

The Herald

Of Christ's Kingdom

January/February 2000

Seven Millenniums

EDITOR'S JOURNAL

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. — Ecclesiastes 3:1

This issue of **THE HERALD** opens a new millennium. Men may debate whether the new millennium dawns on January 1, 2000, or January 1, 2001, but one thing is certain: the millennium is one of the most frequently discussed topics today.

In the popular press, commentators on the incoming millennium swing between enthusiasm for the technological progress they see on the horizon and mounting perplexity concerning the moral fiber that has produced such gigantic problems as a culture rife with drugs and drive-by shootings locally and pollution and ethnic battles internationally. This millennium of the year 2000 is in sharp contrast with the millennium predicted in the Bible.

To Christians the word has an even deeper meaning. Throughout the past 2000 years Christians have looked forward to the millennium promised in the last book of the Bible. This is the thousand years during which Christ shall reign (Revelation 20:4-6). This is the great kingdom which promises to ultimately bring peace, health, prosperity, and life to the human race. It is little wonder that Christians continuously pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). This Millennium of the Bible does not coincide with the millennium of today's media but, according to Bible chronology, began over 100 years ago.

There is a venerable Jewish tradition that says sin and evil would dominate this world for 6000 years, followed by the return of the Messiah who would rule for the next thousand years. This tradition is not without biblical foundations. If this reasonable conclusion be correct, God's plan for man spans a period of seven millenniums, leading up to "the ages to come [when] he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:7).

The articles in this issue of The Herald will examine each of these thousand-year periods of man's history. We will see how God has worked with his human creation during each of these long periods of time.

From the very start of God's plan, when he created Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, until its grand climax with a kingdom of world-wide peace, the Bible presents one common theme of sin, redemption, and deliverance. It is the purpose of this issue to note the way in which the Creator of the universe is carrying out his intentions for the human race. Each era is methodically based on the one preceding, and sets a foundation for the one following. We have tried to trace the systematic developments of these progressive time periods in this issue of The Herald.

The ending of each millennium does not coincide with the time periods of the various ages and dispensations in God's plan. The chart below illustrates how these millenniums are distributed in the various ages and dispensations. We trust that this issue will enable us each to glorify the heavenly Father as we note "the stately steppings of our God."

The First Millennium

The Origins of Man

Then God said, Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.—Genesis 1:26; 2:7, New American Standard

Leonard Griehs

The first thousand years of man's existence passes by in the first five chapters of Genesis. It is a ten-generation listing of firstborn sons: Adam (son of God), Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methusaleh, Lamech and Noah. Little is recorded about most of these sons, other than their father's age when they were born, their age when their own son was born, and their age at death. Most notable in the list is Seth listed as the firstborn son of Adam.

Person	Years After Adam Born	Years Died	Years Lived
Adam	0	930	930
Seth	130	1042	912
Enoch	235	1140	905
Kenan	325	1235	910
Mahalalel	395	1290	895
Jared	460	1422	962
Enoch	622	987	365
Methuselah	687	1656	969
Lamech	874	1651	777
Noah	1056		

According to this chart, only Adam lived and died within this first thousand-year period. While much legend and speculation exist surrounding the events and people mentioned,

only a few significant events are actually recorded: the creation of Adam; the "building" of woman; the fall into sin; the murder of Abel by his brother Cain; the mysterious entry of the sons of God (recorded later in chapter 6). Although few in number, each of these events would significantly alter the remaining 6000 years of man's existence on this planet.

The Creation of Adam

It was near the end of the sixth creative day that God made man in his own image. Adam was made a human being thoroughly in harmony with God, without unrighteousness and without sin. When considering this first man in the image of God, one cannot but compare immediately "the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5), "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26), who was like the first Adam whose penalty he came into the world to pay (1 Corinthians 15:22). Adam's creation in God's image gave him dominion over the lower animals just as God has dominion over the entire universe. Man's dominion, now overthrown by sin, is to be restored by this second Adam's kingdom (Acts 3:19-21).

Genesis gives two accounts of the creation of Adam. In chapter one a general description is given to show that the creation of man and woman was the crowning feature of creation, indicated by the generic term "man." In chapter two the particulars of the creation in the Garden of Eden are given to connect man with the earth on which he was created. It is chapter two that supplies important details.

The phrase "in our image, according to our likeness" in Genesis 1:26 is an important link between Creator and created. As part of his dominion, man was given mental powers and moral qualities considerably above the creatures of earth. The mental faculties made it possible for man to increase in knowledge and achievements far beyond that of any other earthly creature. However, man is confined to the earth. Paul states that "there are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another" (1 Corinthians 15:40). Man was made with mental and moral qualities similar to his Creator but given a body that could only exist on earth.

The detailed account of Adam's creation in Genesis 2:7 supplies verification for this idea. "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." God made something entirely new from the earth which he had created. The Hebrew word for "dust" is *aphar*, which generally means "mud" and in usage refers to extracting from the ground the fine parts of the soil as a potter would do to make clay. In fact the word "formed" here is the Hebrew *yatsar*, which is from Strong's 3335, meaning to squeeze into shape, to mould into a form, as a potter.

One step yet remained. The breath of life from the Father brought activity to the lump of clay that he had fashioned out of the elements of the earth that he had made. Luke 3:38 calls Adam the son of God, yet we are told that Jesus was "the only begotten son" (John 3:16). While other men receive their life in the natural process of human procreation,

Adam received a perfect life directly from God. This was the critical factor in the payment of justice when God's only-begotten son, Jesus, would redeem Adam and the unborn race in his loins. Man's history on earth began.

The Building of Eve

"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Genesis 2:18). We cannot be sure exactly how long Adam was alone in Eden. It is certain however, that none of the creation over which Adam had dominion was sufficient for his companionship. The creation of Eve from Adam, rather than as an entirely separate creation from him, was an important indication of God's purpose. He divided the first perfect human nature into two parts—into a male and female creature. "So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh at that place. And the Lord God fashioned [literally: "built"] into a woman the rib which he had taken from man, and brought her to the man" (Genesis 2:21,22).

The term "help meet" is often misused to suggest that God had intended only to create a wife for Adam. Although Eve became Adam's wife, that is not the intent of the original. The word "meet" is the Hebrew *neged* literally meaning "a part opposite, a counterpart." Rotherham captures this idea in his translation of verse 20: "But for man had there not been found a helper as his counterpart." Of all the living creatures that had been made by God and named by Adam, there was none that Adam could communicate with at his level. Only when God created Eve did the man find someone who could share his thoughts, his ideas and his life.

While Adam was shaped out of the elements of the earth, Eve was constructed from something that came from inside the man. That appears to be the meaning of Adam's statement that she was "bone of my bones" and "flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23). The word bone is the Hebrew *etsem* and when used as a pronoun means "selfsame." Adam identified the woman as someone who had been taken from "a side of him" and had been built into another human.

The Jewish Tanakh renders Genesis 2:23, "Then the man said, This one at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. This one shall be called Woman, for from man was she taken." The term "at last" signifies that Adam realized that he now had a companion equal to himself with whom he could share his life and he gave her a name to reflect that idea. The term "woman" is the Hebrew *ishshah*, meaning the feminine counterpart of "man." Male and female characteristics were separated to generate human life on this planet. This was intended from the beginning as noted by the description of creation in Genesis 1:27, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

The Fall Into Sin

"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16,17).

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Genesis 3:4-6).

The temptation and fall of Eve have not only been the subject of many paintings, but also fodder for speculation into the exact nature of her sin. The traditional concept of the first woman munching on an apple is almost certainly not the correct one. What is certain is that disobedience led to a disruption of the channel of life that God had provided in Eden.

God said unto them, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." God's commission to man had been simple: be fruitful and multiply until you fill the earth; exercise dominion over the creation to keep it peaceful and in proper balance (Genesis 1:28). The plan to populate the earth in a systematic, proper method would have led to an expanded knowledge as man learned more about how God wanted him to subdue the earth.

The heavenly visitor described as the serpent proposed to Eve a different way: "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Genesis 3:6).

Throughout history trees and worship have been closely connected. The early history of Israel contains frequent admonitions against Israel going to the "groves" where Baal was being worshiped. Perhaps this stems from an association with the tree of life mentioned in Genesis with the relationship between God and man which it so greatly impacted. While Adam and Eve took the recognized path to God, they would continue to live in peace and harmony, free from the effects of death and sin.

The subsequent disobedience came from too close an association with the forbidden fruit. John speaks of the nature of this sin in 1 John 2:16, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world." Eve was deceived into thinking that the course of action they were taking was an excusable path to gain knowledge. Her temptation came at the suggestion of the then-splendid being known as Lucifer. Her subsequent discussion with Adam about it ultimately resulted in Adam following the same course although he thoroughly understood the consequence of that action (1 Timothy 2:14).

"And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked" (Genesis 3:7). Prior to their disobedience, Adam and Eve could meet with God and stand before him in righteousness—they had nothing to be ashamed of as they obeyed him and received his instruction. Now they felt differently—not repentance or shame, but fear. "And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the Garden" (Genesis 3:8, Leeser). Whereas they had always met and communicated with God openly in the appointed area of the garden, now they sought to escape his presence.

The punishment for their disobedience was clear. They must be removed from the presence of God and made to struggle on their own in this new world. Eventually they would give up life itself. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3:17-19). Death was no longer a remote possibility but a certain reality. Expulsed from the garden, they began the long struggle which would end in Adam's death at the age of 930 before the end of one "day" of his life. "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8).

The Murder of Abel

"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 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. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering. But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." (Genesis 4:1-5) "[And the Lord said] if thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door; and unto thee is its desire, but thou canst rule over it" (Genesis 4:7, Leeser).

Although Cain was the firstborn son, the genealogy from Adam to Noah is carried on through Seth. Cain's act of hatred and subsequent expulsion from the presence of the family evidently resulted in the omission of his posterity from the line to bring the promised redemption (Luke 3:38). He was replaced by Seth who was born shortly after Abel's death.

Cain's jealousy brought him to the position of hatred and envy rather than the love of his brother that should have ruled his heart. The reason for his own sacrifice being rejected by God was less important to him than the fact that his brother's sacrifice was accepted. God's principle of personal responsibility in obedience and disobedience had not changed

with the fall of Adam. Cain should have resisted the hatred and malice boiling up inside him. God reprimanded him not because he had brought an inferior sacrifice, but because his attitude was leading him on a downward course. This same principle was exemplified in the downfall of the rich young ruler of Luke 18 who came to Jesus seeking eternal life. Jesus saw that although he claimed to have done his duty in sacrifice, he was not willing to examine his selfish motives and alter his heart attitude about what he possessed. Unless he could recognize his improper course and deal with it, he would not be able to overcome the secret sin that was in his heart.

"And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him" (Genesis. 4:8). Rotherham's rendering indicates a premeditated thought on Cain's part: "Let us go into the field." Cain did not heed the Lord's word, but led Abel into the field with the intent to kill him. Rather than heed the words of God to repent and make proper sacrifice, he chose to let the sin overcome him. The Lord's punishment was severe. Cain was exiled to become a fugitive and a vagabond, having no home. In the days when the earth was still in its infancy, that was a severe penalty indeed. Cain's reaction showed his fear. "Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me" (Genesis 4:14). Cain knew that his penalty meant he would no longer be under the protection of his family, but now confined to the area outside of the immediate population. He must give up what he had—the support of the community of post-Edenic life. He must fend for himself in a new land east of Eden. He would be cut off from family and from the line of the one who would eventually eradicate the sin. Seth would be in the line to produce the promised seed (Luke 3:38).

The Fallen Angels

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" (Genesis. 6:1,2).

The Hebrew term here for "sons of God" is *beni Elohim*, and is used in Job 38:7 and again in Daniel 3:25. It means angels. It is evident that sometime during the first thousand years, man was corrupted by heavenly beings that misused their power to take advantage of those they were assigned to protect. This must have happened relatively quickly following the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden. The "men" that began to multiply is the Hebrew *adam* plus *ha*, which can only properly be understood to mean Adam and Eve.

The heavenly messengers that God allowed to teach mankind and perhaps prevent the further decline that came with life outside the garden chose not to just deliver a message, but to actively involve themselves in a life they had never seen before. Instead of aiding sinful man these angels misused their powers to engage in sin themselves. They produced a hybrid race that was not of Adamic stock. Man's fate was now set. God would wipe

everyone off the face of the earth. Only Noah, born 1,056 years after Adam was created, would escape to begin the next thousand years.

The Second Millennium

A Change of Worlds

For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.—2 Peter 3:5,6

The era that begins shortly before the birth of Noah and ends during the lifetime of Abraham comprises the second millennium of the human race. The great flood, and God's miraculous rescue of eight people and a representative sample of all the animals, certainly stands out as a momentous event in history (1 Peter 3:20). The extended life span of people and the direct involvement of angelic beings in the affairs of men led to a terrible worldwide society of evil and violence, out of harmony with God's will. The Scriptures give an account of the intermingling between angels and humans with the resulting hybrid beings, Nephilim, capable of tremendous violence and harm. The flood proclaimed God's judgment.

The Flood

There are lessons we can learn from the experience of the flood.

First, God permitted the angels to materialize and mingle with women. Apparently, some of the angels had the same spirit as Satan and questioned God's authority. The opportunity to create a new race was a strong temptation to those who had this improper heart condition. Perhaps they thought they would be helping mankind in some way, but their offspring proved to be violent and unruly. Being stronger than humans, they easily dominated them. The angels responsible for this terrible state of affairs were subsequently confined to "Tartarus"—("the darkness of this world," A Commentary, Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown). They were forbidden to materialize and given "ringside seats" to the pageant of God's dealings with the human race, including the unfolding of the permission of evil. God never forgot or abandoned them. In fact, a special time is reserved for their final judgment at the Lord's second advent. (See Genesis 6 and 7; Matthew 8:29; Hebrews 2:5; 1 Peter 3:19,20; 2Peter 2:4; Jude 6.)

Second, the devastating power of evil proved to be very destructive when human beings were capable of living almost 1000 years. Using the information provided in Genesis, we see that Adam was alive when Methuselah was born and Methuselah died in the same year that the flood came. Genesis 6:6 states that God "repented" his creation of mankind when he saw the extent of the evil. We know that God did not think he had made a mistake in creating the human race. He was saddened by the decline of his creation in so few generations. The flood apparently caused significant changes in the earth that affected the human lifespan. This dramatically cut down the amount of evil that could be contrived or suffered by anyone. (See Genesis 6:3; 15:16; 50:23; Deuteronomy 5:6; 32:7; Exodus 20:5; 34:7; Matthew 1:17.)

Third, the salvation of Noah and his family stands as a pillar of Noah's faithfulness. Noah obeyed God in every particular. He paid no attention to the mocking and taunting of his neighbors. He constructed a vessel that was designed to float in deep water. He trusted God to protect him and his family from whatever would happen. He and the others dutifully and lovingly cared for the animals who shared the ark and released them at the appropriate time. The "rainbow covenant" illustrates God's faithfulness to his creation by promising to never again destroy all mankind. (See Genesis 6 to 9:19; Isaiah 54:9; Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5.)

Approximately five hundred years elapsed from the time of the flood to God's covenant with Abraham. The Bible informs us that human beings multiplied again on the earth. Soon cities sprang up and another attempt was made to challenge God's authority. The tower of Babel began as a tribute to man's greatness and ended in the dispersal of the people to every corner of the world, profoundly confused by their inability to understand one another's words. We have very little detailed information regarding this period in mankind's history.

The Bible alone contains any reliable historical information. God dealt with men on an individual basis during this time. The lifetime of Abram, whose name was changed to Abraham, marks the end of this millennium as well as the next most notable event in man's history, namely the covenant to bless "all the families of the earth" through his descendants.

Shem and Melchizedek

It is interesting to note that both Noah and Shem lived contemporaneously with Abraham, and in fact, Abraham outlived Shem by only twenty five years. There is a tradition that Shem and Melchizedek are the same *person* (*Faith's Foundations*, page 47). The Bible does not state this, but it is recorded that Abraham met Melchizedek and paid tithes to him as a priest of God. He received a blessing from him in return (Genesis 14:18; Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6,10; 6:20; 7:1-21). The lineage of Melchizedek is conspicuously not recorded. Shem would likely be identified as an "Ancient One"—someone who was alive as long as anyone else could remember. The phrase "without father or mother" makes sense in this context. Others hold that this phrase means that his pedigree was undocumented.

Tradition also credits Shem as the builder of the Great Pyramid (*The Time Is At Hand*, page 322). This magnificent edifice and witness to the greatness of Jehovah stood in stark contrast to the tower of Babel and remains to this day as an example of superior skill and workmanship. Shem, the son of Noah would certainly have had the skill and knowledge as well as the divine guidance needed to construct the Great Pyramid.



These ideas are speculative, but certainly possible. Providing a direct link between Shem and Abraham serves to intensify the impact of God's plan as it unfolds in the second millennium. The groundwork for development of the seed of promise is firmly laid in this thousand year period. The history of mankind from creation to Abraham had been conveyed by only three witnesses, Adam, Methuselah and Shem. Shem was still alive during a significant portion of Isaac's life as well. From Isaac to Moses, there is only Jacob, Levi and Kohath. Moses provided the first recorded history of the race, and we can see that it could be a very accurate one.

The Second Millennium reveals God's attention to detail. He alone had the perspective that we now can share as we look back on history from our vantage point in the Seventh Millennium. It strengthens our faith to see his careful planning and his singleness of purpose, namely, the development of the "seed of promise." It deepens our love and respect for his greatness as well, when we look back on man's history and see God working while, at the same time, granting to all mankind the full exercise of their own will. As we approach ever nearer to the glorious conclusion of God's plan for blessing all the families of the earth, we can thank him and praise him for the many lessons he has for us in the study of his Word. Meditating on God's careful guidance of his creation through seven thousand years of history helps us appreciate the apostle Peter's words, "one day with the Lord is as 1000 years and 1000 years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8).

The Third Millennium

A Covenant-Keeping God

In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.—Genesis 22:17,18

Two thousand years had passed since God, in sentencing the serpent for his role in deceiving Eve, made the promise: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15).

Now, early in man's third millennium, this promise of a seed is reiterated along with important additional details. Not only would this seed bruise the serpent's head, it would actively bless all the families of the earth. The source of the seed was also narrowed down to one family line: he would come from the descendants of Abraham. The implication was that the seed would be composed of two parts: one heavenly "as the stars of the heaven," another earthly, "as the sand which is upon the sea shore."

Over the short term the descendants of Abraham became the nation of Israel, but the larger fulfillment, that of the "stars of the heaven," is defined by the apostle Paul: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. . . . And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Galatians 3:16,29

The entire story of the first two thousand years of man is found in the first fourteen chapters of Genesis and the book of Job. It takes fifteen entire books of the Bible to relate the narrative of the next thousand years.

God's dealings with mankind during the first period can be divided into four sections: 1) the lives of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; 2) the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt; 3) the exodus and journey to the promised land; 4) the period of Israel's judges.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

Faith was the test God placed upon the first three patriarchs. Abraham's faith was tested, first by his willingness to leave his birthplace for an unknown destination and to which the providence of God would direct him (Genesis 12:1-3). His second test of faith was in his patient waiting upon God to provide an heir even after his body, then "dead," and his wife Sarah being beyond the age of child-bearing (Romans 4:19). A third test was that, even though he had been promised the land of Canaan, he refused to claim it before the time that God indicated (Hebrews 11:9). But the ultimate test of his faith was in his willingness to offer his long-awaited and only son as an offering unto God (Hebrews

11:17-19). Each time he passed the test of faith the promise was repeated until it was given in the form found in our theme text.

This covenant promise was repeated to Isaac as an inheritance: "The LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" (Genesis 26:2-5).

By faith Isaac passed this blessing to his son Jacob. The biblical historian sums it up concisely: "Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; and hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance" (1 Chronicles 16:16,17).

This promise of the land of Canaan for an everlasting dwelling place was explicitly stated in the original covenant given in Genesis 15:7, "And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it." However God also told Abraham that even though Canaan was to be his promised home, this would not be fulfilled until 400 years of affliction had passed (Genesis 15:13).

Israel in Egypt

The hand of God was manifest in this move to a foreign land. Jacob's favorite son, Joseph, was sold by his ten jealous brothers as a slave to a Midianite caravan which, in turn, placed him with the Egyptian general Potipher. Although an exceptional servant, he was accused by Potipher's frustrated wife of sexual impropriety and was placed in prison. Rising to the position of a trustee, his successful interpretation of the dreams of Pharaoh's butler and valet eventually brought him to the notice of the Egyptian monarch.

Joseph was called upon to interpret the king's dreams of seven lean cows which consumed seven fat cows. He correctly predicted from this that Egypt would have seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine. Impressed with the young Hebrew's sagacity, Pharaoh made him his vicegerent and administrator of a massive food storage program. In the course of time, Jacob and his family felt the effect of the famine and, after Joseph was reconciled with his brothers, the family moved to Egypt where they were granted prime land in the Nile delta area of Goshen.

After many years, another dynasty arose in Egypt who were not kindly disposed to the Hebrews dwelling among them. Seeing how the descendants of Jacob had been blessed with an exceptionally high population increase (some two million by this time) the new Pharaoh decreed that all the male Hebrew children should be slain at birth. This policy

does not appear to have been effective, considering the high population of Israel some eighty years later.

In at least one notable case, this decree of death was not carried out. A couple by the name of Amram and Jochebed gave birth to their third child, Moses. Unable to protect him for long from the watchful eyes of Pharaoh's soldiers, Jochebed entrusted the infant to the Lord and placed him in a basket in the waters of the river Nile where he was noticed and adopted by Pharaoh's daughter. In one of the many strange twists of providence so evident in God's dealings with his chosen people, the Egyptian princess selected Jochebed as the child's nurse maid and, presumably, tutor.

Moses was to become perhaps the mightiest leader and deliverer that Israel was to have. After a royal upbringing, his sense of justice compelled him to intervene in the unfair treatment of a Hebrew slave by his Egyptian taskmaster. This resulted in his killing the Egyptian. Shortly thereafter he sought to intervene in a struggle between two Israelites. Unwilling to accept his intervention, the two threatened to tell the Egyptians about his killing of the taskmaster.

Moses' reaction, which we might take at first reading to be motivated by fear, was to flee to the wilderness southeast of Egypt. The apostle Paul, however, attributes this flight as one of the examples of the outstanding faith of Moses. He writes: "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:27).

The forty years he spent in the Midianite wilderness evidently prepared him further for the role he was to play. There his education of the sciences in Pharaoh's court was supplemented by a first-hand knowledge of desert conditions through which he was to lead Israel. During this time he also may have lost his fluency with the Egyptian language for, when called by God to present the Israelite's cause for freedom, he demurred: "Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue" (Exodus 4:10).

It took considerable persuasion on God's part and three remarkable signs at the burning bush before Moses accepted his new assignment. Even then he felt the need of an interpreter, a job filled by his brother Aaron.

Pharaoh, having found the slaves a useful pool of free labor for his building enterprises, was naturally reluctant to let them go. As God had used signs to persuade Moses to go to Pharaoh, now he used even more dramatic miracles to persuade the king to let the Israelites go. A series of miraculous plagues, each demonstrating the power of Jehovah over one or another of the various Egyptian gods, was climaxed with a plague of death.

So dramatic was this deliverance that it is celebrated even to this day by the Feast of Passover, instituted over 3000 years ago. This feast not only was to celebrate Israel's deliverance, but has served the Christian as a powerful typical lesson of the saving power

of coming under the blood of "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

The Exodus

Although, as Paul observes of Israel, "by faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned" (Hebrews 11:29), that faith was soon dissipated by their wilderness experiences. A summary of their lack of faith is given by the same apostle in 1 Corinthians 10:7-13, drawing the lesson in verse 6: "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted."

The climax of this lack of faith was shown when, not long into the exodus, they reached the borders of the promised land at Kadesh Barnea. There, after ten of twelve spies brought back a fearful report that the people accepted, God promised his punishment upon them: "Your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise" (Numbers 14:33,34).

The mistake of the ten spies who brought back a negative report was in comparing the Canaanites with the Israelites, while Caleb and Joshua, the other two spies, compared the Canaanites to the God of Israel.

Despite the unfaithfulness of the children of Israel, God remained faithful to his part of his covenant. He met their doubts with miracles and their complaints with chastisements. Moses, in his final address to the nation as recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, summarizes their experiences—the good and the bad. This had its desired effect. The generation of Israelites who crossed the Jordan showed a different spirit than their forebears at Kadesh Barnea. Under the brilliant leadership of Joshua, and with the sterling example of Caleb, they quickly conquered much of the promised land.

The Law and the Tabernacle

God, in carrying out his part of the covenant, gave Israel two gifts during their time in the wilderness: a law to govern their actions and a tabernacle for their worship. The law was composed of four main sections: the moral code, the ceremonial laws, rules of worship, and a dietary code. These laws proved to be beyond their ability to keep. Nevertheless, they were uplifted from the conduct of the nations around them to the degree that they tried to apply these statutes to their individual lives. A beautiful ode to the practical effects of the law in personal life is penned in Psalm 119, the longest chapter in the Bible.

One of the main functions of the law is identified by the apostle Paul in Galatians 3:23,24: "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto

Christ, that we might be justified by faith." By keeping the perfect law, which Israel had been unable to do, Jesus demonstrated his own perfection and right to be the heir to all that the law promised.

The ceremonial and worship features of the law (and perhaps the dietary code as well) contained types or illustrations for the Christian dispensation. Paul implies as much: "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). He elaborates on a great number of these typical pictures throughout his exposition to the Hebrews.

Conquest of Canaan

Once they crossed the Jordan river into the promised land of Canaan, the Israelites faced the problem of driving out its inhabitants. This was no easy task and it took some six years to accomplish. Although God had given them the land, they had to work to conquer it, to till it, and keep it clean from the wild beasts that threatened their herds and their crops.

God supplied them with an unlikely ally in the conquest of the former inhabitants—swarms of hornets. "I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite, from before thee" (Exodus 23:28). We are not told just what function these bees had, but perhaps they may have stung the enemy soldiers hiding in the field or behind trees, so that their reaction to the bee stings would cause them to expose their position. This would provide an apt lesson for the Christian today. While we are responsible for fighting our own imperfections, the Lord assists by exposing them to us so that, identifying them, we can more successfully defeat them.

Even the ability of the native inhabitants to remain in their unconquered cities was overruled by their covenant-keeping God: "I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land" (Exodus 23:29,30).

Israel's bravery, however, did not lead them to a full conquest of the land. At times they proved unable to dislodge the inhabitants. "Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land. Yet it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute; but did not utterly drive them out" (Joshua 17:12,13).

This lack of full conquering faith proved to remain a thorn in their side for centuries. Not only did some of these native inhabitants form coalitions and rebel against Israel, a far greater danger was for the Israelites to assimilate the worship of the pagan gods of the Canaanites.

Judges

It was just this pagan idolatry that proved to be the stumbling block to the Israelites in their first period of possession, the period ruled by judges. The period of judges differed from that of kings in its political organization. During the period of the judges the twelve tribes of Israel were allied in a loose federation with no central organization. In contrast the kings ruled over many tribes, with Saul and David (for 33 years of his 40-year reign) ruling the entire nation.

A good example of this division among the tribes was during the judgeship of Deborah when Israel fought the armies of Hazor under their general, Sisera. Benjamin, Ephraim, Issachar, Naphtali, and Zebulun joined forces with Deborah while Asher, Dan, and Reuben declined to become involved (Judges 5:14-18).

During the period of the judges, Israel frequently went into idolatry. This repetitive pattern of idolatry, repentance, and deliverance is well described in Judges 2:15-18: "Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed. Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so. And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them."

As a result of no centralized government, there was little enforcement of the divine law. The net result was that every man felt free to live life the way he preferred. "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).

When corruption developed amongst the sons of Samuel, Israel's last judge, the tribes clamored for a king like the other nations around them. This request not only displeased Samuel, but God stated that by so doing they were rejecting Jehovah as their king (1 Samuel 8:7). The contrasting bad reign of Saul who was chosen by God after man's desire, a man who was head and shoulders taller than his brethren (1 Samuel 9:2), and the good reign of David, a humble shepherd lad, is notable. Unfortunately, as the Davidic dynasty unfolded, there were more who followed in the pattern of Saul than those who followed in the pattern of David.

Thus it was, from the covenant with Abraham until the death of David, God maintained his covenant with a wayward people. Their transgressions did not hinder his grace. He was, indeed, a covenant-keeping God.

The Fourth Millennium

The Kingdom of Israel

Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.—1 Samuel 8:5

David Rice

The fourth millennium from Adam covered the period of Israel's kingdom, through and including the period of the Maccabees in the second century BC when a measure of independence was briefly restored.

The institution of kings was at the insistence of the Israelites and was contrary to the counsel of the Lord who said, "they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Samuel 8:7). Samuel warned them of the dangers, conscription and taxation, and these grew so heavy on the people as time passed that they demanded relief of Solomon's son Rehoboam. When he threatened to increase the burden, the kingdom was rent in two. The greater part formed the ten-tribe kingdom ruled from Tirzah, later Samaria. To the line of David ruling from Jerusalem were left only Judah and Benjamin, together with the Levites.

Of course the Israelites had some legitimate concerns. Samuel had grown old and his sons who served as assistants "turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." Then all the elders of Israel requested a king (1 Samuel 8:1-5). Also, Israel had recently experienced 40 years of oppression by the Philistines (Judges 13:1; 1 Samuel 7). Naturally they felt the need of a strong military leader such as a king.

Although the pressure of these issues was strong, there is never a good reason to reject the counsel of the Lord. It was a test of faith for the Israelites which they failed. It would have been better had they come to Samuel with their concerns, and asked counsel of the Lord for a remedy.

A recent documentary on state-sponsored gambling showed politician after politician acknowledging that state lotteries were probably "morally wrong, but" followed by reasons for having them anyway. Do we bow to lesser concerns when principles are at stake? Or do we take our stand on principle and faith, fully prepared to accept temporal disadvantage as a consequence?

Among the brethren today, there is probably no greater threat than lack of reverent devotion to the Lord's principles, and a rejection of the influence, false hopes, and empty rewards of worldliness. Many in their pursuit of earthly advantage sacrifice spiritual interests. Sometimes meeting becomes irregular, and others are induced to follow this poor example. Paul saw this tendency also, and counseled the brethren: "Let us not hold aloof from our church meetings, as some do. Let us do all we can to help one another's

faith" (Hebrews 10:25, Phillips). If followed, the Lord's advice will correct this tendency: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33).

The First Three Kings

Saul, David, and Solomon, the only kings to rule a united Israel, each reigned 40 years. The number 40 is a symbol of trial, testing, judgment, and these reigns represent three ages of trial and judgment in God's plan: the Jewish, Gospel, and Millennial ages.

Saul's reign represents the Jewish age and Saul represents the Israelites who were disobedient and cast off at our Lord's first advent. David's reign represents the Gospel age and his victories represent the victories of faith in the present time. Solomon, in glory and peace, represents the kingdom of Christ which will spread worldwide. The 120 years of the united kingdom parallels the 120 years of Moses life which was likewise divided into three periods of 40 years, each of which represents the same ages.

It is possible that relics from Saul's reign are extant today, in the form of correspondence with the king of Egypt. This suggestion is in *Pharaohs and Kings*, a 1995 book by David Rohl. A number of clay tablets from El-Amarna in Egypt were discovered by a peasant woman in 1887; this archive eventually produced over 380 tablets. There were diplomatic letters between Egypt and the "Great Kings" of Babylon, Assyria, Hatti (Turkey), Alashiya (Cyprus), and Mitanni (between Hatti and Assyria), and also with the lesser kings of Canaan. Among these is correspondence from and about one "Labayu" which is said to mean "the Lion of Yah"—King Saul. Rohl's case for this seems compelling:

Saul was killed in battle by the Philistines; Labayu was killed in battle by kings from the west.

Saul's enemies were the Philistines; Labayu's enemies included the kings of Gath and Ashkelon, which were Philistine cities (1 Samuel 6:17).

Saul's body was displayed on the "wall of Bethshan" (1 Samuel 31:10); in the Amarna tablets the troops of the western coalition occupied Bethshan.

After Labayu's death his adversaries complain of the "sons" of Labayu; the Scriptures indicate Saul's kingdom was temporarily divided between his son Eshbaal and his son-in-law David.

In the tablets Labayu's successor is Mutbaal (Canaanite, "man of baal"); Saul's successor was Eshbaal (Hebrew: "man of baal"—1 Chronicles 8:33).

This connection has not been embraced by the scholarly world because the dates traditionally assigned to the kings of Egypt involved in this correspondence are earlier than the time of Saul and David. However, Rohl presents good evidence that Egyptian history for this period has been incorrectly dated.

The Sure Mercies of David

King David wanted to build a temple for the Lord. He consulted the prophet Nathan who encouraged him to proceed. But that night the Lord directed Nathan to change his counsel, and David was told that the honor of this building would be for his son: "He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever" (2 Samuel 7:13-16).

This was a remarkable promise, later referred to in Psalm 89:27-37, and still later in Isaiah 55:3 where it is termed "the sure mercies of David." For Solomon's sins the Lord rebuked him greatly, even rending his son Rehoboam's kingdom in two. But God always preserved the throne in Jerusalem for a seed of David. In the northern kingdom several dynasties came and went, but in the southern kingdom the throne passed only to the descendants of David.

Twice this kingly line was in peril, but the Lord preserved it on both occasions: once during the usurpation by Athaliah, daughter of Jezebel, when the priest Jehoiada preserved the child Joash for seven years (2 Chronicles 23), and again in the days of wicked king Ahaz when Isaiah assured him that his sins notwithstanding, God would preserve the kingly line from the conspirators (Isaiah 7:1-7).

Ultimately the promise is secure through David's son Jesus; those who are Christ's are co-inheritors with him. Thus Revelation indicates the saints reign as kings with Christ during the kingdom.

David and Melchizedek

Melchizedek was the king of Salem—later called Jerusalem (Psalm 76:2)—to whom Abraham paid tithes and from whom he received bread and wine. About a thousand years later Melchizedek is mentioned in a psalm about David and Jesus, the son of David: "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:4).

Whether the immediate successor of Melchizedek was a godly man we do not know, but in time the rulers of that city became ungodly, as evidenced in Adoni-zedek whom Joshua slew (Joshua 10:1). The first known godly ruler of the city thereafter was David who conquered the city and moved his capital there. Combining David the "king"—Melchi in Hebrew—and the priest of David's time "Zadok," produces "Melchi-Zadok." Vowels did not exist in ancient Hebrew so this could as easily be rendered "Melchi-Zedek."

Much later after the kingdom had ended and the Israelites returned from captivity under Zerubbabel (of royal seed) and Joshua (the priest), the theme of Melchizedek, though

with out that name, reappeared. Joshua (Hebrew for Jesus) was made to picture the coming Jesus, who would unite both offices in himself. "Take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest . . . saying . . . Behold the man whose name is The Branch . . . he shall build the temple of the Lord . . . and he shall be a priest upon his throne" (Zechariah 6:11-13).

Note that Zerubbabel, a descendant of David, appears in the genealogies of both Joseph (Matthew 1) and Mary (Luke 3), as though to mark him as a picture of the coming Messiah.

Later, following the Maccabean revolt of 167 BC, the Maccabean rulers who were of the priestly line joined the offices again. Probably this also was a foreshadowing of the coming Messiah who would incorporate both offices. Zechariah 9:13 seems to be a prophetic reference to the Maccabean revolt, and it is embedded in a context which is prophetic of Messiah: "I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man" (verse 13). "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (verse 9).

The Kingdom of Israel Falls

The northern ten tribes of Israel fell to the Assyrians during the time of Hezekiah, and the southern two tribes of Judah fell to the Babylonians during the time of Nebuchadnezzar, more than a century later. We properly date the beginning of Israel's seven times of national punishment, 2520 years, from the latter episode, as suggested by Leviticus 26:31-36. This terminated with World War I, which released the land of Israel from the Ottoman Empire and started it on the road to becoming a national homeland for the Jewish people. The last 1260 years of this span was approximately the time the land of Israel had been dominated by the Sunni Moslems.

There is also a parallel period of 2520 years from the fall of the northern ten tribes. This period terminates about 1799, at the end of the 1260 years of Papal rule (Daniel 7:25; 12:7). Following this and as a result of the Napoleonic wars and the breaking up of old kingdoms, the Jewish people began to appreciate some increased liberties.

The final downfall of Judah, the last remnant of the kingdom of Israel, was sealed as a result of the atrocities of King Manasseh. "[He] built again in the high places, which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them . . . he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger. And he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God . . . Manasseh made Judah . . . do worse than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of

Israel" (2Chronicles 33:3-9). "Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another" (2 Kings 21:16).

Manasseh was punished. He was bound and carried to Babylon where he repented and was subsequently restored. He tried to undo his mistakes, but after he died his son Amon reverted. Josiah his successor was a godly king, but the sins had risen too far to be excused: "My wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched" (2 Kings 22:17). Josiah himself was spared by having the punishments take place after his death.

Even then God would have preserved the kingdom though subject to Babylon had the last king Zedekiah cooperated with the Lord. But he would not, so God took them away. The remnant which were permitted to stay would not believe Jeremiah's assurances and fled to Egypt, only to suffer again when Nebuchadnezzar invaded there. The kingdom was broken and the land desolated.

Returning to the Land

After Babylon's power was broken God brought the Israelites back, though thereafter communities of Israelites continued for centuries in the various places they had been dispersed. The first part of the return was under Cyrus as a result of a decree in his first regnal year cited in Ezra 1:2-4.

This decree was logged into the official records of the Persian Empire. Seventeen years later there was found "at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes" a decree specifying even the size of the temple to be restored in Jerusalem (Ezra 6:1-6). Because of this document the Israelites were allowed to complete their temple which had been stopped by accusations from Israel's enemies shortly after the rebuilding had begun.

More than six decades later Ezra returned to Jerusalem with a decree from Artaxerxes, but after some initial rebuilding work he also was stopped. Then 13 years later Nehemiah received a commission to proceed (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

Nehemiah 5:14 contains a reference to Artaxerxes' 32nd year, and records appended in Nehemiah 12:10-12 and 22 mention the priesthood through the days of Jaddua, evidently the high priest who greeted Alexander at the gates of Jerusalem in 332 BC. This mention of Jaddua is the latest historical record in the Old Testament. "In that case his name must have been inserted by 'the great Synagogue' after the Scripture canon had been made up by Ezra (ca406 BC)" (McClintock and Strong, "Jaddua").

The Maccabean Revolt

The intervening history to the next major episode is covered in Daniel 11. After Alexander's death the kingdom was divided among his generals. Syria, governed by the Seleucids, and Egypt, governed by the Ptolemys, repeatedly impacted Israel, usually in devastating ways, until the rise of Antiochus Epiphanes of Syria in 175 BC.

About this time a group of renegade Jews encouraged the people to integrate themselves with the Gentile peoples about them, noting the calamities which had repeatedly come and suggesting they might escape further difficulties. This proposal was widely approved and pagan customs began to infuse Judea.

In 169 BC Antiochus thought to invade Egypt, and on return from his successful venture he plundered the temple at Jerusalem. Two years later he determined to thoroughly Hellenize Judea. "Those of the people who were ready to betray the law all thronged to their side in large numbers. Their wicked conduct throughout the land drove Israel into hiding in every possible place of refuge" (1Maccabees 1:52,53).

In 167 BC on the 15th day of Kislev (December 7, Julian calendar) Antiochus profaned the altar, built in its place an altar to Zeus, outlawed the practice of Jewish religious customs, and imposed a reign of terror in which many perished because of their faith.

An elderly priest, Mattathias son of John, could desist no more. As an apostate approached the pagan altar with an offering, Mattathias "shaking with passion and in a fury of righteous anger, rushed forward and cut him down on the very altar. At the same time he killed the officer sent by the king to enforce sacrifice, and demolished the pagan altar" (1Maccabees 2:24,25). He challenged everyone to stand for the covenant and join him in organized resistance, which many did.

Mattathias died the following year leaving his five sons to guide the revolt including Simeon as counselor and his brother Judas Maccabaeus as general of the forces. Against great odds they began to prevail evidently through the blessing of the Lord as intimated in Zechariah 9:13.

"Early on the 25th day of the ninth month, the month of Kislev, in the year 148 [164 BC], sacrifice was offered, as laid down by the law, on the newly constructed altar of whole-offerings. On the anniversary of the day of its desecration by the Gentiles, on that very day it was dedicated by hymns of thanksgiving . . . All the people prostrated themselves in worship and gave praise to Heaven for prospering their cause. They celebrated the dedication of the altar for eight days."—1 Maccabees 4:52-56

As time passed, the blessings of this reform lapsed into a further coldness. Nevertheless, this revival of Jewish hopes and Jewish prospects was no doubt providentially directed as a preparation for the blessings to come with the turn of the next Millennium and the advent of Messiah.

The Fifth Millenium

Unnatural Rapid Growth

Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.—Matthew 13:31,32

Michael Brann

Perhaps more than any other preceding period, the fifth millenium held out to mankind the most hope and promise. During the 4000 years prior, the Scriptures consisting of the law, the prophets and the Psalms often pointed to this time. In particular they spoke of the coming of a Savior into the world to save the people from their sins. (See Luke 24:44; John 1:45; 5:39.) At the time of Jesus' first advent, it is written, "And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not"—referring to their hopes of what he would accomplish for their salvation.

Great Expectations

Even the footstep followers of Jesus entertained certain hopes and expectations concerning God's promised kingdom to soon come. Note their anxious concern for it expressed in Acts 1:6, "So when they met together, they asked him, Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

These followers of the Lord, along with many who had entertained certain expectations concerning Jesus during his first advent, held correct concepts but their expectations as to when they were to be accomplished was a bit off target. Note Jesus' reply to the disciples in Acts 1:7,8, "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The Lord, not wishing to disappoint them by stating that their expectations would not be fully met for another 2000 years, encouraged them to wait patiently for the time when his heavenly Father would decide the matter for the kingdom to begin. He further advised that they allow the influence of the spirit of God to guide and direct them until the due time would come. In the meantime, he suggested that they would be kept busy preaching the kingdom message to both Jews and Gentiles, "to the ends of the earth."

Those who heeded the words of our Lord did just as he commanded. They gathered together for fellowship, communion, and prayer to receive more of God's holy spirit along with the knowledge, wisdom, and grace it imparted to them. With boldness and humility they preached the gospel beginning in Jerusalem and extending unto the ends of

the civilized world, most notably Africa and Asia. What an excellent start this fifth Millennium had!

Sadly, and much to the chagrin of the humble followers of the Lord, the modest hopes and expectations which they now entertained soon became grossly distorted by a combination of world conditions and ambitious men. The Lord had originally taught his disciples to expect they would be a little flock, to suffer for righteousness' sake, to expect persecution and be hated by the world. The new view about to come into vogue was that they should be large in number, to be delivered from the persecutors, and unite with the civil powers of this world!

The writings of the apostles confirmed Jesus' teachings and were in direct opposition to the changes about to occur. Paul says, "If we endure, we shall also reign with him" (2 Timothy 2:12). John testifies, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you" (1 John 3:13). James adds, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

Three Parables

In the series of seven parables given in Matthew 13, the Lord appears to give a brief account of the Christian church from its beginning to its conclusion, that is, from the beginning of the Gospel age until the beginning of the kingdom. If so, we would expect to draw some pertinent information from these regarding the church during the period of the fifth millennium. We suggest that the first three of these parables covers the time from Jesus until approximately AD 1157, thus quite clearly giving us some information concerning the fifth Millennium.

The first parable (Matthew 13:18-23) portrays the sowing work begun by Jesus and his disciples and sets the tone for the work of the Gospel age: preaching the kingdom message and letting it have its effects on various classes of mankind. Various levels of acceptance are illustrated as to how this message would be received during the age, ranging from complete rejection to total acceptance. This parable also corresponds to the first of the seven churches (Revelation 2:1-7) and its time is AD 29-70.

The second parable (Matthew 13:24-30) begins by describing the time shortly after the death of the last apostle ("while men slept"—verse 25). It further suggests that the Lord would permit a contamination of the truth to both occur and continue until the time of harvest at the end of the age. This parable corresponds to the second of the seven Revelation churches (Revelation 2:8-11) and its time is AD 70-313.

This period marked a small but dramatic change in the development of the church. The apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians about some who had begun teaching that the Day of Christ had begun. He confirms the parables of Jesus by saying that this day of Christ (the return of the Lord and the establishment of his kingdom) would not commence until there had come a "falling away" and that "that man of sin be revealed" (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12).

Regarding the beginnings of antichrist the apostle John adds, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." (1 John 2:18,19) He states that the seeds of antichrist, the man of sin, were also at work and came from those who had been associated with the church.

The Mustard Seed Parable

The third parable (Matthew 13:31,32) describes a time of phenomenal growth and development. It is interesting to note that this tree grew from an herb plant. Trees do not do this. This suggests something extraordinary and unnatural, hence something of a dubious nature.

This is exactly what happened. The church, originally intent on staying separate from the world and worldly governmental arrangements, actually combined to become a church-state power in its own right. This was contrary to the will of the Lord and it became something other than what was intended. This church-state power is known as the Papacy.

The revelator calls this church stage "Pergamos." Two definitions fit the picture. According to Thayer's Lexicon, Pergamos means "earthly elevation." Others have suggested a combination of two Greek words, per meaning much or great and gamos meaning marriage, thus a great marriage. Either explanation describes the situation. The church, once considered to be a virgin waiting for her Lord to return as bridegroom, took a husband (the worldly government of Rome) and rose from a position of obscurity and humility to one of ruling supremacy. Comparing this parable to the third church mentioned in Revelation 3:12-17 reveals further details. This parable covers the time from approximately 313-1157 AD, thus extending into the early years of the sixth millennium.

Highlights of the Fifth Millennium

Here are some highlights from history:

BC2 Date of Christ's Birth

AD33 Jesus Crucified

68-70 Jerusalem destroyed; Christians flee in advance

98-100 Last of the Apostles (John) dies

180 Decline of the Roman Empire begins

284 Diocletian begins the reorganization of the Empire

248-610 The Roman Empire goes into sharp decline and Christianity rises dramatically

303-313 Diocletian severely persecutes Christians

306 Constantine becomes Emperor, signs edict of Milan in 313 establishing a policy of toleration for Christians

325 Constantine organizes the Council of Nicea to resolve the conflict between Arians and Athanasians over the relationship between God the Father and Jesus

380 Emperor Theodosius declares Christianity the sole religion of the Empire

539 The defeat of the Ostrigoths by Belisarius, a Roman general under orders of the Pope, marks the setting up of the supremacy of the Papacy. (See Volume 3, *Thy Kingdom Come*, pages 68-70, and *Beauties of the Truth*, June 1981. This date marks the beginning of the 1260, 1290, and 1335 days of Daniel.)

800 Charlemagne crowned Emperor by the Pope in Rome.

955 John XII becomes Pope at age 18 illustrating the decline of the Roman church. The majority of popes at this time are sons of powerful Roman families, corrupt, and incompetent

1095 Pope Urban II summons the first Crusade

This timeline of history affirms the teachings of Jesus. It demonstrates the sowing work of the Gospel age produced both wheat and tares (the tares being exceedingly prolific and dominant) and the development of a great church-state system offering to protect those who join themselves to it. It further demonstrates the corruption of the Papal system and sets the stage for honest and sincere men to investigate its claims and practices in the light of the holy Scriptures.

Two men stand out at this time: Saint Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) and Peter Waldo who led the Waldensian movement around 1173. As H G. Wells writes in *The Outline of History*: "There seems to be little difference between the teaching and the spirit of St. Francis and Waldo. Both men were passionately enthusiastic for the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth. But while Waldo rebelled against the church, St. Francis did his best to be a good child of the church."

Thus the fifth millennium which began with such great promise ends in 874 AD with the church at nearly its lowest spiritual ebb.

The Sixth Millennium

The Man of Sin Revealed

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.—2 Thessalonians 2:3

Carl Hagensick

Christianity was at its lowest ebb in the ninth and tenth centuries. Corruption was rife in both the church and the Empire. Immorality was rampant amongst both priests and nuns. The right to wear the papal tiara was blatantly sold to the highest bidder. In truth, the church-state entity called the Holy Roman Empire was neither holy nor Roman nor an empire. It was the darkest of the dark ages. As Baron Acton so aptly phrased it, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." The church had reached its nadir; there was no place to go but up.

This corruption had not taken Jehovah by surprise. He anticipated it, and the apostles predicted that there would be such an apostasy. Even in the very early days of the church Paul had written that "the mystery of iniquity doth already work" (2 Thessalonians 2:7) and John stated "ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists" (1 John 2:18). Many details of the rise of this system were predicted in the Pergamos and Thyatira periods of the church (Revelation 2).

During man's sixth millennium on the earth, it was time to expose this system, weaken its underpinnings, and prepare it for its judgment and removal. The early beginnings of this activity by God can be traced as far back as the ninth century of the Christian era.

Schisms

The unity of the Roman Catholic church received a shattering blow in 867 when Photius, patriarch of Constantinople, deposed the sitting pope, Nicholas I, laying the foundations for the Eastern Orthodox, or Byzantine church. This division was not only administrative, it had doctrinal connotations as well. Influenced by Frankish missionaries to Bulgaria, Photius favored a revised adaptation of the Nicene creed. The words of the original creed, "from the Father," were replaced with the more Arian sounding, "from the Father and the son." Although a reconciliation was eventually effected, this laid the basis for the permanent schism of 1054.

A second schism took place in the Western, or Romish church, in a rivalry between the papal claimants at Avignon, under French influence, and those in Rome. The papal throne had been in Avignon since 1308, but it was not until 1378 that a rift openly developed which was not settled until the Council of Constance (1414-18) when all claimants to the papal throne were displaced and near-unanimous consent was given to the election of

Pope Martin V on November 11, 1417. Still one more short term schism occurred shortly thereafter with the election of the "antipope," Felix V. This was short-lived however, and Felix abdicated the throne in 1449.

The Bible in the Vernacular

A major source of the clergy's power over the laity came from a refusal to have the Bible translated into the native languages of parishioners. All versions were in Latin which only the educated could read. This enabled the clergy to control the interpretation of the text and formulate a united creed for the church. Independent Bible study was impossible. The Revelator poetically refers to this as a time when God's two witnesses, the Old and New Testament, "shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth" (Revelation 11:3).

The first native language into which the Bible was translated was Slavic. Since there was no written Slavic language at the time, one had to be invented. Two Greek missionaries, brothers in the flesh, Cyril and Methodius, developed a written alphabet based on the Greek, called Glagolitic. Later this was refined into the Cyrillic alphabet, widely used today in Russia and the Ukraine. This Slavic translation was completed about 864. Widespread opposition from the German clerics to translating into the vernacular led to Cyril's imprisonment in 870.

The Church in the Wilderness

The same time period that the two witnesses prophesy in the sackcloth of dead languages (1260 days, or symbolically, 1260 years) is mentioned repeatedly in the Bible. It is generally agreed by many students of the Bible that this period extends from the political establishment of the papacy (as a result of the battle of Ravenna in 539) to the collapse of that political power when the pope died as a prisoner of Napoleonic France in 1799.

One of the places where this time period appears is Revelation 12:6. The true church of God is described as a woman fleeing a dragon (the pagan Roman empire). "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

During the sixth millennium, various groups of Christians were literally forced to do just that in order to avoid persecution and death by the reigning church. These included the Albigenses and Waldenses in the thirteenth century and the Anabaptists in the sixteenth.

Opposition to the wilderness church led to the instigation of harsh punishments against heretical Christians. At first, under the episcopal inquisition authorized by the Lateran Councils of 1139, 1179, and 1215, the penalty for heresy was confined to imprisonment and confiscation of property. This soon was superseded by the papal inquisition instituted by Pope Gregory IX in 1231 which mandated that heretics be seized by the secular authorities and burned.

Still harsher methods of torture were incorporated in the special Spanish Inquisition endorsed by Pope Sixtus IV in 1483 under the infamous grand inquisitor Torquemada. These excesses seem to be the "depths of Satan" referred to in the Thyatira period of the church (Revelation 2:24).

The Morning Star

To the church at Thyatira is granted the promise: "I will give him the morning star" (Revelation 2:28). John Wycliffe (1328-1384) is widely known as "the morning star of the Reformation." Certainly his reforms in England and northern Europe, along with those of John Huss (1372-1415) in eastern Europe were the precursors of the Great Reformation.

Both reformers owed their disenchantment of the established church to the political debates arising from the Great Schism in Catholicism. Both rejected the authority of the Roman See. In 1378, Wycliffe published a strong denunciation of Rome in his paper *De Protestate Papea* (On Papal Power). Here he laid the foundations on which the Reformation would be built—the lack of biblical basis for papal authority, the primacy of Scripture, and the need for extensive theological reform. Although he died a natural death, his views were condemned in 1415 and his bones were ordered exhumed and burned.

The Great Reformation

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his famous ninety-five theses to the church door in Wittenburg, Germany. This was the clarion call that hailed the Great Reformation. For the next 131 years, until the Peace of Westphalia under the Thirty Years War in 1648, Protestants openly rebelled against the teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Reformation call was not only one for correction of church doctrines and practices, it was also a cry for simple justice for those who had been mercilessly slain and burned at the stake for their religious beliefs. It is well captured in the fifth seal of Revelation: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Revelation 6:10).

While there were many challenges which reformation doctrine presented to the established church, three stand out as most prominent.

1. Justification by faith was a direct attack on the system of indulgences which declared that donations to the mother church were efficacious in shortening the time a soul must spend in purgatory after death. The abuse of this system by such "religious salesmen" as Johann Tetzel (1465-1519) made this the main object of attack by Luther.

2. The primacy of the Bible, along with the encouragement of translations of the Scriptures into native languages, undermined the authority of the church as the sole interpreter of the word of God.
3. The priesthood of all believers further undercut the clerical office of the ordained priesthood and opened the way for deeper individual probing into the message of the Bible.

One of the first doctrines to be openly debated was a central one to the Romish theology—the mass. The concept of transub-stantiation —teaching that the actual body and blood of Christ were miraculously replicated in the Eucharist—had gone unchallenged for centuries and been affirmed by every ecumenical council from 325 to 787 (History of the Christian Church, Phillip Schaaf).

While Schaaf dates the challenging of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist as early as the ninth century with the writings of Paschasius Radbert (volume 3, page 381), it was not until the Reformation that the matter was openly discussed. Luther's position of consubstantiation, which holds that Christ is present not in but along with the memorial emblems, was only marginally different from the traditional doctrine of the Mass. A Swiss reformer, Ulrich Zwingli, contested both of these opinions with the view that the bread and wine of the Eucharist were merely symbols of Christ's body and blood.

The Augsburg Confession

The winds of reform quickly swept throughout Europe. Such notable figures as John Calvin and Zwingli in Switzerland, John Knox in Scotland, and Philip Melanchthon soon took up the cause. There was as much rivalry as there was co-operation among the reformers and brotherly love was not widely manifest. Emperors were likewise brought into the fray. In 1530, Charles V called the Diet of Augsburg to attempt to bring peace to Europe. Melanchthon, one of the more moderate reformers, drafted the Augsburg Confession as the credo for the reformist churches. He so designed it to be relatively open to the Roman Catholic churches on the right and the non-Lutheran princes on the left.

Peace was not obtained. The Catholic church began its counter-reformation to squelch the burgeoning Protestant movement. The Index of Forbidden Books was published and the inquisition took on renewed vigor in hunting down and persecuting the dissidents. New religious orders, such as the Jesuits, were approved and the Council of Trent (1545-63) was called to deal with the doctrinal and disciplinary questions raised by the reformers.

Still the conflict persisted. In 1618 a war broke out in Prague between the Catholics and the Protestants. This war lasted for thirty years and finally ended with an uneasy truce in 1648, the Treaty of Westphalia, effectively dividing Europe into Catholic and Protestant domains.

Pietism

Much of the ritual of Catholicism was adopted by the various Protestant denominations. The dissidents followed the mother church by uniting with warring princes for secular protection. Preaching was confined to theological hairsplitting and spirituality waned in the nascent Protestant movement. Time had again come for reform. Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705) issued a manifesto from his Frankfurt pulpit for a return to piety. The Pietist movement was to set the stage for still further debates on the nature of salvation.

A century later John Wesley and the newly-formed Methodist church began combating the Calvinist doctrine of predestination (fixing one's eternal destiny at birth on the arbitrary choice of God) with the concept of free grace (God's mercies being open to all who would respond). It was this softer, gentler, doctrine that introduced a spirit of brotherhood into the Christian church.

A Mighty Flood

"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth."—Revelation 12:14-16

The floods of truth spawned by the Reformation had political as well as religious overtones. The exposure of corruption in both church and empire gave rise to humanism and the doctrine of the rights of man. As the doctrines of Protestantism weakened the clerical power of the church of Rome, so rising concerns for human rights undermined the political power of the church-state system.

The philosophy of deism, viewing God as an "absentee landlord," was the foundation for the waves of revolution which would beset the world in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Thomas Paine's treatise, *Common Sense*, spurred on the American deists, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and George Washington in their pursuit of the American Revolution.

The French Revolution with its call for "Liberty, Fraternity, Equality," introduced anew era in Europe. In 1793 Napoleon assumed command of a French revolutionary artillery brigade and soon rose to become commander of the army. His Italian and Egyptian campaigns soon established him in sufficient power to declare himself emperor. Disdaining tradition, Napoleon crowned himself as emperor in the presence of the pope. The pope had been previously imprisoned by General Berthier for non-payment of levies or fines. He died as a prisoner in France in 1799. These acts proved to be the turning point in the decline of temporal power for the Papal system.

Power shifted back and forth between the populace and the royalty until 1830 when the July Revolution in France was quickly followed by revolutions throughout Europe, effectively weakening the premise of empire—the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings.

The industrial revolution saw the development of a new type of working class. Ancient craftsmen's guilds were replaced by labor unions whose goal was to lift the working class from being virtually slave laborers to sharing in the profits of their labors. These movements gave rise to the Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx with its ringing call, "Workers of the world, Unite!" The call of James 5:4 was heard loud and clear: "Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth."

The battle for social justice raged across America as the anti-slavery forces combated the slave trade from Africa, finally resulting in the Civil War (1861-1865) and the Emancipation Proclamation of Abraham Lincoln.

Anticipation

As the religious world entered the last century of the sixth millennium, personal Bible study intensified. Of special note was the rise in study on the second advent of Christ. Prominent missionaries, such as J. A. Bengel in Europe and Joseph Wolfe in Asia, made this message central in their ministries. The issue became so prominent that it was discussed at various times in the British parliament.

However, the intensity of Adventist fervor was most pronounced with the work of William Miller from 1829 to 1844. As many as one in twenty American Christians had become followers of the predictions of Miller that Jesus would return in 1844. When their anticipations failed to be realized, many continued to hold to their prophetic vision, repeatedly predicting various dates until the year 1874 was settled upon by many Bible students.

Charles Taze Russell felt that this date was correct, but that the earlier Adventists had misinterpreted both the manner and the object of this event. Russell taught that the return was to be invisible, unnoticed by the world at large, and would be for the immediate purpose of leveling society for the eventual establishment of peace upon the earth.

The great disappointment of 1844 had two effects. For some it encouraged even deeper probing into the Bible's message. The nature of God, the nature of man, the condition of the dead, the ransom, salvation in heaven as well as on earth, all came under close scrutiny. Monumental research projects resulted in the publication of exhaustive Bible concordances and lexicons. Sincere Bible scholars produced extensive verse by verse commentaries on the Bible. The stage was set for the rediscoveries of long-hidden truths. The groundwork was laid for the climactic seventh millennium of man, beginning in 1874.

The Seventh Millennium

The Law of the Leper— A Lesson in Millennial Law*

Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently, and do according to all that the priests the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, so ye shall observe to do.—Deuteronomy 24:8

David Stein

The apostle Paul assures us that "things written aforetime were written for our learning" (Romans 15:4) and "all these things happened unto them for ensamples [types]" (1 Corinthians 10:11). The idea behind these words is that God, knowing the end from the beginning, has provided many insights into the future outworking of his plan. To be sure, these insights are frequently couched in the vague language of symbol and type. To the extent that these expressions are not clearly interpreted elsewhere in Scripture, we must exercise caution and restraint in our search for meaning. But search we should! The lack of clarity and certainty in respect to these lessons should incite our interest rather than be seen as a "no trespassing" sign.

Leprosy is a terrible condition because of what it does to the human body. It was even more of a scourge in the world of the past. Leprosy is mentioned often in the Scriptures and for good reason. As with many of the experiences of the human family, God has chosen to use the circumstance of leprosy to teach important lessons about his plan for man's redemption.

Leprosy as a Symbol

Leprosy appears to be recognized almost universally by students of the Bible as a symbol of sin and sinfulness. Special instruction is provided in the law of Moses that teaches wonderful lessons not only about the sad condition of man's sinfulness, but also of God's marvelous provisions for man's "cleansing" from sin. These details are given in Leviticus chapters 13 and 14.

Some basic symbols used in these chapters help us to decipher the lessons. Not surprisingly, the interpretation of these basic symbols is the same throughout the Scriptures which is exactly what we should expect if we have the correct meaning:

Aaron—High Priest = Jesus, our High Priest
Aaron's sons = The church functioning as priests
Leprosy = Sin, sinfulness, the sinful condition
Lepers = Mankind in the kingdom.

These definitions provide the perspective concerning the law of the leper. The diagnosis (chapter 13) and cleansing (chapter 14) of the leper was a responsibility of the priests. They had complete charge over the destiny of the leper. It is the ministry of those priests that leads our minds to a similar ministry to be conducted by the Royal Priesthood toward mankind during the kingdom. (See Revelation 1:6; 5:10; 20:6.) Although the principal application of these types is future, nevertheless there are many lessons we can apply to ourselves as well.

The Symptoms of Leprosy

"And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying" (Leviticus 13:1). The author of salvation is Jehovah God, our heavenly Father. It is Jehovah's words that we are considering. "When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh like the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests" (Leviticus 13:2).

The symptoms are a "rising, a scab, or a bright spot." A "rising" seems to apply well to pride and its symptoms. Pride puffs up; it is a "rising" of the ego which causes contention. There are many things which give rise to pride. As Paul observed, "Knowledge puffeth up" (1Corinthians 8:1). It is striking to remember that Paul is here speaking of the knowledge of God! The Pharisee of Luke 18:11 had a very bad "rising" of this sort of pride. In the kingdom and now, the leprosy of pride must be cleansed to receive God's blessing.

The next symptom was a "scab." A scab covers a prior wound or sore. It is fresher than a scar. If someone treated us badly in the past, we should resolve the problem and forgive. But if we keep recalling it, it is like picking a scab. It does not heal. Note this apostolic advice: "Make straight paths for your feet, that that which is lame be not turned out of the way, but rather be healed. Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord: looking carefully lest there be any man that falleth short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby the many be defiled." —Hebrews 12:13-15

In the kingdom there will be plenty of opportunity to pick at scabs. Everyone's friends and enemies will be there! But progress in becoming cleansed from sin will require the forgetting of past wounds. Healing must occur. This is also good advice for us today.

The last symptom is a "bright spot." Paul mentions "the pleasures of sin" (Hebrews 11:25). Sin does have its pleasures—it is often appealing in appearance. Eve's perspective when she looked at the forbidden fruit in Eden is described in Genesis 3:6: "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

The fruit appeared desirable! It was a "bright spot" and tempted her to eat it and break God's law. That "bright spot" did indeed break out into leprosy for Eve. Mankind in the kingdom must guard against such allurements of sin that may come to them.

Notice what must be done upon the first sign of leprosy symptoms: "He shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests."

When any sign of sin—leprosy—begins to manifest itself, the one in whom it is seen must be brought to the priest. Although mankind experienced the "exceeding sinfulness of sin," they must learn to identify even the first subtleties of their sinful condition. Until then, they are not competent to identify it. They must go to the priest for it is the priest who knows and declares the truth of it. One might say, "I do not consider this rising, scab or bright spot to be a problem. In my opinion it is of no importance." But the individual's opinion does not matter. What does the priest say?

Note that the man might not be willing to go to the priest because the text says "he shall be brought" unto the priest for inspection.

Diagnosis and Treatment

"The priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and when the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh, it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean."—Leviticus 13:3

In this case the sin of the individual is unmistakable. The plague turned the hair white and progressed deeper than the skin. The degrading effect of sin has gone beyond mistake and begun to poison the individual. The priest cannot allow this infection to spread in the kingdom. The man is pronounced "unclean."

If there is a question about the extent of the leprosy, another procedure is followed: "If the bright spot be white in the skin of his flesh, and in sight be not deeper than the skin, and the hair thereof be not turned white; then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague seven days: and the priest shall look on him the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague in his sight be at a stay, and the plague spread not in the skin; then the priest shall shut him up seven days more: and the priest shall look on him again the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague be somewhat dark, and the plague spread not in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean: it is but a scab: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean."—Leviticus 13:4-6

This is the procedure that was followed if the Aaronic priest was unsure. There is, however, no uncertainty with the glorified Christ. Remember, however, that the kingdom is for the education and uplift of mankind. If sin is beginning to break out in someone by behavior proscribed in the kingdom, that person and his behavior will be identified and he will be marked out in some way within the community. Perhaps it may be something similar to the way we are instructed to treat those within our ecclesia who are divisive: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."—2 Thessalonians 3:6,11-15

Paul is a bit stronger in Romans 16:17,18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."

This is not overt disfellowshipping, but rather sanctions against the offender. We can only guess as to how wise priests will handle this in the kingdom. But this much is clear: overt sinful behavior will not be tolerated. Prompt action will be taken against it for the good of the individual and the good of the community. It is this action that is typified by being "shut up" seven days or a second seven-day period. The sinful behavior must cease.

"But if the scab spread much abroad in the skin, after that he hath been seen of the priest for his cleansing, he shall be seen of the priest again: and if the priest see that, behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a leprosy."—Leviticus 13:7,8

What does it mean in the kingdom if a man is declared "unclean"? In ancient times the leper was cast out of the community and had to remain in quarantine until there was a change in his condition. Perhaps there will be something similar in the kingdom.

Total Leprosy

In Leviticus 13:12,13 we find a most extraordinary statement: "If a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the leprosy cover all the skin of him that hath the plague from his head even to his foot, wheresoever the priest looketh, then the priest shall consider and, behold, if the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague: it is all turned white: he is clean."

If just a few months or years before he was brought to the priest with only one tiny rising, scab or bright spot, the priest pronounced him unclean; he had to go outside the camp and

live alone. Now he is completely covered and the priest says, "You are clean!" What can this mean?

The perspective of the leper, or the individual typified by the leper, changed. He recognized his sinful, imperfect condition. This recognition allows him to receive the grace and cleansing the glorified priests have to give. We have several examples in Scripture of the cleansing effect of such recognition.

"When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5:8). Just four verses later we read: "And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him. And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

The recognition of one's sin and need for cleansing is the initial step to receiving the cleansing. Similarly in the parable of the prodigal son: "The son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son" (Luke 15:21).

Again in Luke 18:13,14, "The publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified."

All these cases show a recognition of one's sinful condition and the need for cleansing. It is this attitude of mind and heart which allows the cleansing of the ransom to begin its work. This truth is revealed beautifully by Job: "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" (Job 33:27,28).

But woe unto him who recognizes his condition yet makes no effort to change. Such a person excuses himself and goes on sinning. This might be suggested in Leviticus 13:14, 15: "But when raw flesh appeareth in him, he shall be unclean. And the priest shall see the raw flesh, and pronounce him to be unclean: for the raw flesh is unclean: it is a leprosy."

The "raw flesh" suggests a willfulness in sin that approaches the ultimate danger zone. There were those in Jesus' time who knew right from wrong but pursued wrong even to plotting the murder of Jesus. Of these he said, "How will you escape the judgment of Gehenna?" (Matthew 23:33).

Yet even in this advanced condition there is still hope. Note verses 16 and 17: "If the raw flesh turn again, and be changed unto white, he shall come unto the priest; and the priest

shall see him: and, behold, if the plague be turned into white; then the priest shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague: he is clean."

Utterly Unclean

A special uncleanness of Adamic leprosy is referred to in Leviticus 13:42-44: "If there be in the bald head, or bald forehead, a white reddish sore; it is a leprosy sprung up in his bald head, or his bald forehead. Then the priest shall look upon it: and, behold, if the rising of the sore be white reddish in his bald head, or in his bald forehead, as the leprosy appeareth in the skin of the flesh; he is a leprous man, he is unclean: the priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean."

This judgment is more severe than we have seen before. The priest pronounces the individual with leprosy in his forehead as "utterly unclean." This distinction has important implications. In the kingdom, it will be necessary to cleanse the heart which is done by cleansing the mind, the thinking. But leprosy striking in the forehead suggests inappropriate trust in the intellect and wisdom of man—the thinking of man. This thinking is diametrically opposed to the arrangements of God. It generates a proud heart that is dangerous to the individual and those that may listen to such wrong thinking.

We have a Scriptural example in 2 Chronicles 26:16-20 when King Uzziah's thinking went awry: "But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were valiant men: And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the LORD God. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar. And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself desired also to go out, because the LORD had smitten him. And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD."

The Love of a Brother

Leviticus 14 describes the cleansing processes showing the recovery of a man from sin: "The LORD spake unto Moses, saying, This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: he shall be brought unto the priest" (Leviticus 14:1,2).

The ancient and typical leper had been pronounced unclean; he had been banished from the camp. If he is approached by a stranger, he is obligated to cry out "unclean, unclean" in warning. But now, unexpectedly, he is brought to the priest.

The text does not say who brings him, but it is probably a relative or friend who wants the best for this poor leper. We would expect that such love of neighbor will gradually begin to dominate in the kingdom. As more and more experience the cleansing power of the kings and priests of Christ's kingdom, they will want to share with others who have not yet tasted these blessings.

That same appreciation is why you believe what you do today; some dear brother or sister in Christ was moved to bring you to Jesus. We saw this same attitude of mind in an individual who is not prominent in the gospel accounts, but whose excitement and love of the truth and desire to share it had a profound effect. We read of Andrew, the brother of Peter: "One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone."—John 1:40-42

This was not the only occasion where Andrew brings people to Jesus. In John 6:8,9 he brings a lad to Jesus: "One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barleyloaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?" And in John 12:20-22: "And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: the same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus."

So the lepers of the kingdom will be brought by true friends to the priests. Then what? "The priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper" (Leviticus 14:3). In ancient Israel it was necessary for the priest to "go forth" inasmuch as the leper was not allowed to enter the camp nor would the priest go into the leper colony. But the priest understands the situation and moves to help. This same desire is seen on the part of the Royal Priesthood in the kingdom. The cleansing procedure is next.

"Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: and the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water" (Leviticus 14:4,5).

Note what the leper must do. The priest commands that two birds be provided. Obviously the poor leper does not have the resources to obtain the sacrifices so they are provided for him. This reminds us of Isaac's question: "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham's answer: "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering" (Genesis. 22:7,8). God understands the weakness of the human race and provides all that is necessary. All the recipients of his love must provide is a willing spirit.

The sacrificing of the first live bird in an earthen vessel over running water is a vivid image. The "earthen vessel" is suggestive of the human body of the man Jesus Christ. The use of the bird suggests the heavenly origin of our Redeemer. The water contained in

the vessel represents the truth. The blood of the slain bird mixed with this water represents the redeeming merit of Jesus' sacrifice. This combination of water and blood reminds us of what came from Jesus' body when a Roman soldier pierced it: "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:34). Truth and legal redemption come from Jesus—water and blood. John picks this up even further: "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood" (1John 5:6).

The ritual continues: "As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field."—Leviticus 14:6,7

In this type of cleansing, it appears that God would have man see the matter of redemption sequentially. The first bird conveys the perspective of God's gift of his son to man. God sent his son to earth to become the redeemer by his sacrificial death. John 3:16 plainly says: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The second aspect shows the later result of that sacrifice is the creation of a life-giving well which allows man once again the hope of being cleansed and approaching God.

The dipping of the living bird into the blood of the slain bird shows a connection between the two. How beautifully this sets forth sequentially the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. The release of the living bird into the field shows that death could not hold our faithful High Priest. The sprinkling of the blood upon the leper shows that the cleansing comes only from the merit of Jesus' sacrificed life.

A cedar tree is evergreen. The beautifully aromatic wood suggests the objective of cleansing is to attain life as a perfect human being. This is in contrast with the divine life held forth to the faithful church, symbolized by gold.

Hyssop was used to sprinkle the leper. It is another symbol of cleansing or purging. Hyssop is a bushy, evergreen shrub of the mint family. It was used in ancient times as a medicine. The Israelites were told to put the blood from the Passover lamb on their doorposts and lintels with hyssop. Scarlet reminds us of the sacrifice involved for cleansing to occur.

After this the leper is further instructed: "He that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean: and after that he shall come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days. But it shall be on the seventh day, that he shall shave all his hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off: and he shall wash his clothes, also he shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean." —Leviticus 14:8,9

Note that the leper was pronounced clean in verse 7, yet in verse 8 he is described as 'he that is to be cleansed.' This suggests that the sprinkling is just the beginning of the cleansing; there is yet more to the process such as washing and shaving.

The washing and shaving suggest a complete separation from the previous condition. The leper must seek to cleanse everything and bring all into conformity with the new, clean condition. Hair tends to retain odors and infections. These must be cut away. Washing with water suggests the role of truth in this process: purifying and sustaining the newly clean individual. The washing of clothes is consistent with the washing of the body. The entire focus of this cleansed leper will be for righteousness which is, of course, the objective of the kingdom for each member of the human race.

* * * * *

Editors' Note: This article treats the seventh millennium of man from the standpoint of its main work, the resurrection of the dead and the laws that will prevail in the Kingdom of Christ. The preceding articles have traced God's dealings with man for 6000 years, bringing us to 1874 AD. Between that date, over 100 years ago, to the time for the full establishment of the kingdom, are years of transition. During this time we have already seen evidences that indicate to many Bible Students that the Lord returned secretly and invisibly in 1874. Events since then have included:.....

1. The re-establishment of Israel in their ancient homeland.....
2. An outpouring of Bible truths on such subjects as the ransom for all, an earthly salvation as well as a heavenly one, the nature of God as the Father of Jesus Christ, the nature of man as mortal rather than immortal, and many others.....
3. The collapse of the concept of the so-called "divine right of kings.".....
4. The invasion of mainline Christianity with modernism and the concepts of higher criticism.
5. A separation of many sincere students of the Bible from the churches of organized Christianity in search of the simplicity of the Gospel.....
6. An unparalleled growth of nationalism resulting in increasing tribal and ethnic strife.....
7. Numerous movements springing up claiming their real and, sometimes, fancied rights: racial rights, rights of the laborer, gay rights, women's rights, and many others.....
8. Two world wars, spawning the development of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons with the capability of destroying all life on earth.....Each of these developments is connected with biblical predictions about the transition from the kingdoms of this world to the kingdom of God.....Following such prophetic evidence, we

anticipate still further world-wide strife, resulting in the collapse of governmental systems as we know them.

Prophecies of the end-time appear to be specially focused on Israel, predicting a climactic battle over Jerusalem, as described in detail in Ezekiel 38 and 39 and other prophecies. This may well be in connection with the ultimate battle of this age, the Battle of Armageddon predicted in Revelation 16.....When these transitional events shall have been completed, Christ's kingdom will be fully ushered in. That is where this article finds its beginning.

Nearing the Goal

With eyes aflame, with panting breath, they
come—
The runners—every nerve and muscle
tense—
Urged forward by a thousand deafening
cries,
On, on, they rush, when one, close to the
goal,
For but one moment glances back in pride
To note how far he hath outrun the rest.
Alas! tripped by a pebble on the course,
He stumbles, falls, arises, but too late—
Another sweeps ahead with blood-flecked
lips
And bursting heart! One final, awful strain,
With superhuman effort, grand, supreme,
He leaps into the air—and falls in death
Across the line—a victor, but at what
A fearful cost! He gave his life, his all!

I ponder o'er this tragedy of days
When Greece was mistress of the world, and
say,
"Hast not thou also entered on a race,
My soul, in contest for a 'Crown of life,'
A prize thou canst not win except thine all
Thou givest!
Then be wise, and watch and pray,
Turn not thine eyes one instant from 'the
mark,'
For fear thou dash thy foot against some
small,
Well-rounded truth, which in thy pride thou
hast
O'erlooked, and thus thou stumble, fall, and
though
Thou shouldst arise, 'twould be too late to
win!"

God's Will

I asked the New Year for some motto sweet,
Some rule of life by which to guide my feet,
I asked and paused; it answered soft and
low,
"God's will to KNOW."

Will knowledge then suffice? New Year, I
cried
But ere the question into silence died
The answer came, "No, this remember too,
God's will to DO."

Once more I asked, is there still more to tell?
And once again the answer sweetly fell;"
Yes, this one thing all other things above,
God's will to LOVE."

—Author Unknown

NEWS AND VIEWS

Pastoral Bible Institute News

PBI News

"The Keys of Revelation"

The commentary on the book of Revelation written by R. E. Streeter, one of the first editors of The Herald, is of course not the only book on this subject of interest to Bible Students. Frank Shallieu, a Bible scholar with a life-long interest in Revelation, has a carefully reasoned alternate point of view on a number of things found in this book of the Bible. Since some of our readers may not know of this book, for a limited time we are making it available at its usual price of \$20, postpaid anywhere in the world. Use the insert found in this issue to order.

Letters

I'm inquiring about talks that Bro. Paul Thomson gave to different groups of brethren at conventions. I would like to acquire a few of them if possible as recordings or in written form. —A reader in Rhode Island

Note: Bro. Thomson was a former editor of The Herald. Please call us at our toll-free number if you know where to obtain copies of his discourses. We will forward that information to this inquirer.

Around the World

On October 12, 1999, in theory, the planet's 6 billionth person was born. Most experts greet this milestone with anxiety. In just 12 years, they note, humans have increased their number by 1 billion. During the 20th century, the world's population has tripled. And by 2100, ecologist David Pimentel of Cornell University warned in a recent paper, "12 billion miserable humans will suffer a difficult life on earth." Not everybody agrees that it is a cause for doom and gloom. Economist Stephen Moore of the Cato Institute, a think tank in Washington, D.C. says, "A lot of these prophecies [about overpopulation] have really proven to be false." The United Nations has found reason for encouragement in population growth because the boom is proof of increased agricultural production, decreased infant mortality and prolonged life expectancy. There are really two demographic worlds. One is poor, young and growing. In countries like Uganda and Niger, the median age is 15 and the growth rate is fast enough to double the population in 23 years. The other demographic world is wealthy, old and shrinking. The median age in Italy and Japan is 40 and the population growth in those countries has fallen to zero or below.

—Associated Press, 10/10/99

Israel

Alarmed by the possibility of violence by extreme Christian groups in the countdown to 2000, Israeli police have detained foreign Christians, many of them Americans, who settled near the Mount of Olives in recent years in hopes of witnessing Christ's return. A police spokeswoman said those in custody were suspected of plotting to harm public safety in Israel and they will be deported. Israeli officials have warned previously that Christian extremists could be planning to carry out acts aimed at precipitating the Second Coming, including destroying the mosques on Jerusalem's Temple Mount or committing mass suicide nearby.

—Los Angeles Times, 10/26/99

Israel has recently exported one thousand queen bees, which produce honey on a much larger scale than ordinary bees, to the Arab countries of Jordan, Lebanon, and several others, including some with which Israel has no trade relations. Following the success of this unique type of export, a second shipment, containing hundreds of queen bees and ordinary bees will be made in upcoming months to neighboring countries.

—Israel Wire, The Friends of Israel, 10/99

Ehud Barak, Israeli prime minister, wants to build a security fence along any future border between Israel and a Palestinian state. He also favors economic separation between the two states. Western intelligence experts described the ideas as shortsighted and potentially dangerous. A strip of "no man's land" would run parallel to the fence. Mr. Barak's support for such a rigid division between the two states stems partly from his belief in absolute separation of Palestinians from Israelis. Intelligence officials said it also reflected his obsession with security. The total economic separation between the two states would result in job losses for the 100,000 Palestinians who currently work in Israel. Such a decision would lead to greater unemployment in the Palestinian-controlled areas which is already as high as 40 percent in some cities in the West Bank and Gaza.

—Financial Times, 10/25/99

The Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) has condemned Nelson Mandela for calling on the Palestinian Arabs to "use violence" against Israel if the Jewish State does not retreat to the pre-1967 borders. Speaking to members of Yasser Arafat's Legislative Council in Gaza on October 20, 1999, Mandela said, "A 'regional peace' must include a full Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 borders. If taking up arms is the only solution, that is what should be done," according to Ha'Aretz. ZOA National President

Morton A. Klein said: "Why is the world silent when Nelson Mandela helps encourage violence against Israelis by telling Palestinian Arab leaders that they would be justified to take up arms against Israel? It is deplorable that the winner of a Nobel Peace Prize is undermining the hopes for peace by encouraging violence."

—Israel Wire, 10/25/99

Izzadin Kassam, the armed wing of Hamas, pledged to renew attacks against Israel, while Israeli security sources confirmed that Hamas is trying to mount operations that could leave hundreds dead and thousands injured, the Jerusalem Post reported. According to Ha'Aretz, Izzadin Kassam on Thursday disseminated leaflets in the West Bank and Gaza Strip stating that the members of the military wing are prepared to make whatever sacrifice is necessary to carry out a "holy war." Similar slogans have been scrawled on West Bank buildings in the past few days. The threat of a new wave of terrorist attacks inconsistent with some of the situation appraisals voiced recently in discussions held at senior levels in the defense establishment, including some discussions held with Prime Minister and Defense Minister Ehud Barak. The appraisals suggest that Hamas will attempt to perpetrate terrorist attacks within Israel's pre-1967 borders as soon as tangible progress is made in contacts between the Palestinian Authority.

—Government Press Office (Israel), 10/26/99

Islam

An Israeli minister said his country must be ready to fight peace partner Egypt and defend itself against Egyptian missiles, especially if Islamists come to power in Cairo. Science Minister Matan Vilnai, a retired major general and former deputy chief of staff, listed Egypt as a potential source of long-range threat to Israel, along with Iran, Iraq and Libya. "I read this morning a quotation of General Tantawi that maybe they might be ready to fight us. I don't know why he said it but he said it, so we must be ready to fight them if they would like to," he said. An Egyptian diplomat said he had seen Tantawi's alleged remark only in the Israeli press. But Vilnai said Israel had reason to be wary because of the strength of the Islamic movement in Egypt. "We remember who killed Sadat and their power," he said. Sadat had signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979 and was assassinated by militant Islamists in 1981.

—Reuters, 10/27/99

Over 100,000 Muslims in Nigeria's northern Zamfara state attended a mass celebration marking the state's historic adoption of Islamic law. The outdoor ceremony held in the state capital ushers in sharia—fundamentalist Islamic law—for the first time in a Nigerian state. The new measures put in place by Zamfara's Governor Ahmed Sani included segregating men and women on public transport throughout the state. Sani said he hoped the new system would eliminate moral decadence. The system includes proposals for strict penal measures including flogging, beheading and amputating hands for crimes such as adultery and theft. Many Christians in the majority-Muslim state fear the measures will lead to the closure of churches, enforced dress codes and Islamic morality laws. The issue threatens to inflame religious tensions throughout the country and several other states said they may also introduce sharia. Nigeria, a country of 120 million people, is sharply divided along ethnic and religious lines. Muslims and Christians each make up about 45 percent of Nigeria's population.

—Associated Press, 10/28/99

Christendom

Distraught over school violence and chronic discipline problems, educators nationwide are looking for ways to improve children's moral education. By identifying those qualities Americans value and hope to instill in their children, a wave called "character education" is sweeping the nation's schools. Character First! is a joint venture between the public schools in Oklahoma and a Christian organization. Another organization, Character Counts! is a popular character-education program with no religious affiliation that is based in Marina Del Rey, California. The program has exploded to about 600 schools nationwide from the original eight in Oklahoma City. For some, the religious affiliation presents a dilemma. They wonder whether a religious organization should be in charge of teaching it.

—Wall Street Journal, 10/25/99

Pope John Paul II shook up the theological world when he mused on the nature of heaven, hell and purgatory for the audience of 7,000 tourists who gather at the Vatican every Wednesday afternoon. He told them to forget the popular notion of actual physical places—fluffy clouds above, an inky inferno below. Think of hell as a state of mind, a self-willed exile from God. The pope's discourse reflected his tendency toward philosophical abstraction rather than traditional Catholic thinking. Protestant fundamentalists prefer a physical burning pit. They said that any suggestion that hell is simply an abstraction is a dangerous, even blasphemous notion. "My concern is the temptation to make hell a state of mind, to psychologize hell," said R. Albert Mohler, Jr., president of the Southern Baptists' Theological Seminary in Louisville. "As attractive as that might be to the modern mind, that is not the hell of the Bible. Jesus himself spoke of hell as a lake of fire, where the worms would not die and the fire would not be quenched. It's all very graphic."

—Washington Post, 8/17/99

Economics

Singapore is seeking to conceive what it calls E-citizens. The government is attempting to jump start its computer-based economy by rewiring its citizenry and transforming the island nation of about four million people from an economy built on trade and services to one built upon information technology. To achieve that goal, Singapore has embarked on one of the most far-reaching technology-promotion efforts in the world. All new births must be registered through a computer system or parents are fined \$100. After nearly a decade of planning, Singapore officials have launched a host of electronic services to make the government more efficient and more omniscient. Central databases allow bureaucrats to track everything from immigrant work permits to detailed information on the population.

—Wall Street Journal, 10/27/99

Canada would probably face the highest economic costs of any industrialized country if it met agreed targets to lower greenhouse gas emissions as set out in the 1997 Kyoto Protocol on climate change, according to a study prepared for Canada's oil and gas industry. Charles River Associates conducted the study. It predicts that the cost of meeting the targets would be from C\$8.4 to C\$17 billion annually by 2010. Canada faces a battle between business and environmental groups over the development of a national strategy for meeting the commitments. If Canada were to meet its target entirely through domestic action, it would mean adding about 24¢ a liter to retail gasoline prices and doubling consumer prices for natural gas.

—Financial Times, 10/26/99

Science

A study performed in Israel has revealed, for the first time, the biological and molecular mechanism that lends garlic its unique medical properties. In the course of the study, the scientists created the main active agent in garlic by means of a semi-artificial process—and took out a world patent on it. The reason: this substance may serve as a basis for innovative pharmaceuticals that may eventually replace antibiotics. The study, carried out by Professor David Mirelman, vice president of the Weizmann Institute of Science, and Professor Meir Wilcak, dean of the Institute's faculty of biochemistry, revealed the molecular mechanism of the active agent in garlic, allicin, which enables garlic to fight infectious and vascular diseases. Using a special and original biotechnological system that they had developed, the researchers produced large quantities of allicin through a semi-synthetic process, thus paving the way to the use of this substance as the basis for pharmaceuticals. One of the severe problems overcome by the Israeli scholars is that natural allicin remains active for a very short time—a matter of minutes—from the moment it is extracted from the garlic to the time its volatility causes it to disappear.

—Israel in the News Website, 10/26/99

Hebrew University researchers have discovered that the introduction of a particular gene into trees and plants can produce greatly accelerated growth, reducing normal growing time by one-third to as much as half the span now required. Among other things, this discovery could provide the means to rapidly restore forests that have been depleted to supply the world's growing demand for wood and paper. The process can also speed up growth of a number of everyday agricultural products.

—Arutz-7, 10/99

Book Review

AD 1000, *A World on the Brink of Apocalypse*, Richard Erdoes, Seastone Publishing, Berkeley, California, 1998, 256 pages.

The tenth century has been called the Century of Lead and Iron. The Saracens, the Spanish Moors, the Vikings, the Bulgars and the Magyar horsemen all invaded Europe. Land barons slaughtered each other over pieces of property, killing rival barons' serfs, burning villages and crops in order to weaken enemies. In Rome, rival popes imprisoned, starved, mutilated and assassinated each other. Recurrent famines produced starvation in region after region, resulting in widespread cannibalism. Famines were followed by epidemics caused by eating infected grain. Medicine was still a matter of magic and illness was looked upon as divine punishment. Life was so difficult and so challenging that men believed the orderly laws of nature had been suspended, that the natural flow of seasons had fallen into utter disorder, foretelling the end of all mankind.

Thus it was in the year 999 that an epidemic terror of the end of the world spread throughout the earth. The author Raoul Glaber wrote, "Though the people quarreled about the exact day and hour, they all agreed that Satan will soon be unleashed because the thousand years have been completed." Buildings, edifices, churches, all were allowed to deteriorate as people from all walks of life made their way towards Jerusalem with their "eyes on the sky, expecting the Son of God to descend in glory at any moment."

On the last day of 999 in Rome, a mass of weeping and trembling worshippers waited for the dreaded Day of Wrath. Many poor entered the church of St. Peter's in sackcloth and ashes, having spent months doing penance and mortifying the flesh. Their fears were only heightened as they looked at the new pope celebrating the mass. He was Sylvester II, also known as Gerbert, who many worshippers believed to be Antichrist (!) appearing in the shape of a pontiff. Gerbert had risen from humble beginnings to the papacy through the influence of his pupil, Emperor Otto III. The first French pope had learned much in Spain as a young man that was as yet unknown in the superstitious west. He had invented a steam-powered organ, a new system of writing music and even Arabic numerals. Accusations abounded that he had sold his soul to the devil at an early age in order to get this magical ability. Now he was head of the church.

This chilling historical account of the days leading up to and just after the year 1000 holds up a dark mirror to our own society and gives an interesting and early perspective on how the Roman Catholic church rose to such power during a mysterious time in history. Told through the perspective of Gerbert of Aurillac, who became Pope Sylvester II in February, 999, the book recounts a time of almost unbelievable ignorance and superstition. Gerbert was a prolific letter writer and left a great legacy that author Erdoes analyzes and describes in a fascinating account of the early medieval world. The account of Gerbert's attempts to reform the abusive powers of the church may not be as interesting to Bible Students as the understanding that comes from Erdoes' description of the environment of inequity, injustice and ignorance that allowed such power to develop. As a sideline, Bible Students will find it interesting that the only pope to attempt some reform to the papal system was eventually disowned and buried without note. Later that century the church would show its total corruption with the most horrendous of all its activities—the Crusades.

—Len Griehs