

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

March / April, 2003 No. 2

In the Beginning

The Roles of Jesus

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS for he shall save his people from their sins. -- Matthew 1:21

Once again the season is approaching for observing the Memorial of Jesus' death as a redemptive sacrifice for all mankind. This year the appropriate time is after 6 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15.

While most notable men are commemorated on the days of their birth, the celebration that Jesus inaugurated "in remembrance of me" honors the time of his death. That death however was followed just three days later by his birth to a new nature, the divine nature, the same as that inhabited by his heavenly Father.

In this issue of The Herald we will take a look at the various roles Jesus played on his way to becoming a ransom for Adam and the entire race in his loins. The articles in this edition will examine him as the son of God, the suffering Messiah, the elder brother of his church, and the redeemer of mankind.

The verse-by-verse treatise focuses on one of the psalms which Jewish tradition links with the annual Passover celebration, and which may have formed a part of the hymn which the apostles sang after the Last Supper before departing for the lonely vigil in the Garden of Gethsemane. This psalm is the 118th and is known as the last of the Great Hallel, or psalms of praise.

In addition to the articles that concentrate on the life and work of Christ, an extensive treatise on *Building the Temple* traces the houses of worship used by the Jewish nation from the days of the exodus from Egypt to the times of Jesus and the apostles.

Another dissertation deals with the world situation facing us today, especially after the fall of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Entitled *A Crisis of Confidence*, it deals with developments in the economic, political, and social segments of society and how these connect with Bible prophecy.

The editors of this journal place this material before our readers in the hope that it will not only awaken a fresh appreciation of the greatest life ever lived, but also alert us all to the signs around us that the long-promised kingdom of Christ is finally at the doors.

God's Only Begotten Son

The Son of God

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said; Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. -- Matthew 16:13-16

Len Griehs

The description "son of God" is not used exclusively of Jesus in Scripture. Luke's genealogy calls Adam "the son of God" (Luke 3:38). Genesis 6:2 associates "the sons of God" with angels entrusted with mankind's welfare prior to their illicit conjugation with women. Angels are also referred to as "the sons of God" (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7). God calls his regathered people Israel his sons and daughters in Isaiah 43:3-7. "We have one Father, God," cried the Jewish audience in John 8:41 in response to Jesus' accusations. Prospective members of the church, "those who receive him (Jesus)," are called "sons of God" (see John 1:12; Romans 8:14,19; Philippians 2:15; 1 John 3:1,2). Is there a difference in the term applied to Jesus?

Yes, there is. Not Adam, not the angels, not the nation of Israel, and not even the prospective church can claim the special relationship Jesus has with our heavenly Father. Jesus alone is the "beginning of the creation of God" (Revelation 3:14), and he alone reflects the characteristics of God to such an extent that knowing him was tantamount to personally knowing God (John 10:30). Nowhere is this special relationship better expressed than in what may arguably be the most widely quoted verse in the Bible: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten (Greek: *monogenes*) son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Strong's Concordance defines *monogenes* (#3439) as "only-born, i.e., sole; or only (begotten child)." It says the word is a compound word made up of *mono*, meaning sole or single, and *ginomai*, meaning to cause to be, or to cause to become.

Liddell and Scott's Lexicon suggests the primary meaning of the word *monogenes* as "only member of a kin or kind." It gives a secondary definition as "unique."

Kittel's Theological dictionary adds that the term *monogenes* implies not just "only begotten" but also conveys a special relationship.

The New International Version of the Bible translates *monogenes* not as "only begotten" but as "one and only (Son)." This is an attempt to emphasize the unique relationship suggested by Liddell and Scott. However, this translation does not differentiate enough between Jesus and others mentioned as sons of God.

If we understand the term "only begotten son" properly, we will understand the insight Peter was granted. When he responded to Jesus' question in our theme text, Jesus told him: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 16:17).

"Begotten" Does Not Always Mean Unique or Firstborn

"Only begotten son" is an awkward phrase built on the word "beget." Today we rarely use the word "beget" except in Bible translation. Therefore, in order to understand what the phrase really implies, we need to first examine its usage in Scripture.

Hebrews 11:17 uses the phrase to describe the relationship between Abraham and Isaac. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son." Isaac was not Abraham's only son, so the definition of "one and only" for *monogenes* cannot be true. Abraham's first son was Ishmael, born of his wife's handmaiden Hagar (Genesis 16:1-4). A further examination of the relationship of Abraham to his two sons will help to convey a better definition.

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of" (Genesis 22:1,2). God calls Isaac Abraham's "only" (Hebrew: *yachiyd*) son. Certainly God had not forgotten about Ishmael!

Yachiyd is used in other Scriptures to refer to an only child. "And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only (Hebrew: *yachiyd*) child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter"(Judges 11:34; see also Genesis 22:2,12,16; Jeremiah 6:26). "Only" is not the only translation of the word, however. Sometimes it is translated with the meaning lonely or solitary: "Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate (*yachiyd*) and afflicted"(Psalm 25:16). Sometimes it is translated to indicate something precious: "Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling (*yachiyd*) from the power of the dog" (Psalm 22:20).

The Septuagint is the third century B.C. translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. It renders the Hebrew word *yachiyd* in Genesis 22:2,12,16 with the Greek word *agapetos* (beloved) rather than with the Greek word *monogenes* (only begotten). This is significant because this was the version being used in Jesus' day and we can sometimes best understand the meaning of Hebrew words by looking at how the Septuagint translated them.

It was this Greek word *agapetos* that was used to describe Jesus' relationship to God when he was transfigured on the mountain: "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved (Greek: *agapetos*) son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matthew 17:5).

In each of these examples, "only (begotten) son" refers to a unique and loving relationship that exists between father and son rather than to the number of children that he claims.

Unique and Especially Loved

This idea attached to "only begotten son" is further supported by the separation of Abraham from Hagar and Ishmael: "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son" (Genesis 21:9-11).

"And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it

unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba."(Genesis 21:14). Although Abraham was a wealthy man, he provided nothing but bare sustenance for his firstborn son. Why did he choose such a hard course of action? The answer lies in properly understanding what the "mocking" of Isaac really was.

In Galatians 4:29, Paul says that seed of the bondwoman "persecuted" the seed of the freewoman. However, from the context it appears that Paul was referring to the idea that the Jews under the law, a type of Ishmael, persecuted the early Christians, a type of Isaac. What did Ishmael do to make Sarah so irate and insist that Abraham expel Ishmael and Hagar to a fate of almost certain death (were it not for God's intervention)? (Genesis 21:17)

The Hebrew word for "mocking" is *tsachaq* defined by Strong (#6711) as "to laugh outright (in merriment or scorn); by implication to sport: -- laugh, mock, play, make sport." The term is frequently associated with idolatry. One striking example of this use is in connection with Israel in the Wilderness of Sin. Moses had gone up Mt. Sinai to receive the law from God. Because they thought Moses had died on the mountain, the people of Israel rebelled and wanted to return to Egypt. They persuaded Aaron to make a golden calf from the melted-down treasures they had brought with them. They planned to put that idol before them on their entry back into Egypt to keep the Egyptians from killing them. "And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings (before the idol), and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and **rose up to play** (*tsachaq*)" (Exodus 32:6).

Ishmael was likely following his mother's religious beliefs when he encouraged Isaac to participate. Abraham had left Ur to escape the idolatry there. When he heard from Sarah what had taken place, "the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his [love for his] son [Ishmael]." Abraham expelled Ishmael and treated him as though he had died.

Even today some orthodox Jewish families hold a funeral service to disown apostate children. Jesus illustrated this principal in the parable of the prodigal son. When the prodigal returned from his apostate ways, the father held a banquet and proclaimed, "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found" (Luke 15:24). Thus would Isaac not only be the "beloved" son but now he had become Abraham's "only" son as well.

Begotten Implies More Than Sonship

There is a further implication in the words "begot" and "begotten." "And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat (*yadad*)..." Genesis 25:19). While the term begat might seem to refer to just the lineage of Isaac, there is earlier biblical evidence that the word was meant to convey a broader meaning. In Genesis 5:3, Moses says that "Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat (*yadad*) a son in his own likeness¹, after his image², and called his name Seth." Seth was "begotten" of Adam and thus he resembled his father in both image and character.

This resemblance of character was what Jesus referred to when he replied to Philip's request to "show us the Father." "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" (John 14:9). Jesus did not mean that he and his Father were the same person, but that he was the unique replica of his father, just as Seth was of Adam. He was the personification of God's character and attributes. Paul says, "in him the whole fullness of God lives in bodily form" (Colossians 2:9, International Standard Version). Although others might be called "sons of God," only Jesus was called "only begotten son." He was truly unique and especially loved of God.

Jesus Is Unique in All Things

As the *Logos*, Jesus was "in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:2-4). In order to redeem man, the *Logos* gave up that existence for the human nature of Jesus. As the man Jesus, he reflected the image and likeness of his Father in heaven.

Jesus is "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature ... And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Colossians 1:15-18). From creation to the beginning of his redemptive work, Jesus held the highest position possible under God. He gave that up to be born a sinless human, to complete the work of redemption, and to provide an example for those who would be called to be with him in heaven. After his work on earth was finished, God rewarded Jesus by elevating him to the very nature which God himself possessed. In everything, God gave his son a unique position because of his extreme love for him.

"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" (John 3:16). John believed that the Jesus he knew on earth was the one and only, unique, and dearly beloved, son of God. He alone had expressed God's image and character. Later Paul told Jewish Christians that this beloved Jesus had overcome death, and now reflected the glory of God with a position fitting for the loved one that he was and for the work he had done: "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:3).

1. *Demuwth*, Strong's #1823), resemblance; concretely model, shape; adverbially like: -- fashion, like (-ness, as), manner, similitude

2. *Tselem*, Strong's #6754, from an unused root meaning to shade; a phantom, that is, (figuratively) illusion, resemblance; hence a representative figure, especially an idol: -- image, vain show.

Jesus, the Suffering Servant

The Sympathetic High Priest

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. -- 1 Peter 3:18

Homer Montague

During his ministry of three and one half years, our Redeemer's life personified that of a suffering servant. His final hours in the flesh contained many examples of personal anguish, some of which included the inability of his disciples to remain awake while he prayed in Gethsemane, his betrayal by Judas, Peter's denial, the all night buffetings and abuse endured during the civil and religious trials to which he was subjected, his need for assistance in bearing the cross to Golgotha because of diminished physical stamina, and the jeers and taunting he received while hanging on the cross during six hours of agony, anguish, thirst, and incessant pain.

Throughout his entire ministry, Jesus experienced much suffering, reproach, opposition and rejection, but he always bore these willingly and patiently as part of God's will for him.

The sufferings of Christ commenced immediately after his baptism at the Jordan River when the spirit led him into the wilderness. Apparently the Lord was so absorbed in meditation, study, and prayer that he fasted forty days and forty nights, during which the Scriptures were opened to him and he received instruction and guidance from the heavenly Father. At the close of this period when Jesus was weakened and hungry, the devil presented three temptations in an attempt to ensnare him. In each instance he resisted the adversary and subsequently was ministered to by the angels (Matthew 4:2-11). The Master proved victorious in his initial series of trials.

As the heavenly Father's servant, he taught the Jews from the Scriptures with a view to preparing them as a nation to inherit the special promises of the high calling as part of Abraham's spiritual seed. Although wondrous words proceeded from his mouth, his enemies rejected his authority. On one occasion after he spoke in the synagogue it is recorded, "And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way" (Luke 4:28-30). Such hardness of heart against Jesus when he was presenting the good news of the kingdom for their benefit was part of the contradiction of sinners that he endured (Hebrews 12:3).

Reviled by the Leaders

During his ministry he performed several miracles to relieve the afflictions of many individuals. These good works instead of being applauded by the Pharisees brought expressions of disapproval and condemnation: "And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him" (Mark 3:1-6).

The chief Priests and the scribes attempted to have Jesus make a statement that would have potentially dangerous implications. They posed the question as to whether or not it would be lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, reasoning if he said no, it would be an act of rebellion against the Roman government and provide grounds to have charges pressed against him. On the other hand, if he said yes, it would alienate many of the common people who detested the payment of tribute to the Romans and whose support he had gained through his marvelous works. Our Lord exposed their hypocrisy by his response that noted the appropriateness of being subject to the powers that be, as long as it did not conflict with allegiance and loyalty to the heavenly Father (Luke 20:19-25). How patiently he endured such nefarious scheming by his opponents. Would that all of Christ's followers adopt such a sage approach when dealing with their adversaries.

The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection and also sought to discredit the Master by posing a riddle concerning a woman whose husband died, and who in turn married each of his six brothers one after the other as each died. Finally the woman also died. Jesus was asked whose wife the woman would be in the resurrection. Again, the Master silenced his antagonists by declaring that the resurrection will awaken mankind from the tomb, but since the need for filling the earth with humanity no longer will exist, propagation of the race will cease as will the institution of marriage (Luke 20:27-33).

Another attack upon his character related to his casting out a demon from a victim who was mute. Despite this wonderful miracle, some of Christ's opponents attributed his ability to cast out the evil spirit by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of demons. Not only would it be absurd to suppose that Satan was opposing his own underlings by using his power to cast them out, but additionally, other Jews cast out devils, too. Whatever source of power Jesus utilized would also be employed by others engaged in this work. Since there was no condemnation of anyone else for performing the same act, it was another example of unjust treatment the Master had to endure (Luke 11:14-20).

The doing of his Father's will caused Jesus to be totally consumed and physically spent. Day after day he walked upon dusty roads preaching, teaching, healing, and enduring the opposition of sinners. An aspect of his suffering to be considered was the weariness caused by such a demanding regimen.

"And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matthew 8:19,20). Here the Lord's answer stressed the concept of self-denial that is required to be pleasing to God. He had no permanent residence of his own at which to rest during his public ministry although he was a welcome guest at various homes. An additional thought in this connection was that Jesus always went about doing his Father's business and would not cease until he uttered those final words from the cross, "It is finished."

Special Trials of a Perfect Man

In a discourse entitled "The Highest Motive" Bro. Benjamin Barton addresses Jesus' sufferings by noting how his perfect sense of taste must have been offended by eating imperfect foods prepared by his hosts, but because he loved to proclaim God's word to them, he gladly endured this unpleasantness. Bro. Barton then continues: "Think what it must have been with our Savior, living as he did in those eastern cities, with narrow and uncleanly streets! Travelers from Europe have so frequently spoken of the filthy condition in those cities. Then how must a man with a

perfect smell endure it! Think what that cost our Savior! Then think how his perfect hearing would enable him to hear more unpleasant noises, and his perfect sight enable him to see more the disagreeable things than any of the rest of us. And then his perfect mind and perfect being enabled him to suffer to an extent the rest of us could not. He could know more intimately indeed what the human race was going through than any of the rest of the race possibly could. But in addition to this, we realize his pre-existence added to his suffering. You and I have never known anything better than this. If we had ever lived under better conditions in a better world, and then had to come here, how much more trying, how much more unpleasant it would be than it is at the present time. So, dear friends, think what it cost our Saviour. He had never had his word doubted in heaven; he had never been mistreated there; he had never been unkindly dealt with during all those ages he had spent with the Father. Think what our Savior suffered in coming down to this earth!" -- *Pilgrim Echoes*, p. 139.

Other evidences of our Lord's suffering are described in Old Testament prophecy: "He was despised and rejected and forsaken by men, a man of sorrows and pains, and acquainted with grief and sickness; and like one from whom men hid their faces he was despised, and we did not appreciate his worth or have any esteem for him. Surely he has borne our griefs (sicknesses, weaknesses, and distresses) and carried our sorrows and pains (of punishment), yet we (ignorantly) considered him stricken, smitten and afflicted by God (as if with leprosy). But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our guilt and iniquities; the chastisement (needful to obtain) peace and well-being for us was upon him, and with the stripes (that wounded) him we are healed and made whole. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has made to light upon him the guilt and iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, (yet when) he was afflicted, he was submissive and opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" (Isaiah 53:3-7, *The Amplified Bible*).

A Sympathetic Priest

Our Lord was a man of sorrows not because of any deficiency in his being, but because of his perfection he could sympathize deeply with fallen humanity that he observed. His perfect sensibilities enabled him to enter into the sorrows of the poor groaning and dying world of mankind. On many occasions during his ministry he gave of his own vitality to heal those who were afflicted, thereby refreshing and restoring them at the cost of his own personal strength: "And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; and they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all" (Luke 6:17-19). Given our Lord's intimate relationship with God and the affirmation of how much the Father loved him (John 17:25,26), it would be logical to inquire why the Creator permitted his son to undergo such tribulation in the flesh, especially since his death as a perfect man would provide the ransom price to bring back Adam and all of his race from the grave. During a walk on the road to Emmaus with two of his disciples the risen Lord commented on this very matter: "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:25-27).

Among the matters referred to in the writings of Moses, one of them undoubtedly related to the atonement day sacrifices. The bullock for the sin offering (Leviticus 16:11), was for Aaron and his house. The blood was not applied for the sins of the people, but for the sins of the high priest

and his house. Antotypically, since Jesus had no sin, he presented the merit of his sacrifice not for himself but for his body or family, the church (Hebrews 9:24). The imputation of this merit was the basis for the church's justification (Romans 8:1-4). This merit passes through the church and will ultimately be applied for Adam and the entire human race when mankind is awakened from the tomb (John 5:25). The blood from the Lord's goat for the sin offering was applied on behalf of the people as noted in Leviticus 16:15. Christ's merit alone gave the church a standing with God. In reality, the blood of the antitypical Lord's goat, or the church, belongs to Christ and he has been offering the church as a part of his own sacrifice throughout the Gospel age.

The knowledge that the church is counted in as part of Christ's sacrifice and participates in his sufferings, to qualify as a part of the Mediator to help reconcile mankind back to the Father, should be awe inspiring. This fact gives special meaning to various Scriptures regarding the church's share in the sin offering, based upon the efficacy of Jesus' precious blood.

This is one such passage: "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church" (Colossians 1:24). Let us more fully appreciate the unfathomable love of God in giving his son to be a ransom for all, and the magnificent sacrifice Christ made in faithfully pouring out his soul unto death for his bride and for the whole world of mankind.

Closer Than a Brother **Christ our Elder Brother**

There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. -- Proverbs 18:24

Tim Alexander

In Psalm 69, King David prophetically speaks of Jesus' experience at his first advent. The verses tell of God's servant who is hated without cause, who is wrongly accused, and who is persecuted in spite of his own righteousness. He states in verse 4 that he restored that which he had not taken away, that which was taken away by another man. This is a prophecy that describes how Jesus, as the second Adam, would restore mankind's human life that had been taken away by the sin of the first Adam.

In verse 9, through the words of David, Jesus says, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (KJV). During his life here on earth, Jesus was consumed by the zeal he had for God's house. In this context, God's house was the temple. Jesus had an all-consuming zeal for the temple and all that it represented. At twelve years of age, Jesus demonstrated this zeal while his parents were returning from the feast of the Passover in Jerusalem. For three days, Jesus remained in the temple, "sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions." He was there, in God's house, developing and exercising his knowledge and understanding of God's word. When asked by his mother the reason for this, his response was, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I **must** be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:49, RSV).

Cleansing the Temple

The next recorded occasion during which Jesus demonstrated his zeal for God's house is again connected with the Passover and is recorded in John 2:13. On this occasion, Jesus finds within the temple merchandizing profit seekers, contaminating the sincere worship of God with irreverent and chaotic commerce. The zeal within Jesus' heart for the temple compelled him to drive them all out. Jesus was here demonstrating his consuming desire to protect, to purify, and to keep the temple holy. For the disciples, witnessing this event brought to their memories those same words of David from Psalm 69 (see John 2:19).

In both of these instances, the object of Jesus' zeal was God's literal house, the temple. Now, though, after Jesus' death and resurrection, the object of Jesus' zeal is no longer that temple. Now the object of his zeal is the church, the spiritual temple of the living God: "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (2 Corinthians 6:16). That same consuming desire to protect, to purify, and to make holy is now directed toward each of his footstep followers, each of the members of his own body down throughout the Gospel age and especially at the end of that age, the harvest.

What a beautiful picture this brings to our minds, that of an elder brother watching over, teaching, and lending support, having already laid down an example of righteousness and sacrifice. Many Scriptures variously describe this role that Jesus plays in our lives; and each of them gives us another perspective on this tender, supportive relationship that we have with our Lord.

Our Instructor

One of the primary roles of Jesus in our lives today is that of teacher. As our elder brother, Jesus teaches us many things by way of instruction and by way of example. The value and compelling nature of Jesus' words while he was here on earth is evident by the response that all classes of men had to those words. Soldiers who were commissioned to take Jesus into custody were so impressed with the teachings they heard that they allowed themselves to fail at their duty. The explanation of their conduct was simply that, "No man ever spoke like this man!" (John 7:46, RSV).

Nicodemus, who himself was considered a great teacher in Israel, put his own reputation at risk by approaching Jesus at night. Upon contact with Jesus, Nicodemus immediately acknowledged that Jesus was not only a teacher, but was a teacher come from God. Authentic godliness in a teacher was a condition that would have been greatly coveted by the Pharisees at the time (John 3:2).

After a lesson from Jesus that was particularly difficult to comprehend, many of the disciples began to falter and "walk no more with him" (John 6:66). Then Jesus, in an effort to evaluate and strengthen Peter's commitment, said to him, "Will you also go away?" Peter's response indicated his appreciation of Jesus' role as teacher: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Not only was Peter acknowledging Jesus as his teacher and master, but also as the one teacher whose words actually lead to life.

From the testimonies of a soldier, a Pharisee, and an apostle, we can readily see the impact of Jesus' words on those lives around him. Jesus' words constrained those soldiers to make a stand for what was morally right. Nicodemus was led to sincerely re-examine his own pattern, practice, and way of thinking. Peter was compelled to take an unpopular course because he realized the blessings of life associated with it. Do Jesus' words have those same effects on us? His words have the same weight and force today as they did then; Jesus is still speaking those words to each of us.

Teaching by Example

Matthew 7:28,29 is a lovely instance of Jesus teaching not only by instruction, but also by example: "When Jesus ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Why did Jesus' words have authority? Why did they carry so much weight? It was because he had personal experience with the power of the truth he was teaching. Jesus was teaching God's word, and the power of that word was working in his own life. Those who were listening to Jesus not only heard the truth being taught, but they saw it and felt it emanating from Jesus' every gesture, action, and reaction. They saw the fruits of the spirit in every aspect of Jesus' life. From our own personal interaction with our Lord -- through Scripture, through prayer, and through experiences -- we can just as clearly see that same strength and authority. That is the kind of elder brother we have, and he has offered to be our constant companion.

Two important principles are mentioned in connection with Jesus' teachings and how we come to know the truth: "If any man's will is to do his [God's] will, he shall know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority" (John 7:17, RSV). Jesus is saying that true devotion of heart, a full consecration to do the will of God, is one of the most important steps toward knowing what is really truth and comprehending the full meaning of Jesus' words. "He who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory, but he who seeks the glory of him who sent

him is true, and in him there is no falsehood" (verse 18). All teachings that are indeed truth, without exception, honor God. All true teachings will be consistent with God's wisdom, power, justice, and love. These are important lessons for anyone who is truly seeking to know the truth.

The Light of Life

Another aspect of our relationship with our elder brother Jesus is that he is indeed the light of our lives. Jesus said that he is the light of the world (John 8:12). This is a reference to the fact that the world, for 4,000 years, lay in the darkness of sin and death and it wasn't until Jesus became a man that the light of truth, grace, and salvation became a reality. That light shed on the world is a wonderful blessing, but the light enjoyed by those who appreciate that light and accept it as the guide for their lives is even greater.

One of the curiosities of the context of this verse is that it immediately follows the reference to the woman taken in adultery. <SFNote that the account of the woman taken in adultery is of questionable authenticity and is considered to be spurious by many scholars.> This juxtaposition becomes meaningful to us in our relationship with our Lord during our lives. The correction and chiding that the Lord gives us is as gentle and mild as it can be and still turn us away from sin. He is there to cast light on our lives and show us the narrow way more clearly, and spur us on with a helpful hand toward more perfect obedience to the principles of righteousness and sacrifice.

Jesus' criticism of the scribes and Pharisees in John 8 was not that they did not know the truth on the subject, it was that they were primarily focused on the behavior of those around them and not on their own development. They therefore missed entirely the power of Jesus' teachings. The scribes and Pharisees knew the truth, but they used it only to separate themselves from others. They used the truth they knew to reassure themselves that they were better than those around them. They were hypocrites. Jesus was teaching that he was the light of the world; once he was gone, the light that the world would have would be that which would shine through the members of his body. The privilege of his footstep followers is to have that light from him in their lives, to keep their lamps trimmed and burning by allowing the holy spirit to take hold of their lives, and as a result of that light to illuminate the path of righteousness for those who walk around them.

"For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life" (Proverbs 6:23, RSV). Perhaps connected with this verse and others like it is the Jewish custom where, at the end of the Feast of the Tabernacles, the books of the law are removed from the box in which they are kept and are replaced with a lighted candle. This beautifully illustrates the fact that the words of the perfect law of God truly are a light to guide one's way. This gesture becomes even more meaningful, however, when one remembers that the Jewish law, which effectively bound all imperfect men like a fetter, was eventually replaced with the glorious light of the gospel.

Our Liberator

Jesus is also our liberator. The apostle Paul himself and many to whom he was writing were originally under that Jewish law which was ceremonially removed from the box on the Feast of Tabernacles. The remainder of mankind was merely under the law of sin and death inherited from father Adam. Paul explains how Jesus has liberated us from both those laws "in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit" (Romans 8:1-4, RSV). He has freed us from the condemnation of the law for the purpose of allowing the righteousness of the law to be fulfilled in us. The word "fulfilled" comes from the Greek word that means to level up or fill in an empty space. The Jewish law was

perfect, yet it left an empty space. It was a promise of life, but a promise that could never be realized by sinful men.

Jesus' sacrifice took away the requirement of perfection in our lives, and his continued relationship with us assists us in working toward righteousness by walking in the spirit, patterning our lives after the principles of righteousness and grace.

The liberation that Jesus thus provides us is a genuine blessing in our daily lives. A daily relationship with him makes the difference between a life that is filled with emptiness and frustration and one that is filled with fulfillment and joy. The apostle Paul describes it beautifully: "To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the spirit is life and peace" (Romans 8:6, RSV). What does the human mind and heart desire more than life and peace?

Our Elder Brother

Among the many roles that Jesus fills in our lives, we have considered just a few. We have considered him as our teacher, our example, our light, and our liberator; but he is also our friend. What better friend to have than that found in an elder brother. An elder brother is a friend whose life comes from the same source as your own, a friend who has been developed by the same kind of life experience that is developing you, a friend with whom unassailable bonds have been formed which will carry and sustain you through all of life's hardest experiences. He is also a friend whose correction is a faithful part of your love and respect for each other.

That is just what Jesus is in our lives. "To all who received him ... he gave power to become the [fellow] children of God" (John 1:12, RSV). Paul tells us that Jesus is one "who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15, RSV). Jesus promised that he would be with his disciples always, through every trying experience of life, even unto the end of the age (Matthew 28:20). Proverbs 27:6 says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend" (RSV).

Jesus is the friend that Proverbs 18:24 describes when it says there is a friend who sticks even closer than a natural brother. He is our elder brother. He is the friend who has given his life for us.

The Last "Hillel" **The Passover Hymn**

And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. -- Matthew 26:30

A verse-by-verse study of Psalm 118 by Carl Hagensick

According to Jewish tradition, Psalms 113 to 118 were sung at the annual feast of Passover. These were known as "The Great Hillel" or song of praise, from the same root as the word Hallelujah, "Praise to Jehovah." Supposedly Psalms 113 and 114 were sung with the second cup of Passover and Psalms 115 to 118 at the end of the meal. These psalms were also sung on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Although written at different times and for various occasions, they are all variations on the theme of praise. Opinion is divided on whether they refer to David or to the Messiah. Quite likely they have reference to the king as a type of the greater than David, Jesus of Nazareth.

Three-Fold Mercy -- Psalm 118:1-4

"O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever. Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy endureth for ever."

God's goodness is indelibly connected with his mercy. Fallen man has claim to neither. Because mercy is one of the deity's operable principles, it acts regardless of the rights of its recipients. Mercy dictates the operation of divine grace; goodness is the product of such actions. "The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad" (Psalm 126:3).

Three classes are singled out as examples of having received such unmerited favor:

Israel: With the Temple being completed, the nation had, so to speak, passed out of its probationary phase of acceptable worship into a permanent one. God's mercy had not only brought Israel to its promised land, but established sufficient tranquility to establish a permanent sanctuary to Jehovah.

The House of Aaron: This permanent temple was also a special blessing to the priesthood. These descendants of Aaron were now permanently ensconced in their sacerdotal positions.

All That Fear the Lord: Not only natural-born Israelites, but the proselytes in their midst were beneficiaries of these mercies.

But this three-fold mercy, great as it was, blanched in comparison with the mercies vouchsafed by the sacrifice, which followed the last Passover of Jesus when these words were sung before the departure into the mount of Olives.

Israel, though temporarily falling into disfavor, is guaranteed a restoration to the highest earthly position, under their resurrected ancient prophets, in the kingdom for which Christ died.

The House of Aaron, the priesthood, was typical of a spiritual order of priests. These

"Melchizedek" priests are to be priests on thrones, reigning with Christ for a thousand years (Revelation 20:6).

All That Fear the Lord from every land and nation will then taste the merciful goodness of eternal life. Only the stubbornly and rebellious disobedient will be cut off in second death.

Trust in the Lord -- Psalm 118:5-9

"I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place. The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes."

David's past experiences were the basis for his implicit trust in the Lord. It has well been said, "All that I have seen, leads me to trust him for all I have not seen." At the time of the writing of this psalm, all of Israel's foes had not yet been defeated. The miraculous manner in which past victories were accomplished gave David confidence that future victories would be secure.

This faith had been the hallmark of David from his earliest youth. When volunteering to fight the Philistine giant Goliath, he rested his trust in his earlier victories over a lion and a bear (1 Samuel 17:34-37). This was the faith with which he met his mighty foe: "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (1 Samuel 17:45,46).

The word translated "distress" in verse 5 literally means a narrow place, and is set in contrast to the larger place wherein he now was set. This finds a deeper meaning on the day when Jesus and his disciples sang this song. That Passover, and the events which followed it, brought Jesus' followers out from the bondage of the law into the "liberty wherewith Christ has made us free" (Galatians 5:1). Jesus, too, was about to be released from the restrictions of flesh to enjoy an unhampered spiritual life with his Father on the plane of the Divine nature.

While the wording of this psalm makes David appear vengeful, his abhorrence of his enemies is not personal, but rather because they had defied Israel and its God. It was this omnipotence of Jehovah that fueled David's desire to demonstrate that the God of Israel was well able to protect his people.

It was not, therefore, either in the men of his army or their prince or leaders in whom David placed his trust, but in Jehovah who had promised their eternal care and protection.

More To Follow -- Psalm 118:10-16

"All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them. They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me. The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly. The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly."

David now turns his attention from the past to the future. In his lifetime the Philistines from the east, the Ammonites from the west, the Moabites from the southwest, the Amalekites from the south, and the Syrians from the north, threatened Israel. Buoyed up by past victories, he faces these foes unafraid.

They stormed Israel as swarms of bees. The Hebrew suggests that they also attacked with bee hives. One of the tactics of ancient warfare was for invading troops to throw hives of bees at their attackers and quickly retreat while the insects stung the defending horses, causing them to panic, run, and throw off their riders. In confidence, David viewed them as no more than tumbling tumbleweeds to be quickly quenched by the fires of Jehovah.

Verse 14 is borrowed from the song of deliverance which Moses and the children of Israel sang after God drowned Pharaoh's army in the surging waters of the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1). The sword and shield of battle would soon give way to the songs of triumph and deliverance.

David credits these future victories to "the right hand of Jehovah," a metaphor for the son of God, who as Michael, was the Creator's guardian angel for Israel.

In the deeper picture of Jesus' last Passover, this song heralded the sure defeat of all the enemies of his incoming kingdom. As the Master put it in the parable of the pounds, "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me" (Luke 19:27). Here he speaks not of the literal slaughter of those who opposed him, but the transformation of them into friends by conversion on the "way of holiness" (Isaiah 35).

The Gates of Righteousness -- Psalm 118:17-21

"I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD. The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death. Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD: This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter. I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation."

David did die and, as the apostle expressed it, "his sepulcher is with us to this day" (Acts 2:29). The reference here, in this Messianic psalm, is to the greater than David, Jesus Christ. He also died, but in three days he was raised in triumph from his tomb. As a result of his death David also will live again, as will all mankind.

Jesus' father had permitted him to be chastened sore: "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Hebrews 5:8). As his chastening experiences proved his total loyalty, so his followers must learn the same implicit obedience through hard trials. But though they, like their Master, might be afflicted, they would not suffer eternal death but rather gain life with their Lord by passing through death.

The opened gates of righteousness may refer to either of three entranceways:

1. The gates of Jerusalem. The Targum translates the phrase "open to me the gates of the city of righteousness." The Jerusalem of the kingdom is to be called "the city of righteousness" (Isaiah 1:26).
2. The outer temple gates of the temple over which the spiritual Levites will have oversight (Ezekiel 44:11).
3. The gates into the inner sanctum, the Holy of Holies, picturing heaven itself.

While all three may be appropriate, we suggest that the reference is to the outer gates of the temple. It is through these gates that all who eventually attain full righteousness will enter to worship Jehovah their God. Christ and his church enter these gates and proceed on to the gates of the second vail, while all mankind will be able to enter the outer gates into a spacious courtyard large enough for the entire human race.

It was fitting for this hymn to be sung at that last fateful Passover in Jerusalem, for there began the trail of events which led to the death of mankind's redeemer who, entering these everlasting portals, "brought life [on earth] and immortality [in heaven] to light" (2 Timothy 1:10). Only as these gates are entered will Christ have become their salvation.

The Rejected Stone -- Psalm 118:22-24

"The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

The corner stone is an obvious reference to the chief corner stone of the temple (see 1 Peter 2:4-7). The term "chief" corner stone is apt in such a reference. Being constructed on the crest of Mount Moriah, the foundation plane was uneven. Even after leveling the ground, the Temple platform was to extend over the Kidron valley which was more than a hundred feet below. Thus the southeast corner stone of the Temple complex had to be carefully fitted to the terrain and on it would come the bulk of the weight of the structure above.

Such a stone would be rejected at first by the builders, but later greatly prized for its preeminent position. David was looking forward in his mind to the realization of his dream -- to build a fitting house for the worship of Jehovah, a temple that would attract the devotees to it. The day of its inauguration, when tradition says this psalm was sung, would truly be a great day of rejoicing.

In like manner Jesus was about to be rejected and killed shortly after the Passover in 33 A.D., but it was that very event which would begin the construction of the spiritual house of which Peter writes in the second chapter of his first epistle. Looking backward we, although repulsed at the cruelty of his crucifixion, nevertheless consider it a day of rejoicing for it portends the salvation of all. Truly the day of Jesus' dying for man's sin was a unique "day which the Lord hath made." We rejoice, not in the agonies he endured, but in the result of redemption thus attained.

Peter expressed it well when speaking of the plot of the Jews, Herod, and Pilate. He states that all they really accomplished was "to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done" (Acts 4:28).

Hosanna -- Psalm 118:25, 26

"Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD."

These are the words that were shouted by the crowds welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem just four days before the Passover (Matthew 21:9). These are also the words which Jesus quoted in his sermon denouncing the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23:39, "For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

The plea of the crowds at the triumphal entry would not be answered until the people acclaimed him in his rightful role as king. Jesus did not say that he would not return until they recognized him, but that they would not realize that he was invisibly in their midst until they accorded him that honor.

This is in accordance with the prophecy of Revelation 1:7, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

The blessing that is spoken of in the latter half of verse 26 is that of Numbers 6:23-27, "Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: the LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them."

Bind the Sacrifice -- Psalm 118:27-29

"God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever."

The symbolism here is apt for the Passover festival. Thousands of lambs were brought to the priest as ritual sacrifices. These lambs were pictures of Jesus as the Lamb of God, who would soon bind the sacrifice of his life to the altar as a ransom price for the entire race.

It is interesting that both Rotherham and the New American Standard Bible add the word "festive" before "sacrifice," again suggesting the celebratory nature of Jesus as the spiritual Passover Lamb, providing atonement now for his church, but eventually for all humanity.

The course he had embarked upon at Jordan was now about to be climaxed with the words, "It is finished." He had begun his narrow way of sacrifice in the words of the psalmist, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Psalm 40:8). Now he was to complete it in the words of this psalm: "Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee." From beginning to end his walk was a walk of willing and joyful obedience to the desires of his heavenly Father.

This is the example he left us to follow. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever."

Reconciliation for All

Atonement

By him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of his blood on the cross. -- Colossians 1:20, New Living Translation

Jeff Mezera

Colossians 1:20 is one of the most firm and unwavering promises of God in all of Scripture. All things in heaven and earth will be reconciled to him. All the things created through him (verse 16) will be restored to a former state of harmony with God beginning with the coming of Christ with all his saints (1 Thessalonians 3:13).

This was the expectation of the nation of Israel. They expected that Christ, the Messiah would come and they knew that the purpose of his coming was for destroying the enemies of Israel and of God.

"In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem ... And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn" (Zechariah 12:8-10, NASV).

"But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come. ... until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom. ... Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; his kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey him" (Daniel 7:18,22,27, NASV).

An example of the expectation of the Jewish hope of the restoration and redemption of Israel can be found in the words of Anna who "continued to speak of him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem" (Luke 2:38, NASV).

The disciples also expected the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. After the death of Christ, they lamented saying that they "were hoping that it was he who was going to redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21, NASV). And when Jesus appeared to them following his resurrection, the disciples asked him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6).

A recent magazine article simply stated the hope of the Jewish people when it said, "When the Messiah comes at the end of time, Jews believe paradise will exist on earth and souls will be reunited with their bodies" (*Newsweek*, "Visions of Heaven," August 12, 2002).

The Jewish nation knew these prophecies. They knew what was promised and what would happen to their nation and all of the families of the earth after Messiah's coming.

Reconciliation

"Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, Thou hast increased the nation, Thou art glorified; Thou hast extended all the borders of the land" (Isaiah 26:15, NASV).

They knew they were the promised nation of God. They expected not only that their nation would be delivered and exalted above all other nations, but also that their unfaithful nation would be cleansed and faithfulness restored to them.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: ... I will put, my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people ... I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Israel would be taught righteousness by the Lord. They knew that not only would Israel be reconciled, but also that all nations including their enemies would be blessed if they would submit themselves to the kingdom of God.

"Indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice" (Genesis 22:17,18, NASV).

Realization

But their expectations of reconciliation have not yet been realized. "These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (Hebrews 11:39,40).

Jesus also expected this reconciliation, but his expectations were different from those of his disciples. They expected the restoration to immediately come to pass. Jesus expected it to come later.

Israel was a lost people, but they were not left without a savior. Their Messiah, their deliverer, was sent to them; this is why they will not be a lost people forever. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isaiah 26:19).

To whom does this refer? Surely it refers to those to whom the prophecy was given, not to some nation to which it was not directed.

We know from other prophecies that Israel would return to their land and to God's favor in the last days. We see they are back in their land, but why are they still in unbelief? This too was prophesied. Zechariah 12 tells us of a time when all nations will come against Israel to battle. The Israelites must be in their land for all nations to come against them at Jerusalem. It is at the time this prophecy will be fulfilled that we are told the unbelieving nation of Israel will become a believing nation under God (verse 16).

Judgment

The nation of Israel will be judged at the same time as the rest of mankind, when all will be resurrected to judgment.

There are prophecies that Israel will have their ancient judges restored to them in the kingdom: "And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city" (Isaiah 1:26).

"And Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for my name's sake, shall receive many times as much, and shall inherit eternal life" (Matthew 19:28,29, NASV).

This judgment is not only to be upon the twelve tribes of Israel, but upon all mankind in the resurrection of judgment. "Thus you will know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and there is no other; and my people will never be put to shame. And it will come about after this that I will pour out my Spirit on all mankind" (Joel 2:27, 28, NASV).

All who are in their graves, both the righteous and the wicked, are to be resurrected to judgment: "There shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked" (Acts 24:15, NASV). "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28,29, NASV).

Scripture tells us who will do this judgment work and how long this judgment will take. Christ had promised this judgment to his followers. They are promised to live and reign with him for a thousand years: "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them ... and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years" (Revelation 20:4, NASV).

We are told that these will participate in the judgment of men and angels in that judgment day during the reign with Christ over the resurrected masses: "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? ... that we shall judge angels?" (1 Corinthians 6:2,3, NASV).

The Lord with his saints will judge resurrected mankind during the thousand years of judgment.

Redemption

We have discussed the reconciliation of the nation of Israel, and also the promise to the saints that they will live and reign with Christ over all who will be resurrected to judgment. But how will this be made possible?

All have been born under Adam's curse because it was through the transgression of this originally sinless man that all have been born into sin and death: "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men. ... So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men" (Romans 5:12,18, NASV).

Not only did God curse the human race, he also cursed the earth: "Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you

return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:17-19, NASV).

The heavenly Father did this knowing that he would provide a way for the human race and the earth to be released from the curse: "For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Romans 8:20,21, NASV).

We know that all have been born under this curse, but the Bible provides hope. The Bible tells us there was only one way to remove this curse: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement" (Leviticus 17:11). "Thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth" (Exodus 21:23, 24). It was through blood that God was able to make atonement, and the blood of a mere sinful man could not do this: "No man can by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him" (Psalm 49:7, NASV). Jesus was different. He was sinless, like Adam before he sinned.

"For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself" (Hebrews 7:26,27).

The blood of Jesus was able to make peace and it is through this peace that reconciliation will be made available to all men in the day of judgment (Colossians 1:20). "For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:21,22, NASV).

It was the curse that was passed unto all men because of the sin of Adam. It was the blood of Jesus which was able to ransom Adam and satisfy the justice of God. Thus all will be raised in the judgment day since Jesus died not only for those who believe in him, but also for those who do not.

"He himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" (1 John 2:2, NASV). For this reason all who are resurrected in the day of judgment will be educated because the "one act of righteousness ... resulted [in] justification of life to all men" (Romans 5:18, NASV).

Education

Not only will everyone be resurrected to judgment for a thousand years, we are told that in the resurrection of judgment they will also come to a knowledge of the truth and will learn righteousness: "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favor be shewed to the wicked" (Isaiah 26:9,10).

"This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time" (1 Timothy 2:3-6, NASV).

We know how the nation to which they were given interpreted these prophecies. We can read and

understand them as they are written without the need for special interpretation beyond what is plainly stated.

"The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the LORD's: and he is the governor among the nations" (Psalm 22:26-28).

This kingdom is the one for which we pray, that God's will be done "on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10, NASV).

Building the Temple **Where God Dwelt with Israel**

*And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. --
Revelation 21:22*

Ted Marten

The word temple in the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew word which primarily means palace or any magnificent building. It is only when we look at the many references to the temple in the Scriptures which use instead the term "house of the Lord" or "house of God," that we understand the more appropriate thought of the word as being the dwelling place of God.

The Scriptures use the word temple in relation to several things:

The place of worship of false gods -- Acts 19:27

God's dwelling place in the heavens -- Psalm 11:4

The physical buildings (Solomon's, Zerubbabel's, and Herod's) -- 2 Chronicles 4:7,8

The Church class as a composite body -- Ephesians 2:21

Individual members of the Church -- 1 Corinthians 6:19

When God conceived his plan for man before the foundations of the earth, even before the *Logos* was created, he envisioned a dwelling place for himself with other beings of his same nature, through whom he would deal with the remainder of his creatures. These individuals would be so filled with his spirit, would be so loyal, would love him so much that he could trust them to do as he would do.

So he conceived the final outcome and then began to fashion how that glorious plan would come about. During the Jewish age God directed the building of several structures which would illustrate his work in the construction of his dwelling place.

The Tabernacle

In the year 1615 B.C.¹ the Israelites left Egypt after their deliverance was brought about by the plagues brought upon the Egyptians and that culminated in the death of all the first-born of Egypt.

During the next 13 months the Israelites would travel to Mt. Sinai and while encamped there would build the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, according to the specifications God would give to Moses. This structure is usually referred to in Scripture as the tabernacle, but it is also called the tent (from the same Hebrew word); it is also referred to as the House of the Lord, the House of God, and in two Scriptures as the temple of the LORD (1 Samuel 1:9; 3:3).

The Tabernacle served Israel as the place where, through their High Priest, they could communicate with God and where their sins could be atoned for in a typical, temporary way. The Tabernacle also has served spiritual Israel by showing them in picture form how the real

atonement for sin is actually accomplished and, in another picture, how one comes into a relationship with God and progresses to a heavenly reward.

Solomon's Temple

When the Tabernacle had served its intended purpose for 587 years, it was replaced in 1028 B.C. by the temple conceived by David and built by Solomon. The temple took seven years to build and remained standing for 422 years until the army of Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it in 606 B.C., although it only retained its original full beauty and sacred significance for a short time. Just 33 years after its inauguration, Rehoboam surrendered the treasures of the temple to Shishak the king of Egypt. What followed were periods in which the temple was neglected and looted, followed by feeble attempts to restore it.

God kept the tabernacle viable for almost 600 years, yet he allowed the temple, a building of such beauty and sacred significance, to fall into disrepair, disuse, and eventually destruction in much less time. Paul tells us why: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Corinthians 10:11). God had Solomon's temple constructed for the lessons it would provide his people of the Gospel age, and incidentally for his chosen people of Israel, and eventually for all the world of mankind.

When the intended lessons of the tabernacle and Solomon's temple had served their function in regard to natural Israel and spiritual Israel, they were allowed to go away in a seemingly natural way; yet we think the process was fully planned by the one who is too wise to err.

The Construction of the Temple

Because there is more information in Scripture about the planning, the construction, and the dedication of Solomon's temple than the services that were afterward conducted in it, we conclude that the important lessons are contained in the construction of the temple.

David must have been an inspiration for Solomon who began his kingship in such an appropriate manner, asking for wisdom to judge God's people with understanding, then beginning the building of the temple. We can see how these character traits are also required for those who would be a part of that spiritual temple: an attitude that always puts first one's relationship to God, and the desire to honor God in action, thought, and word.

The stones for the temple were probably quarried from beneath the city of Jerusalem at a site now known as Solomon's quarry. It is a huge underground area under the surface of the old city. The Scriptures tell us that the stones were so carefully and perfectly shaped that they needed no additional work at the site. In 1 Kings 6:7 we read, "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." The Scripture does not say that the stones were quarried and fitted for their place in the temple without the use of a hammer or other instrument, but that once they had gone through the preparation work the assembly work was accomplished in silence.

The stones of the antitypical temple have been in the process of being quarried and fitted for their places for nearly 2,000 years, but the building phase did not begin until the raising of the sleeping saints in 1878, an event unobserved by the world. The time for the recognition of the heavenly temple has not yet come and the building is not yet finished. The shaping of the last stones is now

in progress; as they are finished, they are put in place. The construction of the building has been going on silently, without the sound of a hammer.

"So Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold: ... And the whole house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house" (1 Kings 6:21,22). The temple was constructed of stone; the stone inside was covered with wood -- floors, walls, and ceiling -- and all the wood was covered with gold.

When the antitypical temple is completed, it will appear to the world, by the eye of faith, as a white, righteous structure designed by God, the building blocks being quarried out of the earth and fitted for this structure without any particular notice by the world, even though it may have played a part in the cutting and shaping of the individual stones.

Inside the Temple

We see the temple from God's perspective on the inside, with the white stone representing the righteousness once imputed to the individual, but when put into position in the temple, having righteousness in its own right. The wood on the inside of the building teaches that those stones had their origin as human beings, but now, in the completed temple, they are covered with gold, they have the divine nature: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:42-44,53) How well this is pictured by covering the wood with gold indicating that the temple is composed of those who have the divine nature.

When the typical temple was completed, Solomon instructed the priests and Levites to bring the ark of the covenant from the tent where David had put it, to the temple; it was brought into the Most Holy and the staves used to transport it were removed. Inside the ark all that remained were the tablets of the law that were delivered to Moses.

The antitypical significance of these things gives us an appreciation of God's direction in creating this picture. The removal of the staves show us that when the propitiatory is in the temple, it has reached its final destination. It shows in symbol that the blood applied to it has satisfied the demands of justice, to qualify the mediator to administer that phase of God's plan, which will bring mankind back into harmony with him. The merit of Christ's sacrifice, which had been used or imputed to the church during its period of development, is available for application to the world of mankind.

The fact that the golden cherubims with out-stretched wings hovered over the ark would seem to indicate the whole process of providing atonement was under divine supervision.

Missing from the ark were Aaron's rod that budded and the golden pot of manna that Paul says were in the ark when it was in the tabernacle (Hebrews 9:4). The budded rod of Aaron reminds the antitypical underpriests of their privilege of service and the need to be fruitful in putting on the spiritual likeness of their forerunner. The golden bowl of manna pictured the immortality promised to the royal priesthood, for that manna never corrupted (Revelation 2:17). Both the rod and manna disappear when the antitypical temple is complete which is why they did not appear in the ark when it came to rest in the temple.

When Solomon had finished building the temple, the time had come to dedicate the structure to

the Lord and his service.

Inaugurating the Temple

Solomon opened the service by first blessing the Lord God of Israel for choosing David his father to be king over Israel, and his own privilege of building the temple. He offered a prayer to God beginning with his realization that the heavens were inadequate to contain God, so this temple was far less adequate. He asks that God watch over all of the doings of his people Israel, and when they sin and then repent, that he will have compassion upon them.

When Solomon finished with his prayer, then began what might at first be considered a rather strange sequence of events: "Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD. And king Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep: so the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. And the priests waited on their offices: the Levites also with instruments of music of the LORD, which David the king had made to praise the LORD, because his mercy endureth for ever, when David praised by their ministry; and the priests sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood. Moreover Solomon hallowed [or sanctified or consecrated] the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings, because the brasen altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt offerings, and the meat offerings, and the fat." -- 2 Chronicles 7:4-7

Solomon's Role

In the context, the priests (plural) and the Levites are mentioned, but not the High Priest, even though it would appear logical and fitting that he would play the major role in this dedication ceremony. Moreover, we recall when King Saul offered a sacrifice without waiting for Samuel, the one whom the Lord had appointed, it cost him the privilege of passing his kingship to his posterity.

Why did Solomon take it upon himself to take the lead in this important event? He seems to have displaced the Lord's appointed spiritual leader much as Saul had done, and yet it does not seem to have displeased Jehovah, certainly not as Solomon's subsequent acts did.

The explanation lies in the antitype. When the antitypical temple is completed, the high priest of our profession will have finished his work as a sacrificing high priest in offering himself and his body members. He will then in the fullest sense be the greater than Solomon. It is the time when the marriage of Christ and his bride takes place.

The Scriptures do not clearly state that Solomon personally participated in the sacrificing work, and so it is quite probable he directed the whole dedication ceremony. By having Solomon play the leading role the lesson is that Jesus is being portrayed in his role of king, in harmony with the picture of Melchizedek who was both priest and king. Christ Jesus will give thanks to God for the privilege of directing the building of the temple and seek God's continued blessing on his work as King of Kings.

Nothing in Scripture tells us of the use of the temple for the remainder of Solomon's life, nor in the reign of succeeding kings with but a few exceptions. In 606 B.C. the temple was looted by the army of Nebuchadnezzar; all the vessels and treasures it contained were carried away to Babylon. They burnt the remains of the temple so all that remained were ruins of what had previously been the house of the Lord.

Zerubbabel's Temple

But that was not the end of the temple. 70 years later God raised up Cyrus, who conquered Babylon and perceived that God had relegated to him the responsibility to provide another temple on the site of the original temple.

Does it not make us stand in awe and wonder how our heavenly Father works to accomplish his plans? Nebuchadnezzar carried away the utensils of the temple and when they reached Babylon, they were put into his temple. Many years later God raised up a man who was undoubtedly a pagan, Cyrus by name. After coming to power in Persia and extending his power to the land of the Medes, he turned his conquest westward to Babylon. After a spectacular conquest of the city of Babylon, Cyrus makes a proclamation recorded in the last two verses of second Chronicles and the opening verses of Ezra:

"Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah" (Ezra 1:1,2). It seems reasonable that Cyrus had heard of the prophecies concerning him in the writings of Isaiah, which called him by name and predicted his actions in regard to Israel's return to Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple.

It was one thing for Cyrus to be flattered by having been mentioned by the God of the Israelites, but it is amazing that he believed enough that he was willing to not only let the people return to their land, but was willing to finance the project and even be their protector during the construction. Truly God works in mysterious ways to accomplish his purposes.

When Zerubbabel began to build the temple in Jerusalem, the people of the land, the descendents of those who had been brought into the land when Esarhaddon took the ten tribes of Israel captive, offered their service in the building. They based their offering on the fact that they worshipped the same God as the returned Israelites. These were the people who when they were brought to the land, requested a priest from the captive Israelites to teach them about the customs, the religion, and the God of the former inhabitants.

Refusing Help

We are not told who the priest was or what he taught the people, but his efforts were far from successful. In 2 Kings 17:29-34 we read that the people had all brought their own gods with them and continued to worship these false gods. It was because of the mixing of the worship of Jehovah with that of other gods that Zerubabel and the other elders rejected the offer of help from those who would come to be known as Samaritans.

What lesson is contained in this incident? Since Solomon employed many foreigners in the building of the first temple, why was not the same procedure followed in the building of the second? Although the men who worked on the first temple were probably favorable toward Israel, nonetheless they were not Jews and yet there was no objection to their participation.

If the stones of the temple represent the individuals of the antitypical temple, then the shaping and fitting for their place in the temple is done through the agency of the world from which there is

opposition. That would seem ample reason for using the foreigners in the preparation work.

In the days of Zerubbabel the reason foreign help was not accepted was most likely because if those who later came to be called Samaritans were given a role in the building, they most likely would have wanted a voice in the use of the temple.

To make this application to the antitype it would apply not when that temple was begun at Pentecost but at a time later in the age.

While the building of Solomon's temple shows us details regarding the quarrying and preparation of the stones, the building of Zerubbabel's temple places the emphasis on who does the rebuilding. Because of this emphasis, the picture of the temple centers more on the Word of God and shows the builders as the church with its belief and doctrines as determining their fitness to be part of the temple. The Jews who returned to Jerusalem were already dedicated followers of Zerubbabel, the prince who was commissioned to rebuild the temple.

This picture therefore would seem to have special application, not when the selection of the church began at Pentecost, but more particularly when the harvest began. It was then that those, who had been indoctrinated with the errors of nominal systems and the worldly spirit, wanted to bring some of those errors into the temple condition which was returning to an understanding of the basic truths once delivered to the saints.

Those who would bring the doctrinal errors of men, who had substituted their own thinking for that of the Scriptures, could not be included with those who both heard the message "Come out of her my people" and obeyed the command.

Ezra tells us about the beginning of the building. He tells us of the joy and enthusiasm that filled the people when they realized that the work had finally begun. It was like that when the harvest began. "And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy" (Ezra 3:11,12)

The prophet Haggai gives us a little different perspective on the reaction of the ancient men: "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?" (Haggai 2:3). There must have been tears of joy at the prospect of the rebuilt temple when the foundation was laid, but when the temple was completed, one could not help but compare it to the spectacular beauty of the previous structure. Yet Haggai gives them reassurance of God's continued care: "Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts. According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not" (Haggai 2:4,5). Even though the temple did not compare in outward beauty to the previous one, the important message to the faithful Israelites was that the Lord's spirit remained with them.

And that encouragement was needed also for those who had left the magnificent edifices of Babylon to meet with those who appreciated the message of their returned Lord and were content to meet in small groups, feasting upon the truth.

The Temple of Herod

The temple that was erected in the days of Ezra stood for nearly 500 years until the time of Herod, styled "the great" by Josephus to distinguish him from those of his sons who bore the same name. In about the year B.C. 17 Herod, who was a Jew by faith but not by birth, proposed to build a new temple. His idea did not meet with acceptance by the Jews who refused to let him start the building fearing that if he tore down what remained of Zerubabel's temple, he would not build a new one. It was only after he assembled the materials for the new temple that they agreed to the tearing down of the old.

According to Josephus the temple proper was finished in about a year and a half, but because of additions and alterations, at the beginning of our Lord's ministry the Jews said the temple had been in the process of building for 46 years -- the implication was that it was still not finished (see John 2:20).

The Jews were reluctant to refer to this as the third temple; they preferred to think of it as a rebuilding of Zerubabel's temple. Nonetheless it was a new building that for all intents and purposes was built by one who was anything but a man of God. Thus the building of this temple contains at least three lessons from God concerning the stones and the builders: 1) Jesus' symbolic cleansing of the temple; 2) Jesus' statement about rebuilding the temple in three days; 3) the renting of the veil in the temple when Jesus died.

It was necessary for the Jews to have a typical temple when Messiah arrived to show that the typical kingdom of Israel was about to come to an end of its favor with God, and that the tabernacle and the temple that succeeded it were about to be replaced. The temple symbolized to the Jews the polity of the nation as well as the center of their religion. As a theocracy, at least theoretically, they recognized God as their head or king.

Jesus presented himself to the Jewish house in the beginning of their harvest as bridegroom and reaper. Just before his crucifixion he presented himself as their king, exercising his authority in pronouncing judgment against them by declaring their house desolate and by an act of cleansing the temple.

The parallel of this act in the Gospel age harvest occurred in 1878 when the consecrated or temple class, still in the nominal system, was told that Babylon was fallen from its position as repository of God's word. They were to leave so they might be cleansed from the defilements of that cast-off system.

Raising the Temple in Three Days

As this temple teaching had its fulfillment at the end of the age, likewise that which had to do with raising the temple in three days would not have its full application until the harvest of the Gospel age. Jesus replied to the request of the Jews for a sign of his authority by saying: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said" (John 2:19-22).

The Jews did not understand what Jesus said; they didn't even get the point that he made when he said "destroy this temple." They thought he said that he would destroy the temple and then he

would rebuild it in three 24-hour days, when he clearly meant that they would be the cause of the destruction: "two false witnesses said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days" (Matthew 26:60,61). We wonder how fully the disciples understood this was a prophesy that indicated it would take over 2,000 years to complete the true temple which was his body.

Jesus was not talking about his human body. This he gave for the life of the world. And he did not raise himself from the dead. The bodies in which he appeared after his resurrection were not the human body that he had before the crucifixion for the disciples failed to recognize him on several occasions; he was able to come and go as the wind. Could the disciples have known that they were living in the fifth thousand-year day since Adam, and that the completion of the body of Christ, the temple, would not be complete until the beginning of the seventh?

Even if **they** did not understand this, it is an inspiring concept for us who know that we are now living in that seventh day. We know we are living when the last temple stones are being fitted and prepared. Even in this earthly condition we have a foretaste of what will be, from a promise of Jesus: "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:23).

If we are living up to our privileges, we will be feasting on the truth that has been provided for us, and dwelling in heavenly places with our Father and our Lord by our communion in prayer and reliance on the precious promise of God.

"The Veil Was Rent"

The last of the main lessons from the third temple concerns the parting of the veil: "Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the spirit. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Mark 15:37,38). The rending of the veil top to bottom indicated that it was a manifestation from heaven and not from wear and tear. God was showing that this was from him, and it meant that the way into the heavenly condition was now open to those who follow in Jesus' footsteps. Paul corroborates this thought: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Hebrews 10:19, 20). Yes, a new and living way into the most holy, the divine presence, has been opened to us and it could only be opened by the blood of our Savior whose merit provides for our justification.

The apostle Peter brings the illustration of the temple to a personal level when he says, "You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up ²spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5, NASV). It is obvious that Peter's comparison is to the typical stones of Solomon's temple. These stones are shaped and fitted even more carefully because they will make up the spiritual house, these "stones" offer sacrifices acceptable to God because they are offered with the imputed merit of their high priest.

Paul also uses this illustration of the temple to show us the responsibilities of those who will be a part of the antitypical temple: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 3:16,17). Paul emphasizes that this illustration of the temple pertains only to those who are consecrated and spirit-begotten for it is these who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them. Then he warns these that the defiling of this favored position by returning to worldly pursuits, worldly desires, and worldly ambitions will show him to be a stone which will be rejected and destroyed by God in the second death.

The apostle John in explaining the vision of the New Jerusalem says, "I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb **are** the temple of it" (Revelation 21:22). John indicates that when the New Jerusalem is complete, there is no temple **therein**. Jehovah and his beloved Son are the temple -- the Father as the creator and the lamb as the one who executed the plan conceived by God.

When the world is restored to fellowship with God, then the words of Revelation 21:3 will truly come to pass: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle [dwelling place] of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

Let us realize the lengths that our heavenly Father has gone to provide us a comprehensive picture of the part that we have been invited to have with our Lord, and strive to be worthy of his love in calling us to be stones in his dwelling place.

1 Editors' note: All dates in this article follow the chronology found in *The Time Is At Hand* by Charles T. Russell.

2 The word "spiritual" is deleted on the authority of Constatine Tishendorf's reading of the Siniatic manuscript which omits the word. We do not sacrifice spiritual things.

A Crisis of Confidence

Earth-Shaking Events

Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. -- Luke 21:26

Carl Hagensick

September 11, 2001 changed the world in which we live. Fears have risen dramatically. Mankind has been brought harshly to the awareness of the ever-present threat of terrorism. These fears in turn have provoked uncertainties in every sector of society.

Shifting sands of changing political coalitions have blurred the distinctions between friend and foe. Scandals have shaken not only the Roman Catholic church, but many Protestant denominations as well. Economic advances of a decade of prosperity have vanished overnight. Corporate giants have plummeted into bankruptcy. Accountants, appointed as watchdogs over big business, have covered up questionable financial transactions. The consumer confidence index has dangled precipitously over the brink. The world is facing a crisis of confidence.

Terrorism

The rules of warfare have been changed. The fight against terrorism is a conflict against a hidden enemy. Traditional battles between one national armada against another have evolved into guerilla fighting within a country, precision strikes by small bands of terrorists who know no national boundaries. Carefully planned and executed assaults have taken thousands of lives.

The collapse of the World Trade Center and the coordinated crashing of a jet plane into the Pentagon prompted President George Bush to declare a "War on Terrorism." Along with a wide-ranging coalition of partners these allied forces launched a fearful reprisal on Osama Bin Laden and his Al Qaeda network of terrorists sheltered by the Taliban regime of Afghanistan and other fundamentalist Islamic states.

The reaction to the September 11 attacks, in the United States at least, has included a tightening of immigration policies and large-scale arrests and detentions of people particularly those of Arabian descent. Many are being held for indefinite terms without being charged and without having their names released. This has raised a debate as to whether constitutional civil rights are being eroded.

Fears are fueled even further by concerns over future tactics of terrorists who may employ biological or even nuclear devices. The anthrax mailings have created worries about the safety of water supplies, air-borne pollutants, or attacks on nuclear power plants.

The "Axis of Evil"

In his State of the Union address, President Bush identified three countries -- Iraq, Iran and North Korea -- as an "axis of evil." This has been followed by an active debate, not only in America but throughout the world, of a possible pre-emptive and unilateral strike by the United States on Iraq, with the stated aim of removing Saddam Hussein from his position of power in that country.

Voices raised in favor of such an invasion see Iraq as a developer of chemical, biological, and

nuclear arms for terrorist use against both Israel and America. Opposition voices fear the political, moral, and economic consequences of one nation unilaterally attacking another sovereign country. A major side effect of this debate has been concerns over the United States assuming too much arbitrary authority without obtaining a mandate from the United Nations.

Terrorism and Drugs

One of the evil phenomena of the past century has been the rapid increase in the traffic of illicit drugs. So-called "recreational drugs" have been added to their twin counterparts of tobacco and alcohol. Together they have wreaked a fearsome toll on the health of mankind. Sexual promiscuity has unleashed a worldwide epidemic of AIDS. In addition to the cost of human life and physical well-being, the health care cost of treating those who are sick is staggering.

These have not only posed an epidemic health risk but have created vast economic empires. The billions of dollars reaped by the drug lords are being increasingly diverted into the arming of terrorists. While nations, seeking to arm themselves, can raise taxes to pay for their armaments, terrorists do not have that option. They must resort to criminal methods to finance their supply of weaponry. Drug trafficking is only one of their options.

Financial Insecurity

Giddy from the halcyon days of the last decade, investors in the world's stock markets were lured into a belief that double-digit percentage growth would go on forever. Trillions of dollars have evaporated into thin air as the S&P 500 index on the New York Stock Exchange has plunged 40% from its peak set in March 2000; the NASDAQ index is down more than 70% (as of the close Jan. 13, 2003).

As greed and corruption at the highest levels of the corporate world and imaginative accounting practices were exposed, confidence in the integrity of big business plummeted along with the markets. Despite assurances that the economy is fundamentally strong, this lack of confidence has greatly delayed a recovery.

Added to these factors, fear of more terrorist attacks, unstable conditions in the Middle East and many other parts of the globe, and the increasing threat of greater armed conflicts against countries that aid terrorism, have added to the uncertainty about future world conditions.

The Religious World

A crisis of another type has rocked the religious world, eroding even further a fading confidence in the purity of the clergy. Sexual abuse scandals have been exposed among the priesthood, particularly in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. Investigative reporting has revealed an extensive pattern of mistreatment of the youth committed to their care extending back over a period of decades. Adding to the problem has been the discovery of systematic cover-ups and the reassignment of offending priests to other positions where they have continued to exploit the young.

Political activism on both the right and left has further divided the adherents of Christianity. Involvement in such causes has diluted the message of the pulpit from an examination of Scriptural passages to conflicting statements in the political and social arenas.

Weighed in the Balances

Other great civilizations have fallen under similar pressures. Lack of confidence in the Roman Empire led to a profligate living style and its ultimate collapse. Karl Marx in *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* (1852) points to the same conditions that led to the French Revolution. In like manner Babylon, the first of the great world empires, also succumbed. The Bible records the last night of that mighty kingdom. It describes a riotous feast of King Belshazzar which was startlingly interrupted by a mysterious hand writing four Chaldaic words on the wall: "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." The prophet Daniel interpreted the meaning in part: "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting" (Daniel 5:27).

How appropriate these words are today! People are increasingly losing their confidence in the organized pillars of society -- political, social, financial, and religious. The desire for stable societal institutions coupled with disillusionment with the realities, leads to frustration and hopelessness.

Jesus stated the matter well: "And there shall be ... upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring" (Luke 21:25). Vine's Dictionary gives the meaning of perplexity as "at a loss for a way ... finding no solution to their embarrassment." Vine proceeds to show that the usage in the papyri is being at "wit's end, at a loss to proceed, without resources." In short, the word means a situation where there seems to be no way out. How accurately this describes the quandaries that the leaders of this world face.

The next verse in Luke speaks of God "shaking" the heavens and the earth. The apostle Paul speaks of this "shaking" in Hebrews 12:26,27, where he compares it with the earthquake that shook Mt. Sinai when Moses received the divine law: "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

Peter speaks of the same events: "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10).

Two Earthquakes

In the book of Revelation we read of two great symbolic earthquakes in the end time. One happens during the sixth seal in the time preceding the Lord's second advent. This is described both in Revelation 6:12 and again in Revelation 11:13. Many Bible Students identify this with the French Revolution of 1789 with its after-shocks continuing to the revolutions of 1829-30 that swept Europe.

But this earthquake is only a forerunner of a far greater seismic event described under the seventh plague of Revelation 16:18, "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great."

There are many symbols used to describe this conflagration: a whirlwind, fire, a storm, hail, etc. Each metaphor emphasizes a particular aspect of the trouble. The picture of an earthquake calls attention to the aspect of a social revolution. As the friction between two tectonic plates causes a natural quake, so revolts among men are caused by abrasive contact between two conflicting

classes of mankind, in this case the "haves" and the "have-nots," the privileged versus those in the lower economic strata. The under crust, the lower economic classes, thrust upwards in search for more favorable conditions.

The objective of this great earthquake is that everything that can be shaken will be shaken. That which remains is enduring and can be utilized in the new social structure which will replace the present religious and social orders, the "new heavens and new earth." As Paul concludes, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Hebrews 12:28). Peter, in a similar vein, gives the positive effects such knowledge of the present approaching end should have in our lives: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" (2 Peter 3:11).

Islam, Israel, and Christianity

Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world, mainly through a high birth rate. This table, prepared by The Canadian Society of Muslims, shows that the Muslim proportion of world population is projected to increase to 30% by 2025 making it the religion with the largest number of adherents; the Christian percentage decreases to 25% by 2025.

	Christian	Muslim
1900 world population	26.9%	12.4%
1980 world population	30.0%	16.5%
2000 world population	29.9%	19.2%
2025 world population†	25.0%	30.0%

†projected

While many followers of Mohammedanism believe in peaceful coexistence with their non-Islam neighbors, many fundamentalist Muslims do not. They believe it is their religious duty to convert the world to their religion, either by persuasion or by the sword. Their militancy is further heightened by hostility toward Israel, which they see as encroaching on their territory, both by the creation of the Jewish state and even more by their perception of Israelis occupying Palestinian land as a result of the 1967 and 1973 wars.

Anger toward Israel has created animosity toward those who support Israel, particularly the United States. Lacking the political and military might to reclaim Israeli land or, as many of them desire, drive Israel into the sea, they have resorted to guerilla and terrorist tactics. These have included the use of suicide bombers who have claimed hundreds of Israeli lives and provoked retaliatory strikes that have taken even more Palestinian lives.

The net effect has been to move the hands of the "doomsday clock" ever nearer to the fateful midnight hour. Mankind's confidence in world peace and stability is further eroded.

Most Christians have feelings of sympathy with Israel, recognizing that they have a rich heritage as God's chosen people. The Bible, too, honors that people with not only historic recognition in Old Testament times, but with a prophetic inheritance. Prophecies predict a future role of Israel in the kingdom for which all Christians pray: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

The promise God made to Abraham to bless his seed is sure of fulfillment. The principle that "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3) is equally guaranteed.

Israel has a promised land (Genesis 15:18-21) which they as yet only partially occupy. But before they possess all this territory the Scriptures indicate they will need to go through one more war (described in Ezekiel 38 and 39). Their opponents are listed in Ezekiel 38:3-8 and comprise mostly Mohammedan nations. Therefore it is not surprising that strong hostility now exists on the part of the Islamic countries against Israel. This indicates a nearness of this final battle before Messiah's kingdom with its better days can be established.

The Source of Confidence

"Man's extremity is God's opportunity." The lack of confidence in all phases of organized society is understandable and well founded. Christians share this lack of confidence in the ability of man to find solutions to all the complex problems of today's world. But the Christian has unbounded confidence that these same events portend the final transition from this "present evil world" (Galatians 1:4) to the "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13).

Violence and wrath may well be the hallmarks of our day, but we are assured that "surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain" (Psalm 76:10). With eager anticipation and full confidence in God we await that kingdom.

We've been watching, we've been waiting,
For the bright, prophetic day;
When the shadows, weary shadows,
From the world shall roll away.

We are waking, for 'tis morning,
And the beautiful day is dawning;
We are happy, for 'tis morning;
See! the shadows flee away.
Lo! he comes! see the King draw near!
Zion, shout! the Lord is here.

Poems and Short Features

The Word of God

Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
True wisdom its pages unfold;
And though we may read them a thousand times o'er,
They never, no never, grow old!

Each line hath a pleasure, each promise a pearl,
That all if they will may secure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away,
God's Word shall forever endure.

Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
The lamp that our Father above
So kindly hath lighted to teach us the way
That leads to the arms of His love!

Its warnings, its counsels, are faithful and just;
Its judgments are perfect and pure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away,
God's Word shall forever endure.

Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
Our only salvation is there;
It carries conviction down deep in the heart,
And shows us ourselves as we are.

It tells of a Savior, and points to the cross,
Where pardon we now may secure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away
God's Word shall forever endure.

-- *Poems of the Way*

The Tools of the Master Builder

I watched him in awe as I stood by him there,
This builder that worked with such skill --
As I saw him pick up with most infinite care
Each tool that he wished at his will.

They were many and varied, but each in its place.
Though some were strange looking and queer.
There were hammers and saws, chisels and brace,
Tools of steel looking cold and severe.

But O what a change when the great builder chose
Just the tool for the time and the place,
For under his hand from the earth there arose
A building of beauty and grace.

What a lesson, I thought, for each child of the Lord
Of submission to God's holy will,
He's our great "Master-Builder" who reveals through his Word
How he's building his temple with skill.

We are the tools that he chooses to use,
Not too few or too many are there,
So when he picks you for a task, don't refuse,
In that temple you too have a share.

The great Master-Builder has need for each one,
Perhaps you're the tool he doth seek.
Let us rest in his hand 'til the work is all done,
And his temple is grandly complete.

-- Alice Ripper, Poems of the Way

This Wonderful Period

There never was such a wonderful period! We never before knew so much or could do so much. We never experienced an age of equal comfort. No part of yesterday was as glorious as this hour. The hundred years behind us are jammed and crammed with achievements that out-balance the sum total of progress since the signing of the Magna Charta. The average mechanic enjoys luxuries that Midas, with all his wealth, could not command. The college freshman has more real information in his little finger than the erudition of the foremost scholar of the Renaissance. We have done more to put existence on a sane, logical and definite basis than the sum total of our ancestors.

A mere hundred years ago even the scientist thought that the atmosphere was simply space -- that gas was only a smell. The first microbe hadn't disclosed his identity. Metchnikoff's announcement of battling hosts in every drop of human blood would have earned him a padded cell. The best illumination George Washington could secure came from tallow dips, lighted by striking a spark from flint and steel.

Every piece of fabric was woven by hand. The only horse-power was four-legged and wore a tail. The steamboat was still building on the ways of Fulton's brain, and the wheels of the steam engine had only moved in Stephenson's head. It took Benjamin Franklin two weeks to send a letter from Boston and get a reply from Baltimore. Abraham Lincoln's angular frame never reposed in a Pullman berth. Garfield called a 20-day "liner" an "ocean greyhound."

"Impossibility" is now an old-fashioned word with a definition, but not a meaning. Almost every dream of the past is a reality today. The magic cities and the fairy kingdoms of your grandmother aren't half so wonderful as the world in which you live.

-- *The Cincinnati Post*, quoted in *Reprints*, p. 5153, January 1, 1913

Tell Me About the Master

*Tell me about the Master!
I am weary and worn tonight;
The day lies behind me in shadow,
And only the evening is light!
Light with a radiant glory
That lingers about the west.
My poor heart is weary, aweary,
And longs, like a child, for rest.*

*Tell me about the Master!
Of the hills He in loneliness trod,
When the tears and blood of His anguish,
Dropped down on Judea's sod.
For to me life's seventy mile-stones
But a sorrowful journey mark;
Rough lies the hill country before me,
The mountains behind me are dark.*

*Tell me about the Master!
Of the wrongs He freely forgave;
Of His love and tender compassion,
Of His love that is mighty to save;
For my heart is aweary, aweary,
Of the woes and temptations of life,
Of the error that stalks in the noonday,
Of falsehood and malice and strife.*

*Yet I know that whatever of sorrow
Or pain or temptation befall,
The infinite Master hath suffered,
And knoweth and pitieth all.
So tell me the sweet old story,
That falls on each wound like a balm,
And my heart that is bruised and broken
Shall grow patient and strong and calm.*

-- Poems of the Way

News and Views

PBI News

Date of Annual PBI Meeting

The annual meeting of PBI Members and Directors will be held on Friday, July 18, at the University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown, Pennsylvania. The General Convention of Bible Students will begin on Saturday, July 19, at the same location and end the evening of July 24. Those who are interested in the Pastoral Bible Institute, whether members or not, are encouraged to attend this meeting. Contact the Institute's secretary for details concerning accommodations.

New Booklet

We are pleased to announce a small book *What Everyone Should Know About Being Saved*, produced by our Bible Student friends in Oakland County [Michigan]. It contains a thorough presentation of this important doctrine and concludes that just saying the right words is not enough. Order it by filling out the form on the back of the insert found in each issue of this magazine sent to subscribers. Alternatively the text may be downloaded from our web site at www.heraldmag.org. Click on "Bookstore." It is the last title in the list.

World News

Religious

Touched off by the plan to have the Miss World contest in Nigeria, more than 200 people were killed in riots. In the last three years, more than 10,000 lives have been lost in conflicts there between Christians and Muslims. Fundamental shifts are taking place in Nigeria, the fifth largest supplier of oil to the U.S. and home to Africa's largest population. Nigeria is almost evenly split between Muslims, mostly in the North, and non-Muslims. After one of the most brutal and corrupt military regimes in Nigerian history came to an end in 1999, the country elected Olusegun Obasanjo president. His election was seen as a new era in Nigeria. However, he has been unable to manage the growing tensions within the country. Once awash in oil earnings, corruption has robbed the country blind. Nigerian per capita GNP has declined from \$750 in 1982 to less than \$250 today. Foreign debt stands at \$30 billion. State governors in the North have been introducing Islam sharia criminal law. The historic fault line between Islam and Christianity has shifted and become more fluid, more dangerous. American evangelical organizations who funnel money to Nigerian Christian radio stations are seen as contributing to what is one of the most explosive factors in religious tension -- proselytization.

-- Wall Street Journal, 11/27/2002

Cardinal Bernard F. Law, whose credibility and stewardship as archbishop of Boston were irrevocably damaged by how he handled the clergy sex abuse crisis, became the highest-ranking American Catholic leader to lose his job because of scandal. Now that the scandal has resulted in the downfall of the nation's senior prelate, the American bishops recognize that the crisis in the church may only grow as laypeople and priests, lawyers and judges, see the power they can have. Church experts say they cannot recall another instance in which a bishop resigned after a virtual revolt from his parishioners and his priests. Five other bishops, former associates of Cardinal Law who once worked in Boston and were eventually promoted, have now been subpoenaed to testify by a grand jury in Massachusetts. "I think we're seeing just the beginning of serious interest by the government in criminal investigations," said Seth Taube, a lawyer who has defended the church in the abuse claims. Grand juries are investigating the church in at least nine states.

-- New York Times, 12/15/2002

Tighter security around churches in Pakistan has failed to prevent a fatal attack at a Christmas Day service. Three worshippers were killed and up to eight more injured when masked men threw hand grenades into a Presbyterian Church in a village in Pakistan's central Punjab province. A Pakistan Interior ministry spokesman called it an act of terrorism. News of the attack came despite greater efforts to protect Christians in Pakistan. This year around 50 people have been killed in attacks on western, or Christian targets in Pakistan.

-- ABC Radio Australia News, 12/26/2002

Approximately 142,000 Christians live in Israel, or 2.1 percent of the general population, the Central Bureau of Statistics announced. Approximately 81% are Christian Arabs. The rest immigrated to Israel under the Law of Return. A few thousand arrived during the waves of Aliyah in the Seventies and Eighties from Romania and Poland. Most arrived in the wave of Aliyah in the Nineties from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia.

-- Jerusalem Post, 12/25/2002

The Book of Mormon, made public by Joseph Smith in 1830, is taken literally by the faithful. It teaches, among other things, that many American Indians are descendants of ancient Israelites who came to this continent 600 years before Christ -- a time period within the reach of modern archeology and genetics. Anthropologist Thomas W. Murphy set out to test that key principle of his Mormon faith with the latest technology. He wondered: Would DNA analysis show that many American Indians are descended from ancient Israelites? His finding: negative. The result: excommunication -- if a church disciplinary panel finds him guilty of apostasy. The church hierarchy has repeatedly warred with historians, anthropologists and others who have questioned its doctrines. Murphy appears to be the first member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to face expulsion for genetic research.

-- Los Angeles Times, 12/8/2002

[In fact the disciplinary hearing was indefinitely postponed. The next day a church spokesman said it was "best not to proceed at this time" against Thomas Murphy.]

Social

Thieves are stealing water from rivers and public waterways and selling the precious liquid to hard-up Australian farmers struggling against one of the worst droughts in a century. Queensland state Natural Resources Minister Stephen Robertson said his department was investigating 146 complaints and would prosecute anybody found to be taking more water than they are allowed to or anyone profiting from the hardship of farmers. The farmlands of this vast food exporting nation have been devastated by a severe drought that has halved the winter wheat crop since it took root in March and now threatens to prevent planting of the summer sorghum crop. Exacerbated by a return of the periodic El Niño weather event, which every few years brings reduced rainfall to eastern Australia and downpours to western South America, weather forecasters say the drought is likely to last through into 2003.

-- Reuters, 11/26/2002

Ice in the Arctic Ocean and on Greenland's massive icecap shrank to record levels this summer, providing more evidence that global warming is causing unprecedented environmental change that is alarming seasoned climate watchers. The dramatic loss of ice in the Arctic Ocean and Greenland, coupled with other new work showing the rise of trees and shrubs across once-barren Arctic tundra lands, "presents a compelling case that something is changing very rapidly over a wide area," said Larry Hinzman, an expert in Arctic change at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks.

-- Los Angeles Times, 12/8/2002

Civil

The Yongbyon Nuclear Center, the focus of an escalating confrontation between North Korea and the United States, is one of the most guarded places in one of the world's most isolated countries. North Korea says the complex was built to generate badly needed electricity. U.S. officials say the site is a nuclear weapons facility with a peaceful cover, and a tool of nuclear blackmail. Nuclear activity began at Yongbyon in 1965 when the former Soviet Union helped build a tiny research reactor there. Russian and U.S. satellite photographs show the site since has grown steadily into a 10-square mile complex. The site now includes a 5-megawatt reactor and an unfinished 50-megawatt reactor, facilities for fuel manufacture and waste storage, and a radio-chemical laboratory that can reprocess spent fuel rods to extract plutonium, a material used to build bombs. North Korea says it will restart the 192-yard-long laboratory to store spent fuel rods from reactors. It plans to resume construction on the unfinished 50-megawatt reactor west of Yongbyon.

-- Associated Press, 12/30/2002

Ethiopia faces a famine two to three times as bad as the food shortages of the 1980s, which prompted an international relief effort, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi said. Six million people already need food aid and the number may rise to 15 million early next year if international donors don't come to the country's assistance, said Meles, speaking on BBC Radio. "It's like going through recurring nightmares. In the disaster we had in 1984-85, the number of people involved was roughly a third to half the people involved now. The Ethiopian government is already barely able to keep its people alive, let alone supply adequate food, and can't afford to buy extra stocks," Meles said. "There is no possibility for us to deal with this problem. Even if we had the food available in the domestic market, the government doesn't have the money to buy surplus food for distribution."

-- Bloomberg News, 11/11/2002

Lawlessness has plagued Indonesia since 1998 when the military dictatorship of President Suharto collapsed. Despite Indonesians' desire for democracy, disorder has reigned. The country of 231 million people has suffered from chronic corruption, feeble leadership, and ineffective law enforcement. The military finances most of its activities through a business empire that operates inside and outside the law. Its enterprises include hotels, oil refineries, and insurance. They also include drug dealing, gambling, prostitution and illegal logging. The police, independent of the military only in recent years, are widely perceived to be as corrupt as the army. In the courts, justice is for sale. ... Indonesia has the world's highest Muslim population.

-- Los Angeles Times, 12/10/2002

Financial

Ronald Noble, the American who heads Interpol, recently said that al-Qaida is unscathed by the U.S.-led war on terror's finances. Al-Qaida gets between \$20 million and \$50 million a year, according to a June 2002 study by University of Linz professor Friedrich Schneider. His study outlines sources of terror money for 25 groups, including al-Qaida: Transporting drugs, 30-35%; donations from governments, wealthy individuals or religious groups, 25-30%; crime, 10-15%; illegal diamond trading, 10-15%, miscellaneous, 5-25%. Editor of the Malaysia-based World Money Laundering Report, Nigel Morris-Cotterill, says, "Terrorists can do business in anything with tradable value. The U.S. has not accepted that a boatload of light bulbs is money. If they're exchanged for weapons, the arms merchant can sell them." In August 2002, a U.N. panel said al-Qaida is flush with money from charities and businesses. Rachel Ehrenfeld of the Center for the Study of Corruption and the Rule of Law found that "Saudi Arabia is a major source of terror funding. The Saudis have been using the money we pay for their oil to fund international terrorism."

-- Investors' Business Daily, 11/26/2002

Major U.S. stock indexes fell in 2002, their third straight calendar year decline. The last time the market dropped for three consecutive years was 1939-41, during the early years of World War II. The market fell four straight years in 1929-32 at the start of the Great Depression.

-- Los Angeles Times, 1/1/2003

As the world economy struggles to exit a downturn, the prospect of a sustained rise in oil prices is coming at the worst possible time for some of the least resilient regions, threatening to crimp already fragile growth. Fears of military conflict in Iraq and a waning supply of oil to the United States from Venezuela have pushed the price of a barrel of crude to around \$30 -- up more than 40 percent from a year ago. Barring an unforeseen and peaceful resolution of the standoff over Iraq, most analysts expect prices to remain above the range of \$22 to \$28 a barrel favored by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries for at least the next few months. In Asia, higher oil prices would sting Japan, which imports all of its oil, at a time when policymakers are struggling to dig the economy out from a long recession and to eliminate a mountain of bad debt at the nation's banks.

-- International Herald Tribune, 1/3/2003

Israel

2,792 People killed in the 9/11/2001 World Trade Center attacks.

Over 400 Israelis who died in terrorist attacks in 2002.

-- TIME, 12/31/2002

Palestinian TV is broadcasting a series of documentaries with one single objective: to disprove the "myth" that any Jewish Temple ever stood in Jerusalem, and to present any historical reference to that claim as an act of deception. The message is that the Jews have no business in the Holy City. The inevitable conclusion is that significant numbers, though by no means all, of the young generation of Arab artists, a stratum that usually represents liberal trends and openness, have volunteered their services to sharpen and stylize the message; that up until now has been promoted by fundamentalist movements such as Hamas. The essence of the message is that there is no possibility of making peace with the Jews -- not because of any political argument or clash over territory, but because that nation is *a priori* unfit to be counted among the human race. The Jewish religion is one big, ongoing lie, and Jewish history is the fruit of a consistent distortion of the past. Furthermore, the Jewish people present a future threat to the rest of the world. Where is this campaign leading? It is a far-reaching, dangerous rationale laying the ground for the justification of a mass exile of Jews from Israel -- "ethnic cleansing" in contemporary terms.

-- The Jerusalem Report, 12/16/2002

Suicide bombing is more than a particularly vicious method of killing. Suicide bombing is a best effort to produce a Final Solution. The suicide bombers of September 11, emulating their Nazi role models, even created a makeshift oven to incinerate 3,000 people. If they could have killed 100,000 or 1 million, they would have done so gladly. The same is true of all suicide bombers, particularly those who daily attack Israelis. Suicide bombers kill and maim dozens at a time, with but one regret: that their victims are so few. What they truly strive to bring about is a Holocaust. They come as close to that end as their means will allow.

-- Editorial by Steven Zak,
Washington Times, 12/04/2002

Evidence is growing that a British boycott of Israeli academics is gathering pace. British academics have delivered a series of snubs to their Israeli counterparts since the idea of a boycott first gained ground in the spring. In interviews with the Guardian, British and Israeli academics listed various incidents in which visits, research projects and publication of articles have been blocked. Colin Blakemore, an Oxford University professor of physiology, who supports a boycott, said: "I do not know of any British academic who has been to a conference in Israel in the last six months." The issue of a boycott was highlighted in the spring when two British academics, Steven and Hilary Rose, had a letter published in the Guardian supporting the idea. It was signed by 123 other academics.

-- The Guardian, 12/12/2002

The Simon Wiesenthal Center has been invited to jointly sponsor an international conference on the recent upsurge of anti-Semitism. The conference will be held in May at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. "Not since the end of the Second World War has there been such a campaign of vilification directed against Israel and her supporters worldwide," said Rabbi Marvin Hier, Dean of the Center.

-- Arutz 7, 12/22/2002

New archaeological findings from the Bar Kokhba period, over 1,850 years ago, were discovered in a cave in the Ein Gedi Nature Preserve just west of the Dead Sea. Two documents written on papyrus, coins, and even remnants of fruits were among the artifacts found in hard-to-reach caves atop mountain cliffs -- the destination of choice for many Jewish refugees from the Romans at the time. The documents are now in the Israel Museum, where they must be carefully opened and analyzed. Dr. Tzvika Tzuk, Chief Archaeologist of the Nature and Park Authority, said that the caves served as refuge for the fleeing Jews, "as indicated by what we found there, especially the coins on which we found the name Shimon, who was the leader of the rebellion at the time."

-- Arutz 7, 11/20/2002

The Israeli government is weighing whether to allow a team of Jordanian engineers to repair a worrisome bulge along the southern wall of Jerusalem's Temple Mount. The Jordanians made a series of recommendations in November following their inspection of the bulge. The Jordanian team recommends dismantling some 1,500 square feet of wall at the center of the bulge, reinforcing the area with new building materials, and then recovering the area with stone. The decision to allow the inspection ended a year-long standoff between Israel, which has nominal control over the Temple Mount, and the Waqf, the Muslim religious trust that has *de facto* control over the Temple Mount esplanade, home of the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa mosque. Neither party would allow the other to make needed repairs to the bulge for fear of seeming to relinquish control over the Mount. Jordan, which ruled the Old City of Jerusalem until the war of 1967, was a compromise. Just as Israel and the Waqf could not agree on who should repair the bulge, neither did they agree on the cause of the bulge. The Waqf blamed Israeli excavations outside the southern wall carried out in the decades after the 1967 war. A more likely cause, however, as many Israeli archaeologists have claimed, is the extensive construction work undertaken by the Waqf in recent years in the southeast quadrant of the Temple Mount in connection with a large-scale expansion of an underground mosque in the area.

-- Biblical Archaeology Review, January/February 2003