to be one of the world's hottest oil properties, expected to be capable of pumping two million barrels a day. A peaceful Angola could be one of the richest countries per capita in Africa.

—*Wall Street Journal*, 12/17/98

Israel

Editor's note: In January, the Israeli Knesset (Parliament) voted to dissolve itself and hold new elections on May 17, 1999. While there are many articles that could have appeared here concerning this move in Israel, we include only the following excerpt which we believe captures the essence of the situation.

What led to the collapse of Israel's current coalition? Binyamin Netanyahu is Israel's first directly-elected prime minister, an electoral reform that was supposed to stabilize government but has failed miserably. In two-and-a-half years in office, Netanyahu tried to satisfy both the Right and the Left, and in doing so lost the support and confidence of

his core constituency. Netanyahu was torn between the parliamentary politics of the Knesset and the presidential politics of the directly-elected prime minister. Netanyahu, moreover, found that he could not jettison an inherited policy which he found distasteful. He could not undo what the Knesset had already done—agree to share the Land of Israel with the Palestinians. No matter how he tried to obfuscate, delay, or find fault with the Palestinians, he could not reverse a democratically endorsed parliamentary decision that continues to be supported by a majority of the Israeli population. By signing the Wye Memorandum, Netanyahu alienated his core constituency. Israel's new political system is inherently flawed.

—*Jerusalem Post*, 1/5/99

Israeli police on Sunday detained eight adults and six children belonging to a Denver-based apocalyptic Christian cult and said the group intended to carry out violent acts here to hasten the second coming of Christ. Israeli officials, who are increasingly concerned that the countdown to 2000 will bring a number of Christian extremists to the Holy Land, identified those in custody as members of an American cult known as Concerned Christians. "They intended to carry out extreme acts of violence in the streets of Jerusalem toward the end of 1999 in order to begin a process that would bring about the second coming of Jesus," Jerusalem police spokesman Shmulik Ben-Ruby said. Two months ago Israeli police formed a task force to deal with the possibility of violence here by doomsday cults and messianic groups as the turn of the century approaches.

—*Los Angeles Times*, 1/4/99

Israel's population passed six million at the end of September, the Central Bureau of Statistics announced Wednesday. Some 4.76 million Israelis are Jewish. Over the last seven years the population has increased by 1 million. About 59% of this is natural increase, with the remainder the result of the immigration of some 520,000 people, with 110,000 emigrating. When Israel was established 50 years ago, there were an estimated 800,000 people living here. Within a year, that figure had risen to more than 1 million. By the end of the first decade, the total had climbed to 2 million. That had doubled by 1982; and the 5 million mark was passed in 1991.

—*Jerusalem Post*, 11/5/98

In three successive weeks, the courts have handed down precedent-setting rulings that contain the seeds for fundamental change in the way the country looks and feels. The first was the November decision by the High Court of Justice to force the religious councils in Jerusalem and Kiryat Tivon to seat representatives of the Reform and Conservative movements, a small victory by these movements in their struggle to gain recognition and legitimacy in the eyes of the state. The second decision came two weeks ago, when the Jerusalem Labor Court ruled that kibbutz shopping centers could remain open to the public on Shabbat. This ruling drastically changed a situation in which only selected places of "cultural activity" such as theaters and cinemas were permitted to operate on Shabbat. The third and most significant decision was last week's High Court of Justice

ruling rendering "illegal" the current situation where yeshiva students receive wholesale draft deferments. The court gave the Knesset a year to draw up legislation determining whether and how many yeshiva students can continue to receive deferments.

—*Jerusalem Post*, 12/17/98

The last few months have been the driest in Israel in more than 58 years with some parts of the country receiving only a third of an inch of rainfall since April, according to the Tel Aviv weather bureau. The Sea of Galilee, the country's main reservoir, is dangerously low and only has two months water supply left. Officials are considering stringent water-rationing measures.

—*Los Angeles Times*, 12/17/98

Islam

Six people died and 30 were wounded in Jakarta when riots in Indonesia took on a religious dimension. Crowds of Moslems killed and mutilated five Catholics from the Indonesian island of Ambon, after accusing them of killing one Moslem. Mobs tore through the town, torching churches, attacking Christian schools, and looting shops. The bloody strife reflects long simmering ethnic and religious tensions in Indonesia. The tensions had been largely suppressed during the iron-fisted 32-year rule of former president Suharto who quit in May during rioting that killed more than 1200 people. Today there are almost daily protests and frequent clashes, fuelled by popular frustration and economic hardship. The religious violence raises fears of continuing unrest preceding parliamentary elections. More than 100 parties have registered, of which at least 20 are running on an exclusively Islamic platform.

—*Financial Times*, 11/23/98

Iran said over 10 million of its 60 million population are illiterate, with another 16 million barely able to read and write. Iran will have to build an estimated 200,000 more classrooms over the next few years to deal with rising school rolls. Iran depends on oil exports for more than 80 percent of its foreign currency revenue and a 41 percent fall in oil prices in the last year has contributed to a \$6.3 billion budget deficit in 1998.

—*IRNA (Iran's official news agency) press release*, 12/27/98

Christendom

Some young people today are rebelling in a whole new way—by seeking religion. Ministers and rabbis say they are seeing an increasing number of teens walking into houses of worship without their parents, looking for an intense experience, a close encounter with a higher power. To grab them, religions are reviving the ancient practices, exploring Gregorian chants, cabala, the Latin Mass. Yet churches and synagogues must walk a fine line: while rituals attract kids, they can often put off adults, who find the

practices too weird. "Some worry that teens are taking an 'X-files' approach to religion" says Rick Lawrence, editor of a Loveland, Colorado, magazine for Christian youth leaders. Rabbi Richard Jacobs of Scarsdale, New York, says that Jewish mysticism has become trendy in certain circles. "All these people in the fashion industry gathering to study cabala," he laments. While the teens remain devoted, many have no qualms about switching to other faiths. Meghan Springer, a 17-year-old in Seattle, said, "I could be a Christian for two years and say, 'You know, this doesn't work for me,' and become a Buddhist."

—*Wall Street Journal* 12/18/98

A small movement of Pakistan's minority Christian community, calling itself the "Christian Taliban," hopes to bring significant changes to the lives of the poorest members of the population, tackling drug abuse and alcoholism. There is little regret over a symbolic association with Afghanistan's Moslem Taliban, notorious for its draconian justice system. Amputating limbs as a punishment for theft—even when motivated by extreme hunger in harsh winter months—is one of the chief policies of the Afghan Taliban. Pakistan's Christian Taliban show little concern about Moslem Taliban's reputation. Javie Piyara, the movement's leader, says, "there are some 200 Christian organizations already working here for welfare activities, but none attracted so much attention. It's like we've shocked everybody." Mainstream Christian leaders consider the new movement provocative and fear it could break their ties with the country's liberals, who have been supportive of minority rights. Mr. Sadiq says that unlike the Moslem Taliban with its tough methods, the Christian movement would be in no position to dictate to the population and would shy away from using force to achieve results.

—*Financial Times*, 12/24/98

Thirty-three percent of Danes say they want to separate the church of Denmark from the state, in a survey conducted by a Copenhagen newspaper. Many want the same arrangement as in Sweden, where the church will be independent from the government by 2000. Currently 86.1 percent of all Danes are members of the Protestant-Lutheran church, which is funded by a combination of a tax paid by members through national income taxation as well as by direct support from the government. The Danish constitution states that the Protestant-Lutheran church is the state religion under parliamentary supervision and financial support and although there is freedom of religion, the head of state, currently Queen Margrethe II, must be a practicing member of the church.

—*Bloomberg News Service*, 12/28/98

\$ Economics

Russia's poor have been able to survive in spite of high levels of poverty because they grow their own food in family-owned "dachas" (wooden country cottages) that ring the country's cities. At a recent conference in Moscow, Greg Thain, head of the Russian Market Research Company, said: "Dacha owners are starting to dig up their lawns to grow vegetables." Researchers at a seminar sponsored by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions claimed the widespread belief that Russians have returned to their peasant roots to survive is a myth. The researchers argued that the government must encourage the reform of commercial agriculture and provide more effective social assistance to the poor rather than encourage and subsidize petty agricultural production.

—*Financial Times*, 12/11/98

Ostentatious displays of wealth masked unpleasant realities when the regional monarchs convened in Abu Dhabi for the annual meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), an economic and security group. The GCC states—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates—own collectively almost 45 percent of proven global oil reserves and 15 percent of natural gas reserves. It has left the Gulf States at the mercy of oil revenues, which provide 75 percent of annual income. Sixty percent of the GCC's 25 million nationals are under the age of 30 and many are still being encouraged by over-indulgent rulers to have inflated expectations for future security, employment, and welfare handouts. Even where young nationals are told to stand on their own feet, many look askance at the imbalance of national wealth, where oligarchies numbering less than 1.5 percent of national populations keep up to \$800 billion of private wealth.

—*Financial Times*, 12/6/98

Developing countries face a precarious short-term outlook to avert a slump, the World Bank warned. In its annual report on Global Economic Prospects and the Developing Countries, the institution said that per capita income in developing world countries would on average increase just 0.4 percent this year. The financial crises that have swept emerging markets over the last 18 months mean that incomes will fall in Brazil, Indonesia, Russia and 33 other developing former communist countries. "There are substantial risks that the world economy will fall into recession in 1999 rather than merely enduring the period of sluggish growth expected," the report said. "These risks are strongly interconnected and potentially mutually reinforcing."

—*Wall Street Journal*, 12/3/98

Science

A new genetic material containing instructions for making a protein called vascular endothelial growth factor-2 will begin to be tested on humans. The substance may encourage blood-starved limbs to repair themselves by growing new blood vessels. A study published in the American Heart Association's journal, *Circulation*, said early research showed the direct injections of DNA into the heart could help it grow new blood vessels and ease chest pain that can't be treated in any other way.

—*Washington Post*, 12/23/98

Book Review

Pontius Pilate (second edition), Paul L. Maier. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 1990. 370 pp.

The man who condemned Jesus to death on the cross must intrigue any serious student of the New Testament. For example, why do the gospel writers go to such lengths to show Pilate's hesitation? Why do they mention the dream of Pilate's wife? Certainly Herod is not portrayed in such a favorable light. Pilate tried five times to rid himself of the situation, only to be confronted repeatedly by those he despised who wanted Jesus executed for crimes not punishable under Roman law. What hold did these people have over Pilate that made him accede to their wishes?

According to Maier Pilate's actions may have resulted from pressures of the moment, but it was conditioned by the turbulent politics of the Mediterranean world at the time. Although there is little source material on Pontius Pilate, there is enough to speculate beyond mere fiction. This treatise melds fact and fiction in what some might call a historical novel. The account differs from typical historical fiction in that Maier takes no liberties with the facts. They are used without alteration as he discovered them. A valuable part of this book are the notes which provide source information to the serious student who wants to conduct original research. Some of these sources provide recent (pre-1990) historical and archaeological data that this reviewer has not seen discussed elsewhere.

While the book purports to reconstruct the entire career of Pilate, Bible Students will likely be more interested in the discussion of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. Maier follows the New Testament version of the trial. (Talmudic sources generally agree with it.) This portrayal of the crucifixion adds an important perspective generally missing from most discussions—the Roman perspective. What happened in Palestine in the first century is usually viewed from a Jewish perspective. Yet the events in Judea were linked to the largess of the Roman Empire that controlled the province. Pontius Pilate tells this part of the story and provides good background for a Memorial study.

—Len Griehs

The Brazen Serpent

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—John 3:14,15

Charles T. Russell

When finally the time arrived in the last of the forty years of the wilderness experience for the people to move forward and to enter into Canaan, they essayed to go by the nearest route, through Edom. But the Edomites forbade this and threatened them with war (Numbers 20:18-21). This seemingly greatly discouraged the Israelites, who supposed that because the Lord's time had come they would have no difficulty in entering in and taking possession.

They began their journey to the eastward of Edom through a dense wilderness, "and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way" (Numbers 21:4). Here a rebellious spirit again broke out and they murmured, as did their fathers thirty-eight years before, against Moses and against God, declaring that their condition of bondage in Egypt, severe as it was, was preferable to the experiences they were having.

The Israelites murmured against the whole divine arrangements. As a punishment for this rebellious condition, the Lord permitted to come upon them a host of fiery serpents. They are supposed to have been called the fiery serpents because of red streaks upon the head, and because of a glistening of the skin in the sunlight. Such serpents are found in those desert parts and are very ferocious, very poisonous. They began to realize that the chastisement of the Lord was upon them and they cried to Moses for help (Numbers 21:7).

By divine direction Moses erected on a pole a serpent made of brass, apparently of immense size and capable of being seen by the Israelites from quite a distance. By this means God would teach Natural Israel a lesson of faith. They had sinned, the punishment of their sins was upon them, but his mercy was extended to those who would recognize it by faith. We can well imagine the credulity of the people at first, and how they would say, What benefit could come from looking at a brass or copper serpent on a pole? How could that affect the wounds? How could that heal the dying ones? Is not this a fraud upon us? What does Moses, our great captain, think of us? Why does he thus trifle with us, and why does he not prepare some special balm?

However, as the news would circulate that those who looked upon the serpent were healed, we can imagine the spread of the message among the people and their efforts and zeal to help one another to look and live. We can imagine parents pointing their dying children to the serpent, others helping themselves and being helped to the doors of their tents or other points from which the serpent might be seen. We can imagine better than describe the commotion experienced throughout so large a camp by this arrangement, and

we can see that it was not only a penalty for their transgression, but incidentally it became a valuable assistance to their faith. Henceforth they might more clearly than ever realize that God was their leader, that through him they could do all things, and that murmuring against him would bring divine displeasure and some unfavorable punishment.

"He Was Made Sin For Us"

We might not have discovered without divine aid the antitypical signification of this incident. But our Lord himself directs our attention to the fact that the Israelites bitten by those serpents represented or typified sinners bitten by sin and suffering from the consequences thereof—the fall. He calls our attention to the fact that he himself was the great antitype of that brazen serpent lifted in the wilderness—that by his crucifixion he who knew no sin was made a curse for us who were transgressors. From our Lord's explanation we perceive the great truth taught by this type, namely, that in no other way has God provided for eternal life for the people than by the acceptance of Christ—yea, more than this, the acceptance of Christ crucified.

How plainly does this show us that it is not sufficient for us to believe in Jesus as the great teacher, classing him with Plato, Zoroaster, Confucius or others, nor even by himself as a teacher above all other teachers. The lesson was that there was a redemption accomplished by our Lord in his crucifixion, which was necessary for us and without which we could not have eternal life.

And further, the lesson outlined in the type is that not only was it necessary that Christ should die for our sins, but that none could be saved through his death except by looking unto him, exercising faith in the merit of his great atonement-sacrifice. It is in harmony with this that we, seeing, look and live. It is in harmony with this that we are looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith, until he becomes its finisher. It is in harmony with this that we are exhorted to look away from our own imperfections and dying conditions to the perfection of life in the Son of God, who gave himself our ransom price, and that we realize that through faith in his blood we have forgiveness of sins, reconciliation to the Father, and thus eternal life through him.

All The Blind Eyes Shall Be Opened

But alas, says one, if it be true that there is no salvation except through faith in Christ—faith in his blood, faith in his sacrifice, faith in the redemption accomplished thereby—then how few will be saved! Some tell us that they cannot accept so narrow and limited a Gospel, that they believe that the heathen are saved without looking with the eye of faith to the crucified one, that they are as much saved as we who do look. We answer that we must not be wiser than the great Teacher himself, that we must not claim to have a greater benevolence than he who gave his life as our ransom price, and who declares that no man can come unto the Father but by him, and who points out that faith in him is necessary to such an approach to the Father and the getting of life eternal.

But while looking to him from the standpoint of faith and accepting his Word, we hear from him a blessed message, which comforts our hearts and bids us rejoice. He assures us through the prophets that the hour is coming when all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. He assures us that every eye shall see him, including those who pierced him.

Those "eyes of understanding" now blinded, as the apostle declares, by the god of this world and the cares of this life, will all be opened wide, in God's due time, to see the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of divine love and provision of grace in Christ. Others will come forth to judgments, disciplines, corrections in righteousness, either that they may learn to look and live, or that, persistently refusing divine favor, they shall ultimately be destroyed from amongst the people (Acts 3:23).

The Drawing Power

As soon as the Israelites began to realize the divine power behind the brazen serpent they began to respond. Similarly our Lord informs us that as a result of his being lifted up at Calvary he shall ultimately exercise a drawing power upon all mankind. Not that he is exercising this drawing power now, however, for he declares respecting those who now come unto him that they are drawn of the Father. He says, "No man cometh unto me except the Father which sent me draw him" (John 6:44). Thus the little flock, the Royal Priesthood, the members of the Body of Christ, are now being drawn. But the great mass of mankind are not drawn of the Father, but will be drawn by the Son, as we read, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). Thus we see that the drawing of all men is a future work, and to be accomplished by the Christ, while the drawing of the little flock in this present time is the Father's work through various agencies. Let us rejoice in the divine plan, which is so complete, so harmonious, so satisfactory. Let us not mar in our minds the beauties of that plan by any false theories of our own or of other men, but let us receive with meekness the heavenly message that we may be wise, for our own benefit in making our calling and election sure now, and be prepared for a share in the heavenly kingdom and its work of blessing all the families of the earth under the promise made to Abraham's Seed, the heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29).

The Sacrifice of Christ as Shown on the Day of Atonement

It shall be a Sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute forever. And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year.--Leviticus 16:31, 34

The tenth day of the seventh month was to be set apart every year as a "Sabbath" in which Israel was to afflict their souls, a Sabbath in which no work was to be performed, save that of the affliction of their souls (Leviticus 23:27, 28; Numbers 9:7). They were to keep themselves aware of their sinfulness and their need of atonement.

The sacrifices of this day, or any day, could not take away sin nor make the people perfect (Hebrews 10:1,2, 4); but they were a feature of the law of which not one jot or one tittle would pass away until all should be fulfilled (Matthew 5:18). These sacrifices were to be repeated yearly, keeping Israel conscious of sin (Hebrews 10:3) until the "better sacrifices." These are the sacrifices pictured by the bullock and the goat--Christ and his church, by which those sanctified by way of them, would be made perfect forever (Hebrews 10:14).

All the blood shed upon Jewish altars pointed forward to this great sacrifice for sin slain on behalf of both the church and, later, the entire human race.. The blood of bulls and of goats could never take away sin, only the antitypical sacrifice could do this, 'the precious blood.' On this subject of the sacrifice for sins, see Hebrews 9:12, 10:10, Ephesians. 5:2, 1 Corinthians 5:7, 1 Peter 2:22-24, and 2 Corinthians 5:21 in the *Diaglott*.

This ritual was a part of the law and was intended to point to Christ (Galatians 3:19,24). At least some part of the fleshly seed might become the true "seed of Abraham" and "heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29). In the typical sacrifices therefore, there was the remembrance of sin (Hebrews 10:3) which God did not want them to ever forget.

Then Jesus came to offer himself to God in absolute consecration and dedication to the Father's will. He made it possible to take away the "first" (the typical sacrifices for sin) and to establish the "second" (the anti-typical, the real sacrifice for sin), which would thoroughly and completely remedy sin, never needing any repeating (Hebrews 10:9).

Leviticus 16

In Leviticus 16 we have the divinely arranged picture of the Day of Atonement and its sacrificial work. The High Priest took a bullock, which was for himself and his house, and slew (sacrificed) it. The bullock represented our Lord during his ministry on earth. Later two goats were brought and tied at the door of the tabernacle. These were taken from the congregation, the people of Israel, and were typical of the household of faith, the Lord's consecrated people--two classes of them, the "little flock" and the "great

company." The type shows that these do not have bodies especially prepared for sacrifice. This is particularly shown in the statement that the goats were taken for a sin-offering while no such statement is made respecting the bullock. Our Lord, by reason of his miraculous birth, was actually perfect--"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." Our imperfections are reckoned as covered by Christ's sacrifice--by the first part of his sacrifice--atoned for by the blood of the antitypical bullock, the blood of Christ.

The apostle points out that our Lord's sacrifice took place at the beginning of his ministry and was finished at its close. He could not be the sin sacrifice until his thirtieth year, the age a man could enter the priesthood according to the law (Numbers 4:3). It is written that just as soon as he became thirty he made the sacrifice: "Now when Jesus began to be about thirty years of age he cometh to John at Jordan to be baptized of him." We may be sure that he arrived in time to present himself in sacrifice to the Lord at the very earliest possible moment. He fulfilled the prophecy, "Lo, I have come, as in the volume of the Book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God. Thy law is written in my heart." "There," says the apostle, "he taketh away the first that he may establish the second." He began to set aside the typical for the "better sacrifices." The offering of himself was instantaneous, but the presentation of his body to the trials and difficulties of life continued throughout his ministry and finished on Calvary. He consecrated himself in a moment, to give up all, even life itself, in the Father's service. The actual giving of time, influence, strength, vitality, lasted three and a half years.

From his consecration at baptism he was considered dead as a human being and begotten of the holy spirit to a new nature. He was reckoned alive as a new creature. During the next three and a half years, his flesh was consumed and the new nature grew strong, developing in harmony with his Father's will. At the cross, the consumption of the sacrifice was completed. The new creature was raised by the Father's power, as a glorious spirit being, invisible to the dead world, but manifested to the disciples under various forms and under various circumstances to prove that he was no longer dead, that he was no longer the man Jesus, but the glorified spirit Jesus. Thus the apostle says, "He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit." (In the Greek, the definite articles are supplied by the translators, making the text read "He was put to death flesh, but quickened spirit.")

Many Overlapping Pictures

Not only was our Lord Jesus pictured in the sacrificed bullock, he was also pictured by the High Priest. The main distinction was the bullock represented the perfect man and the priest represented the new mind begotten of the Holy Spirit .

The High Priest was instructed to kill the bullock for a sin-offering. The fat, the kidneys and other life-producing organs were placed on the Brazen Altar in the court. Later, the hides and dung were taken without the camp (Leviticus 16: 27) and burned. He was also instructed to take a censer full of burning coals from off the brazen altar along with his hands full of sweet incense, bring it into the Holy and burn the sweet incense on the altar

before the Lord. The incense yielded a sweet perfume which penetrated through the second veil into the Most Holy.

Compare the doings of Jesus with this prophetic picture of his work. When the man Christ Jesus had consecrated himself, he immediately, as a new creature and begotten by the holy spirit, took the sacrificed human life (blood of the bullock) to present it before God. Spirit begotten, he was no longer in the court condition, but in the first compartment of the tabernacle, the holy, where he must tarry and offer his incense upon the fire of trial. He must demonstrate his loyalty to God and righteousness by the things suffered as a begotten son before entering the Most Holy--the perfect spiritual condition (Hebrews 5:8).

The High Priest took with him (along with the blood) fire from off the altar and his two hands full of sweet incense to cause the perfume. The sweet incense beaten small represented the perfection of the man Jesus. The fire from the Brazen Altar represented the trial to which he was subject. Its being carried along with the priest signifies that our Lord must, by his own course of faithfulness, bring his persecutions upon himself. When the perfection of his being (incense) came in contact with the trials of life (fire), he yielded perfect obedience to the divine will, a sweet perfume. The sweet incense went before him and appeared in the presence of God before he finished his course at Calvary. His death upon the cross was the last crumb of incense falling into the fire, in the antitype.

While Jesus, as a new creature, was within the holy, enjoying the light of the golden candlestick, fed by the bread of truth, and offering acceptable incense to Jehovah, let us look out into the court and see another simultaneous work. There in the court on the Brazen Altar is another fire burning away. The bullock has much fat. A cloud of smoke, called a "sweet savor to God," rises in the sight of all who are in this court. This represents how Jesus' sacrifice appeared to believing men. They saw the devotion, the self-sacrifice, the loving zeal (fat) ascending to God as an acceptable sacrifice. They knew the Father was well pleased with him.

While these two fires were burning a third one "outside the camp" smolders with a stench--the burning of the hides and dung, an apt picture of the view the world sees of Jesus' sacrifice. To the world it was a foolish waste of life. They did not appreciate the obedience to the Father or the daily sacrifices culminating at the cross. They did not see a hero or leader, only the elements of character which they despised as weak--he was despised and rejected by men. They blushed and hid their faces from him similar to the way the Israelites treated the burning carcass outside the camp.

The Blood

The blood of the bullock was caught in a basin in which it was carried by the High Priest into the Tabernacle of the Congregation (the Holy) where the priest, before entering into the Most Holy, offered incense upon the Golden Altar (Leviticus 16:12,13) to prepare the way for him into the Holiest of all--into the very presence of Jehovah. The incense having

preceded him, he then proceeded with the bullock's into the Most Holy where he sprinkled of it upon and before the Mercy Seat. However, not all of the bullock's blood was thus disposed of. Some of it still remained in the basin to be subsequently used in connection with the reconciling of the Most Holy, the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and the Court (Leviticus 16:16,18). Before he could do this, the Lord's goat would have to be slain (Leviticus 16:15).

The blood of the goat was evidently caught in the same basin as had been the bullock's, or at the least the two bloods were mixed, to make up that which is designated "the blood of atonements" (plural--Exodus 30:10), i.e., the [commingled] blood of the bullock and the goat, which blood was then to accomplish the "reconciliation" of God's Sanctuary and Court (Leviticus 16:16,18). First the blood of the goat was carried through the Tabernacle of the Congregation (the Holy) where, however, no incense was offered this time since the priest continued right on through the Second Vail into the Most Holy where he now sprinkled it as he had previously with the bullock's blood, upon and before the Mercy Seat (Leviticus 16:15). As the bullock's blood was accepted for the priest and his house (Leviticus 16:6), so the goat's blood was accepted for the people (Leviticus 9:15; 16:5,9). Note that the blood now being used was in reality a commingled blood, as if to say the goat's blood is accepted because of its being commingled with that of the bullock. The sin-offering of the goat had merit only because of its association with the bullock. Antitypically the merit of atonement represented in the church's sacrifice is merely that of Christ Jesus, since the church had no merit of its own.

After sprinkling this commingled blood upon the Mercy Seat, the priest went back into the Holy to reconcile it (Leviticus 16:16). This he did by putting of this blood of the sin-offering of atonements (Exodus 30:10) upon the horns of the altar of incense. What then remained of the blood he took into the Court to reconcile it.

It was the High Priest who sprinkled the blood of the bullock and who, later, sprinkled the blood of the goat as that of his own body. Individuality is lost as one becomes a member of the body of Christ and takes his name. He henceforth shares Christ's glory and his work. The participation of the church in the sin-offering for the world is not due to any necessity that has arisen, but is simply the divine arrangement which permits one to come in with Christ and share in his glorious higher nature and work. The matter of suffering is purely a matter of favor for the church and entirely unnecessary. Jesus' death alone is all that was necessary for the release of the world from the sentence of death.

It is highly important to keep clearly in mind the difference between the work of **presenting** one's body as a living sacrifice and the Lord's work, as the Great High Priest, in **offering** the individual sacrificially. The two matters are distinctly separate, as shown in the type. The goat was brought to the door of the Tabernacle and tied, picturing the covenant of sacrifice which we make. But the goat had not yet been offered and no one but the High Priest was qualified to make the sacrifice. (See Reprints 4747:5,6.)

Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, the apostle says. The type shows us two offerings, yet the two were parts of one. The first represented the head and the second the body. The two sacrifices of the Day of Atonement were really one because the second was based upon the first (Reprints 4512:4).

Both of these animals represented the High Priest: the bullock, our Lord and Head, and the goat, his body, the church. When the High Priest sprinkled the blood of the bullock, it represented "his own blood," the merit of his own sacrifice. He applied it for the church, not for the world. Only believers have had the blessing secured by our Lord's sacrifice, thus far. The Christian's presentation of himself to the Lord was represented by the tethering of the goat at the door of the tabernacle. This acceptance was indicated by the killing processes. He ceased to be looked upon as a human, but was recognized on a new plane as a "member of the body of Christ," without any headship of his own. Consequently, when at the end of the Day of Atonement sacrificing the anti-typical High Priest shall make a further presentation of the blood of the goat upon the mercy seat, it will be "his own blood" in two senses of the word:

1. It will be his own in the sense that all the merit was originally his and appropriated to others so they might have the opportunity to share with him in sacrifice. His sacrificial merit merely passed through the church, "the Lord's goat" class. They were favored by the privilege accorded of "suffering with him that [in due time] [they] might be also glorified together with him." No more merit was necessary than that possessed by the Lord.
2. The blood which the Lord will apply as soon as the church shall have finished her share in his sacrifice will be "his own blood" in the sense that he accepted or adopted the church as his members. They lose their personality in the transaction in the same way a bride loses her name and her individuality at marriage. All that they have and are belong to the great bridegroom. They are delighted that he is pleased to count them in with himself in any sense of the word in connection with his sufferings of this present time and the glories that are to follow. (See Reprints 4493:2-4.)

Three Days and Three Nights

But he [Jesus] answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.--Matthew 12:39,40

F. A. Acheson

EDITORS' NOTE: Excerpted from a discourse by F. A. Acheson at a convention in Seattle, Washington, as reported in the *Souvenir Notes of Bible Student Conventions for 1909*.

Our Savior tells us that Jonah in some way was typical of himself or rather that the condition of Jonah while in the bowels of the fish illustrated Christ's experience during the time he was "in the heart of the earth."

"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Most Christians seem to think this describes the time when Christ lay buried in Joseph's tomb, when he was in the grave from Friday evening until Sunday morning. This period of time they think was typified by Jonah being confined three days and three nights in the bowels of the fish. But can this be what was meant?

Three days and nights would be 72 hours in our modern culture. Christ died at three o'clock on Friday and was buried probably about five o'clock (Matthew 27:46, 57-60; Mark 13:34,42; Luke 23:54). He arose early Sunday morning, a little after six o'clock at the very latest, possibly before (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2; 1 John 20:1), making in all less than 38 hours that he was in the grave; that is, a bit more than one and one-half days, considerably short of three full days and three full nights. Consequently many Christian have been unable to understand this passage.

Certainly if there were no specification otherwise, our courts would probably decide that if a man was sentenced to serve three days and three nights in prison, he would have to remain there 72 hours. However, the Scriptures are not so rigid when they speak of three days and three nights. In Esther 4:16 we read, "Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will do likewise." Yet in Esther 5:1 we find that she did not wait for the third day to expire, but **on** the third day, probably about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, she appeared before the king.

Again in 1 Kings 12:5, Rehoboam said to Jeroboam and his followers: "Depart yet for three days, then come again to me." By the twelfth verse of the same chapter we see that they came to him again the third day, which was evidently what the king and all present understood what was meant. In 2 Chronicles 10:5 the same incident is recorded but Rehoboam is made to say **after** three days instead of **yet for** three days. Nevertheless Jeroboam came **on** the third day. In Genesis 42:17,18, when Joseph put his brethren in ward three days, the time was reckoned similarly.

I think we can see that when the Scriptures talk of three days and three nights that three time periods of 24 hours each are not meant, but rather part of the first day or night, part of the third day or night, and, of course, all the intervening time.

Heart of the Earth

Let us now look at the phrase, "in the heart of the earth." Language can be literal or figurative. The word "heart" primarily means the organ which circulates the blood in the body. Of course, it is not used in that sense here, nor is it used in the secondary sense of "the seat of the affections," nor yet in the third sense as "the part nearest the center," as the heart of an apple or the heart of a country for Christ was not buried four thousand miles deep--he was not buried in the center of the earth. Evidently the sense in which "heart of the earth" is used is not a literal but a figurative one.

What is there about the grave to make such a figure appropriate? There is nothing whatever. We should bear carefully in mind that the comparison is between the experience of Jonah and that of Christ. Jonah was for a period of time in a *condition* that illustrated a *condition* which Christ would for a time be in. And what part of Jonah's experience is that? The time when he was inside the great fish by which he had been swallowed. His *condition* then represented Christ in "the heart of the earth." The living fish had actively taken Jonah into its own power, and under whose control he was until he was cast forth upon the dry land. Jonah was not in the bottom of the sea, nor laid in some submarine cavern, nor in dead earth anywhere. He was in a living monster which bore him whithersoever he would. So when Christ was in a corresponding condition "in the heart of the earth" we must look for him not merely in the embrace of the lifeless grave, but under the dominion of some living power. Otherwise we do violence to the comparison; the living fish is not a fit symbol of the grave.

But does not Christ refer to the time he would be in the grave? That time is, of course, included; but that is not the *condition* to which he specially referred. He was not in the heart of the earth because he was in the grave, but he was in the grave incidentally because he was in the heart of the earth. He was under the control of a power which put him in the grave, a power corresponding to the living fish that had swallowed Jonah.

The expression "heart of the earth" is a figurative one for all can see there is no literal sense in which the application can be made.

Now, taken figuratively, the word "earth" is most frequently used in the Scriptures to represent the inhabitants of the earth. "And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech" (Genesis 11:1). "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD" (Jeremiah 22:29) where the word Aearth@ is used to denote the wicked inhabitants of the earth.

Satan is the god of this world, the head of its prevailing multitudes, who constitute the children of the wicked one: "The whole world lieth in the wicked one" (1 John 5:19, Diaglott). Into the hands of these the Son of man was to be for a time delivered. This is what we understand he meant by declaring that he should be "in the heart of the earth," that is, under the full control of wicked men and devils so that they could accomplish the evil desires of their hearts concerning him.

In nine different places in the New Testament where it is declared that he will rise on the third day, the betrayal, trial, and crucifixion are included in the events to occur during the three days, and from the first of these, not from the burial, the period should therefore be reckoned (Matthew 16:21; 17:22,23; 20:18,29; Mark 9:31; 10:33,34; Luke 18:32,33; 24:7,20,21,46). During all this time he was "in the heart of the earth," that is, under the dominion of the sinful inhabitants of the earth. The idea corresponds much better with the case of Jonah. Jonah was in the stomach of the fish, under the control of a living monster which carried him whithersoever it would. So Christ was under the dominion of living men and devils.

When Christ in Gethsemane said to the chief priests and captains of the temple who had come to take him, "This is your hour and the power of darkness" (Luke 22:52, 53), he set apart a particular period in his experiences during which he was to be "in the hands of men." This is the time, therefore, when we understand he was "in the heart of the earth." It began with his betrayal Thursday night and ended Sunday morning.

From about 10 o'clock Thursday night

to Friday morning 8 hours

Friday morning to Saturday morning 24 hours

Saturday morning to early Sunday morning 24+ hours

TOTAL 56+ hours

This is three full nights, two full days and a portion of the third day. This is in full harmony with the Jewish manner of reckoning as already cited, and Christ's repeated declaration that on the third day after his betrayal into the hands of men, followed by his suffering and death, he would rise again.

Thus viewing the Scriptures, we see our Lord when "in the heart of the earth," before his voice was stilled in death, could indeed sacrifice unto his Father with the voice of

thanksgiving even as Jonah in the bowels of the fish declared that he would pay that he had vowed (Jonah 2:9).

Moreover, dear friends, I want to point out that this experience which Jonah passed through has a great interest for us also--all who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus because it typifies our experiences also as members of the body of Christ, as truly as it did those of our Lord the head, our Redeemer.

We read: "Jesus answered and said unto them, destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up . . . but he spake of the temple of his body" (John 2:19,21). Paul tells us that the church is his body (Ephesians 1:22,23). So these three days must mean thousand-year days and correspond to those our Lord mentions in Luke 13:32,33 as applying to the time in which his church must be perfected. It was in the fifth thousand-year day from Adam's fall in Eden when Jesus spoke these words.

The sixth thousand-year day ended in October, 1874. In the early part of the seventh thousand-year day his body, the church, will be perfected and exalted to reign with him during the greater part which yet remains--the millennial day--which is the seventh and last thousand-year day of the great prophetic week which witnesses the entrance, the continued permission, and the extinction of evil.

The same three days are spoken of by Hosea: "After three days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight" (Hosea 6:2). The prophet applies this period to the time during which the Jews are cast off, when blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles is come in (Romans 11:25), and at the end of which the Jews will be restored to favor again. They are the same three days of a thousand years each in which the church, his body, is being perfected.

And thus it is while "in the heart of the earth," dear brethren, as typified by Jonah in the bowels of the fish, while we are in the midst of wicked men and devils, even given into their power by our heavenly Father, who will also permit them to afflict us with fiery trials and with death; that, having been shown beforehand these things by his spirit (John 16:13), and made us to understand the object of them, we can, as Jonah, cry out, "I will sacrifice unto God with the voice of thanksgiving" and declare with our Redeemer, "I will pay that which I have vowed."

* * * * *

Jonah and Christ

As Jonah went from the wood of the ship into the depth of the sea, so Christ went from the wood of the cross into the depth of the earth. As Jonah gave himself to death for those who were tossed by the storm in the Mediterranean Sea, Christ gave himself to death for those who are tossed by the storm in the seas of this world. As Jonah rose from the whale's belly and from the depth of the sea, so Christ rose from the dead. . . . The reality of the antitype confirms the historic truth of the type. Jonah is proved by Christ.

The Bible with Notes by Wordsworth, Vol. VI, Sec. II, page 66

I Have Found a Ransom

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.--1 Timothy 2:5, 6

A verse by verse study in Job 33

Unlike the three comforters who preceded him, Elihu was a true comforter to Job. The trio of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar were intent on linking Job's afflictions to some sin he had committed. While Elihu does reprove Job for being overly righteous, he points to the one remedy, not only for Job's problems, but for the deeper problems of the permission of evil on the entire human race.

As a Buzite (Job 32:2), Elihu was a close relative of Abraham (Genesis 22:20, 21). In contrast, the other comforters were either from the Arabic tribes of Esau or descendants of Keturah. While it is not clear who the Naamathites (ancestors of Zophar) were, the Septuagint links them to the Minaeans. The Assyrian king Shalmaneser II identifies the land of Uz, Job's homeland, with the northeastern part of Palestine. This accords with Josephus' assertion that "Uz founded Trachnonitis and Damascus" (*Antiquities*, I, vi, 4). Thus Elihu, of all the consolers of Job, would have the closest link to the religion of Abraham.

Elihu Addresses Job—Verses 1 and 2

Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words. Behold, now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth.

In the previous chapter Elihu spoke to the comforters. He pleaded his youth as the reason for keeping silent so long. However, frustrated by their failure to produce an adequate answer to Job's trials, he decided to speak up. His opening word, both to the other three and to Job, are a model of tact. While accusing Job of unrighteous responses, he nevertheless is careful not to condemn Job as a person. In this his speech differs markedly from those who spoke before him.

Proper Criticism—Verses 3 to 12

My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart: and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly. The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life. If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up. Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay. Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee. Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying, I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me. Behold,

he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy, He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths. Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.

Elihu takes great pains to lay the foundation for his words to Job. He wants to assure Job that he has no desire to hurt him, but rather to help him in his dilemma. In these introductory remarks we find a good example for those times when we need to make a needed correction of another.

Proper Motivation: He assures Job that he is talking from the uprightness of his heart, that he has searched his heart and found no motive of pride or evil-thinking in his inner being. The Hebrew word translated "clearly" can be better rendered "sincerely." Sincerity is another part of proper motivation. Further, he assures Job, he will give criticism which is approved by the spirit of God. For us today, this implies phrasing our criticism in biblical terms.

Invites Rebuttal: Elihu recognizes that he is only perceiving Job's situation from observation. He invites Job to offer a rebuttal to the criticism, recognizing that Job may have not intended his own words to carry the meaning which Elihu took from them.

No Busy-Bodying: "Behold, I am according to this wish in God's stead." The thought conveyed is that Elihu has felt invited to comment on Job's troubles. Interfering in another's business where not invited is to avoided.

No Superiority: "I also am formed of clay." How vital it is to assure another that we ourselves are not above similar criticisms. It is because we also err that we should have great sympathy with another whose path we perceive to be wrong.

An Uplifting Hand: "Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee." It must have been comforting to Job, after the harsh words of the other three comforters, to hear the assurance that Elihu's criticisms would not be harsh. The sole desire of this critic is to lift Job up out of his sorrow, not push his face into it.

No Hearsay: "Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words." It is easy to get drawn into a dispute where we are only second-hand parties to the evidence. Elihu limits his criticism to words which Job has uttered in his hearing. This rule is so important that it is even an essential part of our criminal justice system. The Roman governor Festus, when hearing the case against the apostle Paul, utters similar counsel: "It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have license to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him" (Acts 25:16).

Actions, Not Person, Criticized: "Behold, in this thou art not just." Finally, after citing the offending remarks by Job, Elihu carefully makes the distinction between the sin and the sinner. He condemns the remarks, without condemning Job.

The specific charges which Elihu listed can all be documented from Job's own words. An example of some of the words of Job follows: "For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause" (Job 9:17); "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem" (Job 29:14); "Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?" (Job 13:24); "He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies" (Job 19:11); "Thou putttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet" (Job 13:27).

Despite these strong claims by Job, he was held to be innocent of speaking evil against God (Job 42:7). Nevertheless, "there is none righteous, no, not one," and that includes Job. One of the Adversary's main tools is the wedge. The stronger the accusation, the stronger the defense. Soon, an innocent defense can become an overstatement of the facts. No where is this better illustrated in the book of Job and the justified charges of Elihu.

Dreams and Visions—Verses 13 to 18

Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters. For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.

The opening sentence of this passage loses much of its sense in translation. Rather than being a statement that God did not deign to inform man of his dealings, it is an affirmation that God does communicate with man. The New American Standard Version renders it more appropriately, "Why do you complain against Him, that He does not give an account of all His doings? Indeed God speaks once, or twice, [yet] no one notices it" (Job 33:13, 14).

Diverse from other New Testament epistles which begin with the name of the author, the writer of Hebrews opens with a stronger authority: "**God**, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets" (Hebrews 1:1). Elihu picks up on this theme and discusses two of God's approaches with Job. The first of these is through dreams and visions. While this is not a method God employs today, it is one which he used many times in Old Testament history.

It is not God who is not speaking, it is the individual who is not listening. It was when the recipient was in repose, with thoughts of earthly distractions blocked out, that God often chose to reveal his will. Its purpose was always to remove the individual from his own thoughts and thus take away his pride by removing selfish thoughts from consideration. These were always to correct the human so that he would be neither in danger of judgment by God ("the pit") or by man ("the sword").

God Speaks Through Sufferings—Verses 19 to 22

He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain: So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.

In Job's case, God chose to speak to him through suffering. It is unfortunate that most translators chose to introduce this thought with the word "chastening." Although a frequent correct translation of the Hebrew word, it is far from the only way it is used in the Bible. It might be better rendered "appointed" in this passage as it is in Genesis 24:14, 44.

Elihu sees a far different lesson in Job's experiences than do the other so-called comforters. Elihu sees the suffering as a method God has chosen to remove all fleshly desires from Job--so that his life would abhor bread and tasty foods. Nor should the thought be limited to food alone, but to any of the fleshly desires of man. By bringing Job to the very brink of death, God could better show the reward of fidelity under the most trying of conditions. As a picture of either Israel or the human race, it aptly pictures the depths to which God permits evil and suffering so that the lessons learned may be truly indelible.

The Ransom Solution—Verses 23 and 24

If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness: Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.

The Hebrew word here used for messenger is usually one reserved for a spirit being and is most frequently translated "angel." The term "one among a thousand" is merely a Hebrewism for one who is rare. While the usual translation of the Hebrew term used for "interpreter," Brown, Driver, and Riggs, point out that in the Hiphil conjunction here used it has the thought picked up by most literal translators of "mediator."

The object of this mediator is not to show man his own righteousness, but rather to show him the uprightness of the mediator. It is this mediator who interprets the sufferings of Job and gives the ultimate answer for the larger question, "Why does God permit evil?" The answer is simple, "I have found a ransom." This is God's ultimate answer to the permission of evil. A ransom, or corresponding price for Adam, guarantees not only a reversal of the death sentence against the human race, but a final and fitting restoration from all the effects of sin and evil itself.

The Principles of Salvation—Verses 25 to 30

His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth: He shall pray unto God, and he will be favorable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness. He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.

Elihu's foresight into the application of the principles of salvation seems to bear out his earlier statement as uttering words given him by "the breath of the Almighty" (Job 33:4). He enumerates six of these principles in the words above.

1. The one who experientially "finds the ransom" will not only be restored to life, but will return to the days of his youth, with his flesh becoming fresher than that of a child.
2. This newly resurrected one will enjoy the privilege of prayer with the assurance that God "will be favorable unto him."
3. As a result of answered prayer, humans will no longer be afraid of approaching the face of Jehovah, but "will see his [Jehovah's] face with joy."
4. Repentance and acknowledgement of sins, both past and present, will result in ultimate deliverance from the human soul returning to the pit.
5. Not only will such an one be delivered from going into the pit but he will profit greatly from the experiences of sin and redemption--"his life shall see the light."
6. Errors will be permitted for a while in God's kingdom. This process of repentance and deliverance, Job is assured, "worketh God oftentimes with man."

It seems amazing indeed that individuals living in the days of Job, probably one or two generations after the Exodus, had such a depthful insight into the operations of a kingdom some four thousand years distant.

A Further Invitation—Verses 31 to 33

Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak. If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak, for I desire to justify thee. If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.

Verse 30 ends Elihu's first of four speeches. Before proceeding with more difficult lessons for Job, he reiterates his earlier invitation for Job to give him an answer. He also stresses that his objective is to justify Job and not to condemn him. Barring Job's rebuttal Elihu invites him to listen to the further words of this lesson. Since Job does not answer, it is to be presumed that he gives Elihu permission to continue. This he does through chapter 37.

Some argue that Elihu is to be classified with the other three comforters since his words are interrupted by God in chapter 38 with the words, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" (Job 38:2). However such seem to miss the import of verse one of that chapter, "Then the LORD answered **Job** out of the whirlwind." Jehovah's words are addressed not to Elihu, but to Job.

In any case, the discourse of Elihu in Job 33 shows a remarkable insight into God's plan of salvation and forms one of the earliest foregleams of the great work which the Messiah was to accomplish, not only for Israel, but all humanity as well, through the provision of a ransom at his first advent and the carrying out of the restoration of the entire race at his return.

Nehushtan

He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.--2 Kings 18:4

The reform of Hezekiah was one of the high points of Israel's history during the period of the kings. The brazen serpent which had played such an important role in the wilderness wanderings of the chosen people (Numbers 21:5-9) had become worshipped as a relic. Seeing how it was being used, Hezekiah had it broken in pieces so that the Israelites could no longer burn incense to it. He further demeaned it by renaming it Nehushtan, which means "a thing of brass"--in other words, a brass object of no special significance.

In Romans 1:23, Paul speaks of this tendency of man to build his own visible objects of worship replacing the invisible realities behind them: "And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."

This was the problem with Israel when they built the golden calf in their fear that Moses would not come down from Mt. Sinai (Exodus 32). The same tendency is noted in Habakkuk 1:14-16, "And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, that have no ruler over them? They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag; therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous." The worship was directed to the net instead of to God who made the fish for man's meat.

In a very real sense, the brazen serpent of Moses' day was a symbol of the cross of Christ. Only too frequently today we see the death of Christ trivialized by conspicuous golden jewelry. If this is worn only for its aesthetic effects, the cross becomes, like the brazen serpent in Hezekiah's day, "a thing of metal." It is not the instrument of the death that we must worship, but the one who died thereon. If the visible object replaces the invisible reality, it is to be discarded and called Nehushtan--a worthless thing.

The Lonely Olive Mill

Then cometh Jesus with them into a place called Gethsemane [oil press.]--Matthew 26:36

**There's a peaceful vale in a sunny land
Where the hills keep guard around,
And the soft breeze stirs the olive trees
And the grass that clothes the ground.**

**And in the hush and solitude
Where even the birds are still,
There stands untended and alone
An ancient olive mill.**

**Through the long bright day the mill wheel turns
And the fruit is crushed by the stone,
And drips in silence the fragrant oil
In silence and alone.**

**But somewhere out in the circling hills,
Unseen, unheard, unknown,
The Master of the olive mill
Is mindful of his own.**

**So many hours the wheel must turn,
And stone on stone must grind,
And then he will come to his olive mill,
His need of oil to find.**

**He knows how heavy the weight must be,
How long to let it lie
Ere he can gather the precious oil
And throw the refuse by.**

**O child of God, are you being crushed
`Neath trial, pain or woe?
No eye to pity, no ear to hear,
No voice to whisper low?**

**Alone in your Gethsemane,
Christ watches with you there.
He will not suffer one ounce of weight
More than your strength can bear.**

**He chasteneth but to purify;
He crusheth but to raise;
In love he worketh his blessed will
To his glory's endless praise.**

**In our affliction, afflicted still
He leaveth us not alone;
He will not forget, he will not forsake,
He is mindful of his own.**

Annie Johnson Flint

The Servant of the Lord Must Be Gentle

2 TIMOTHY 2:24

When God conquers us and takes all the flint out of our nature and we get deep visions into the spirit of Jesus, we see as never before the great rarity of gentleness of spirit in this dark and unheavenly world.

The graces of the spirit do not settle themselves down upon us by chance, and if we do not discern certain states of grace, and choose them, and in our own thoughts nourish them, they never become fastened in our nature or behavior. Every advance step in grace must be preceded by first apprehending it, and then a prayerful resolve to have it.

So few are willing to undergo the suffering out of which thorough gentleness comes. We must die before we are turned into gentleness. And crucifixion involves suffering. It is a real breaking and crushing of self which wrings the heart and conquers the mind.

There is a good deal of mere mental and logical sanctification nowadays, which is only a religious fiction. It consists of mentally putting oneself on the altar, and then mentally saying the altar sanctifies the gift, and then logically concluding, therefore, one is sanctified. Such a one goes forth with a gay, flippant theological prattle about the deep things of God. But the natural heartstrings have not been snapped and the Adamic flint has not been ground to powder, and the bosom has not throbbled with lonely surging sighs of Gethsemane. Not having the real death mark of Calvary, there cannot be that soft, sweet, gentle, floating, victorious, overflowing, triumphant life that flows like a spring morning from an empty tomb.

" And great grace was upon them all." — Acts 4:33

From *Songs of the Nightingale*