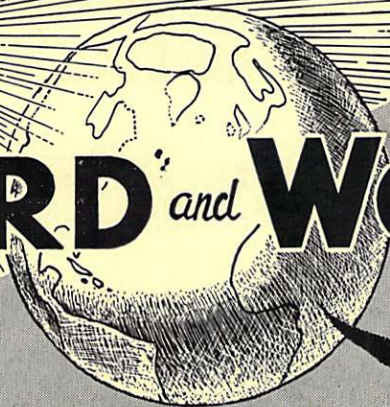


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MARCH, 1976

## **God's Word Prunes the Vine**

Page 66

## **"Revelation" Was Sent With a Divine Purpose**

Page 69

## **A Candid Look at our Worship Services**

Page 74

## **Satan All-out to Destroy the Jews**

Page 77



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## In This Issue

God's Family —W. R. H.	65
A Real Sacrifice —Brandon Church Bulletin	68
Understanding The Scriptures —W. J. Johnson	69
Viewing The News —Ernest E. Lyon	71
Love In Service —Willis H. Allen	73
Questions Asked of Us —Carl Kitzmiller	74
Prophecy: The Jews and the Tribulation —A. G. Fruchtenbaum	77
Reprint: The Love of God Manifested —R. H. Boll	81
MISSIONARY MESSENGER	83
Success —Asa Baber	86
Where Should the Christian Give His Money? —J. B. Marchbanks	87
Stoning Awaits You —(From <i>Our Hope</i> )	93
The Sins Of Geography —O. L. Bayless	94
NEWS AND NOTES	95

Robert Heid is a minister in Louisville, Kentucky



## God's Family

W. R. H.

### THOUGHTS WHILE PRUNING

I find it difficult to do the February work with grapevines without musing on the 15th chapter of John. Not that the six small vines I have are all that important, but there is something about having the shears in hand and realizing that the destiny of the twigs, as well as the improvement of the general health of the vine and the quality of the fruit, depend upon the work that is just now being done.

Vines, like fruit trees, can go along unattended. It would seem that "nature" would do just what is best for them and that they would not need help from any intelligence. But such has not proved to be the case. It is true that they may continue to live, but the production of desirable fruit is practically nil. Man, likewise, when left to work out his own destiny according to nature, is in as bad a fix. Without divine pruning, planning, and support the result is uncontrolled growth and blighted fruit. Self-shade prevails, where the sunlight of God's counsel could have reached, to turn the blight of sin into lovely fruitage.

Jesus' parable of the vine and the branches does not deal with the sinfulness of our past, nor the joy of finding Jesus, but with the Christian Walk; and that, for the child of God, is what the rest of this life is all about.

### MAN IS A POOR VINEDRESSER

We cannot determine precisely which branches bore the fruit last year, nor can we be sure that every blemish in the vine is fatal and should therefore be removed. Twigs that might seem diseased, as far as I can judge, might really be sound and promising. I am not wise. But the Vinedresser that Jesus tells of, the Father, is altogether wise and excellent. He can well remember if or how much fruit we have borne, and if not, why not. He knows if our branch is diseased, and if so, how seriously. Furthermore, since He knows the future, He is the wise One who can bend and shape our lives to the all-important end to which we should be turned. If improvement is possible, not only does He know what to do, and how to do it, but *desires* to accomplish that very thing for each of us. What unmerited favor that God should undertake as Vinedresser for us!



## PRUNING HAS TWOFOLD RESULTS

First, in the nature of the process, pruning is the removal of what is either superfluous or ill. This is not necessarily the immediate removal of the entire branch. Jesus' words farther on show that the cleansing is done on an individual basis and that the individual survives, cleansed from the hindrances.

Second, then, is the improvement that is experienced under the kind hand of a loving God. Strength is multiplied and properly flows to the remaining portion of the cleansed branch, making fruit a natural consequence, since twigs that would only sap the strength have been eliminated. In this point, Jesus used the terms fruit, more fruit, and much fruit. This is the ascending triad of Christian usefulness.

## PRUNING IS BY THE WORD

Jesus told the disciples that they were clean already, because of the words that He had spoken unto them. No wonder that Satan is so quick to snatch away the word when it is sown in the heart. And we wonder why the Word of God oftentimes does not appeal to the hearts and desires of men. The natural man does not want to be pruned. He is not desirous of any chastening from God. And as for wanting to know God's will and His way, the majority of people prefer to go their own way. Why, then, would the pruning of the Word of God be sought out? Rather, a deaf ear will be turned so that the pruning is thereby avoided.

If there is ever to be a pruning away of lust, immorality, greed, hatred, pride, selfishness, or meanness, that pruning can only be had by the word of God, as the Holy Spirit reveals it unto our hearts and shows us our needs. Without such working of the Word, there can be only evil fruit from our corrupt tree. We see again how basic and important is a hearing of God's word: how it needs to be made known to all who know Him not, and studied by all who have already believed.

## A VITAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS

Perhaps the most marvelous thought in the analogy is that we have a "vine-to-branch" relationship with the Son of God. This means that we have identical life, identical strength, identical fruit. Such a union with God is all but incredible. And yet, Jesus said that herein is the Father *glorified*, that ye bear much fruit. Just think; there is something that we do that glorifies the God of heaven!

Jesus spoke of our abiding in Him as a matter of our will and choice. He urges us to abide but indicates that we may not. Those who sever themselves from Him are cast out, withered and burned up.

## WHAT IS FRUIT?

We often think of evangelism and personal evangelism as the fruit envisioned here. Certainly they are paramount. But there

are many other fruits. The Holy Spirit is the essence of the new life in Christ Jesus, and the fruits of the Holy Spirit are legion. A life of praise, lived in the power of the Holy Spirit, will bear love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. I think that this list from Galatians 5:22, 23 is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather typical, or in basic outline.

Paul told the Corinthians in his second letter (9:6-14) that the gift that they sent to the needy saints would cause praise to arise unto God (and this is where the praise should go!). Thus we see that giving of money can surely be fruit. So can humble humanitarian service, as with the good Samaritan that Jesus told about. Living a good but simple Christian life, as Jesus urged, being the "light of the world" will lead men who see our good works to glorify the Father who is in heaven.

Realizing that whatever causes fellowmen to praise and thank God is fruitbearing, we will know that the Christian's fruitbearing is of many varieties. We need to see fruit in the lives of fellow Christians wherever we find it, and strive to let our own fruit become "much," as Jesus has intended for each one.

---

## A Real Sacrifice

Two wealthy Christians, a lawyer and a merchant, joined a party that was going around the world.

In Korea one day they saw in a field by the side of the road a boy pulling a crude plow while an old man held the plow handles and directed it. The lawyer was amused and took a snapshot of the scene.

"That's a curious picture. I suppose they are very poor," he said to the missionary who was interpreter and guide.

"Yes," was the quiet reply. "That is the family of Chi Noui. When the church was being built, they were eager to give something to it, but had no money; so they sold the only ox they had and gave the money to the church. This spring they are pulling that plow themselves."

The lawyer and the businessman by his side were silent for some moments. Then the businessman said, "That must have been a real sacrifice." "They did not call it that," said the missionary. They thought it was *fortunate* that they had an ox to *sell*."

The lawyer and the businessman had not much to say. But when they reached home and the lawyer took the picture to his minister and told him of the incident, he said, "I want to double my pledge to our building program. *And give me some plow work to do!* Why I have never known what sacrifice for the Lord meant. A converted heathen had to teach me. I am ashamed to say I have never given anything to the church that cost me anything."

How many that call themselves followers of Christ ever sold the ox and then pulled the plow? Have you?

—From the Brandon Church of Christ Bulletin.

# UNDERSTANDING THE SCRIPTURES

W. J. Johnson

It is reasonable to believe that God had a definite purpose in giving the manifestation of Jesus Christ to His Son for His servants, "even the things which must come to pass hereafter," and that they are profitable, practical and understandable.

Christ Jesus sent His angel to signify them unto John the beloved apostle who, inspired by the Holy Spirit, recorded them, and testified that they are true words of God (not dark sayings with an uncertain meaning) and said "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and they that keep the things written therein for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:1-3).

Inasmuch as the Revelation of Jesus Christ is an inspired message of God it behooves us to recognize it as profitable for us in every phase of work in our Master's vineyard. If it is practical, it is also "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." For this reason we can see how the things revealed in this portion of God's message will profit us. If we take the right attitude toward God, our faith will become more real, our hope encouraged, and our love will grow stronger, because we can see more clearly how "all things work together for the good of them who love God and are called according to His purpose."

It is important to believe the Revelation of Christ Jesus has an important place to fill in the Bible message of God. For God has a definite purpose in all things that He does. This idea is supported by its being given specially for the churches (Rev. 22:16).

It is true that there are hard spots in the book of Revelation just as there are in other parts of the Bible. Nevertheless they contain something of value to us. If we take the attitude of the good ground hearer they will be profitable to us. But on the other hand if we should trim and twist them to fit our way of thinking, condemnation will rest upon us just as it does upon "the ignorant and unstable who wrest other scriptures to their own condemnation" (2 Pet. 3:16; Rev. 22:18, 19).

In every occupation, in every business, and in every profession and enterprise there is an interest manifested in the outcome. What will it be? A bright outlook gives inspiration, stimulates deeper interest, and encourages steadfastness in the understanding. Such is true in respect to the Christian life. If we can see a glorious outcome, we feel that our works of faith, patience of hope, and labors of love in Christ Jesus are worth while. We feel secure, if we continue to walk by faith in the grace of God. Also we can see a reason for rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:2).

Beginning in Genesis and continuing through the Bible we find that there are many things told us about the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, which culminate in Revelation. The outcome surpasses all earthly glories combined. If we view them in faith we can perceive what His personal coming means to us, provided we are willing to suffer with Him that we may be glorified with Him (Rom. 8:17).

In Acts 1:8-11 two heavenly witnesses testified that Jesus Christ would return in person. So we should believe that He will come again in person, not through a system of teaching, or some one as a representative. John the beloved apostle believed that He will come in person for he says in 1 John 3:2, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see him as he is." Paul saw Him in His glory and heard His voice when He appeared to him in the way to Damascus. In his letter to the church at Philippi he wrote, "Our citizenship is in heaven, whence we wait a Saviour who shall fashion our bodies like unto His own glorious body" (Phil. 3:20, 21).

Now in Revelation 1:7, John testified that His coming would be in person. And in verse 8 he heard the following words evidently spoken by Jesus Christ when He appeared to John on the Isle of Patmos, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, who is and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." And verses 12-19 of chapter one testify that He appeared to him in the brightness of His glorious body. In his mortal body John could not stand. He fell at His feet as one dead. "But he laid his right hand on me," John said, "and spoke the comforting words, 'Fear not,' " words which he had often heard Him speak. "I am the first and the last, and the Living One, I was dead, but I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades."

Notice the words of Peter, "wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace of God that shall be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:13). Then the body is redeemed and fashioned like the glorious body of Christ Jesus, thus preserving body, soul, and spirit (1 Thes. 5:23; 4:14-16; 1 Cor. 15:51-56). "Every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure (1 John 3:3).

---

"Grave on thy heart each past red-letter day!  
Forget not all the sunshine of the way  
By which the Lord hath led thee; answered prayers,  
And joys unasked, strange blessings, lifted cares,  
Grand promise-echoes! Thus thy life shall be  
One record of His love and faithfulness to thee."

—F. R. Havergal



Ernest Lyon is a professor of music at the University of Louisville and minister of the Highland Church of Christ.



## Viewing the News

Ernest E. Lyon

BILLY JAMES HARGIS was very viciously attacked in a national magazine recently by reporters who never talked to Hargis even when they were in his town for a good while. The newspapers picked up the story from the magazine, but they have not yet, so far as I have seen, reported that Hargis denies the entire story. A lot of people will believe the story because Hargis will not sue. He will not sue because of a decision by our Supreme Court several years ago denying to public figures the right to sue when attacked unless they can "prove malice," an impossibility. The decision was made in the case of General Walker, who had been awarded several million dollars in the lower courts.

AMERICAN SECURITY will be hurt if Angola falls completely into Soviet hands — not to mention the great threat to Rhodesia, South Africa, and any other country wanting to maintain freedom.

THE MISSING DAY in the stories of Joshua and Hezekiah was thoroughly explored and written about by a man named Totten a good while ago. Now the story is coming back again because of claims that in the space program, the computer has turned up a "missing" day for its calculations. The claim has been made a number of times and has been denied by some in the program, but we still know that the sun stood still for nearly a day in Joshua's battles and went back 40 minutes (10 degrees) in Hezekiah's day. So I am inclined to believe that the story is true and that scientists afraid of the anti-Christian nature of much of our government now, deny the story to keep on the "right" side of

those in power. The latest I have seen on this is from an article reviewing a chapter in Harold Hill's book, "How to Live Like a King's Kid" (Logos International, Plainfield, N. J.).

FREEDOM is a word that is being bandied about a lot these days, but almost every day legislative units over the country decide "there ought to be a law" and take away some more freedoms in the name of helping "the people" against their great "enemies" — usually not defined but mostly being those who are producing the goods that make our living standards high. The government that protects you from yourself is going to take away all your freedoms, so which do you want?

DAN LYONS, former Catholic priest, is now editor of *Christian Crusade Weekly*. He has been a fighter for freedom for many years.

IT IS INTERESTING to contrast the treatment being given to J. Edgar Hoover and Martin Luther King after their deaths. Hoover was a strong anti-communist and King had many associations with communist leaders, using a number of them in his organizations. The attack on Hoover is being made largely in the name of protecting King's name, picturing him simply as a great fighter for "civil rights" for black people. I do not presume to stand in judgment of either man, and I rejoice in any good brought about by any man, but my own study of Hoover's life indicates that he was a true American working for the good of the country. It is strange that he is attacked for checking on King but the presidents who suggested this

and countenanced him in this area are not attacked.

ANOTHER reason for the attack on Hoover is the effort by the ones who want to change our country for the worse trying to keep America from having protection from enemies within (FBI mostly) and without (CIA or other intelligence-gathering groups). It looks like they have succeeded at a time when Russia has tremendously increased its KGB and other spy groups.

MRS. FORD, according to Religious News Service, is sending out the following word to those who question her motives in her famous statements: "My husband and I have lived 26 years of faithfulness in marriage. I do not believe in premarital relationships, but I realize that many of today's generation do not share my views. However, this must never cause us to withdraw the love, counseling and understanding that they may need now more than ever before."

IN CASE YOU'VE WONDERED: The South Vietnamese are still fighting the invaders from North Vietnam in spite of overwhelming odds against them. Guerilla tactics are being turned against the communists for a change, due to the realization of the loyal South Vietnamese that all they could expect would be to be added to the statistics of the dead if they surrender.

HAVE YOU HEARD that there is a very high rate of suicides among Transcendental Meditation teachers? I have heard that from several reliable sources, but I have not seen any case of it myself.

THOSE SUPPORTING homosexual attempts to be accepted as Christians in good standing will stop at nothing. One of the latest is the claim that the word "know" used in the Sodom story in Genesis does not refer to sexual relations (homosexual in this case). Continue to pray for such darkness.

IN MANY STATES efforts are being made to destroy private schools at all levels, but I feel that the central government will beat the states to it. The department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) has

ordained that schools with students who receive G. I. benefits, grants, government loans or similar aid must be treated as if the funds were received directly by the institution itself. If that ruling stands a tremendous step toward centralized control (next step - destruction?) has been made.

ALSO NOTE THIS: New I.R.S. regulations published in Bulletin 1975-49 on Dec. 9, 1975 states that income-tax exemptions will be denied to private schools that discriminate by reason of race, color, or national or ethnic origin. It also states that schools which favor racial minority groups in admissions, facilities, programs, or financial assistance do not violate that rule. These rules apply to all schools that apply for federal tax exemption even if they receive no government funds. To add to that the schools are required to keep records of the racial composition of faculty and staff and are ordered to keep files detailing the race of any persons receiving scholarship and other financial aid. Yet the I.R.S. mandate states that it does not require schools to keep records which are in violation of state or federal law in spite of the fact that federal (and many state) laws prohibit requiring a student or employee to disclose his race or ethnic background or for the school to keep such records.

WOMEN who have been ordained priests of the Episcopal Church are barred from Episcopal parishes of the Diocese of Lexington (Ky.), according to Bishop Addison Hosea, as reported in Ben L. Kaufman's column in the Cincinnati Enquirer on Feb. 5, 1976. This prohibition does not affect the work of more than 100 women deacons, Bishop Hosea is reported to have added.

THREE INDIANAPOLIS churches were reported by Kaufman to be included in a British Broadcasting Corporation documentary on world religions. One is a black church (Second Christian), one a main-line denominational church (North United Methodist) and one represents successful Fundamentalism (Baptist Temple). I do not know when the documentary will be made public.

ABOUT 21 WOMEN are reported to be serving as deacons in the

Southern Baptist churches of Illinois, none of them in a pastoral role.

CAMP PENDLETON has the first Lutheran woman chaplain on active duty with the U.S. armed forces. The Rev. Christine E. Miller, ALC, the daughter of a Navy officer, reported for duty on January 8, 1976. She is also said to be the first woman chaplain to serve with the Marines.

CHAPLAIN RAY, after stories got in papers about it, confirms that some

of the Manson Family have been converted and some of them are trying to win Manson to Christ.

KEEP PRAYING for our country, for the unity of God's people, for the spread of the gospel throughout all the world—even into some places that call themselves "churches." Thank you for your help with information for this column. Keep your questions and comments and clippings coming to Ernest E. Lyon, 2629 Valletta Road, Louisville, Ky. 40205.

## Love In Service

Willis H. Allen

We have been reminded that love is the supreme motivation of the Christian for all his acts. It is the fulfillment of the law and has no limit. It thus becomes the test of our attitude and service to one another. It is also the test of our service to God, our consecration, our devotion, our loyalty and faithfulness. We wonder sometimes why there is such a laxity among Christians in their attention to the things of God and of His church; why attendance at church services is on the wane; why we cannot find men ready and willing to fill needed places of special service to the church, such as elders and deacons; why it is so difficult to interest the young people in some special effort on their behalf. If I prefer to lie in bed on Sunday morning rather than to get up and prepare to go with my family to Sunday school and church, am I not showing greater concern for my personal comfort and interest than for my Lord and His work. If I prefer to stay at home on Sunday nights and watch some silly program on TV rather than attend the services of the church and have fellowship with God and my brethren, is it not because I do not love my Lord sufficiently? The great need, then, is to get men to love God.

Today the world is dying for lack of love. Enmity and strife are seen everywhere—among groups and individuals. Backbiting and slanderous whisperings poison the minds of others in their insinuations against God's own. We should make no distinctions when we love. Following Christ is to love as He loves. Love knows no partialities, no selfish motives, no limit to what it can do, and it always believes the best about others.

Love is not just loving those who love us. If that is the extent of our love, Jesus asks, "What do ye more than others?" Here is the crucial test in loving our enemies. There is an *extra* in the life of the believer—the second mile to walk; the other cheek to turn.

—In *The Bible Way*, 1963

Carl Kitzmiller is a minister in Oakdale, Louisiana.



## *Questions Asked of Us*

Carl Kitzmiller

Carl Kitzmiller

Would it not be better if the churches spent more time in worship and in partaking of the Lord's Supper?

Without a doubt many even of those congregations which observe the Lord's Supper each Lord's Day would do well to put more emphasis on the Supper and on the worship associated with it. This is one of the primary purposes of meeting on the Lord's Day (Acts 20:7), yet in many cases the Lord's Supper becomes a sort of side issue done somewhat mechanically and hurriedly. There is certainly a sense in which it takes time to be holy and to worship. So what we shall say hereafter is not intended to justify stale, mechanical practice of a routine or the lack of awareness which can creep into any act of worship. But knowing something of the thinking that lies back of the question, I wish to comment on some of its ramifications. I am not personally convinced that more time is the answer in a lot of cases.

We must not fall into the trap of believing that more time, perhaps much more time, devoted to this act of worship necessarily makes it better or more pleasing to the Lord. Changed emphases and new routines may get us out of the rut for a while, but these then tend to create a new rut to claim us. I do not find the word of God placing much emphasis on the quantity of time consumed as being a measure of the worship rendered. Obviously quality of worship is important too. The prophets of Baal spent all day crying to their god, dealing themselves misery and cutting themselves, even showing a great fervency of spirit; but in a short, simple prayer at the close of the day Elijah prayed and fire fell from heaven (1 Kgs. 18:25-39). I have seen men take advantage of the chance to address the congregation when remarks of reminder or exhortation were being made at the Lord's table. Some of these rambled on and on, strayed from the purpose of such remarks, hoped to impress someone with their spirituality, understanding, or speech-making ability, but really only succeeded in distracting many from a satisfying participation in the Supper. Others, with a few clear spiritual remarks, have sometimes made

us keenly aware of the great truths being remembered, and we came away moved by the participation.

There are those who tell us that if we do not know how to pray all night we know nothing about prayer; prayer should be long and punishing to the flesh. Their standard seems to be that we shall be heard for much speaking or at least for taking a long time to do our speaking to God. Again, preachers may overrate their preaching. A few men have made a specialty of the long sermon, often scolding their audiences for any sign of restlessness. After all, it is the word of God that is being preached, so we should just drink it in hour after hour. And do we not have the example of Neh. 8 for all-day reading and expounding? There are human limitations, however, so that extended time does not always result in edification. We have frames of dust, and the Lord is aware of that fact (Ps. 103:14). Advocates of personal work may become so intensely concerned with the importance of their method that they insist we have fewer church meetings and get out knocking doors. In some areas Jehovah's Witnesses work particularly hard on Sunday mornings, when the non-Christian and the half-hearted Christians are at home. One can make a pretty good case for greater use of personal work on Sundays. Now our point is this: If we are to satisfy the pray-ers and the preachers and the more-time-for-the-Supper folks, we are going to spend most of the day on Sundays in a very long worship service, and that is going to prevent almost all personal work on that day. There is a matter of balance involved in these things.

The early church "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). Of course they met for the breaking of bread, and who can believe that it was an indifferent, worship-less performance? But they did not go off the deep end and neglect all else. They also engaged in other acts of worship. And they engaged in that which may not be classed under worship in the strictest sense of the word. They must have engaged in prayers which were not just adoration for our wonderful Lord but which interceded for the sick, the persecuted, etc. (cf. Acts 12:5ff). Singing was not just metrical praying but served to teach and admonish one another (Col. 3:16). There was time for admonition, exhortation, rebuke, teaching *everything* Jesus gave for His church (2 Tim. 4:2; Matt. 28:20). We are not necessarily insisting on the somewhat traditional type of service, but there must be some good in the arrangement that has resulted from the combined wisdom of so many of God's people, and we do believe God intended to achieve several things in having His people assemble regularly.

People who love singing may tend to overemphasize singing. People who love the word and enjoy good, capable exposition thereof may overemphasize preaching and teaching. People who

have spiritual appreciation for the Lord's death and who have learned to view with awe and quickened understanding the great work of God in the cross will probably tend to overemphasize the Lord's Supper. But all of these need to be careful that their love, appreciation, or attainment does not somehow shut out or "turn off" the less spiritual person, the young Christian of less attainment, the unsaved, and others. We do have to be concerned somewhat with what even the unsaved person thinks of the services (see, for example, 1 Cor. 14:23-25). There are concessions, of course, which we *cannot* make, but in church services involving many different types of personalities and varying degrees of spiritual development there must be some attention given to these differences. It is hardly a spiritual attitude which says, for example: "I like long prayers, and anyone who does not appreciate a good long talk with the Lord can just go elsewhere or go fly a kite!" Let the individual in private pray as long as he likes, but in public there will be more worship, more participation, more real benefit for most people in a prayer of more moderate proportions. Let the individual in private spend as much time as he will in meditation and appreciation of the Lord's death for our sins, but a slow, unplanned, drawn out observance of the Lord's Supper will not necessarily minister good to every worshipper or result in a higher type of worship to the Lord. These are facts of our humanity that we have to live with. These infirmities that mar to some extent our present worship will be removed when we are with the Lord, but until then we have to live with them. We are not suggesting that our present worship be reduced to the lowest common denominator, but we do have to deal with people as they are and not just as we would like them to be.

The Lord's Supper is a teaching device as well as an act of worship, much in the same way that the Jewish feasts were teaching devices as well as acts of worship (Ex. 12:26-27). By it we "proclaim the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. 11:26). Now the person who needs that proclamation most is the unregenerate man. So while the unregenerate man should not partake of the Supper, it is a mistake to shut him off from seeing it observed, whether we do so by the manner of observance or by having it in a closed Christian gathering.

Is it wrong to play cards?

We might also ask: Is it wrong to shoot a gun? Is it wrong to see a movie? It is not necessarily wrong to do any of these things, but any of these things could be very wrong! Guns may be used for violence, murder, and all sorts of evil, but we should not suppose everyone who uses a gun is guilty of these misuses. They may also be used to provide food and survival for mankind.

Movies are not wrong because of the mechanical process involved, but they may be wrong because of the material presented.



Let it be conceded—yes, even declared and issued as a warning—that many of the commercially prepared movies are filthy and evil. But this method could also be used to present spiritual truth. We need to be accurate just what it is that we protest.

Cards are often associated with the evil of gambling. As a gambling device or activity, they stand condemned. They are just a game, an amusement, in the simplest sense, however; and one can play cards without going to the dives, without gambling, or without any of the other evils that may be associated in some people's minds. And amusement in and of itself is not necessarily wrong; it may be very good.

As to non-gambling usage, about the only evil would be the possible cause of stumbling to someone. This objection may be weighty or trivial, depending on who is involved, the attitude of the community, etc. I personally do not especially recommend cards because of possible criticism, but I am also aware that this is an area where we must beware of spiritual legislation. Given the right set of circumstances, almost anything Christians do could become a source for criticism.

Has anyone ever become a gambler because he knew how to play cards? No doubt. But gambling is possible with almost any game. One suspects that it takes more than ignorance of how to use a deck of cards to keep people from doing that wrong.

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Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

# **PROPHECY**

## **THE JEWS AND THE TRIBULATION**

Fourth and concluding Article

by Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum

### **IV. THE JEWS AND THE END OF THE TRIBULATION**

The final area of this study is to see how the Jews are related to the ending of the Tribulation Period. In order to understand what is happening we must keep in mind that during the Tribulation there will be four groups of Jews.

#### **A. THE FOUR GROUPS OF JEWS**

The first group discussed in the February issue is the 144,000 Jews. These will be Jewish evangelists saved sometime after the Rapture, and they will conduct a worldwide revival during the first half of the Tribulation.

The second group is what we might call Christian Jews. Of course the 144,000 are also Christian Jews; but, due to a lack of a

better name, this term is applied to the second group. Basically, these are other Jewish people that are going to be saved under the preaching of the 144,000 but are not part of that number.

The third group is comprised of the apostate Jews. These are the many who enter the covenant relationship with the Antichrist. By and large these are the ones that are going to be killed off in the persecutions of the Jews in the Tribulation Period.

The fourth group is the most important one for understanding as to how the Jews are related to the end of the Tribulation Period. The fourth group is called the Faithful Remnant. Essentially these will comprise one-third of the Jewish people who will go through the entire Tribulation, unbelievers as far as Christ is concerned, but also believers as far as Antichrist is concerned. They will try to remain true to the light they have and will refuse to have anything to do with the covenant with the Antichrist. They are the non-many. The fact of the Remnant is found in Isaiah 10:20-23:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and they that are escaped of the House of Jacob, shall no more lean upon him that smote them, but shall lean upon Jehovah the Holy One of Israel, in truth. A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For tho thy people Israel, be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them shall return: a destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness. For a full end, and that determined, will the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, make in the midst of all the earth.

Although a decree of destruction is determined upon all the earth and God intends to make a full end of civilization as we know it in the Tribulation Period, nevertheless a remnant of Israel will be preserved throughout the Tribulation that will return to Jehovah their God.

Isaiah 65:13-16 shows how God divinely protects His remnant from destruction. He will miraculously provide food and water for them as He provided for Israel during the forty years of wandering in the Sinai peninsula.

It is this faithful remnant that plays the primary role during the crisis that brings the Tribulation to an end.

## B. THE BASIS OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

The second important thing to note in understanding how the Jews are related to the end of the Tribulation is to understand the basis of the Second Coming of Christ. Beginning next month we will make a detailed study of what the basis of the Second Coming of Christ is and under what conditions Christ will return to set up His Kingdom. But now we will need to touch on it briefly in order to understand what is happening with the closing of the Tribulation.

A key passage is Hosea 5:15. In all of chapter five God is doing the speaking and He is still speaking when we come to verse 15:

I will go and return to my place until they acknowledge their offense, and seek my face: in their affliction they shall seek me earnestly.

In this passage God says He is going back to His own place because of an offense committed against Him and He will not return from His place until this offense is acknowledged or confessed. God's place is Heaven. When did God ever leave Heaven? He left Heaven at the Incarnation in the person of Jesus Christ. Now because of an offense committed against Him He went back to His place which is Heaven, at the Ascension. He will remain in Heaven and not return to earth until this offense is acknowledged and confessed.

The next question is: What is the national offense committed by the Jewish nation against the person of Jesus? It is not in killing Him. As it shall be shown in the following studies, the national offense of Israel against Christ is not in killing Him but in rejecting His Messiahship. And until this offense is acknowledged and confessed Christ will not return.

Another passage that deals with the basis of the Second Coming of Christ is found in Matthew 23:37-39:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets and stoneth them that are sent unto her! How often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.

In this chapter Christ is speaking to the Jewish leaders and reminds them of how often He would have liked to have gathered them and established His Kingdom. But they willed it not, and they rejected His Messianic claims. Because of this Christ says their house, that is their Temple, will now lie desolate. He concludes by telling them that they will not see Him again until they cry, "*Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.*"

The point that these passages and others make is that Christ will not come back to the earth until the Jewish people ask Him to come back. Of course this does not refer to the Rapture, which has no pre-conditions, but of the actual Second Coming of Christ to the earth to establish the Kingdom. The Tribulation will not end until Christ returns to the earth, but Christ will not return to the earth until the Jewish people ask Him to come back. This is the basis of the Second Coming of Christ. Future articles will explain this in more detail.

Earlier a question was raised as to what is the relationship between Satan knowing his time is short and persecuting the Jews? Why pick on the Jews because Satan knows his time is short? Now we have the answer. Satan knows that once Christ returns his career will be finished. He also understands that Christ will not come back until the Jews ask Him to come back. If Satan can succeed in destroying all the Jews before they have a chance to ask Christ to come back, Christ will not come back and Satan will be

safe. This is why Satan is in an all-out campaign to destroy the Jews.

### C. THE CAMPAIGN OF ARMAGEDDON

In the closing days Satan will organize the campaign of Armageddon (Rev. 16:12-16) and the purpose of the Campaign of Armageddon is to destroy the remaining Jews still living (Rev. 12:12-13). The means by which Satan will try to destroy all the Jews is by means of using all the nations during the Armageddon Campaign:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be so wounded; and all the nations of the earth shall be gathered together against it (Zech. 12:3).

Behold a day of Jehovah cometh, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. I will gather all nations together against Jerusalem to battle . . . (Zech. 14:1-2a).

Satan will organize all the Gentile nations for a final onslaught against the Jewish people, and by this he hopes to destroy them once and for all.

But Satan will fail. For the Jews will have begun seeking the Scriptures to see why the troublous times have fallen upon them and will discover that it is because of their rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. They will then confess the great confession of Isaiah 53:1-9 by which they acknowledge the national offense committed against the person of Christ. Then they will plead for Messiah to return, and we have graphic description of this plea in Psalm 79, 80, and Isaiah 64. So at the request of the Jews, Christ returns and the Tribulation comes to an end.

The Jews are related to the end of the Tribulation by virtue of the fact that the Tribulation ends with the Second Coming of Christ, and Christ will not return until the Jewish people ask Him to return. The power of the Second Coming of Christ is very much in the hands of Israel.

### CONCLUSION

Unlike other missions, Jewish missions is not merely evangelistic. The purpose of missions in general is to evangelize and disciple. But Jewish missions is more so. Not only does Jewish missions seek to evangelize and disciple, it is also a prophetic ministry. God is using Jewish evangelism today to fulfill His program of the future. It must be remembered that people will be saved in all ages by faith. *"But faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.* By evangelizing the Jews today (tho many will reject the Gospel today) after the Rapture many will see by the events around them that what has been told them is indeed the truth and will accept Christ and will begin to preach the Gospel. So they will become part of the 144,000 Jews. They in turn will reach out with the Gospel to the Faithful Remnant in the closing days of the Tribulation. So Jewish missions is very much a prophetic ministry.

*Reprint:*

## The Love of God Manifested

R. H. Boll

The one, only conclusive proof of the love of God is that given us in John's epistle: "Herein was the love of God manifested in us, that *God hath sent His only begotten Son into the world* that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and *sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*" (1 Jn. 4:9, 10). Once this has been seen and believed, we shall all recognize many other proofs and evidences of God-love, for we are daily surrounded by the tokens of His goodness toward us. Nevertheless by none of them can the love of God be proved. Too many questions arise, too many exceptions and seeming contradictions. All things are shrouded in doubt and the eye of flesh cannot penetrate beyond the appearances.

A little boy who had been taught to see God's love in the blessings and comforts of home, said when he heard of suffering orphan children, "God doesn't love *them*, does He?" Things seem to come and go blindly in this world—always by the reign of inexorable law, so far as we can see and know, often by apparent chance and accident. The forces are capricious, and no one knows what a day will bring. To most of us, unaccountable and bitter sorrows and misfortunes have come. Under the stress of such things the heart may be tempted to ask, "Where is the love of God?" "What was God doing during the great war?" asked an acrimonious infidel, "counting hairs, I suppose, and watching sparrows fall?" No. Earthly good and blessing cannot demonstrate the love of God, although His love is indeed back of it all. Human life is always a mystery—uncertain, and sometimes tragic. The child of God indeed has a truer outlook; but it is because he has learned to know the love of God first on other grounds.

### THE PROOFS OF GOD'S LOVE

The only conclusive—the all-comprehensive and final proof of God's love—is that He gave His only begotten Son for us. That is the only real assurance that God has really cared, that He has not been merely experimenting with us. He sent His Son, He gave Him, He spared Him not, He gave Him up for us all. And that involved everything else that God could give and do. "He that spared not his only Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). Be still, O my soul—God has suffered for us and with us. He has all along seen and known and cared—cared so much that He gave His all, the only begotten Son whose home is in the bosom of the Father. And if He did that, He does and will do all else. Never

more can we think that any mere accident could befall His beloved. His providential care directs every circumstance and makes all things work together for their good. Then we can see His loving hand and purpose in all things, both sweet and bitter, and the proofs of His love are manifest on all sides. But it is because we have known and have believed that the One who holds all things in His hands is He who so loved us that He gave His Son to die for us. That is the final, the perfect proof of God's perfect love. Every other proof, apart from this, can be called in question; but once we have understood God's sacrifice of His Son, that settles the matter of His perfect love for us for evermore. And once assured of this, our eyes are opened so that thenceforth we are able to see the love of God everywhere and in all things.

### THE WORST HERESY

If by *this* we know the love of God toward us, and if this is the one and only way, then the worst of all false teaching would be that which mars and destroys the truth concerning that demonstration of His love. For on that depends our comfort, our hope, all true service, and our love toward our fellowmen. If, for example, some one would try to make us believe that Jesus Christ was not deity, of the same Nature and Being with the Father, such a one would destroy for us the one and only truth through which the love of God can be known. For if the Son was but a creature—though the highest of all creatures—then God's redemptive plan was only a wise and benevolent scheme, but not that extreme sacrifice of love with which the Father Himself was identified.

The suffering and the sacrifice is represented as being *God's* suffering and sacrifice. In that the Son suffered, the Father suffered; and in the sacrifice of the Son, God gave *Himself* up. The well-sustained reading of Acts 20:28 is that the church was bought with the *blood of God*. Take, for example, such a passage as this: "The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us." Now follows the description of this love of God: "For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly." In that lies the love of God. Such language is inappropriate unless Christ and God are identified, and Christ is God's Son, His own, only begotten. Had He been only a vassal and a creature the vision of supreme Love that gave its all for us would be gone. But to return to our scripture—"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; for peradventure for a good man some one would even dare to die." That is the limit of human love. No one would so love another as to die for him, merely because of that other's uprightness; yet, perhaps, if a man were *good* (that is, big-hearted and kind), one might be found who would love him sufficiently to die for him. "But God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:5-8). The only impression such



language can make on us is that God Himself died for us, in the person of His Son; which is conceivable only in the light of the Son's intimate relation to and identification with the Father—a relation essentially different in kind from that of a creature to a Creator, and which we can know only dimly by analogy as that which exists between a human father and his own, only beloved son, in whom dwells his own life, and who is of his own flesh and blood.

Such is the peculiar relationship of the Son of God to the Father. In the beginning He already was, and was with God, and by nature He was God; dwelling in the Father's bosom, sharing His glory "before the world was," "and beloved by Him before the foundation of the world" (Jn. 1:1-3, 18; 17:5, 24). It was He who created all things ("all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that hath been made"—He, therefore, was never *made*). "For in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things have been created *through him and unto him*" (Col. 1:16). He was in the form of God, and, not ambitious to assert His high place, He at the Father's will (and His love was the same as the Father's: He and the Father are one) emptied Himself and took upon Himself the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man He became obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross (Phil. 2:5-8). In this lies the story of *God's love for us*.

## Missionary Messenger

*"Greater things for God"*

Alvin Hobby

Livingstone, Zambia

February 1, 1976

One of my main jobs for January was work on the reading, checking and revising of the Tonga manuscript of Deuteronomy. During the first week I spent considerable time combining all the suggestions that had been sent in by different people, to be dealt with in our team meeting scheduled for the last week of the month. Then, this past week, from Monday to Friday, Team I of the Tonga Bible Translation Program met and worked here at Livingstone; but so many problems and difficulties were encountered that we were able to read, check and revise only fourteen chapters. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 22-26. Meanwhile I already have in hand some work to do on I and II Samuel.

The Lester Brittell family who arrived here on December 29 is still looking for a house to live in. Meanwhile we are glad we are able to provide them limited accomodations in the little rest-hut at the back of our house.

No doubt you have heard on the news about the declaration by President Kaunda of a "full state of emergency" in Zambia. There were various things that caused this to be done, as stated in the news, but the apparent reasons seem to be the war in Angola and events that have taken place in the capitol, and we have not yet seen any results of the declaration.

Perhaps the main way in which this will affect us in the near future will be in the increased prices of certain things, due to the economic situation in the country. In 1974 revenue from copper was about \$500,000,000; in 1975 \$90,000,000; but in 1976 there will be no revenue at all from the copper industry which has previously accounted for about 90% of the country's revenue. This has been caused by the general drop in world industrial activity which has reduced the demand for copper, and by the closure of invaluable routes for Zambia's cargo. First, three years ago, the closure of the border with Rhodesia, and now the war in Angola has closed the port of Lobito.

Consequently, the "transplant of the copper heart" as the President called it, has started, mainly by increasing income taxes, import duty and other taxes. The price of gasoline has increased about 20 %, so that an American gallon now costs about \$1.80 to \$1.90. The price of diesel fuel has also increased about 25%. Car licenses, income tax, and cost of food and clothing will also be increased.

We think that President Kaunda is a very good man and that he is going to try his best to do what is right; and we can only pray that at least some of the problems can be solved in the near future.

Dollie Garrett

Salisbury, Rhodesia

February 8, 1976

We are so thankful to all those who are concerned, who are praying, also giving of their means, which helps keep the Children's Home here in Arcadia going. It has been eight years since the Home opened to take in homeless children. All except four have been with us since the beginning. Last year we took in another girl, nine years old, very small for her age; we now have nine girls and ten boys. All the other children are in their teens, 5 of them 17. Our oldest girl turned 17 in January; she is in her last year of high school. She is thinking of taking nurses' training. Two of our boys finished high school this past December. They have been looking for jobs. Francis found a job and worked only two weeks; then was laid off with a lot of other workers. The firm could not keep so many workers due to the fact that enough orders had not come in, and materials. Those two weeks Francis was able to teach one of the workers the Gospel, as he knew nothing, except

Catholic doctrine. This young man gladly received the Word. He wondered how he had been so deceived concerning the Truth. The other young man who is also 17 has left the Home and is living with an adopted aunt, and as yet has not found a job. Pray for these young folk that they will remain faithful to the Lord.

We are still allowed to continue our Scripture teaching in the schools. Three primary and one high school for the Colored people. I have the girls on Friday, also a class at 9 a.m. each Tuesday and Thursday in a new primary school in a new suburb called Sunning Dale (because there are no trees), not too far from Arcadia. I also have a class of women and girls Sunday morning at 9 a.m., then Monday evening a Bible study with the women of the church. Just recently one of our young married sisters has asked if she could come for more Bible study in the forenoons as she is not always able to attend the Monday evening class, as she has two babies to care for, and many times her husband has to work late. She is a very zealous worker for the Lord and has a great desire to grow in the knowledge of our Lord. Her husband is one of our promising young men in the Arcadia congregation.

Robert Garrett

Salisbury, Rhodesia

February 4, 1976

We were blessed with a visit from Bro. Bob Morrow for almost four weeks during November and December. We gave him a good taste of the mission work by taking him around to as many of the different congregations as possible to preach and teach. He also willingly helped in part of the construction work on the Mufakose church building. His last week here he held a Gospel meeting at the Arcadia church which was well attended. He was able to meet and talk with a good number of brethren of several congregations and get a fairly good understanding of the work, its problems and prospects. He was well received everywhere and all of our brethren really appreciated his visit and the encouragement and exhortation he gave. During the Arcadia meeting three came forward to accept Christ. At Raffingora during Bro. Morrow's visit twelve came forward to accept Christ.

We have gone as far as we can with the Mufakose church building with funds on hand. The internal plastering, plumbing, electrical wiring, painting, flooring and benches cannot be done until more funds come in. The men of the Salisbury churches have done a lot of the work themselves or we could not have accomplished nearly so much. As far as labor costs are concerned, we had to hire bricklayers for foundations and walls but everything else so far has been done by volunteer labor, including erection and laying of the roof. We must hire a plumber for the plumbing because the City requires that work to be done by a licensed plumber. The brethren have worked hard to do what they can. We ask your prayers that the Lord will enable us to soon complete the work.

# SUCCESS

Asa Baber

When God chose Joshua to lead the children of Israel into the promised land, He gave him his instructions as follow: "Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest" (Joshua 1:7).

The joy of worthwhile accomplishment is the joy of living, so real success is based upon a faith in God and Jesus Christ. Meditate upon His word, and be strong and courageous; not afraid, not dismayed, for God promises to be with you. The fundamental issue of life is the value system that leads to an understanding of how we may fit into this world; the evaluation of purpose is important whether it is a nation, institution or an individual. The church is a dominant power in the world but is being challenged by people who distrust our motives. What made the church so great? It was a belief in the individual and his worth. We need a resurgence of these values today. When we choose between what a person is and what his potential is, we can make plans for the future. We are called on today to make very clear that we have concern for mankind all over the world; if we have this concern, we will learn all that can be learned in order for us to help bring about peace, freedom, justice and equality among all people.

We must realize that knowledge is essential and obtainable and can be transmitted to others. "And the things that thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). We need to accept people in their infinite worth, in their capacity to learn, in their ability to discipline themselves and in their creative ability, and encourage them to do their best at whatever they are engaged in. In order to bring these values to the people we must be able to discipline ourselves physically, mentally and spiritually.

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## **Prayers Can't Be Answered Unless They Are Prayed!**

Life without purpose is barren indeed—  
There can't be a harvest unless you plant seed,  
There can't be attainment unless there's a goal,  
And man's but a robot unless there's a soul.  
If we send no ships out, no ships will come in,  
And unless there's a contest, nobody can win . . .

For games can't be won unless they are played,  
And *prayers* can't be *answered* unless they are *prayed*.  
So whatever is wrong with your life today,  
You'll find a solution if you kneel down and pray,  
Not just for pleasure, enjoyment and health,  
Not just for honors and prestige and wealth—  
But pray for a purpose to make life worth living,  
And pray for the joy of unselfish giving,  
For great is your gladness and rich your reward  
When you make your *life's purpose* the choice of the Lord.

—Helen Steiner Rice

## WHERE SHOULD THE CHRISTIAN GIVE HIS MONEY?

J. B. Marchbanks

*How much should the Christian give? When should he give?  
Where should he give? Is the local Church God's storehouse?  
What reward does giving bring?*

These questions, which concern every believer, are answered in the Word of God. For the Word has much to say to the Christian on the subject of giving. Not that our giving has anything to do with our salvation. Nevertheless, our attitude toward it after we are saved is a test of our love and sincerity. Speaking of giving, Paul says: "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love" (2 Cor. 8:8).

If the believer has wholly surrendered his life to the Lord, he will have no difficulty about giving. The Macedonian believers "first gave their own selves to the Lord" (2 Cor. 8:5). Then, "to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves" (2 Cor. 8:3), in the matter of giving.

How much of our money ought we to give to the Lord? Here, as in all our study of the Word of God, we must remember God's own threefold division of the human race, given in 1 Corinthians 10:32. "The Jews, ...the Gentiles, ...the Church of God." The Jews, the first mentioned class, are the descendants of Abraham. All the other nations of the world are the Gentiles, the second mentioned class. Then there is the Church of God, which is composed of all who believe on Christ as Saviour in this present age. In it "there is neither Jew nor Greek (Gentile),...for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). The Bible speaks of all these three divisions of the human family, and it speaks to all of them.

To the Gentiles, God has never given any instructions about giving, for the Gentiles, as a class, have never known God. To the Jews, with whom God dealt in Old Testament times, and with whom He will deal again in the future, He gave specific instructions. They were commanded to tithe. A representative com-

mand of God to them is found in Leviticus 27:30-32: "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree...the tithe of the herd, or of the flock...the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord."

To the Church which began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), and serves until her Lord comes in the air ( 1 Thes. 4), God has also given clear instructions about giving. This teaching is found in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, and related passages. Here we notice that Christian giving is not commanded us; rather it must be voluntary, out of a willing heart. "Not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).

The above verse (2 Cor. 9:7) shows us that God does not set any certain amount for us to give, but leaves this to each individual believer: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give." However, the Word tells us elsewhere that we are to give in proportion to our income: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him" (1 Cor. 16:2). So while we are taught to give proportionately, the amount is left to us.

Tithing is not taught to the Church. There are only four references to tithing in the New Testament. The first three of these, Matthew 23:23, Luke 11:42 and 18:12, clearly have reference to the Pharisees who lived under the Law, before the Church began. The other reference, Hebrews 7:4-10, teaches the superiority of Melchisedek's priesthood over Levi's, and has no connection with Christian giving.

But surely we Church believers, blessed with all the bounty of God's grace, ought not to give less than Israel was commanded to give. But whatever the amount of our giving, "if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not" (2 Cor. 8:12). God not only considers what we give but what we keep as well, and we are responsible to Him for it all. He tells us, too, that "he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6).

What is the reaping referred to in the verse above? Does God promise a reward for faithful giving? Some say that God has promised material prosperity as a reward for giving, and cite Malachi 3:10 as proof: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." But Malachi 3:10 has nothing to do with our giving in the Church Age. It is God's word to Israel, as the first verse of the book clearly shows. Malachi speaks of a literal storehouse, a warehouse, into which Israel brought tithes of food for the use of the priests and Levites.



There is no storehouse in the New Testament. The words, "lay by him in store" in 1 Corinthians 16:2 have nothing to do with a storehouse. They mean rather that the Christian is to set apart a portion of his income each week, to be given to the Lord's work as the need arises. J. N. Darby's translation of this verse is: "On the first day of the week let each of you put by at home, laying up in whatever degree he may have prospered, that there may be no collections when I come." This verse shows us also that every believer, "each of you," is to give, and that we are to lay aside the Lord's portion every Lord's Day, "on the first day of the week."

What reward then does God promise to faithful givers? We find the answer in 2 Corinthians 9, verses 8 and 10: "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: . . . (Now He that ministereth seed to the sower doth minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness.)" Here God promises, to the faithful giver, "bread for your food," that is, He will supply our needs. He promises "to multiply your seed sown." We take this to refer to the "incorruptible" seed, "the Word of God" (1 Pet. 1:23), and it indicates that God will give the faithful giver added opportunities for sowing the Word. He promises also to "increase the fruits of your righteousness." This shows that cheerful and faithful giving will enrich our spiritual lives now, but it also looks forward to the future.

The faithful giver is laying up fruit in Heaven, to be received in reward at the judgment seat of Christ, when the Lord comes. Then we shall be rewarded, not only for our giving, but for all that we have done for our Lord.

Now, where are we to give our money? There is absolutely no Scripture which teaches that the local church is God's storehouse, and that we are to put all our money into it. To be sure, a local church which is true to God's Word deserves the support of God's people. But the Lord, alone, through the Holy Spirit and the Word, can lead each individual believer as to how to give his money.

We are living in the end of the Church Age, when the professing church as a whole has departed from God and His Word. We must remember this, and be careful to give our money where it will be used to get out the Word of God in its purity. For our responsibility does not end when we give our money, we need to know how it is being used after we give it.

Where then, does the Word tell us to give? "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles" (Luke 16:9, ASV). That is, give your money where it will be used to lead souls to Christ, that these souls may be with you in glory. Also, we are to look out for God's children, to be "distributing to the necessity of saints" (Rom. 12:13). And

we are to share with God's servants who preach the Word: "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto Him that teacheth in all good things" (Gal. 6:6).

In every case, we are to give where there is a definite need, for God is not interested in tying up money in elaborate buildings or big bank accounts, when millions are starving for the Gospel. And we are to watch for these needs, and seize the opportunities.

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).  
"It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

—In *Together*

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## Stoning Awaits You

A lady came, with an impressive countenance, to her pastor and informed him that she could no longer keep as sacred the Lord's day, or the first day of the week. She had been reading a Seventh Day Adventist book and had become thoroughly convinced that it was her duty to observe Saturday. He listened to her dissertation, and then quietly asked: "Did you have coffee in your house last Saturday?"

"Yes," she replied.

"Did you have fire to make the coffee?"

"Of course, I had," she answered.

"Then," the pastor solemnly replied, "stoning awaits you. Prepare to die. God hath said: 'Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day' (Ex. 35:2, 3).

The lady seemed a little surprised at this, for she had evidently not read it in her Seventh Day Adventist book, and then said: "But we must have fire when it is cold."

"Not at all," he responded; "the Law knows nothing of cold or heat. It says, 'Do and live; fail, and die.' A man once gathered some sticks on the sabbath day, presumably to kindle a fire, and he was put in ward, until it could be ascertained what must be done with him; and the Lord said unto Moses: 'The man shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp.' Prepare then to go without the camp, and receive the stoning due to your sin."

"But," she exclaimed with some excitement, "God has said, Remember the seventh day, to keep it holy!"

"I beg your pardon," answered the pastor, "God has said, Remember the *sabbath* day to keep it holy. It is true He 'rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the *sabbath* day, and hallowed it.' However, you know that another reason was given for its observance, when the Law was repeated forty years later, and that reason is redemption (Deut. 5:15). Moreover, the Law dis-

tinctly provided for a sabbath on the first day and on the eighth day, which was the first day of the week following (Lev. 23:39.) So, if you prefer to give up the first day and go back to the seventh, you must be stoned, for the same God who said: 'Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy,' also said: 'Ye shall kindle no fire in your habitations on the sabbath day,' and, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them' (Gal. 3:10). How can you escape the curse?

"Do you not see," he added, "that it is impossible to tell men which is the seventh day, dating from creation? The division of the week into days is a purely arbitrary and human arrangement, and no one in the world knows when the original seventh day approaches. Not only so, but there are Christians living toward the poles of the earth, upon whom the sun shines for nearly twenty-four hours at one season of the year and is under the horizon for nearly twenty-four hours at another season; and day in the United States is midnight in China. How, then are the people of God to observe the same seventh day at the same time? If you say the principle requires that one day in seven should be set apart for the special service and worship of the Almighty, this is granted, but this is precisely the principle claimed by those who observe the first day.

"Besides," the pastor continued, "our Lord deliberately set aside the sabbath, so far as it was a seal of the covenant made with Israel (Ezek. 22:12), when Israel rejected His grace; and this He did on the ground that the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath (Matt. 12:1-8), showing its adaptability to new necessities by declaring that 'the Son of man is Lord of the sabbath' (Matt. 12:8).

"But were they not bound to observe the Jewish sabbath, or seventh day, also?"

"No, they were not, as expressly asserted by the apostle: 'Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath day (Col. 2:16). There is no allusion here to the Lord's day, for this, as already has been said, was never called in question. They were not under the slightest obligation to keep the Jewish sabbath, which was a shadow. They might observe it, if they chose, provided they regarded it unto the Lord (Rom. 14:5); but the true day was the Lord's day, which rose so high above the old that 'even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth' (2 Cor. 3:10) in the anticipation of which the Psalmist exclaimed: 'This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it'" (Psa. 18:24).

The inquisitor was silent for a moment and then remarked: "There is more to be said in favor of the first day than I had supposed."

"Yes, my friend," her pastor replied, "there is much more to be said for it than you have heard, and you may well consider what sense there is in all this disturbance caused by the books and pamphlets and tracts of these Seventh Day Adventists, and what possible gain and good they hope to reach. They may, if they will, stand under Sinai, with its thunders, and lightnings, and blackness, and darkness, and tempest, but as for me, give me Mount Zion bathed in the soft shining of infinite love."

The lady went her way and, as nothing more has been heard from her on seventh day observance, it is to be hoped that she came to a better mind. *— From Our Hope*

# Institutions or Churches?

Abel Andres

We live in a day of initials: UN, NATO, UNESCO, EEC, OAS, etc. They represent national, international, official, semi-official and private organizations. People seem to think that all our problems can be solved through the creation of new organizations or committees.

Something similar seems to be happening in Christian circles. One of the characteristics of our time is proliferation of institutions, circles, committees, crusades—Youth for Christ, Campus Crusades, C.B.M.C., Inter Varsity Fellowship, etc. We do not doubt that these organizations are being managed by Christian people with sacrifice and effort. We do not question their good and plausible goals. Neither do we doubt the doctrinal basis they sustain.

But is this plethora of institutions in accordance with the Scriptures? Are they envisioned in the instructions contained in the Bible? We wonder.

On the other hand, when we speak of the church or the churches, we know for sure that we are on firm ground. Christ Himself said, "I will build MY church," and the teachings of the Acts and the Epistles leave us in no doubt on the formation, life, functioning, government, etc. of the local churches.

But the question is: are the churches of our times functioning in accordance with New Testament teaching? Are they fulfilling their mission by

- a) *evangelizing children, youth, men, women, students, engineers, businessmen, etc.*
- b) *edifying Christ's body and meeting all the needs of their members—spiritual, intellectual, recreational.*

If the answer is in the affirmative, then what is the need for the organizations, institutions, circles and committees?

If the reply is in the negative, then we are facing a serious problem: the abnormality of churches that say they are following the Bible's teachings, but in practice are not fulfilling their mission.

If this is the case, what then is the solution? Institutions to cover the deficiencies of the churches and to do what the churches are not doing? Would not the medicine be worse than the disease—because the personnel necessary to man the institutions must be taken from the churches, further weakening them?

Has not the time come to reverse this tendency? Rather than create organizations, should we not use all the available talent to promote the activity, life and wellbeing of each local church? On the human side it is much easier, and perhaps more appealing, to form and run an organization rather than to utilize a God-given talent humbly and in dependence on the Lord within the normal and more anonymous life of a church.

The organization is more attractive, has established levels of authority, follows business-like lines, and usually has good financial resources. On the other hand, churches are usually poorly organized and do little planning. Which church plans with due anticipation all the activities for the year—evangelistic campaigns, camps, youth activities, assistance to the poor, missionary cooperation, women's work—utilizing and distributing all the available talent and endeavoring to develop those talents that the church lacks? What church takes into consideration and ministers to all the needs of its community—its children, students, businessmen, hospitals, jails, etc.?

Nevertheless, plainly the Scriptural emphasis is on *churches*, not on religious organizations, no matter how worthy. Rather than innovate and by-pass our God-given pattern, let us strengthen the churches—that from them may sound out the Word of truth to the blessing of men at home and abroad.

—In *Missions*

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## The Sins of Geography

By O. L. Bayless

The bus load of preachers, on a preaching mission to the Bahama Islands, were passing a beautiful golf course near the British Colonial hotel. Our host and driver, an Assembly of God pastor, gave us a most interesting observation in answer to our question—"Brother Davis, our feet are itching to get out there—do you get to play much golf?" He said, "It is amusing the conception of sin people have, based on where they live. When I was a pastor in the states it was all right for me to play golf or bowl, but mixed swimming and theater going was out of the question. Over here it is just the reverse. It is O.K. to engage in mixed bathing and go to the theater, but the worst sin I can commit is to play golf or bowl."

We have found the preacher's observation to be so true. Churches on the coast accept mixed swimming and it is part of normal church recreation activities, but not so with inland churches. In our preaching we ought to deal with the "sin" problem, seeking to win people to Christ as Savior, Lord and Master, knowing that such an experience would take care of the question of "sins." A catalog of the "do's and don'ts" for a church member can become as voluminous as the laws of the Pharisees if you add them all together, since there is a different list depending on who is writing or speaking and the geographical halo he wears.

The basic Christian life is set forth by Jesus: ". . .Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Matt. 22: 37-38). This done we will throw our "halos" away and throw ourselves into the front line of the Great Commission—making disciples and teaching them what Jesus said and not what we think.

—Adapted from *Baptist Message*



# NEWS AND NOTES

"They rehearsed all that God had done with them . . ."

**Tell City, Ind.** This is to let you know that the Lord has graciously supplied the funds to purchase a washer and dryer for Woodland Camp. A Maytag washer and Kenmore dryer have been bought and the money left in the fund will be used for needed things at the camp. We praise the Lord for supplying the money. We never expected to have enough so quickly.

Our appreciation goes to each church group and individual who contributed. We certainly believe that this is another instance where faith of God's people stepped out and the Lord abundantly supplied.

—Submitted by Sandra Naugle

**Iroquois Church, Louisville.** Bro. and Sis. Theodore Houk, Bro. and Sis. Charles Houk, and Bro. and Sis. Ralph Slimick have transferred membership to Iroquois after faithful attendance there for three months. They take an active interest in the work.

## Correspondence Missionaries

World Bible School started by Bro. Jimmy Lovell, Calif., is asking for teachers to win foreign students via the postal system. They are English speaking students, many of them in Nigeria, where also is Bro. R. B. Boyd's latest radio broadcast connections.

**Highview Church, Louisville.** "The Hiding Place" will be shown in Louisville from March 17-23 at the Alpha Theaters. Discount coupons for \$1.75 may be obtained from Bro. or Sis. Schreiner. (Linda Allen, at Portland, has them also.) They must be obtained in advance to be had at that price.

Youth Seminar is to be March 19-21.

**Westside Church, Ft. Lauderdale.** The brethren at Westside are discussing the feasibility of operating a Christian School at Westside for next year.

**Highland Church, Louisville.** Ordination of elders Feb. 8 was wit-

nessed by a number of visitors in addition to the congregation. They were appreciated and so was the fine spiritual service conducted by Bros. C. V. Wilson and Robert Heid. Two confessed Christ and were buried with Him in baptism on Feb. 8.

**Portland Avenue Church, Louisville.** Brothers Chester LaHue and Cecil Thompson have been investigating and administering to needy families. They oversee a small sum of money and determine its use to the glory of God, and the help of the needy.

Bro. Jim Stout has planned some dates, places and events that should interest the young people in activities with other young people.

Portland Christian School has ordered 100 new song books for our congregation in appreciation of their use of our books through the years.

Also S. S. class No. 11, under the direction of Sis. MonaBelle Campbell is receiving donations for the purchase of additional books to fill out the requirements for our congregation.

Growing Pains! Need for additional class rooms was discussed in the recent quarterly meeting of the P.C.S. board of directors. Bro. Smallwood has requested that congregations co-operating in P.C.S. appoint representatives to explore and develop means to expand our facilities. Paul Addams has been appointed to represent Portland. Pray for the direction of God.

Virginia Boll Griffith has been in the Louisville area recently, visiting her sick mother, Sis. R. H. Boll at Maple Manor Christian Home, Sellersburg. Sis. Boll passed away Feb. 21 at 7:30 p.m. Her funeral was held Tuesday at 10:00 a.m., conducted by Bro. C. V. Wilson and Bro. Robert Heid.

**Sellersburg Church, Ind.** Bro. Dale Offutt is thankful for the cooperation of his fellow-workers: Ron Hickman for his good direction of activities for the young people; Bro. Frank Hutchinson for teaching the adult Bible class when Bro. Dale was absent at a funeral; for the whole congrega-

tion's spirit of willingness to share in their common purpose and goal to build up the local congregation for the glory of God. Also to be commended are those young people who stacked the firewood and Bro. Earl Prather for extra effort to maintain the buildings and grounds in good condition.

**Henryville, Ind. (Bulletin)** Brother Dewey E. Coates was called to be with the Lord in his 78th year on Feb. 11, 1976. He was one of our most faithful members. He will be greatly missed.

For some weeks the names of Cody Embry and Charles Weber have been presented to the congregation here for the deaconship. They are to be appointed today. We hope all of you will join us in this solemn and sacred service. Let us pray with them and work with them for the glory of our Lord and the good of the work in this place.

**Rangeland Church of Christ, Lou. Ky.**  
Two came forward Feb. 8, one for forgiveness and the other wanting a closer walk with God. Attendance is encouraging. There were 120 for the morning worship and 115 for Sunday school.

The January financial report on "Wordss of Life" was encouraging. Six new stations are on the air in Nigeria. One writer gave thanks for the "Spirit elevating broadcast" and asked that the program still "be on the air till Christ comes in the air!" Opportunities keep opening up for expansion.

**Cramer and Hanover, Lexington, Ky.**  
The young people are beginning to study the book of Revelation on Sundays at 5:30 p.m. Interest is increased in the second coming of the Lord. From this and other church bulletins it is good to see a growing interest in the word of God in young people. Congratulations to youth directors who endeavor to promote a love of the truth in their respective groups as well as a love of the Incarnate Word, the Lord Jesus.

Sister Rutherford will open her home for the ladies who would like to meet for prayer, Feb. 24 at 10:00 a.m. At 7 p.m. Fannie Medley's home will be open for those ladies who are not able to attend the morn-

ing meeting, but would like to meet for prayer.

These meetings are typical of many throughout the churches, for prayer, study of the word and/or sewing for missionaries or other good works—visiting sick, etc.

**Glenmora, Louisiana Church of Christ**  
From March 8-14 Bro. Kitzmiller is to hold a meeting at the Pine Prairie church of Christ. Following the morning service on the 14th will be a basket dinner.

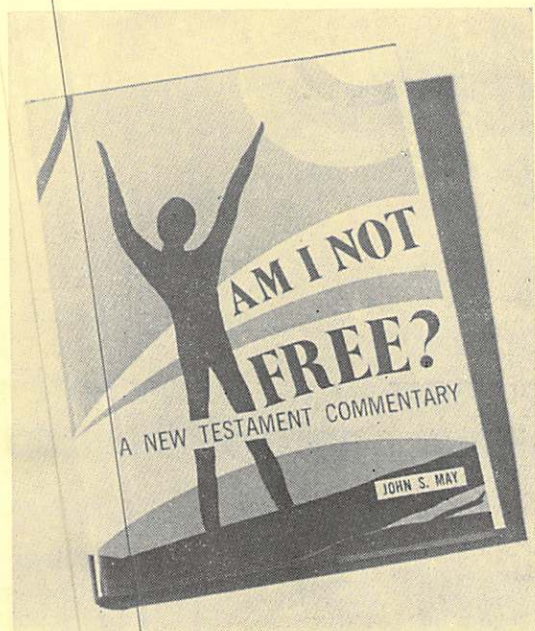
April 11-16 will be our revival meeting with Bro. Glen Baber of Louisville, Kentucky speaking. Bro. Baber is minister of the Ormsby Ave. church of Christ and 6th grade teacher in Portland Christian School.

Plans are for every third Friday night of the month having a youth meeting, consisting of young marrieds and older teens. There is a need for someone to lead in having the younger young people on a monthly basis. Is there a volunteer? The main thing in our activities is not to leave God out. He must be first!

—Bob Morrow

**Louisville, Ky:** We enjoyed the last Word and Work, with four articles touching on the Federal Government trying to take over the rearing of our children! —C. T. Clay

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