

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

*July / August, 2004 No. 4*

July/August 2004

## The Herald Of Christ's Kingdom



### The Church in Symbol

Old Testament Portrayals • Song of Solomon • Psalm 45

New Testament Portrayals • Bride of Christ

Living Stones • Sheep

# In the Beginning

## The Church in Symbol

The word “church” appears seventy-six times in the New Testament and never in the Old (King James Bible). The word is translated from the Greek *ekklesia* (Strong’s #1577) and means “a calling out, i.e. (concretely) a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation (Jewish synagogue, or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both).”

Christians have long appreciated the Old Testament for its prophetic and poetic anticipation of Jesus Christ, the cornerstone of God’s great plan of redemption for all mankind. But less well understood are the many Old Testament references to faithful followers of Jesus who would constitute his “body members,” the “church [*ekklesia*] of the firstborn, which are written in heaven” (Hebrews 12:23).

We begin with *Old Testament Portrayals of the Church*. Many Old Testament symbols which describe the church could not be understood until Jesus Christ made clear how the Father’s plan for blessing all mankind would be implemented. Of special interest in the Old Testament is *The Song of Solomon* discussed in an article of the same name. This great poetic “song” speaks of the love between the church and her Lord, as does the wonderfully prophetic Psalm 45, discussed in verse-by-verse detail in *Bride and Bridegroom*.

Although the Old Testament symbols are veiled in a kind of mystery, such is not the case with the symbols found in the New Testament. *New Testament Portrayals of the Church* examines the symbols of jewels, wheat, virgins, vine and branches, and others. *The Bride of Christ* shows how no picture except marriage captures the love and joy that exist between Jesus Christ and his church.

*Living Stones* is a symbol suggested by the apostle Peter. Believers as “living stones” become a part of God’s great temple. We end with *The Psychology of Sheep*. Sheep have a number of unique characteristics that makes a flock ideally suited as a symbol of the church.

The privilege of becoming a part of the church of the firstborn is being offered only during this Christian or Gospel age. Soon the church will be complete and the blessing of the world of mankind will begin, starting with the resurrection of the dead. May we be accounted faithful to our covenant of sacrifice so that we will eventually reign with Christ (2 Timothy 2:12).

## Old Testament Portrayals of the Church

*The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints ... Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

—Colossians 1:26,27

Homer Montague

Shortly after the transgression in Eden by the first pair, a hint of future retribution against the serpent (Satan) was given for instigating this disobedience. “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15).

Throughout past ages the identity of mankind’s deliverer was unknown, though holy men of old spoke about a coming period of restitution when all that was lost by the human family in Eden would be restored (Acts 3:19-21). Today Christians generally acknowledge Jesus as the Savior of mankind though they may not fully understand the philosophy of atonement. Even less well comprehended is that since Pentecost, God has been selecting the church as a bride for his son, who in a soon-to-be-established kingdom will be intimately associated with Christ Jesus in reconciling humanity back to the heavenly Father.

There are many Old Testament examples depicting the church. Most are closely connected with, yet appropriately subordinate to, a readily identifiable picture of Christ.

### The Lord’s Goat

The Lord’s goat for a sin offering (Leviticus 16:7-9,15) represents the church in the flesh just as the bullock of the sin offering (Leviticus 16:3,6,11) pictures the man Christ Jesus at his first advent. At age thirty he delighted to do the heavenly Father’s will by offering himself in sacrifice on behalf of humanity, recognizing those slain animals in ancient Israel’s tabernacle services were merely of a typical nature and could never take away sin (Psalm 40:6,7). This is further affirmed in the New Testament: “But Christ ... neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Hebrews 9:11,12).

The church is also connected with the tabernacle picture and identified as a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9) and as members of the antitypical high priest’s body (1 Corinthians 12:12). A specific connection between Christ and the members of the church in their sacrificial work is furnished by the apostle: “For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let **us** go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach” (Hebrews 13:11-13). The beasts whose bodies were burned without the camp as offerings for sin typify Jesus who suffered without the gate (verse 12) and “us,” the church, who in like manner are exhorted to go forth unto Jesus without the camp, bearing his reproach.

These words are connected directly with the Leviticus 16 sacrifices of the bullock and the Lord's goat on the day of atonement. No sacrifices other than the sin offerings were burned outside the camp, nor was the blood of any other sacrifice sprinkled in the Most Holy as atonement for sin.

The Lord's goat was treated in the same manner as the bullock on the day of atonement: "Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat" (Leviticus 16:15).

Is it correct to say the Lord's goat typifies the church since its members are imperfect and could have nothing worthy of acceptance to offer? Yes, it is, because the merit is in the perfect sacrifice of the bullock (Jesus) and through the imputation of that merit the church receives the benefit of Christ's blood, which merely passes through the church and becomes available for Adam and the human race at the end of the antitypical atonement day (the end of this Gospel age). It is for this reason we read, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:1,2).

The Lord's goat was taken from the congregation of Israel (Leviticus 16:5) showing how the church is called from out of the world. It was Aaron, however, who came into the tabernacle's court with the bullock for a sin offering (Leviticus 16:3), thus attesting that Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners (Hebrews 7:26).

The sacrifice of the bullock was for Aaron and his house (Leviticus 16:6), picturing the members of Christ's body and the household of faith, the great multitude who will be a spiritual class even though not described as a part of Christ's body. The secondary sacrifice of the Lord's goat was for the people (Leviticus 16:15), which pictures the world of mankind. When Christ, the antitypical high priest, completes his offering of the symbolic Lord's goat, the church will be united in glory with him, and the blessings for all the families of the earth will commence.

### **The Golden Candlestick**

The construction of the golden candlestick within the holy of the tabernacle is described in these words: "He made the candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work made he the candlestick; his shaft, and his branch, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, were of the same: and six branches going out of the sides thereof; ... three bowls made after the fashion of almonds in one branch, a knop and a flower; and three bowls ... in another branch ... all of it was one beaten work of pure gold" (Exodus 37:17-22).

The union between Christ and the church is shown by the six branches carved out of the sides of the center shaft. That center shaft represents the Lord and reminds us of a similar relationship taught by Jesus: "I am the vine, ye are the branches:

he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). Just as the branches separated from the vine could have no standing, in the golden candlestick the six branches must be attached to the center shaft to have any standing.

The church is represented in the branches of the candlestick, especially lovely in workmanship with a fruit and flower alternating with the top part of each branch being shaped like an almond. This teaches that the character of the church is both beautiful and fruitful. “A peculiarity about the almond tree is that fruit-buds appear before the leaves. So with the ‘Royal Priesthood,’ they sacrifice or begin to bring forth fruit before the leaves of profession are seen.”—*Tabernacle Shadows*, p. 122.

The light from the golden candlestick depended upon olive oil representing the holy spirit of enlightenment which enables the Lord’s people to understand the deep things of God. Each day the high priest trimmed the wicks and replenished the oil in the lamps. How solicitous the Lord is toward the members of the church as light bearers, to insure they receive the necessary experiences to trim away the dross of their humanity as they shine forth in this world of comparative darkness.

### **Gideon’s Army**

Gideon’s band of three hundred that fought against the Midianites, using only a trumpet and a torch within a pitcher, pictures the church under the leadership of the antitypical Gideon, the glorified Christ and captain of our salvation (see Judges 7:1-8).

Spiritual new creatures must battle fleshly appetites, weaknesses, ambitions, and oppositions pictured by the Midianites. There were thirty-two thousand who responded to Gideon’s invitation to join him in battle, a number which seems to symbolize those of the Christian world as a whole who are exhorted to count the cost to determine their willingness to consecrate their lives to God (Luke 14:28). Of those, twenty-two thousand were fearful and returned home. The ten thousand remaining represented the spirit begotten who devote themselves to the heavenly Father’s service during this age.

Gideon applied a test to the ten thousand, directing them to drink water from a brook. Three hundred stooped and lapped from their hands in a state of vigilance; the remainder bowed down upon their knees to drink. This suggests the three hundred (the little flock) are circumspect as they imbibe the truth whereas the rest, symbolizing the great company, were not selected for duty. Their partaking of the truth is for personal satisfaction, instead of imbibing its spirit by serving others and combating sin along with its fleshly inclinations.

The members of Gideon’s band had a trumpet, a pitcher, and a torch or lamp placed within that pitcher. The church uses a “trumpet” to proclaim the word of truth, the pitcher represents the earthen vessels of the flesh which are to be broken in the Lord’s service (2 Corinthians 4:7), and the lamps represent the light emanating from each new creature as a result of the holy spirit’s influence (Matthew 5:14-16).



An appreciation of the details and symbolisms concerning the victory by this band of three hundred over the enemy under Gideon's leadership should inspire all of the church to faithful service, especially with the knowledge that the promised deliverance draws nigh.

### **Caleb**

Caleb typifies the church just as Joshua symbolizes Jesus Christ. During Israel's wilderness wanderings, one man from each of the twelve tribes was chosen to spy out Canaan. After forty days in the promised land, ten of the scouts brought back an evil report indicating the dangers of attempting to defeat the Canaanites. Caleb and Joshua said the nation should be courageous and proceed in the strength of the Lord to conquer the land. Their report was rejected and God punished the adult Israelites for their lack of faith.

The antitypical spying out of the land may represent the investigation of present truth with its harmonious doctrines and the Bible's teachings, which demonstrate the magnificent character of God. Additionally illustrated were the wonderful provisions made to effect the ransom and restitution of humanity, as well as the revelation of the hidden mystery that the church, as a called-out class, is being developed now as part of The Christ and consists of 144,000 and one which will bless the world of mankind during Messiah's glorious reign.

In one sense, Canaan represents the earthly phase of the kingdom in which humanity will enter under the leadership of the antitypical Joshua (Jesus—see marginal reference for Hebrews 4:8), and learn to overcome all their weaknesses and imperfections as they walk up the highway of holiness.

Caleb at the age of eighty-five received a promised inheritance whereby he was able to claim Mount Hebron (Joshua 14:6-14). He was rewarded for certain actions, which picture behaviors the church should manifest to obtain its reward. Caleb was willing to proclaim the truth even though he was in the minority (Numbers 13:25-31). As peculiar people the church should let its light shine regardless of what others may do (1 Peter 2:9). Caleb waited upon the Lord (Numbers 14:28-34). Believers are to exercise patience and watch for God's leadings (James 1:4). Caleb had a goal in sight as he was seeking Mount Hebron (Joshua 14:12). The church also must know and pursue the objective it seeks (Romans 2:7). Caleb wholly followed the Lord (Joshua 14:8). The church is required to be faithful unto the end of its course (Revelation 2:10). The commendation that Caleb wholly followed the Lord could not be more superlative. All of the spirit begotten would do well to have such a statement serve as their epitaph.

### **Asenath**

Asenath, the wife of Joseph, was a symbol of the church just as Joseph typified Christ. Joseph was especially loved by Jacob and Jesus was the heavenly Father's beloved son (Genesis 37:3; Matthew 17:5). Both Joseph and Jesus were hated by their brethren

(Genesis 37:4,5; John 15:25). Both were imprisoned, Joseph literally and Jesus went into the prison-house of death (Genesis 39:20; 1 Peter 3:18). Both Joseph and Jesus were highly exalted to a position where all would bow to them in recognition of their supreme authority (Genesis 41:40-43; Philippians 2:9,10). Both Joseph and Jesus provide deliverance and salvation (Genesis 45:7; Acts 4:12).

Regarding Asenath we read: “Pharaoh gave to Joseph a wife, named Asenath (signifying “favor”), and she became Joseph’s associate in honor and dignity, and co-laborer and helpmate with him in his work of blessing Egypt, so Jehovah God proposes a bride for his exalted Son, our Lord, and she also will be a favorite. It has required all of this Gospel age for her betrothal and preparation for the marriage, and the time is now nigh at hand when she shall be brought near to the King, as the bride, the Lamb’s wife, adorned in the glorious linen robe of her Lord, fitly embroidered with the elements of character which he can approve.”—*Reprints*, p. 2888.

Few Scriptures relate to Asenath directly. It is important to realize her being used to picture the church relates to the fact that as it was God’s purpose to provide a bride for Christ, so Pharaoh desired to give Joseph a wife as part of his exaltation to be next to him in rank throughout all Egypt. Thus Asenath is given to Joseph after his suffering in prison just as the church was betrothed unto Christ at Pentecost, following his resurrection and being seated at the right hand of the Father.

Asenath is identified as the daughter of Potipherah (Genesis 41:45). It would appear she was of heathen origin, thus showing the church would be taken from Gentiles as well as from Jewry. She was chosen for Joseph during a time of plenty. The blessings of the high calling during this age are abundant. The Lord’s people have been well-fed from God’s word and strengthened by the exceeding great and precious promises that are available to help them make their calling and election sure.

Asenath’s marriage and exaltation preceded the seven years of famine in which Jacob and his sons and all the Egyptians had to acknowledge Joseph as the one who would provide food for their sustenance. In similar fashion, the church will be united with her Lord as a part of The Christ who will nurture the nation of Israel, represented in Joseph’s brethren and the world of mankind as symbolized by the Egyptians. What a blessed privilege awaits the antitypical Asenath, the church in glory.

## **Rebekah**

Rebekah is one of the most familiar symbols of the church recorded in Scripture. Isaac, as Rebekah’s husband, fulfils the typical picture as the means by which the Abrahamic promise will result in the blessing of all the families of the earth (Genesis 22:16-18). Antitypically this blessing will come through Christ and the church for we read, “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:16,27,29).

In Genesis 24 Abraham was a type of the heavenly Father who sent Eliezer, picturing the holy spirit, to find a bride, symbolized by Rebekah, for his son Isaac, representing Jesus. Unlike Asenath, the wife of Joseph, Rebekah was related to Abraham. This demonstrates that originally God did not seek the church from among the heathen but solely from the nation of Israel (Amos 3:2).

Eliezer's ten camels may represent God's word or certain basic doctrines taught in Scripture. Eliezer found Rebekah at the well. After she gave water to the camels, he gave her golden bracelets and earrings, illustrative of the blessings received by those who respond to the holy spirit. Her labors in providing the needed water indicate the qualities that should be manifest among those who would be among the bride class: the spirit of service and of sacrifice.

Eliezer went to Rebekah's home and explained his mission to her family; Rebekah was prompt in acknowledging that she would go with him. This illustrates how the church responds to the call to joint-heirship with Christ. We leave all behind, walking by faith, not knowing where the holy spirit will lead. Rebekah's journey with Eliezer must have been long and arduous over different types of terrain and weather conditions. Similarly, the church experiences difficulties of various kinds along the narrow way but we are reminded of the Scriptural encouragement, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

Rebekah was enthusiastic when she saw Isaac near the end of her journey (Genesis 24:64,65). This should be our attitude toward our present bridegroom. Do we acknowledge who Jesus is and how blessed it is to be in subjection to him? That is at least part of what is meant by Rebekah covering herself as she approached him. It was an act of submission to Isaac, and in our own lives we should submit to what the master desires of us. Proof of such a submissive attitude would be shown in our seriously striving to do all the things the Scriptures indicate would be pleasing to God and therefore pleasing to the bridegroom.

From Genesis to Revelation the Scriptures contain abundant testimony concerning God's purpose in selecting a called-out class to become the bride of Christ and a part of the divine family. May we who have responded to this gracious invitation be faithful in running with patience the race set before us that we may attain this glorious reward.



# The Song of Solomon

Frank Shallieu

Many have questioned the authenticity of the Song of Solomon in the Old Testament. They are troubled with the nature of the book, and to a certain extent, we can sympathize with the problem. However, when this book is studied from a purely **spiritual** standpoint, the lessons are very meaningful. In fact, the lessons are so beautiful and so precious that we can see why Jesus, in the New Testament, inferentially gave his stamp of approval to this book (see Matthew 25:1-13).

The first verse—“**The** Song of songs, which is Solomon’s”—signifies that this particular song is the most precious one in the entire Bible. Because it is highly symbolic and allegorical, it is difficult to understand in its fullest sense—in the sense of the power it can have in our lives—except by a mature Christian.

The words continue: “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.” Here the bride class, the Rebekah class, is enjoining Jesus as her master, desiring some response on his part. Having dedicated her life to follow him, she wants constant, repetitive assurances of his grace and affection on her behalf. And so the church is saying, “Kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth.” The “mouth” pictures the utterances of Jesus. Of course we do not hear his audible voice or see him personally in vision. The assurances come from God’s word, the **Bible**. The master’s teachings are what attracts us and encourages us to follow him in all the paths of life.

*For thy love is better than wine.—Song 1:2b*

Many people are intoxicated with the pleasures of this life, and to them the pursuit of happiness is their chief goal. But for those who have tasted of the word of God and realized its value, the pleasures of this life are foolishness. Such individuals are attracted to the gospel message of Christ which far exceeds the transitory intoxicating pleasures of this life.

*Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth.—  
Song 1:3a*

When we meditate upon the virtues of Jesus’ character, the power of his doctrine in our lives, and his lessons that help us make straight paths for our crooked feet and mend our difficulties in life, the meditations are like the words of a hymn: “How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer’s ear! It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fear. It makes the wounded spirit whole and calms the troubled breast; ’tis manna to the hungry soul, and to the weary, rest.”

As we hear others speak about Jesus and the word, we find we have an affinity and an attraction to them. We want to commune and fellowship together. What the Book of Life tells about the master brings forth many sweet remembrances of lessons we have already

learned while sitting at his feet. The fragrance of his influence calls to mind many precious truths and experiences we have had at his hand.

***Therefore do the virgins love thee.—Song 1:3b***

Two classes of virgins are described in the Song of Solomon. Matthew 25:1-13 categorizes them as the wise virgins and the foolish virgins. Of course the bride class, the wise virgins, are the ones who learn their lessons well and have the special love for Jesus that is described so beautifully in the Song of Solomon.

***I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.—Song 1:5***

The bride class describe themselves as “black, but comely.” Humble Christians realize the pit whence they were dug, the rock whence they were hewn. The realization that they have been called out of the mire of sin, out of darkness, into the marvelous light of Jesus Christ keeps them humble and meek (1 Peter 2:9). They were originally attracted by Jesus’ invitation: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest [from your weariness]. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart” (Matthew 11:28,29). And now, being of a similar disposition—being meek and lowly in heart—they continue to be attracted to Christ.

***Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me.—Song 1:6a***

Not only are true Christians “black” in connection with their origin on this sin-benighted earth, but also they are figuratively darkened by laboring in the sun in the vineyard. For the nearly two thousand years of this Christian or Gospel age, many have worked feverishly and have dedicated their lives in Christian service to a particular work. Sometimes, after long years of service, they realize they have not spent enough time in the development of their own characters and lives. In being so concerned with the characters and lives of others, they have been a little careless about their own inspection. And so here in the Song of Solomon, those of the true bride class come to the realization in the present life that they have to take time to be holy and not just spend time preaching to others.

***My mother’s children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.—Song 1:6b***

In their humility, many Christians are so pliable in the master’s hand that they are frequently given the hardest work to do as laborers in the vineyard and out in the field. But the time comes when some desire a more personal devotion to Christ—not merely to do great works in his name but also to feel the pulse and the warmth of his love. Realizing they have spent too much time in outward works, they want to have an inner, more secret fellowship and relationship with the master. In the next verse, the bride class inquire where they may get this particular fellowship.

*Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?—Song 1:7*

Many will step to the forefront and take honor and glory in connection with Christian service, whereas the true laborer, the humble Christian, is pushed into the background and onto the side path. In the present life, the blessings and favors of fellowship with other Christians seem to go mostly to the more nominal class, while devoted Christians, those who love the master most deeply, feel cut off from fellowship. Being on the bypath, as it were, they long for a deeper, closer union with Christ. The master loves this class and knows they need assurance. Thus he instructs them:

*If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.—Song 1:8*

To personally develop a Christ-like character, it is necessary to study and observe the working of the holy spirit in the lives of those we know to be true Christians. Of course the safest guide is the example of Jesus himself. The footsteps he trod, as well as the example of the apostles and other faithful saints of the past, should be studied. As we look to others for help and encouragement, we observe their walk in life. There is one caution, however: we should follow others **only in proportion as they follow the teachings of the Lord.**

Sometimes it is necessary to take our family and young ones to a condition where they will be developed favorably in the service of the Lord; that is, we should be careful not to be attracted by the pleasures of life and the remuneration of labor in secular activities. As far as possible, we should place ourselves and our families in a condition of wholesomeness, and our children should be put in a position where they will be blessed by following God's instructions as laid out in his word.

*While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.—Song 1:12*

The "king" represents Jesus. In fellowshiping with him, in serving him, and in hearing him speak to others as well as to us, we are reminded of Spikenard Mary, who broke the costly box of ointment on the master's head and feet at great personal cost (Mark 14:3; John 12:3). Likewise Christians seek opportunities of sacrifice on behalf of the master to show the inner devotion of their lives and consecration to him.

The third chapter of the Song of Solomon tells how the bride class responds during the present Gospel age. We are given an insight into the dispensational experience of the church.

***By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. —Song 3:1***

The bride class is pictured as resting on a bed of faith during the Gospel age nighttime of sin. As those of this class rest, they are thinking about the master, desiring to be near him. Often the Christian finds discomfiture in the present life. An example is described by the prophet Isaiah: “The bed is shorter than ... a man can stretch himself on ... and the covering narrower than ... he can wrap himself in” (Isaiah 28:20). Spiritually speaking, the creedal or doctrinal bed can be likened to a crib that is too small for development. As a literal child grows, the crib becomes too short to stretch out in and too narrow and confining. From a spiritual standpoint, this discomforting condition can actually benefit a Christian **if it stirs him to action** with the realization of his need for further Christian development both in doctrine and in character.

***I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.—Song 3:2***

While the bride class, pictured as a woman, is thinking about the master as she rests on this doctrinal bed of faith, she becomes dissatisfied and voluntarily arises, saying these words. She is not satisfied to merely meditate on him, so she goes out into the world looking for some place, fellowship, or condition that will bring her into a closer relationship with her master. In so doing, she is frustrated in her purpose: “I sought him, but I found him not.” However, this situation does not discourage the true Christian, who persists, as the next verse tells us.

***The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?—Song 3:3***

The “watchmen” represent the shepherds of the flock in one sense of the word, those who are the keepers of the Holy City, spiritually speaking. Sometimes we look to those who are considered more learned for guidance and counsel to help us with our problems in spiritual development, but verse 4 shows that the woman finds relatively little compassion and comfort from them: “It was but a little that I passed from them.” Joy awaits her, however. Her persistence in seeking a closer relationship with Jesus is rewarded: “But I found him whom my soul loveth.”

This finding of the master is a dispensational truth that pertains to our day, to the end of the age. Just as Rebekah alighted from her camel to meet Isaac in the field in the evening, at the end of the day or age, so this class, who were previously in a bed that was too short, now get out of that creedal bed of their own volition to look for their master (Genesis 24:63,64). Eventually they find him. Verse 4 ends: “I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother’s house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.”

The “mother’s house” would be Sarah’s house (Genesis 24:67). Sarah was not only the mother of Isaac but also, in a spiritual sense, the mother of Rebekah with allegorical significance.

*I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up nor awaken love until it please.*

—*Song 3:5 (see RSV and NIV translations)*

Sometimes in our spiritual development, a problem arises with other Christians who love the master with a lesser degree of devotion. When the bride is in sweet communion with her dear master, the secondary or foolish virgin class, called here the “daughters of Jerusalem,” often distract the true church from the intimacy of her worship. And so the holy spirit charges these others not to disturb the bride in her relationship with Jesus. It may take only a word or short conversation to steer our thinking into paths that distract us from holy communion with the father or his son, or from meditation on the Scriptures. This element of intrusion into holy thinking may take place frequently in our lives. How often our hearts desire to have deeper fellowship and to remove distracting thoughts and influences produced by others who may mean well but who do not realize their own lukewarm condition!

In chapter 4, verse 3, the master informs us why he is attracted to his beloved church and bride, why he loves his disciples as they pursue the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake in the present life: “Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.”

In appreciation of the fact that they were bought by the precious blood of Christ, that they were redeemed, Christians are constantly confessing and professing to be Jesus’ disciples. They are not ashamed to declare his merits and the theme of the ransom and redemption, which threads through the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation—the gospel theme of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ and the merits of his blood. It is the constant theme of their “lips” (plural)—of both the upper and the lower lips; that is, of both the Old and New Testaments. Accordingly, Jesus looks upon the bride’s lips as a thread of scarlet, for her speech is very comely in his sight, and her temples meditate upon his precious word. The bride class not only proclaims but also takes the time to meditate upon what she proclaims and upon her alignment with the word.

*Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.—  
Song 4:5*

Jesus is attracted to the church because of the comeliness of her form. Just as from a physical standpoint in the natural life, we might discern a young maiden’s beauty of form and development of maturity as symbolized in her breasts, so Jesus, from a **spiritual** standpoint, appreciates the bride because of her development along the lines of the Old and New Testaments, pictured here by the two breasts. Feeding on the milk of the word and giving it to others helps her develop. As she matures in conformity to the Old and New Testaments, she becomes more and more attractive to Jesus, her prospective bridegroom.

*A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.—Song 4:12*

Jesus is attracted to the bride class, to the woman in this allegory, because she is like “a garden inclosed ... a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.” This virgin class is like a garden enclosed in the sense that no stranger has intruded upon her virginity. Being a “fountain” closed up is a mark of virginity. Jesus appreciates that she is as “a spring shut up, a fountain sealed,” that she is dedicated to him alone, and only he is to have these intimacies of worship. She will not bestow her reverence or worship on fellow human beings or on religious institutions. Her affection for Jesus Christ is on a level far above any affection that she might have for others. Hence she does not reverence any person or thing that puts itself in the place of God or purports to be his spokesman. Jesus said, “Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ” (Matthew 23:9,10). This personal loyalty to Jesus is what he most appreciates.

*Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.—Song 4:16*

Christians, in their desire to develop Christ-like characters, appreciate the fact that the experience of sorrow is needed in the present life. And so the bride says, “Awake, O **north** wind.” She realizes that adversity and discipline are necessary in the school of Christ, that the hard knocks of Christian experience are the only way to develop certain characteristics of patience and fortitude. Of her own volition, she says in effect: “Send sorrow; send pain, O north wind.” Devastating cold winds are from the north. Christians recognize the need for trouble and persecution for the Bible tells us that those who live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution, and that if we do not have this experience in some sense, we are illegitimate children (2 Timothy 3:12; Hebrews 12:8).

Next she says, “Come, thou **south** [wind].” Here we find that not only do Christians realize the necessity for fiery trials to try them in order to attain the “gold” or divine nature to which they are called, but also they realize the need for the encouraging wind of the south (2 Peter 1:4). The “south wind” represents the seasons of blessing, fellowship, love, affection, and quiet—the sweet experiences of life. Both conditions are necessary: light and shadow, sorrow and pain as well as pleasure. This mixed experience develops the Christian in the full sense of the word. Both the blowing of the winter winds and the development of the summer atmosphere give the plant a rounded-out experience which is likened to a spice tree: “Blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.” Just as spices develop under these mixed conditions and exude a most beautiful fragrance, so Christian graces shine most from the lives of those who have had these experiences and are **rightly exercised thereby** (Hebrews 12:11).

When Christians realize their development in life and have had a long time in Christian service and fellowship, they long for the day when they might be with their master. And so they say, “Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.” They look



forward with expectation to meeting Jesus, to the end of the race, to the end of suffering (Hebrews 12:1). Their waiting will terminate in a morning of joy.

Truly the Song of Solomon is a wonderful love story of Christ and his church.

## A Verse-by-verse Study of Psalm 45

### **The Bride and Bridegroom**

*The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. —Revelation 19:7*

Carl Hagensick

Weddings are joyous occasions. This is especially true when the bride and bridegroom are of royalty. Psalm 45 was composed for just such an occasion and becomes an ode to love in commemoration of the king's nuptial day.

While the festive occasion that caused the composition of this song is debatable, it most likely was for one of the weddings of King Solomon, perhaps to the daughter of Pharaoh (1 Kings 3:1). This is supported by the reference to the daughter of Tyre (verse 12).

#### **The Title**

*To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A Song of loves.*

E. W. Bullinger in Appendix 64 of the *Companion Bible*, correctly says the term “To the chief musician” is misplaced in the authorized version; it belongs to Psalm 44. It is less clear whether he is correct in assuming the words “Upon Shoshannim” also belong to that psalm. We believe they are correctly placed as the first of four titles for Psalm 45.

**“Upon Shoshannim”**—or “for the lilies” —is a term that is difficult to identify. Some feel it refers to a lyre of six strings which was either in the form of a lily or is a derivative of the Hebrew word *shesh*, the number six. Others ascribe it to a popular tune of the time entitled “The Lily.” Still others take it as a spring song when the lilies were in bloom, composed to be sung during the Passover season. It is most likely, in line with the wedding theme of the psalm, that it was sung during the procession when lily petals were strewn before the bride.

**“For the sons of Korah”**—a reference to the ones appointed to sing the song. David organized the temple with three main leaders: Heman, the grandson of Samuel and a descendant of Kohath; Asaph, who traces his ancestry back to Gershon; and Ehan (or Jeduthun), a Merarite. Since Korah was a descendant of Kohath, it seems likely that those who were under the direction of Heman sang this song.

**“Maschil”**—or, “for instruction.” The word is derived from the Hebrew *sakal*, to scrutinize, and implies that the author intended a deeper meaning than what appears on the surface. In this psalm the deeper meaning is that the marriage here celebrated is allegorical of the far greater marriage of Christ and his bride, the church.

**“A Song of loves”**—more accurately, a song of the beloved virgins, one expressing the sentiments of the bride's companions.

### **The Author's Enthusiasm—verse 1**

*My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.*

The enthusiasm of the writer is apparent. The word translated “inditing” would be better rendered “to gush out,” or, as some translations phrase it, “overflowing.” The word “ready” in the Hebrew also is suggestive of the rapidity with which words came to his mind as he composed the psalm for this festive occasion. He literally bubbles over and the words come rushing to his mind as he seeks to describe the majesty of the king, the loveliness of the bride and her apparel, and the sheer beauty of the marriage splendors.

### **The King's Beauty—verse 2**

*Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.*

These words represent the feelings of the beloved virgins, the bride's companions. They are reminiscent spiritually of the thoughts of the great company, the five foolish virgins of our Lord's parable in Matthew 25, and correspond well to the sentiments expressed by the great multitude in Revelation 19:7 and the beautiful description of Christ voiced by the lazy lover in Song of Solomon 5:10-16.

### **The King's Power—verses 3-5**

*Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.*

The prosperity of the king is attributed to his conquests and these, in turn, are a result, not so much of unhindered power, but an outgrowth of truth, meekness, and righteousness. These are not usually thought of as the springboards of power.

Truth does not alone refer to accuracy of belief and teachings, but also to that consistency which comes from faithful stability. Righteousness refers to the fact that his judgments are rendered objectively and strictly according to the merits of each individual case. Meekness, referring to the gentle application of the principles of justice, grants the wielder great power for it shows compassion even while administering strict discipline.

The word translated “teach” in verse four would be better rendered “shoot out,” as an archer shoots arrows (see Strong's #3384). Although there is a secondary meaning of “to point out, to teach” this does not fit as well with the allusion to archers in the succeeding verse.

The arrows that the Lord shoots forth are the words of his mouth convicting his enemies of their wrong-doings and converting them to the ways of righteousness. This will occur under the New Covenant when the words of Psalm 19:7 find their grand fulfillment: “The

law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul, the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.”

This falling of the Lord’s enemies under him is the same conversion work to which Jesus refers in the parables of the pounds: “But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay [by turning the enemies into friends] before me” (Luke 19:27).

### **The King’s Justice—verses 6-8**

*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.*

Since these words refer to the reigning Christ, it is often used by Trinitarians to support their belief. Two thoughts may be helpful. First, the Leeser translation reads, “Thy throne, **given of God**, endureth forever and ever” (see *Reprints*, p. 774). This is supported in the quotation of the psalm in Hebrews 1:8, “God is thy throne for ever and ever” (Twentieth Century Translation). Adam Clarke, a Trinitarian, admits that this translation cannot be faulted, noting that the word “God” is in the nominative case. Clarke also notes that this translation is supported by Wakefield in his *History of Opinions*.

The Hebrew word translated “God” in this psalm is *elohim*, a term meaning “mighty one” and is applied widely including mighty men of earth. The context determines to whom it is to be applied; since this is a Messianic psalm, it applies to Christ and not Jehovah.

The psalmist continues by expressing the righteousness of the judgments of the king’s reign. This agrees with the assessment of that reign by Paul: “He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:31). Isaiah says, “When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness” (Isaiah 26:9).

The foundation for these judgments are the love of righteousness and the hatred of wickedness. This is true both of these principles and of those who adhere to them. In harmony with this, the prophet writes of that kingdom, “Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not” (Malachi 3:18). The followers of Christ, likewise, must learn not only to love righteousness but to consider everything wicked as abominable.

As it was the custom for honored guests to be anointed with oil, and especially the bride and groom, so the adherence to the principles of righteousness will cause the host, God himself, to endorse this happy marriage with the “oil of gladness.” The expression in Song of Solomon 3:11 uses a slightly different metaphor: “Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.”

The effect of this anointing was to leave a lingering perfume of myrrh, aloes, and cassia upon the bridegroom's garments. All three of these spices are aromatic. Myrrh and cassia were ingredients of the holy anointing oil of the tabernacle (Exodus 30:23,24). Aloes had medicinal properties. All three are bitter to the taste. While all come from plants, they come from different parts of the plant: myrrh from the sap or gum, aloes from the leaves, and cassia from pulverized bark. Together they represent the perfection of character that comes from the endurance of suffering and bitter experiences (Hebrews 5:8,9).

In *The Treasury of David*, Spurgeon notes that the word translated "whereby" is not the usual word for that meaning. It is the Hebrew *mane*, or, as a place name, *Minnaea* in Arabia Felix ("Happy Arabia" because of its abundant resources, today's Yemen). A possible translation of this verse is: "Myrrh, aloes, and cassias, are all thy garments. From ivory palaces of Minnaea they have made thee glad." The geographer Strabo informs us that Minnaea abounded in myrrh and frankincense; the historian Diodorus of Siculus writes that "the inhabitants of Arabia Felix had sumptuous houses, adorned with ivory and precious stones."

If such a conclusion is correct, it lends weight to the occasion of this psalm being one of the marriages of Solomon, for it was he who developed trade with these southern kingdoms and who had a special relationship with Hiram, king of Tyre (see verse 12).

### **The Bride's Invitation—verses 10, 11**

*Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.*

The use of the combined verbs "hearken" and "consider" urge not only the listening to the bridegroom's invitation, but a careful contemplation of what it involves and the seriousness of the marriage vows. Acceptance of the connubial relationship means leaving behind all former associations. This is what God demanded of Abram (Genesis 12:1) and in the God-given formula for marriage: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). What an encouragement to leave behind the trifling pleasures of this earth which once seemed to mean so much.

Great is the contrast between what the world offers compared with the love and companionship of Christ. Well has one written, "Although the whole family in heaven and earth will be blessed through him [Christ], only his wife, cooperating with him in his work, will alone be his companion, his confidante, his treasure." Even now the church is attractive to the Lord as his peculiar treasure. The same author continues: "Clad in the glorious robe of our Bridegroom's furnishing, we can stand all complete, even now, in the eyes of Jehovah. And possessing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, the faith that trusts under every condition, the love that delights to do the Father's will, we are lovely in the eyes of our Beloved, our Bridegroom and our King." (*Reprints*, p. 5862)

## **The Wedding Guests—verse 12**

*And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favor.*

Solomon and Hiram, king of Tyre, were not only partners in trade but friends as well. Josephus (Apion. I, 17, 18), quotes the historians Dius and Melander as saying that extensive correspondence between the two kings was preserved in the records of Tyre and that the two friends enjoyed challenging each other with riddles. Phoenician historians relate that Hiram gave his daughter in marriage to Solomon. Therefore it is not surprising that women of Tyre would be in attendance at a wedding of the Jewish monarch.

Tyre was a wealthy kingdom and had joint maritime expeditions with Israel in trading spices and precious metals as far away as India, probably the location of the fabled Ophir. Although Tyre is used as a symbol of evil and the empire of Satan in Isaiah 23 and Joel 3:4, these prophecies are of a later date than this psalm and it does not appear that negative implications are implied here. Rather, Tyre seems to be a neutral symbol of all Gentiles, especially of the wealthier classes.

The presentation of a wedding present and the entreatment of the rich is reminiscent of scenes from the closing chapter of Job where the three comforters entreat him for forgiveness, and his family and friends present him with a piece of money and a gold earring. The latter shows the heeding of Job's words while the piece of money, literally a "lamb" of money, i.e., a coin worth the value of a lamb, may aptly picture the recognition of the cost of redemption—the sacrifice of "the Lamb of God."

The wedding guests at the wedding feast of Christ and the church will be all the Gentiles who will give the gift of their lives during the Millennial age (Acts 15:14-17).

## **The Bridal Garments—verses 13, 14a**

*The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework.*

While the church, the daughter of the great king Jehovah, is to be beautiful with all the fruits and graces of the spirit, this is not the meaning here. The American Standard Version correctly supplies an ellipsis, rendering the text "The king's daughter **within the palace** is all glorious." Perhaps a better thought would be "within her pre-nuptial chambers." It is even while in the state of preparation, on this side of the veil of death and preceding the marriage, that the bride is to be all glorious in her character.

She is as the beautiful young maiden Esther who, in preparation for her appearance before the king, "required nothing but what Hegai, the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed" (Esther 2:15). So the church has been under a spiritual Hegai, the holy spirit, and needs nothing more than she is furnished by it.



Any imperfections or blemishes are covered by the seamless robe of Christ's righteousness with its carefully interwoven golden promises that the wearers might "be partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4).

The needlework suggests that the bride embroiders her robe with the graces of the spirit so that, at the end of her course, the white robe of Christ's imputed merit is exchanged for new white garments which are "the righteousness of saints" (Revelation 19:8). The apostle Peter states that we must "add to your faith" the attributes of a Christian character (2 Peter 1:5).

### **The Bridal Party—verses 14b, 15**

*The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.*

As maidens accompanied Rebekah when she went to meet her bridegroom Isaac (Genesis 24:61), so there is a class of virgins who will accompany the church to be with her royal Lord. These are styled virgins because they have maintained their purity, but they do not have the same standing as the bride. In Jesus' parable they are called "foolish" virgins because of their unpreparedness (Matthew 25).

Nonetheless they do overcome at the end and are identified as a "great multitude" in Revelation 19:6 who gladly call out, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Revelation 19:7).

The fact that they follow the bride implies that they go where the bride goes, into the king's palace. That means they receive a spiritual resurrection. Their stature, however, will never be the same as that of the bride, nor will they share in the resurrection to the divine nature with its attribute of immortality (Revelation 20:6).

### **Offspring of a Royal Marriage—verse 16**

*Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.*

Israelites looked at their national and spiritual forebears as "fathers." Hence we read of numerous references to Abraham as "father" (Matthew 3:9; Luke 1:73; John 8:53). These "fathers" will be the firstborn children of the royal couple, the first to be resurrected from the dead. Then David's son (Christ Jesus) will become David's Lord and Father (Luke 20:41-43). It is called "a better resurrection" (Hebrews 11:35) because it is pre-eminent in both time and position.

Their role in that kingdom is also prophetically spelled out in this marriage psalm: they shall be made "princes in all the earth." This implies that they will not only play a governmental role, but that they will be ambassadors "in all the earth." Theirs will be the joy of making known the rules and regulations of that kingdom to all mankind, thus helping the human race back to perfection as they travel the "way of holiness" (Isaiah 35:8).

## A Precious Treasure

# New Testament Portrayals of the Church

*Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*

—*Ephesians 5:23*

Michael Nekora

An old adage says the New Testament in the Old is concealed while the Old Testament in the New is revealed. That is certainly true of the church, something Paul said was a great mystery (Ephesians 5:32). The church was talked about only in symbols in the Old Testament, because it could not be properly understood until Jesus Christ made plain what previously had been hidden. Even when Jesus spoke on this and other subjects, he frequently used parables and “dark sayings” (Psalm 49:4). Those with a hearing ear understood; the others did not (Matthew 13:10,11,16).

## Jewels

The Lord’s called-out ones are like precious jewels: “They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him” (Malachi 3:17). Because of the New Testament, we know this prophecy refers to the church, even though the word “jewels” is not found in the New Testament. But there are references to specific jewels such as those in the wall and gates of the heavenly Jerusalem: “He measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits ... And the building of the wall of it was of jasper ... and the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones ... And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl (Revelation 21:17-19, 21).

“The fabric or composition of the wall (including the twelve foundations) is described as ‘jasper,’ which in verse 11 is said to be ‘clear as crystal’ and is thus the diamond. ... Only the foundations of the wall of the city are adorned or overlaid with all manner of precious stones; that is, each of the twelve foundation stones is garnished with numerous jewels of the variety peculiar to that foundation. The different stones in the twelve foundations picture variety in the Church not from the standpoint of character importance but from the standpoint of authority and jurisdiction.

“The pearl represents Jesus’ costly sacrifice, one of the first lessons those who walk into the city will have to learn; that is, the only reason they could even **begin** to enter is because the man Christ Jesus gave his life for them. The gates emphasize the price the Saviour paid, his supreme sacrifice, which brings to mind his parable in Matthew 13:45,46 [the pearl of great price]. Jesus purchased the spiritual Church primarily and the world secondarily (Acts 20:28). Therefore, since each gate is a pearl, no person can enter the city without first recognizing Christ. ... The lesson of the pearl-gate wall calls attention to this fundamental truth.”—Frank Shallieu, *The Keys of Revelation*, pp. 549, 551, 552.

A one-verse parable preceding the parable of the pearl of great price describes a treasure: “The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field” (Matthew 13:44).

The man in this parable is Jesus Christ who “sold all that he had” including even life itself. After he rose from the dead and ascended up on high, he bought **us** with his own “precious blood” (1 Peter 1:18,19). “Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25). Christ appeared “in the presence of God for us” (Hebrews 9:24).

And so the church is personified as a treasure which brings great joy to the buyer. The buyer gets more than a treasure: he gets the field too, an apt picture of the earth and the entire world of mankind: “The field is the world” (Matthew 13:38). “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22).

## Wheat

One of the oldest cereals known to man is wheat. It is one of the first mentioned in the Bible (see Genesis 30:14). Wheat figures prominently in a parable of our Lord which appears with the parable of the treasure and pearl of great price: “The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.” (Matthew 13:24-30).

The disciples were intrigued by this parable and asked what it meant. Our Lord’s explanation begins in verse 37. He explains that he is the sower, the enemy that sowed tares is the devil, the field is the world, and the good seed [the wheat] are the children of the kingdom. All the wheat is gathered into the barn.

This is an accurate picture of the church of God which starts with the good seed of the word of truth from the hand of the master sower. Under normal circumstances, it would grow to maturity and be harvested. But an adversary with other plans surreptitiously sows tares in this field. Tares are “imitation wheat.”

“There can be little doubt that the [word translated tares] of the parable denotes the weed called ‘darnel’ a widely distributed grass and the only species of the order that has deleterious properties. ... The grains of [the tares] produce vomiting and purging, convulsions, and even death. The darnel before it comes into ear is very similar in appearance to wheat.”—McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, vol. X, ppg. 201,202.

And thus the true church which was started by our Lord was infiltrated by false, wheat-like imitators. No effort has been made to separate the true from the false during this age. But now, at the time of harvest, at the end of this age, the separating work takes place (Matthew 13:39, NIV).

This parable does not teach the literal burning of false Christians. If the fire were literal, the tares would be literal as well. The parable says the imitation wheat will be gathered into bundles which eventually will be destroyed as worthless. Those who are a part of the true church of God are not gathered into bundles; they are gathered into the heavenly "barn" which the Lord said he would prepare for his true followers: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3).

Wheat is ground into flour which is used to make leavened or unleavened bread. Leaven is uniformly a symbol of sin in the Bible and so combining it with flour means to adulterate the true with the false: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour till it was all leavened" (Matthew 13:33, RSV). This parable has a similar lesson as the wheat and the tares.

On the day of Pentecost when the holy spirit descended upon the first members of the church, the priest was waving two loaves of bread which were specifically to be of "fine flour" baked with leaven (Leviticus 23:17). These two loaves beautifully illustrate the church (and the Great Company) which are offered to God even though contaminated with sin. In God's sight, they are acceptable because of Christ's righteousness, the point of the parable of the wedding garment (see Matthew 22:1-14).

## Virgins

The church is frequently described as a virgin in the New Testament. Paul used the term to describe the saints in Corinth: "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:2).

The wonderful, almost lyrical description of the church, the one hundred forty-four thousand, describes them as being virgins: "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. ... and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. ... These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb" (Revelation 14:1,3,4).

These virgins collectively are the bride of Christ: "One of the seven angels ... talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Revelation 21:9). United with the Lord, like a king and queen, they reign over the earth (Revelation 5:10).

Another parable of our Lord used wise and foolish virgins to teach an important lesson: “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps” (Matthew 25:1-4). All the virgins went to sleep until a cry at midnight that the bridegroom had arrived. The wise virgins went in with the bridegroom to the marriage; the foolish virgins had no oil in their lamps and left to buy some. “Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh” (Matthew 25:11-13).

Although there is no mention of a bride, it is the virgins for whom the bridegroom comes. And like the two loaves of fine flour baked with leaven which were presented to God on the day of Pentecost, we again see two groups. Although all are pure, separated from the world, and lovers of the bridegroom, they are not the same. The wise virgins are equivalent to the bride; the foolish virgins, although they are blessed eventually, are not the bride. Revelation calls them a multitude: “I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude ... saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife [the bride, the wise virgins] hath made herself ready” (Revelation 19:6,7).

Different parables use different symbols to teach the needed lessons. It is virgins here, but it is servants in other places. This includes the parables of the talents (Matthew 25:14), the pounds (Luke 19:13), a man on a journey (Mark 13:34), watching servants at the end of the age when the Lord returns (Luke 12:37), and at best unprofitable servants (Luke 17:10). Peter indirectly called the assembled disciples on the day of Pentecost servants when he said in a quotation from Joel, “On my **servants** and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy” (Acts 2:18).

### **Vine and Its Branches**

At the time of the last supper, our Lord said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit” (John 15:5). By the use of symbol this is another description of the church. If we are joined to Christ, we draw sustenance from him and are “alive.” We receive this life so we might bring forth pleasing fruit. It is a similar lesson to the grain of wheat which goes into the ground and from which springs a great fruitage (Matthew 13:8).

Paul used a similar symbol when he talked about branches placed into a different tree from which they originated: “For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?” (Romans 11:24).

Sometimes it is not the vine but the workers in a vineyard that picture the Lord’s faithful church: “The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard” (Matthew 20:1). These

workers are recruited at various times over the course of a day and all are paid generously by the Lord. And thus it has been with all who have gone to work in the “Lord’s vineyard.” As Jesus himself said, “Truly, I say to you, there is no man who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive manifold more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life” (Luke 18:29,30, RSV).

### Other Symbols

The true saints of God are called stewards by Paul: “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:1,2). Our Lord gave a parable about an unjust steward in Luke 16. Although undoubtedly directed at the scribes and Pharisees, the principle applies to every prospective member of the church: those to whom the Lord entrusts his “riches” must demonstrate faithfulness in their responsibilities. Otherwise they will not be rewarded.

Paul likened the church to body members: “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular” (1 Corinthians 12:12, 27). Of course the head of this body is Jesus Christ (see Ephesians 4:15 and 5:23). The church united with Christ has sometimes been called “The Christ—head and body.” Notice too that the voice from heaven asked Saul, “Why persecutest thou **me**?” (Acts 22:7). Saul never answered, “What do you mean, Lord? You’re in heaven. I’m only pursuing heretics!” In his heart Saul understood the symbol of “body members.”

Sometimes instead of the church collectively as shown by wheat, jewels, branches, and body members, a symbol demonstrates the characteristics an individual member of the church must develop. One example of the necessity of having the characteristic of forgiveness is contained in the answer of our Lord to Peter when he asked how often he should forgive someone. Jesus talked about a king who reckoned with his servants. One owed a gigantic sum and could not pay. He is forgiven, but rather than show mercy to a fellow servant who in comparison owed him a pittance, he demanded immediate payment and when he did not get it, he abused the man. The lord of the parable heard what he did, brought the man back to him, and said: “You wicked servant. I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you? In anger his master turned him over to the jailers until he should pay back all he owed” (Matthew 18:32-34, NIV). The lesson for all of us is in the next verse: “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.” Note that the king in the parable never told the one who had been forgiven a gigantic debt that he would be expected similarly to show forgiveness to others. It was considered such a basic principle that it was to be understood without being specifically mentioned.

Another lesson shows the importance of doing what’s right, not just saying the right words. A man had two sons. He asked both to go work in his vineyard. One said he



would not go, but afterward changed his mind and went. Another said he would go, but he did not. Our Lord asked which son did the will of his father. The audience correctly said it was the first (see Matthew 21:28-32). Although Jesus applied “the first” to the publicans and sinners of his day, the principle is still applicable today: it is what we do, not what we say we will do that counts with God.

The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:33) had compassion on one who had been assaulted by thieves; the priest and Levite—ones who should have known the characteristics God expected in them—passed by on the other side, not wanting to get involved with something that would slow them down, or possibly defile them were the man to die and they be guilty of touching him. Our Lord then speaks to the lawyer who had asked who was his neighbor: “Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise” (Luke 10:36,37).

The ministry of Jesus Christ and his redeeming work on behalf of the human race is the main message of the Bible. And the wonderful associated message is that Jesus is to have others with him who become a part of him. These others are collectively called his church. What a wonderful prospect is in store for those who love God!

## Everlasting Joys of Marriage

### **The Bride of Christ**

*Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.—Revelation 19:7*

Michael Brann

The Bible utilizes a wide variety of expressions to tell us about our relationship with God and Jesus. The “bride of Christ” is one of these. Note that it is not the “bride of Jehovah God.” The nation of Israel was the bride of the LORD (see Isaiah 54:1-6; Jeremiah 3:14; Ezekiel 16:8; Hosea 2:19,20; Galatians 4:21-31). Just as Jehovah has his elect “bride,” so he has arranged a bride for his son Jesus (see 2 Corinthians 11:2; Galatians 4:21-31; Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 14:1,4 and 21:9,17).

The church is variously styled as a flock under the care of its shepherd, as branches connected to the vine, as soldiers under its captain, as brethren to their elder brother, as disciples under the tutelage of their master, to name a few. Each of these pictures gives us insight, instruction, and detail regarding our personal relationship with the Lord which no single picture alone could do. Taken together as a whole, we get a more well-rounded and symmetrical view of the matter.

As sheep, we understand something of the nature of trusting our every care to the leading of the gentle shepherd. As branches, we see our absolute dependency for life comes from our connection to the nourishing vine. As soldiers, we learn the need for strict obedience and absolute loyalty to our courageous captain who has already fought the good fight. As younger brothers we learn to lean on our elder brother who has undergone similar experiences of a more fleshly nature. As disciples we understand the value of listening to, learning from, and following our all-wise teacher. What beautiful and important lessons are contained in these and other relationship sketches found in the Bible!

As instructive as these are, none match the level of intensity indicative of love, joy, and delight as that implied by the picture of Bridegroom and Bride. This relationship (and the implied marriage associated with it) is one of the most endearing, inspiring, and uplifting messages found in the Bible. Anyone who has had the experience of courting, engagement, and marriage understands this truth. This union carries with it many beautiful aspects which help us understand the depth of our relationship with Christ. Qualities such as love, joy, loyalty, trust, commitment, bonding/sharing, and caring are all elements of this union.

The associations of sheep, branches, soldiers, brothers, and disciples can exist without a real, deep, or lasting sentiment or affection. A shepherd can just be doing his job, a vine has no emotional attachment to a branch, a captain can be simply completing a career and a soldier merely serving out his time, a teacher can instruct without passion and a student can learn without emotional involvement. But there can be no real connection between a

bride and groom unless that connection is sustained with love and tender affection, overflowing the heart with hope and joyful expectation.

The illustration of a bride and groom suggests a time when plans are being made for a wedding day. Both are usually in a state of bliss and joy. Both eagerly anticipate the coming marriage and their new life together. They are characteristically described by friends and family as “lovesick” or “floating on air.” Some find it difficult to concentrate on the simplest of tasks before their minds wander off to thoughts of their beloved. When they speak of their “intended,” their eyes sparkle and shine like a diamond in the sun. They ignore the world and those around them, not out of spite or apathy, but because their minds are in an excited and anticipatory state.

Anyone who has chosen to love and to prepare for marriage has undoubtedly experienced some of these emotions. Even our Lord has these same strong, tender, and longing desires toward his prospective bride: “For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and **as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee**” (Isaiah 62:5). This is precisely why the picture of a bride and groom is given to us.

Those of little faith might say, “He doesn’t love me like that because I have this blemish or that weakness.” Proper faith will say, “What manner of love hath the Lord shown to me, to love me just as I am. If he can love me despite my blemishes and weaknesses, I am inspired to love him in return and become more and more transformed daily into the most beautiful bride I can possibly become!”

The word of God is true and dependable. If we have given our hearts to the Lord in sincere consecration, it is incumbent upon us to believe his word: he loves us as a groom loves his bride. His written word describing his love toward his bride-to-be is just as sure as the statement that “the wages of sin is death” or that “the earth abideth forever.” The picture of the bride of Christ is not exaggerated hyperbole. These words are “true and faithful.”

### **The Bride Portrayed**

The Old Testament contains two descriptions of bride and groom that are instructive. The first is in Genesis chapter 24 when Abraham sent his servant to find a bride for his son Isaac. Since Isaac clearly represents our Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis 22:3-8,14; John 1:29, 36; Galatians 3:16), the search for this bride is a type of the call and selection of the Lord’s spiritual bride. Abraham represented the heavenly Father who does the actual selecting of the bride for Jesus; Abraham’s servant represented the holy spirit sent out to do his bidding (John 6:44-45,65).

Abraham’s servant is sent to Abraham’s birthplace to look for a bride from among his own people and country. He meets Rebekah at a well. She is beautiful, generous in service, and a virgin—all qualities the Father wants in the bride for his son Jesus. Natural beauty is not a requirement; rather it is beauty of heart and mind, those who have humility and a spirit of service toward God and others. Virginitly in symbol suggests

purity of heart, good intentions, separateness from “the world” with a desire to maintain doctrinal and moral purity.

After Rebekah agrees to become Isaac’s wife, she is given gifts of jewels and garments. This suggests a begetting by God of his holy spirit and the receiving of a new robe of Christ’s righteousness, pure and spotless, without wrinkle. As they journeyed for weeks back to Canaan, a distance of approximately eight hundred miles, Rebekah could have taken the opportunity during their necessary times of rest and refreshment to make one of these clean new garments her bridal dress, weaving fine colorful thread and jewels into its fabric. This draws our attention to another picture often used to describe the present work of the bride in preparing for her marriage as found in Psalm 45:10-15. Verse 13 reads, “The King’s daughter is all glorious within; Her clothing is interwoven with gold.” (See also Isaiah 61:10 and Revelation 19:8.)

At the end of the journey Rebekah comes down off her camel (Rotherham adds “with haste,” Genesis 24:64) at the sight of her beloved Isaac as he was meditating in the field towards evening. Both seem to have each other in mind as they anticipate the great joy of being united to one another. It is similar to a lesson in Matthew 25:6 where the message is “go ye out to meet him.” Here too, love must be the motive as each virgin makes her “journey” to meet the bridegroom while others slumber and sleep. The journey demands a sufficient supply of oil, symbolic of the fruits and graces developed by the holy spirit of God, before union with the beloved “Isaac,” our Lord Jesus Christ, occurs.

Another Old Testament account expressing the depth of love and passion between bride and groom is in the Song of Solomon (see p. 8 in this issue). There are a variety of interpretations assigned to this book’s meaning. One view applies it to Jehovah and Israel while another presents it as a picture of Christ and his bride. This second interpretation is one which we, the spiritual bride of Christ, can appreciate. What a pleasing sense it brings as we place ourselves in the picture of this beautiful love story! How grand is our beloved and how delightful to comprehend the desire and passion he has for us, his spiritual bride!

### **The Preparation by the Groom**

In today’s world, a man finds it necessary to prepare himself for a marriage in two particular ways: 1) He must obtain an education and career adequate enough to provide for the needs of his family, with hopeful plans for a happy future together; 2) He will prepare a place for them to live where they can discover the joys and experiences of becoming one. Both of these are quite attractive and essential to the prospective bride.

Our heavenly bridegroom is similarly engaged. He has established himself on the right hand of the father in heaven and has himself been made both Lord and Christ over all (Acts 2:36). He has an inheritance for us which is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away (1 Peter 1:4; 5:4).

He is also preparing a place for us in the heavenly realm as he said: “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:2,3). What a glorious home awaits us, a home that has been in preparation for nearly two thousand years! Imagine what joys and comforts will be there. The crowning delight of that home will undoubtedly be the privilege of living and reigning with him to bless all the families of the earth in the millennial kingdom.

These things are so attractive to the bride-to-be. How we long to be with him and to share his glory, honor, and immortality. This is why he appears to us as the one who is the “chiefest among ten thousand” and “he is altogether lovely” (Song of Solomon 5:10,16).

### **The Wedding**

Soon we expect the bride, the Gospel age church which at the first was introduced to her bridegroom Jesus by John the Baptist (John 3:29), will be complete. Those who are called, chosen, and faithful will enter into the everlasting joys in marriage to the Lord. “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God” (Revelation 19:7-9). The psalmist adds: “With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king’s palace” (Psalm 45:15).

There will be much rejoicing because then the Lord and his bride will begin the restitution work for the world of mankind. This will include the resurrection of all who were lost in death through the Adamic curse. The invitation will go forth to all mankind: “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17).

## A Holy Priesthood

### Living Stones

*You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual\* sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.—1 Peter 2:5, NIV*

Andrew Polychronis

One of the most profoundly beautiful analogies used in Scripture to describe the truly consecrated believer is the one used by apostle Peter in his first general epistle. Peter describes the honorable role of true believers as that of “living stones” which God uses to build a great temple throughout the Gospel age. It is “living stones” because we come to the Lord Jesus Christ who is himself a “living stone”—not just any “living stone” but a “cornerstone”; and not just any cornerstone, but the “chief cornerstone.”

“Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.”—1 Peter 2:6-8

The vision of the building of this temple must have made a vivid and profound impression on Peter’s mind because it was the fulfillment of the great prophecy made by Jesus on the earlier occasion of Peter’s confession of faith. In Matthew’s gospel we read: “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. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, **and upon this rock I will build my church**; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”—Matthew 16:13-18

Although there is much controversy and theological debate over Scriptural teaching of the “rock/stone” analogies, what Jesus is saying to his disciples on this occasion is quite clear. God’s revelation to Peter that the Lord Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God” clearly is the “rock” upon which the “church of the firstborn” (Hebrews 12:23) would be built. Indeed, the “gates of hades” (Matthew 16:18, NIV) have never prevailed, and never will prevail, against this fundamental doctrinal truth. Roman Catholicism’s teaching that the “rock” is Peter, the first pope of Rome, eludes the import of our Lord’s question and more significantly, Peter’s revealed response. The confusion among men at the time when Jesus asked the disciples “whom do men say that I, the Son of man am” has continued throughout the Gospel age in the guise of the inexplicable philosophy of the trinity. This is Satan’s attempt to undo the very foundation upon which the church is



being built! But praise be to our heavenly father, there has always been a remnant of true believers who, like Peter, have allowed God's holy spirit to reveal the true nature and identity of Christ, thus seeing through the falseness of the trinitarian doctrine. As "living stones" they come to the "rock," the "chief cornerstone," and are being built up a spiritual house. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11).

What is the significance of Jesus being the cornerstone? In referring to Jesus as a cornerstone, Peter is quoting from both the Psalms as well as the prophet Isaiah. The Isaiah prophecy is of special significance: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place" (Isaiah 28:16,17).

As we well know, the purpose of "the measuring line" and the "plummet" is to bring every stone in perfect alignment with the cornerstone. It is God's justice and righteousness through our Lord Jesus Christ that qualify us to be fit "living stones" to be used by the Masterbuilder. God's destiny for each of his children is that their lives be brought into perfect alignment with the life of Jesus that we might be conformed to his blessed image (Romans 8:29).

In the account of the building of Solomon's temple we are told: "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" (1 Kings 6:7). The work and noise of the "hammer, axe, and tools of iron" occurred in the quarry where the stones were being prepared. When the temple was actually erected, the stones fit together so perfectly no further noise was heard.

What a profoundly beautiful picture this is of God's workmanship with each and every member of the body of Christ. For two thousand years God has been preparing "living stones" in the quarry of life. Each saint goes through a unique set of experiences which chisel, hammer, and polish us, to bring us ultimately to the same end result: the character-likeness of Jesus! The world is absolutely oblivious to the great work that God is doing with his saints in this age. Not a sound is heard as the chisel and hammer do their work. But one day the dazzling splendor of the glorified bride of Christ will be revealed to the world of mankind and to all of creation (Revelation 21). What a revealing that will be!

Not only is God preparing all body members as "living stones" to fit perfectly into the temple he is building, he prepares and qualifies them to carry out the priestly duties associated with the temple: "You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5, NIV). Clearly, the typical Aaronic priesthood not only made material sacrifices and offerings, but was expected to offer up spiritual sacrifices as well. These included the following:

- ♦ **The offering of thanksgiving:** “Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High” (Psalm 50:13,14). “Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing” (Psalm 107:21,22).
- ♦ **The offering of praise and humility:** “O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise” (Psalm 51:15-17).
- ♦ **The offering of contrition and prayer:** “Lord, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice” (Psalm 141:1,2).

These sacrifices and offerings were a foretaste of the spiritual sacrifices which were to be made by the “living stones” in the Gospel age. God is not pleased with animal sacrifices: “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4). That situation was remedied by our Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect Lamb of God, who not “by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Hebrews 9:12). We, in return, as “a holy priesthood” are called upon “to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” Again, some of these spiritual sacrifices include:

- ♦ **Our very beings, as loving worship to him:** “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).
- ♦ **Our service:** “Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all” (Philippians 2:17).
- ♦ **Our gifts (material and spiritual) and abilities:** “But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God” (Philippians 4:18).
- ♦ **Our praise and sharing:** “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased” (Hebrews 13:15, 16).

Historically it was the “rediscovery” of these New Testament scriptures that convinced and reassured Luther of the truth of the “priesthood of all believers,” a priesthood not limited to an elite and privileged few as within the Roman Catholic church. This conviction and revelation along with many others ultimately led to the great Protestant Reformation.

Although we know that we will have the awesome privilege and honor of serving as a “kingdom of priests” in the age to come with Christ as our high priest, our training as underpriests must begin in this age. Peter confirms this by saying: “But ye are a chosen

generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

May we truly with all saints, recognize the absolutely amazing, noble, and privileged call we have to come to Jesus as “living stones,” and that we “are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” And may we continue to submit to his workmanship (Ephesians 2:8,10) in the full confidence and assurance that “he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

---

{FOOTNOTE: \* Some Bible Students believe this “spiritual” should be deleted because it is absent from the Sinaitic manuscript. However, virtually all translators accept the word as a part of the sacred record as did Pastor Russell in 1894 (see *Reprints*, p. 600). }

## A Little Flock

# The Psychology of the Sheep

*[The LORD] made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.—Psalm 78:52*

Timothy Krupa

Society at the time of our Lord's first advent was largely agricultural. Most people spent the majority of their waking hours trying to produce enough food to avoid starvation. They grew barley, wheat, corn, and other crops, and they tended vineyards and cared for flocks. As a master teacher, Jesus used many illustrations from the daily lives of his listeners.

The domesticated animals of Jesus' day included cattle, sheep, goats, camels, donkeys, horses, oxen, dogs, and chickens. All are mentioned in the Scriptures and Jesus used them to illustrate different lessons. When his lessons concerned the characteristics of his followers, he could have chosen any of these animals. It's interesting he did not choose the camels, the chickens, or the horses. He chose sheep to illustrate what his followers should be like.

"I know my sheep and my sheep know me" (John 10:14, NIV). "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves" (Matthew 10:16, NIV). Notice how inappropriate it would sound if another animal had been substituted for sheep. Clearly there must be something special about these animals.

Sheep are not like goats, cows, or dogs. Even though there are differences between breeds and differences between individual sheep, sheep have traits, characteristics, behaviors, and feelings that make them an excellent illustration of the collective Christian mind. By considering them in detail, we can gain some incredible insights into the feelings, behaviors, and actions of the Lord's true followers both individually and collectively.

Psychology is the study of how the mind works. It is in the mind where the Christian lives, where he decides, fellowships, and communicates. We have very mortal bodies, but each one's life and death as a Christian is in the mind. And so it is in this aspect that the sheep provide lessons for us. We are interested in the psychology of sheep because we want to understand their minds, behavior, and their traits.

The master once spoke about a man who had a hundred sheep. If one of them strays, he leaves the ninety-nine on the hillside and goes to find the one which strayed. When he finds it, he is more delighted over that sheep than he is with the ninety-nine that never strayed. This shows that sheep are special. In the same way the heavenly Father wants no

little one to become lost. Our Lord said, “Never despise one of these little ones” (Matthew 18:10, NEB).

Jesus went about the towns and villages teaching in the synagogues, announcing the good news of the kingdom, and curing every kind of ailment and disease. The sight of the people moved him to pity. They were like sheep without a shepherd, harassed and helpless (Matthew 9:36).

When Jesus sent out the twelve, he told them, “Do not take the road to Gentile lands and do not enter into any Samaritan town, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 10:5,6, NEB).

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ... I know my sheep and my sheep know me. But there are other sheep of mine not belonging to this fold whom I must bring in. ... there will be one flock and one shepherd” (John 10:11,14,16, NEB). Jesus liked sheep!

A professor at the University of Wyoming wrote an article about his experiences with sheep.\* For those who are not farmers it gives some deeper insights into the nature of sheep. Looking beneath the surface we see the ten sheep characteristics noted by the professor contain lessons for the true followers of Christ.

### **#1—You cannot make sheep do something contrary to their nature.**

There’s a positive and a negative sense to this when applied to a Christian. The phrase “contrary to our nature” causes us to realize we have two natures: fleshly and spiritual. One is to be suppressed and the other is to be developed. “For the flesh lusteth against the spirit” (Galatians 5:17). “I discover this principle, then: that when I want to do the right, only the wrong is within my reach. In my inmost self I delight in the law of God, but I perceive that there is in my bodily members a different law, fighting against the law that my reason approves” (Romans 7:21-23, NEB).

The two natures are within us, but the commandment is to the spiritual life. The sheep are to be as spiritual as possible. “Walk in the spirit” (Galatians 5:16). “Mortify the deeds of the body” (Romans 8:13). In this life we must always contend with the old nature. But if we mortify it, and then strive for the things of the spirit with all our time, energy, effort, and money, then just as assuredly this new nature can be ingrained into our beings and our behavior.

If we keep ourselves in the love of God, we’ll stay in this new nature—by his power. Neither the world, our flesh, nor even the devil will be able to make us change because we’ve been begotten. “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it” (Philippians 1:6). Therefore the unchangeableness of the sheeps’ nature can work to our advantage if we put spiritual things first.

## **#2—Sheep are not sheepish.**

“Sheepish” means to be embarrassed or bashful, as by having done something wrong or foolish; it is something sheep don’t do. They either look you straight in the eye, or they turn around and run the other way. But they never act bashfully.

We are not sheepish either. We’re not embarrassed or bashful as though we had done something wrong. If we lived in our own strength, we might well be embarrassed in front of God and in front of men. But a Christian has no embarrassment because his strength is in the Lord. We know that Christ makes intercession for us (Romans 8:34). We know that our sins are no longer imputed to us (Romans 4:8). So we stand straight, not in any merit of our own, but “justified by his blood” (Romans 5:9). We’re not bashful either. 1 Peter 3:15 says we are ready at any time to give a quiet and reverent answer to any one who wants a reason for the hope that is within us. We’re not ashamed of Jesus’ name: “Not ashamed of the gospel of Christ” (Romans 1:16). Paul speaks of a workman who is not ashamed, rightly dividing the word (2 Timothy 2:15). So like natural sheep we are not sheepish, not bashful, not shy about our Christianity.

## **#3—The sheeps’ most manifest instinct is to flock.**

Except for just a few breeds such as those that live on the highest mountain tops, sheep like to be together. Most animals, if left free to roam, will scatter. But if sheep are left to themselves, they’ll stay together. They’re gregarious. This is helpful because they lack many of the natural defenses other animals have, such as speed or the personal protection a porcupine has. The protection of the flock comes from staying close together. To flock means to be in company together, to be a group. It means togetherness as comrades, brethren, and associates. With the Christian, it means to assemble, congregate, meet, gather.

Many Scriptures speak of this togetherness. “There is one body and one spirit, one Lord, one faith” (Ephesians 4:4,5). And we might add, “One flock.” “Be of the same mind” (Philippians 4:2). “That your hearts might be comforted, knit together in love” (Colossians 2:2). “Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another. Love as brethren” (1 Peter 3:8). “Be of one mind. Live in peace. And the God of love and peace shall be with you” (2 Corinthians 13:11).

The true sheep desire to be with all the flock: no ifs, ands, or buts—no reservations. Flocking together provides sheep with a defense. Break a flock into smaller and smaller sub-flocks, and predators can with greater ease penetrate and make their killings.

## **#4—The propensity of sheep is to follow other sheep.**

This can be a problem. It’s best to follow only the shepherd not just because “greivous wolves shall enter in among you not sparing the flock” (Acts 20:29). Some look like sheep “but are false prophets” which the Lord said, will come in among us dressed in sheep’s clothing. “But inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Matthew 7:15).

It would be naïve to think our Lord's words applied only to his day, or only during the middle ages, or in the time just after a beloved leader's death. Our only safe course is to stay focused on the shepherd. We can learn from fellow sheep—we need their fellowship, protection, and support—but the last word must come from the shepherd.

The propensity to follow other sheep is not a characteristic to be cultured or developed. Following other sheep must be done only with great caution.

### **#5—Sheep are instinctively fearful.**

Sheep are afraid of the unknown, of darkness, and of strange pastures and buildings. That keeps them appreciative of the shepherd and his helpers. It keeps them together for their mutual support and comfort. And it is in these relationships of staying together that they qualify for promises like “Don't be afraid.” Notice how it's precisely directed to the flock: “Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). “Fear ye not, for ye are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:31). The spiritual flock, though fearful by nature, need not fear while they are in the Lord.

### **#6—Flocks seek light, and high ground.**

Actually it's easier for a hoofed animal to walk uphill. The high places apparently provide the flock with a good view to spot any approaching danger. In John 8:12 Jesus said, “I am the light of the world.” We know that light represents truth: “If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another” (1 John 1:7). The high ground we seek is the highest ground, as in “Glory to God in the highest” (Luke 2:14). Yes, clearly, flocks seek light and high ground.

### **#7—Aggressiveness is an important facet of sheep behavior.**

Sheep are not always the passive creatures one imagines in green pastures. Everyone who raises sheep will tell you, “Never turn your back on a ram.” Many have been seriously injured when they ignored this advice. The butting of rams seems almost ceremonial among them. They do it apparently to establish social rank, to get food, to get out of a gate, or to settle their differences. Sometimes they do it to gain attention.

Sheep are quiet when being sheared and our Lord perfectly sacrificed his life like a lamb being led to the slaughter. But in fact both male and female sheep are aggressive.

This forthright insight into the aggressiveness of sheep gives the “sheep illustration” a credibility, an honesty, a candidness. Sheep aren't perfect. There are aspects of our behavior that are not to be carried over into the new nature. Our aggressiveness must be channeled into improving ourselves. We are to be aggressive with ourselves, zealously working for the Lord, not butting heads with each other.

But we are not to be surprised nor discouraged when we see aggressiveness in others. It's somewhat like divisions. Paul urges us to have no divisions. Yet we have them. And he explains why: For there must also be factions or divisions among you. Why? "That they which are approved may be manifest" (1 Corinthians 11:18,19).

Would the apostle approve of the butting of heads? No, he would not. But yet there must be the butting of heads among us so "that they which are approved may be made manifest" (1 Corinthians 11:9). Amidst all the butting, some will show they still have the Lord's spirit. They will be approved by improving themselves, by forgiving, by apologizing, and by butting less. So aggressiveness among us is permitted by the Lord to see who will properly react to the test, who will have the right heart attitude, who will grow and manifest the fruits of the spirit.

This characteristic of the sheep cannot be used as an excuse even though it is inherited from the old nature. Jesus said, "It must be that these offenses come" (Matthew 18:78). It's necessary, but "woe to the man by whom the offense comes."

Thus we conclude, there must be butting and aggressiveness, but woe to the one by whom the aggressiveness comes. And when we see that kind of behavior, we should not be stumbled.

#### **#8—Sheep are very conservative; they like the familiar and resist change.**

This characteristic has its advantages and disadvantages. It's good to hold fast to the profession of our faith (Hebrews 3:6). And it's good to hold fast to that which is good (1 Thessalonians 5:21), especially our doctrines. At the same time change is required, including growth and fruitage (John 15). This is not a problem though. If we keep the shepherd in sight and listen to his word, we are content in that kind of change. We should not be like natural sheep and resist change in our characters and our understanding. Studying is useless if we do not learn anything or we don't gain better understanding. We must change.

#### **#9—Sheep welcome the shepherd, especially during the birthing process.**

Sheep lose their fear of humans and especially the shepherd when the female sheep give birth. Sometimes sheep act as though they don't need a shepherd, but pain changes their mind. With the females, it is the pain of giving birth.

Pain has the same effect on us. It reminds us of the transient nature of this world, the transient nature of money and health. Pain brings us back to the shepherd where we belong.

#### **#10—Sheep are not very intelligent.**

The professor said that "sheep are not very intelligent." By this he meant that when compared to some other animals like dogs, horses, perhaps even elephants, you cannot



teach sheep to do complicated routines or fancy tricks. It's just not something sheep can do. You'll never see sheep doing tricks in a circus; they are simple animals.

At the same time, the professor said "sheep are quick learners and have good memories." So even though we are not known for our brilliance—"not many wise" (1 Corinthians 1:26) —we can still learn our lessons quickly and keep them in our memories.

We are not called for our wisdom according to worldly wisdom. Sometimes the "sheep" get an inflated picture of their own intelligence just because they have an insight into God's plan, into the Scriptures. But it was not their brainpower that logically deduced this.

The Gospel age is a time of selection. Not everyone who is called will be chosen. Not everyone who says, "Lord, lord" will be ushered in. But uncomplicated lessons like these given by our Lord provide us insight to show the objectives of the spiritual life. They're not difficult concepts because they are like the principles of truth, honesty, righteousness, faith, purity.

These are the lessons that show us the difference between the wise and the foolish virgins, between the church and the great company, between the overcomers and those who fall by the wayside.

Sheep must have a very special place in God's heart. His son was called, "The lamb of God." What an opportunity we have been given, what a privilege, to achieve a position in a most special group. It will be worth the effort, the struggle, the resistance to the things of this world, the refusal to use worldly methods. It will be worth the study and the transformation to be part of the little flock of the Lord's sheep.

---

{FOOTNOTE: \* Ron Parker, "The Artful Shepherd," *Country Journal*, December 1982, p. 66.}

# Poems and Short Features

## Beyond the Veil

I can see my bridegroom waiting at the end of my way.  
With the crown of life he's promised me, if faithful I'd stay.  
He will joyfully embrace me, hold me with his strong, loving arms,  
and assure me I'll be part of his glorious bride.

And nearby him shall be standing, in the garden of the Lord,  
All the brethren who have gone before to receive their reward.  
Fellowshipping with each other, rejoicing in his love.  
Looking forward to their marriage to the worthy Lamb.

Then shall come that blessed moment we've awaited for so long,  
When in purity and righteousness we're presented by our Lord.  
To our tender heavenly Father. In adoration we'll bow low.  
With the Hallelujah chorus ringing in our ears.

All the angels will be singing, and with our harps we shall proclaim  
the matchless joy of being in the presence of the King of Kings.

—In The Dawning

## The Church in Glory

An intriguing possible portrayal of the church in glory is found in Job 38:31, in the Creator's challenging words to Job: "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?"

The Pleiades is a particularly beautiful star cluster located in the constellation Taurus, the Bull, one of the twelve signs of the Zodiac. On a clear night, a good pair of eyes can distinguish six or seven stars; otherwise, they will appear as a small silvery cloud. Yet there are no less than 250 stars in the Pleiades group, closely associated together and unsurpassed in beauty and loveliness.

Most stars within a grouping only **appear** to be together because they happen to be in our line of sight; in reality they are traveling in diverse directions at different rates of speed. But not so with the Pleiades—all of its stars are **actually** moving together in space, in a fixed, unalterable relationship. Thus our great God was revealing to Job 3,500 years ago that he had performed this miracle of the heavens, in binding the Pleiades group together. We believe it was for a grand purpose: to portray the church in glory.

The King James rendering, "the sweet influences of the Pleiades," conforms to the Hebrew original and seems best to convey the thought of this pleasant, delightful association of the body members in the kingdom work and beyond. "Pleiades," from the Septuagint rendering of the Hebrew *kiymah*, means "the congregation of the judge or ruler." What a lovely way for the Creator to portray these truths, by fixing the Pleiades cluster in the pageantry of the heavens to be seen throughout all eternity!

—Charles Redeker

## Psalm 23

My Shepherd is the Lord Most High,  
And all my wants shall be supplied:  
In pastures green he makes me lie,  
And leads by streams which gently glide.

He in his mercy doth restore  
My soul when sinking in distress;  
For his name's sake he evermore  
Leads me in paths of righteousness.

Yea, though I walk through death's dark vale,  
Ev'n there no evil will I fear,

Because thy presence shall not fail  
Thy rod and staff my soul shall cheer.

For me a table thou hast spread,  
Prepared before the face of foes;  
With oil thou dost anoint my head;  
My cup is filled and overflows.

Goodness and mercy shall not cease  
Through all my days to follow me;  
And in God's house my dwelling place  
With him forevermore shall be.

—The Psalms of David in Metre

## Many Pictures: One True Church

Scattered throughout the Old Testament  
And frequently used in the New  
Are symbols and types of a called-out class:  
The Church that is holy and true.

Just as the FIRSTBORN OF ISRAEL  
Were spared on that Passover night,  
The Church of the Firstborn, through Jesus' blood,  
Are justified now in God's sight.

These are called saints—they are sanctified  
And under the Husbandman's care.  
From Christ comes their sustenance; he's the Vine.  
As BRANCHES, rich fruitage they bear.

Likened to SHEEP, they most willingly  
Respond to the Shepherd's clear voice.  
Protected and nourished, they flock to him.  
Wherever he leads, they rejoice.

Pictured as JEWELS, they are valuable.  
With skill does the Father refine:  
Through loss, persecution and other trials,  
Their steadfast Christ-likeness will shine.

CALEB stepped out on God's promises.  
He counseled: Possess the good Land!  
As saints view their foes through the eye of faith,  
They likewise find rest as God planned.

Bullock and GOAT were both sacrificed  
In yearly atonement for sin.  
Thus Christ and his Church bear reproach and loss  
Before the world's blessings begin.

WHEAT well portrays their humility.  
The ripening grain will bend low.  
True saints have been blessed with a glimpse of God;  
Thanksgiving and praise overflow!

Purity, love and fidelity  
Abound in both Bridegroom and BRIDE.  
The Church, not defiled with the things of earth,

Seeks always with Christ to abide.

Saints are portrayed in their fellowship.  
Like EAGLES, their vision is keen;  
They feast on the Truths that their Lord supplies  
At Harvest, while still he's unseen.

Small was the ARMY OF GIDEON,  
But fearless and girded to win.  
Well trained and triumphant, the Church here shown  
Will vanquish the strongholds of sin.

Pictured on high as the PLEIADES,  
The glorified Church will remain  
United forever in serving God  
As sons on the Heavenly plane!

—Elaine L. Redeker

# News and Views

## Pastoral Bible Institute News

### Financial Statement of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc.

#### Statement of Net Worth [unaudited]

Cash and Investments: .....	\$152,108
Fixed Assets: .....	None
Liabilities:.....	None
NET WORTH, APRIL 30, 2004 .....	\$152,108

#### Analysis of Net Worth

##### INCOME

Contributions .....	\$ 11,628
Sale of Material .....	4,464
Herald Subscriptions .....	5,126
Interest .....	2,556
Memberships .....	35
Miscellaneous Income .....	705
<b>Total Income .....</b>	<b>\$ 24,514</b>

##### EXPENSES

Purchase of Material for Resale .....	\$ 3,973
Printing and Reproduction .....	10,024
Postage and Delivery.....	8,849
Administrative and General.....	362
Miscellaneous .....	813
<b>Total Operating Expense.....</b>	<b>\$ 24,021</b>

Net Gain for the Fiscal Year.....\$ 493

Net Worth, May 1, 2003.....	\$151,615
Net Worth, April 30, 2004 .....	\$152,108

*Respectfully submitted by Len Griehs, Treasurer*



## **PBI Annual Report for 2003-2004**

*Then wrought ... every wise hearted man, in whom the LORD put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary.—Exodus 36:1*

As in the preceding eighty-five years of our ministry, it has been with the cooperation of many hands that the work of the Pastoral Bible Institute has been accomplished for another year.

The main focus remains the production of our bimonthly journal, *The Herald of Christ's Kingdom*. Our total press run is about 2,500, equally divided between copies going to - individual subscribers and bulk quantities shipped to ecclesias in India and Africa.

The Herald continues to be available on audiocassettes. Each issue is also posted on our web site at [www.heraldmag.org](http://www.heraldmag.org) for those who wish to either view it on-line or download articles for their own use.

The web site continues to be an important tool in the ministry. During the past few years, we have had as many as twenty thousand visitors per month from nearly a hundred countries.

The web site contains every issue of The Herald beginning with the first published in 1918, the complete writings of Pastor Russell, and the Bibles and Bible research material available on the Bible Students' Library CD-ROMs. The site is searchable by word, phrase, or a combination of words via a search tool. Version 2 of the Bible Students' Library became available in May, 2003.

A special bonus issue of The Herald was recently distributed. This undated 44-page magazine contains a history of the Bible Student movement in the context of the development of the church over the past two thousand years, particularly since the Great Reformation to the present time.

This year brethren in Poland began distributing a Polish translation of selected issues of The Herald to four or five hundred subscribers. The Institute has offered modest financial assistance for this effort, primarily to make the magazine available to those who cannot afford the subscription price.

An illustrated edition of *The Divine Plan of the Ages* has been added to our literature list. We also worked with the Berean Bible Institute in Australia to produce *Adam to Zion*, a book inspired by the *Photo-Drama of Creation* written for younger readers. Both publications are available from the PBI for us\$7, postpaid to U.S. and Canadian addresses.

We welcome Todd Alexander as a new director of the PBI. For several years Todd has provided the color separation printing negatives for the covers of *The Herald*. We bid farewell with sincere appreciation for his past service to our departing board member, Andrew Polychronis.

We are most thankful to our heavenly Father for the privilege of having a small part in the work of ministering to the saints.

Directors and Editors  
of the Pastoral Bible Institute

### **Letters**

To assume that Jesus did not and could not keep the [Passover] supper because he would be breaking the Law would be going too far. [See “Time Elements of the Passover: Type and Antitype,” *The Herald*, March/April 2004.] He had perfect knowledge, and if anyone was mixed up, it was the religious leaders—not Jesus. Matthew 26:18 ... is a clear statement by the Master of his intent to eat the Passover with his disciples. We are told the disciples made ready the Passover [verse 19]. That evening hour the supper they sat down to was without a doubt the Passover supper.

—Eugene Burns, Indiana

### **World News**

#### **Religious**

The League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada has just released the 2003 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents. The Audit indicates that anti-Semitic activity in Canada is still on the rise with a 27.2% increase country-wide in 2003 compared to 2002. In total, 584 incidents were reported, which is the highest number in the twenty-one year history of the Audit. ... The number of reported incidents doubled from 2001 to 2003. The Audit gives precise information on the distribution of incidents across Canada, and the percentage increases in each area.

—B'nai Brith website, 3/18/2004

A Shia militia group loyal to radical cleric Muqtada Sadr wiped out a gypsy village in central Iraq which refused to adhere to its puritanical creed, killing some inhabitants and forcing the rest to flee. Scavengers scoured the ruins. Sayuid Yahya Shubari, the 30-year-old local clerical commander of the Mahdi's Army said "it was a well of debauchery, drunkenness and mafia, and they were buying and selling girls." The town's destruction has raised fears that the militia is not just operating above the law, but defining it. Mr. Shubari says his office operates its own Sharia (Islamic law) courts, and uses its Sharia police to apply Islamic punishments. Mr. Shubari confirmed that his office was punishing alcoholics with 80 lashes.

—Financial Times, 4/4/2004

## **Social**

Infosys Technologies, India's second largest software maker, said it has begun "aggressive hiring in America" to employ 500 people over the next three years to work for a new U.S. subsidiary, Infosys Consulting. ... These employees will be advising companies on how to improve efficiency through outsourcing and moving work to India.

—TIME, 4/19/2004

The Lord's Resistance Army is stepping up its rebellion in Uganda, abducting about 10,000 children in the last 18 months for use as fighters and sex slaves in what may be the world's most neglected humanitarian crisis, a senior U.N. official said Wednesday. The rebel group, which has waged an 18-year war against the Ugandan government, has now driven more than 1.5 million people from their homes in northern and eastern Uganda, U.N. Emergency Relief Coordinator Jan Egeland said. The rebels say they are fighting for the establishment of a government based on the biblical Ten Commandments. "Most of the soldiers are children and most of the victims are children," Egeland told reporters after briefing the U.N. Security Council on the crisis. Governments to date have pledged just 10% of this year's U.N. appeal for \$127 million in humanitarian aid for the region.

—Los Angeles Times, 4/15/2004

The United Nations director for relief in Sudan said that Arab militias were conducting a campaign of ethnic cleansing to drive black Africans out of a border region of the country with the apparent tolerance of the Sudanese government. Jan Egeland, the under secretary general for humanitarian affairs, said the armed groups were deliberately destroying food and humanitarian supplies and attacking refugee centers in a program of “systematic depopulation.” He estimated that 750,000 people had been forced from their homes and villages, tens of thousands had fled into neighboring Chad, and 10,000 might have died. Mr. Egeland said that relief workers had witnessed beatings, killings, and gang rapes, but that alerting Sudanese authorities had gotten no response. The fighting began a year ago over local protests that the oil-rich Sudanese government was ignoring the needs of Darfur, which borders Chad.

—New York Times, 4/3/2004

Jack Kelley, a star foreign correspondent at USA Today before he resigned earlier this year, appears to have fabricated substantial portions of at least eight major articles in the last ten years, including one that earned him a finalist nomination for a Pulitzer Prize in 2002, the newspaper reported yesterday. USA Today, the nation’s largest-circulation newspaper, said Mr. Kelley had engaged in his deceptions around the globe, apparently inventing such accounts as his face-to-face encounter with a suicide bomber in Jerusalem, his participation in a high-speed hunt in 2003 for Osama bin Laden, and his witnessing the departure of six refugees from Cuba who, he claimed, later drowned. The revelation of Mr. Kelley’s deceptions is but the latest example of incidents of plagiarism and fabrication that have come to light in recent months at more than a dozen newspapers, including *The Chicago Tribune* and *The Macon Telegraph*. Jay Rosen, the chairman of the journalism department at New York University, said that the disclosure of Mr. Kelley’s journalistic sins was likely to further undermine the public’s faith in the veracity of newspapers and journalists.

—New York Times, 3/20/2004

## **Political**

With a burst of jubilation from Dublin to Lublin on Poland's eastern frontier, 10 countries representing 75 million people joined the European Union [yesterday], a huge step in unifying a continent rent by war and totalitarianism in the last century and aspiring to be the model of peace and democracy for the new. The largest expansion in EU history included five formerly Communist east-central European states—Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Hungary; three ex-Soviet Baltic republics—Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia; and the Mediterranean island nations of Malta and Cyprus. Romania and Bulgaria are due to join in 2007.

--Los Angeles Times, 5/2/2004

Three years after the United Nations declared a worldwide offensive against AIDS, shortages of money and battles over patents have kept antiretroviral drugs from reaching more than 90 percent of the poor people who need them. Progress in distributing the drugs, which have sharply cut the death rate in the United States and other Western countries, has been excruciatingly slow despite steep drops in their prices. As a result, only about 300,000 people in the world's poorest nations are getting the drugs, of the six million who need them, according to the World Health Organization. Experts, advocacy groups and health officials agree that the delays, compounded by inadequate medical facilities and training in very poor countries, are likely to persist unless spending is stepped up sharply. Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, has had trouble running even so much as a pilot program for 15,000 of an estimated 3½ million infected people. Many of the country's 25 treatment centers, which were selling the drugs at a subsidized price of \$85 a year, ran dry in September and did not get new supplies until February.

—New York Times, 2/28/2004

The deadly bombings in Madrid underscore a fact the world's police long have known and hoped to avoid: railroads are nearly impossible to protect. Rail systems typically span hundreds of miles of track and facilities, too large to be watched constantly and completely, and move thousands of people every day. The U.S. rail system includes about 140,000 miles of routes. This makes it almost impossible to fully secure them from potential terrorist attacks. Passengers and baggage get aboard with little or no screening.

—Wall Street Journal, 3/12/2004

## **Financial**

The economies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are set to expand for their sixth successive year of strong growth, according to a report published by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the region's multilateral bank. The study highlights the continuing success of investment in the region nearly 15 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and just two weeks before eight ex-Communist states, headed by Poland, join the European Union on May 1. William Buiter, the bank's chief economist, said in an interview that the larger EU accession states—the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia—were seeing “real reform fatigue” and “populist escapism” with voters reluctant to back further painful restructuring.

—Financial Times, 4/19/2004

The clandestine network created by Abdul Qadeer Khan, the Pakistani nuclear scientist, netted \$100 million for the technology it sold to Libya alone. Under extraordinary security—guards with automatic weapons stationed every few yards—officials showed the high-speed centrifuges marketed to countries seeking to enrich uranium for bomb fuel. North Korea and Iran are believed to have purchased essentially the same package of technology that Libya obtained after negotiating with Dr. Khan in the mid-1990s. The \$100-million estimate was nearly twice as high as the highest previous estimate of what Libya paid for its nuclear technology. The \$100-million figure does, however, explain how a government scientist like Mr. Khan could afford a lavish lifestyle, in Pakistan, in homes around the world, and at his hotel in Mali.

—New York Times, 3/16/2004

## Israel

Libya armed itself with weapons of mass destruction for the purposes of a war with Israel, the son of Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi told the London-based Al Hayat newspaper in an interview. In the interview, Seif al-Islam, Gadhafi's second son and the man tipped to succeed him, explained the reasons why Libya decided to forgo its chemical and biological weapons, to stop its nuclear program, and to renew diplomatic ties with the United States and Britain. "The third and most important reason is that we developed weapons for the purposes of a war with the enemy," he said. "We saw that the armed struggle of the Palestinians, which lasted 50 years, did not produce results like those attained in negotiations that lasted five years. [The Palestinians] said to the commander-in-chief [Colonel Gadhafi] that they gave up the gun, decided to opt for negotiations, and achieved what they had not achieved in the 50 years from Beirut through Tunis to Amman." Gadhafi's son also revealed in the interview that the negotiations with the U.S. and Britain over the issue of weapons of mass destruction were concluded before the war began in Iraq in April 2003.

—Ha'aretz, 3/16/2004

Fatah Tanzim activists in Nablus attempted to use an 11-year-old boy to smuggle a bomb through a roadblock and tried to detonate the bomb when soldiers stopped him. The Tanzim gave the boy a bag containing a seven-to-ten kilogram bomb stuffed with bolts. They promised him a large sum of money if he would carry it through the roadblock and hand it to a woman waiting on the other side. "A military policewoman lifted the bag, which was heavy, and placed it on the table. The soldier noticed the boy was uneasy, and when she questioned him, he told her the bag didn't belong to him and he had been asked to take it through," Lt.-Col. Guy, a Paratroop Brigade battalion commander, told *The Jerusalem Post*. "When the boy's dispatchers saw he was being detained, they dialed the cell phone inside the bag meant to detonate the bomb in an attempt, but it failed to go off," he said. Guy said it is common for terrorist groups to use children or women as couriers for arms and explosives.

—Jerusalem Post, 3/15/2004

Intel researchers have developed a new chip technology that will speed up the flow of information to the speed of light. The Israeli-developed electro-optical chipsets are based on silicon wafers capable of converting electronic signals to optic signals within the chips. The new chip will enable communication to be conducted at the speed of light—some ten times faster than the present speed. The development could potentially revolutionize computing and telecommunications, yet might not cost very much. “This is the greatest [Research and Development] success,” said Amir Elstein, co-CEO of Intel Israel and director of Intel’s Jerusalem facility. “There is no need to build new factories. Faster chips can be manufactured at lower cost, with the same production infrastructure used in existing facilities. We took a theoretical physical effect and, using existing infrastructure, moved it up to a level that was previously impossible to implement.”

—Arutz 7, 4/21/2004

The number of visitors arriving in Israel surged 44 percent in the first two months of 2004, compared to the same period last year, the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and Tourism Ministry reported. Some 183,200 tourists arrived during this period, compared to 127,000 in the months preceding the U.S. invasion of Iraq. These include Jewish tourists as well as Christian groups from North America, Europe, and Latin America. Israelis have also enjoyed a higher level of traveling since the end of the Iraq War. Since April 2003 through February 2004, the CBS and Tourism Ministry have reported a 2.1% average rise per month in exits.

—Jerusalem Post, 3/18/2004

Precipitation in Israel over the three main rainy months of winter (December, January, and February) was slightly higher than average, the Israel Meteorological Service (IMS) announced. The IMS said it was the first time in 53 years that Israel experienced three consecutive winters of above average rainfall. As a result, the Sea of Galilee topped off at its maximum height of 208.90 meters below sea level. The sea has risen 5.52 meters, which represents 966 million cubic meters of water. Since Israel regularly pumps out one million cubic meters a day to store in the coastal aquifers, that means well over one billion cubic meters of water have flowed into the sea, breaking the long drought.

—Bridges for Peace website, 3/24/2004

Nearly one out of every three elderly Israelis requires state aid to enable him/her to survive. There are currently 640,000 Israelis over the age of 65, of whom 210,000 are in need of monthly financial assistance. Those requiring assistance receive a monthly payment of NIS1,069 (approximately US\$237). Sixty-four percent of the senior citizens interviewed stated that at least once a month, they are compelled to decide between buying food or paying other bills.

—Arutz 7, 4/9/2004