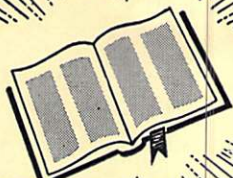
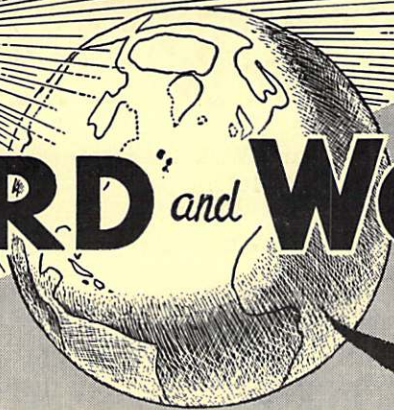


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NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1976

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Robert Heid is a minister in Louisville, Kentucky



God's Family

W. R. H.

JESUS CURES MARRIAGE PROBLEMS

Marriages in today's society are beset with many problems. Some are so great as to terminate the marriage, and while others are of a lesser nature, yet they constantly inject into the marriage a sense of dissatisfaction and despair. Couples who really aim for their marriages to succeed spend much time and money seeking for any solution. Others, not knowing that there is any way to regain their dream, accept dissolution as inevitable, supposing that with another partner at another time happiness might be theirs. In between these extremes there are many who plod along, sometimes up and sometimes down, making the best of what they feel is a normal union. But God has better things for us, beloved; things that accompany peace. And the God that can regenerate the sinful nature of ours, can at that same time work wonders in our marital communications.

Analyzing the problems that arise in marriage, we will find one or more of the following: Basic selfishness, meanness, laziness, immaturity, lack of self respect, lack of love, coldness, or unfaithfulness. From these evil roots grow such unbearable personal traits as drunkenness, braggadocio, personal carelessness, and the like. But it is one thing to analyze and pinpoint a problem, yet an altogether different matter to be able to cure it. This is where the Lord Jesus stands paramount in this field of mending human relationships. He alone has the power to change the human heart.

We are not surprised when a new convert changes his ways and becomes an active witness of a new life within him. We have seen it before and realize that such is the fruit of the Holy Spirit that has just been given him. So, by the same power of the same Holy Spirit, we can expect every facet of life of the child of God to have the same blessed newness and sweetness, most especially the marriage relationship.

First of all, if a marriage is to be happy the union should begin with both partners committed to God. If only one of the pair is a Christian, even then can be a measure of peace and harmony that is impossible without Christ altogether, but when both husband and

wife are first and foremost children of God, all of the help of God is readily available. They should know that God has an answer for any problems that may come, and these answers should be sought out at once.

In instances of violence and meanness—and there are many such cases—only true conversion can make the needed change. Gentleness, meekness and self-control are all fruits of the indwelling Holy Spirit. If these graces do not abound, the Holy Spirit is not having His way in the hearts.

Selfishness will grow like an infection, until God is permitted to change our minds and our priorities. When we can each count the other better than himself, then selfish attitudes will flee, and consideration for others will take its place.

Laziness seems to be a “victimless crime” but nonetheless it blights many homes. God can and will discipline us to overcome this inertia, and in place thereof give us the joy of accomplishment. Real happiness does not survive with idleness. Jesus said “we must work . . . while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work.”

Immaturity has been charged in many a break-up, and rightly so. How few give a second thought about maturity when they decide to marry. But again, the power of God can lend a sort of “instant maturity” to those who seek His ways. One reason that the ‘Jesus Movement’ has had such influence among campus couples is that when someone gives his heart to the Lord, there is a change that means business. An interest is kindled in the Bible, and when God’s word enters, there is light.

For various reasons, many people have no self-respect. They doubt than anyone cares about them or what they do or leave undone. The Lord Jesus tells the believer that he is a child of the King. The humblest and poorest of us has a heavenly calling. We learn that we are made in the image of God Himself! With this glorious truth in mind we are bound to become more respected in our own circle, having acquired a divine self-respect. We now feel that the plan of God is upon us.

What we call “lack of love” is terminal to a marriage, whatever the cause. But a “lack of love” is not beyond remedy if we will let the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts. The process works something like this: Jesus forgives our sins, which are many and grievous. Then He tells us that we should forgive in like manner. This viewpoint makes small matters out of all the things that have been committed against me, and as I thoughtfully compare the debts of mine with what I need to forgive toward others, it all comes easy. Now where there is full forgiveness, love abounds.

Unresponsiveness (coldness) is an emotional hang-up that can be found everywhere. Jesus is Lord of our emotions having given

them to us in the first place. We recently published an article on "What the Bible teaches about sex." It is helpful for us to know that when God made us He had our good in mind, and still has. He has no pleasure in broken homes, frustrated hearts, loneliness or drab relationships between partners. Jesus came that we might have life more abundantly, and surely that includes the bliss of married life. Jesus sets us at liberty from our past sins and gives us the freedom that makes all living 'come alive' to the Christian.

If you have problems in your marriage or know of someone else who has, you also know that there is One who not only wants to make these things "new" but has the power to do so. This is good news for a "blah" union. And tell it to others, also.

Happy Hangover

LeRoy Dugan

Hangovers are not caused by drinking. They are caused by drinking too much of the wrong things. The keys to understanding the common hangover are in the words "too much" and "wrong things." You could imbibe tap water from now till the Mississippi flows west and never develop a hangover. Furthermore, you could drink twice the prescribed four glasses a day and never suffer any staggering aftereffects. It takes *too much* of the *wrong thing* to produce a bona fide hangover.

Not very profound, you say?

Agreed.

But please bear with me. I want to talk to you about a brand of hangover that has no connection whatever with the yuletide spirits generally responsible for all bloodshot eyes so recently opened across our holiday-conscious nation.

I want to discuss the "Christian hangover" that gripped millions of us teetotallers in the wake of the festivities just past. The post-holiday 'blahs' that left so many of us wondering what we have wondered for years: "Was it really worth it?"

Please understand. I am not a Christmas hater. I feel no kinship with the crepehangers who insist that Christmas is essentially pagan in origin and such symbols as the Christmas tree are forbidden by Scripture. On the contrary, *I like Christmas*. It conjures sweet memories in my mind. It sends pleasant feelings coursing through me. Best of all, I am convinced that it gives Jesus Christ more free publicity than He gets at any other time of year.

No, Christian hangovers do not come from Christmas. They come from our misuse of Christmas. They come from *too much* of the *wrong things*.

So we experience a multi-dimensional aftermath.

The Financial Hangover

First of all, we spent *too much*. A friend told me shortly before Christmas, "It took us several months to get out of the debt we got ourselves into last Christmas." A very common comment. A very common condition. A terrible malady—"depletus walletus."

Next, we spent too much on the *wrong things*. The Bible makes it plain that Christians are to give to the poor and needy. We are to buy bread for the hungry, not trinkets for the fat and full. Gifts are a splendid symbol of love. They are a vivid reminder (or could be) of the greatest gift. But they are wrong if they blind us to the needs of people who cannot keep warm on Christmas night and hunger while we feast. "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food . . . notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" James really says it all, doesn't he?

The Friendship Hangover

Just the other day I had the very gratifying experience of getting reacquainted with a friend of my high school days. We once played on the same football team. My hair is thin on top, and his is now white, but that did nothing to spoil the memories we shared. I hope that ours will be a continuing friendship, and that God will give us renewed opportunities to share Christ. But there is a vast difference between friendship for friendship's sake, and friendship for Jesus' sake. Christmas can be a time of being railroaded by our culture into incessant visiting of people who really do not need us around. Or it can be a choice occasion for giving ourselves to people at a season when they are perhaps more receptive to Christian love than at any other time. This is friendship for *Jesus'* sake. But, we protest, there are so many people, and we have relatively little time to visit them. This means that we must do some *selective* socializing—going to those whom we can help the most.

For instance, we have a friend who had just suffered the agonies of a divorce. It was to be his first Christmas without his wife and we wept inside for him. It did not take us long to conclude that we must modify some of our usual Christmas Day schedule. Others could certainly do without our presence. This man needed some friends on Christmas Day. We spent some of it with him.

The Fun Hangover

One of the simple lessons Christians must learn is that we do not hit the fun target when we aim directly at it. It is a lesson easily forgotten at Christmas. We can make elaborate plans for skiing, skating, games and football watching—jamming our days with a full agenda of things calculated to give us pleasure. Perhaps that is exactly what you did. And you discovered it wasn't

nearly as hilarious as you had anticipated. In fact, it left you emotionally famished and spiritually depressed. You had a hangover when it was through. Why? Because fun, for a Christian, comes as a by-product of higher things. When we *aim* to please God we often glean enjoyment as an extra blessing. We have found in our family that the most delightful times have often come when we are gathered together for Bible reading and prayer. Frequently a wave of amusement will sweep over us at the moment we kneel to pray. The very act of worship draws us together, prayer is postponed while we enjoy laughter and warm conversation. We consider God to be part of the circle and are convinced that He is laughing and chatting along with us. The wonderful thing about an occurrence of this kind is that it is not ever necessary to "shift gears" when we begin to pray. The prayer is simply a continuation of the fellowship we have been enjoying together.

The Food Hangover

"*Too much of the wrong things.*" Here is the rule again. Everything is to be received with gratitude and eaten with pleasure. To eat in any other way would be a violation of Scripture. And three cheers for ingenious women who embellish their tables with special delicacies! But must their culinary craftsmanship be spoiled because of our gluttony? Certainly not!

I have a witty brother who often says facetiously to his wife at the conclusion of a fine meal, "There you did it again. You overfed me."

The problem was not overfeeding, but overeating. And we know it. We ingested such a fantastic assortment of contradictory sweets and sours, and in such quantities, that our unconditioned stomachs could scarcely cope with the bombardment. We closed our day with more Alka-Seltzer than thanksgiving. We had made "food-a-holics" of ourselves. The caloric binge ended; we had hangovers!

The Frustration Hangover

Too much traveling. Too much money gone. Too many late nights. Too many people around. Too much mess afterwards. Too many gifts to exchange. Too many pounds put on. Too much sadness when the kids had to go back to college. Too much. Too much of almost everything!

Result: an emotional hangover. And a bundle of new frustrations (or reruns on old ones).

"We wanted to really make Christmas a Christian event, and somehow we missed it again this year. We wanted to be sure to pray with the kids when they were home for the holidays, but we never seemed to get around to it. We wanted time for quiet talks with unconverted relatives, but it was impossible to get alone with any of them . . ."

Frustration!

The week before Christmas a co-worker asked me, "Are you ready for Christmas?" Well, I'd seen too many people jumping about like a grasshopper with a hotfoot to want to "get ready" in the sense the term is usually used. If getting ready meant preparing for another holiday hangover, I wanted no part of it.

So I answered, "I refuse to get ready for Christmas. I rebel against the American Christmas!"

I would like to join the revolution against the misuse of one of the greatest things which has ever been permitted in American society—the celebration of the birthday of God Incarnate.

It is a revolution against the nerve-racking, energy-sapping, Christ-neglecting extravaganza that has been passing itself off as a holy commemoration of a holy event. I want to take up arms against the yuletide banditry that wears out the saints and makes paupers of God's people. I want to stand against the commercially-produced fantasies which have no relation to heavenly realities. I want to resist the euphoria which makes sinners feel temporarily pious while still terribly proud.

I don't like being *used* by manipulators. I resent the marketing industry which plays upon our nebulous religious emotions for the express purpose of making another buck. I object to the networks trotting out their most renowned Hollywood mate-swappers before the cameras and calling their efforts "Christmas Specials."

Now the grim tragedy of all this is not hard to perceive. We have been so used by the secularists that we had little time to be used by the Saviour.

If we have holiday hangover, it means we have let ourselves be victimized one more time—commerce, custom, conditioning conspired to do it to us again.

Think of how different it *might* have been: rich fellowship with God's people. Seasons of delightful worship. (Christmas is a great time to learn more about worshipping God. It is tailor-made for it.) Edifying conversations with children gathered in from far points for the holidays. Loving, intimate talks with relatives and neighbors who need Jesus and are willing to listen as never before. Rejuvenating recreation and long, restful sleep, buoying us up for the return to daily duty. All this, and no bad aftereffects. No regrets. No hangovers.

Would you join me in making a binding resolution not to do *too much* of the *wrong things* next time around?

—From *Message of the Cross*





Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

What can we do about men who, because of our position on prophecy, lie and misrepresent us, accuse us of false teaching, have their own minds closed to hearing what God really says, and generally undermine our efforts?

This kind of attitude is not limited to prophetic teaching, but about the same answer would have to be given regardless as to the issue that brings out what is in human hearts.

We can pray for them. We can do this when much else is not possible. We can in love instruct them when there is any willingness to hear. Admittedly, this may not be very often. We can go our own ways trying to give a positive message of the Lord's grace to the world. We can answer their rantings with scripture when there are those who have been unsettled thereby. And we can pray for ourselves and keep ourselves in the love of God in such a way that we do not stoop to the same kind of low tactics and misrepresentations. It may take more grace to live as a true Christian ought in dealing with such individuals than it does to resist some other onslaughts the devil may hurl.

It is so very human in the situation mentioned to let the flesh take control. We need to be careful that we do not merely seek to defend ourselves. Vengeance belongs to the Lord. There is a place for exposing misrepresentation and misleading publicity, especially as it affects the Lord's messenger (cf. Acts 16:35-39). There is a time and place for withstanding the hypocrisy of even another servant of God (cf. Gal. 2:11ff). But God's work must not degenerate into a "dog fight." There is much teaching in the Bible on our being like Jesus, not rendering reviling for reviling, but instead enduring persecution for the Lord's sake (and this is a type of persecution). It takes a great deal of wisdom to do the right thing.

A recent study in 1 Tim. 1 gave me some help concerning such a situation. Paul left Timothy at Ephesus in order that he might charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine (v. 3). Some of these were men who wanted to be teachers but who did not understand what they said and confidently affirmed (v. 7). I have noticed that some of the people who are really most ignorant in the scriptures tend to talk with the most conceit and defiance about the little that they think they know. Now why did Paul not

tell Timothy just to get rid of such men by disfellowship or by declaring them heretics? The answer seems to come in v. 12, where he takes up his own case. Paul had once been blinded, was a persecutor of the church and was a misguided defender of what he had thought was right. The Lord forgave him and used him to declare hope for the worst of sinners (v. 16). You see, some of the worst enemies of the church may by the grace of God become great supporters of the faith. We need not love their ways, but we must love their souls. Perhaps God will give them repentance unto life.

What does the Bible say about life on other planets?

The Bible is concerned especially with those who inhabit planet earth, and I am not aware of any specific references which have anything to say, either pro or con, about life on other planets. The Bible recognizes a kind of life that is different from the present physical life of man or the creatures of the earth. The life of the angels, of the redeemed and perfected saints of God, and even of God Himself is both different and similar to man's present life. These beings are not limited to planet earth; hence, *there is* life elsewhere than on this earth. But we have no way of knowing whether this means that other places in our solar system or other systems are within the spheres of activity of some of these. We cannot now locate the throne of God nor the place of torment. The "third heaven" concept of Paul (1 Cor. 12:2) seems to place Paradise even beyond the stars and planets. (Incidentally, if this be so, then in the light of 2 Cor. 5:8, where being absent from the body and being at home with the Lord is seen as instantaneous, there is a form of travel faster than the speed of light.)

Likely, however, the question means: Is there intelligent life on other planets similar to man in his present physical limitation. Who knows? If such a life is discovered I can see no way in which it will in any wise reflect on the truth of the Bible or on the need of our world. We need to avoid a dogmatic position supposedly based on the Bible but the result of our own ignorance which says that such other worlds cannot be. God's word is true, but man's ideas sometimes color the way in which he tries to interpret the word.

I would offer the *opinion* that, in the light of the eternity of the God of the Bible and His infinite power and wisdom, such life is a distinct possibility. But if such worlds exist, we are totally uninformed whether these are also capable of sin or have needed an atonement for sin such as has been provided for us. I am not totally uninterested in what God may or may not be doing or have done in the rest of the universe, but what He has done here is very marvellous and our concern needs to be *for what He has revealed*.

What does the Bible say about other races on the earth before mankind?

Nothing specific. As with the preceding question, we are deal-

ing with possibilities, not what is specifically declared. I do believe there is room between the first two verses of Gen. 1 for other inhabitants of the earth and that such a concept does no violence to the creation account. Isaiah 45:18 does say that when God created the earth He made it *not* a waste. The possibility of a race which ended in judgment seems to be there, although there is a great difference between what might have been and what necessarily was. About the only reason why such a conjecture deserves mention is that it provides a possible explanation to some problems that have been raised.

Satan rebelled sometime before the creation of man, and possibly before the ordering of the earth during the six days of Gen. 1. He is also called the prince of the world, the god of this world, and holds some claim on it (Matt. 4:8,9). Now where the rebellion occurred or how Satan had any claim on the earth is not revealed. We only say *it might have been* as earlier inhabitants of the earth. Moreover, we are told of other renovations of the earth. In the days of Noah, God brought a flood and some renovation of the earth. In the future a yet more drastic renovation is to be (2 Pet. 3:10-13), and there will be a new earth. There is a possibility that Gen. 1:1 speaks of the original creation, that a race and judgment followed, and that Gen. 1:2 takes up the setting in order of creation after that judgment. Since it is not unusual for the word of God to pass from the first coming of Christ to the second coming without taking note of the events in between, so a similar thing may have been done here.

Some scientists argue for a great age for the earth. Of course, these could easily be wrong, and many of them are very little concerned whether their ideas contradict God's word or not. There are several possible explanations for the "evidence" that they think they have. But if the above supposition were true it would provide a harmony between the Bible account and the supposed age of the earth. It could provide a possible explanation for some of the great upheavals of the earth's crust, etc. (Man's creation, whatever may be said of the earth, cannot be pushed back hundreds of thousands of years without contradicting the Bible record.)

We repeat, however, that a possibility is not necessarily a fact, and we must discern between what the Bible record might allow and what it declares. The evidence for a previous race seems too skimpy for us to be dogmatic, but it is probably equally true that there need be no dogmatic denial.

113 N. 6th St., Oakdale, La. 71463

Book Review

LET ME BE A WOMAN: Notes on Womanhood for Valerie, by Elisabeth Elliot, 185 pp. Tyndale House (1976), \$5.95.

R. K. H.

Please! If you cannot spend \$5.95 to buy this book, then beg or borrow a copy. Bookstores are currently flooded with books

written by, for, and about women in all aspects—women's life (pro and con), motherhood, how to get a husband, how to keep him once you have him, and on and on. Some are rather good, some better done without. However, not only is *this* book outstanding among them all—it is in a class to itself.

Although Elisabeth Elliot's name is certainly familiar to many readers, some persons may not have read any of her other books. On January 8, 1956, five young missionaries to Ecuador were murdered by the Auca Indians to whom they were hoping to take the Gospel. One of these men, Jim Elliot, left not only a wife but also a daughter less than a year old. That daughter, Valerie, is now in her early twenties and was recently married. During her engagement her mother, married and widowed a second time, wrote to Valerie about the role she was about to assume. That correspondence was collected for this book.

Betty Elliot emphasizes our responsibility to God for becoming *what He created us to be*—and she makes it clear to her readers (should we have any doubts) that the sexes were created different. Her logical (and Biblical) thinking is an intelligent rebuttal to those who would cry for "equality" between women and men. Although I find it hard to say that one part of the book is better than another, two chapters I found particularly thought-provoking were: "Not Who Am I? but Whose Am I?" and "Equality Is Not a Christian Ideal."

The book consists of forty-nine short chapters, many not more than two or three pages long, each developing a particular thought. This style not only makes for easy reading but also would be readily adaptable to group study.

While the author's focus is on the woman's role in marriage, much of what she says is valuable for both husband and wife. Whether you are newly-wed, nearly-wed, just thinking about it, or counseling young people, I believe you'll find this book easy and enjoyable reading which is at the same time thought-provoking. And it should be "must" reading for every woman sixteen or older.

Gift Suggestion. Order from Word and Work

PROPHECY

Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

Difficult Scriptures and a Hateful Enemy

Alex V. Wilson

The Christian professor's statement was painfully provoking. Over the years he had had contact with a number of churches, so he spoke from experience. The statement I heard him make was this: "In all my life I have not seen more than one or two churches which give their young people the desire and ability to study God's Word for themselves, and live by it, when they reach adulthood."

Is his accusation true? Probably so. As individuals and as congregations we often tend to just skim the surface of God's truth, or dip into it here a little and there a little. We are tempted to study only the New Testament plus a few favorite Psalms. Many believers cannot nourish themselves from the Bible, and if their preacher does not feed them well, their spiritual malnutrition nearly becomes starvation.

How sad is our tendency to avoid many passages in God's Word because they are difficult to understand. I know of a church where the adult Sunday School class studied the book of Revelation when the missionary was there to teach it, but on those Sundays when he was away the other teachers, capable men, skipped to some other passages. No doubt they felt Revelation was too obscure. Yet it is probable that many members of the seven churches to which it was first sent were slaves! They certainly were not missionaries, yet the Lord expected them to receive a blessing merely from hearing the book read aloud in the church-meetings (1:3). By our neglect of many portions of the Bible we rob ourselves of numerous treasures which our Father wants us to enjoy.

Maybe part of our problem is the idea that if we don't understand *everything* in a passage, then we cannot understand and apply *anything* in it. Maybe our approach is too much an "all or nothing" attitude. Let us look at a very difficult chapter, and see how we can learn many lessons from it even if we remain uncertain about the meaning of more than half of the objects and events described in it.

DIFFICULT SYMBOLISM

The twelfth chapter of Revelation is the passage, and it would help you (though it is not essential) to read through the entire chapter right now. What wild symbolism—an expectant woman clothed with the sun, and a child, a dragon and warring angels. What in the world can it all mean?

Who is this woman arrayed with the sun? Most commentators say she is Israel, based on Gen. 37:5,9 and Rom. 9:5. Others believe she is the Church; others, God's redeemed people of both Old Testament and New Testament times. Catholics think she is Mary. What is your choice? And what about her child, who is he? Most answer that he is Christ (Ps. 2:8,9), but some say it is the Church, or Christ and the Church together (Rev. 2:26,27), and a few interpret it as the generation of Israelis who will be alive at Christ's return (Isa. 66:7-15; Rom. 11:26,27).

Maybe you have no commentary, and you have no idea at all who the woman and child symbolize. Or maybe you have several commentaries, and still have no idea who they symbolize! Never mind—don't quit your study in disgust. Of course it is better if you can discover their correct identities. But even if you cannot do so, don't cheat yourself of blessings that still await you in this chapter.

One thing is absolutely clear. Verse 9 tells us that the dragon

stands for Satan. So leaving aside the obscurities for the present, concentrate on what is plain. Bible-study has been compared to eating fish. When you find a bone, you need not throw away the whole fish. Lay aside the bone, and eat the meat. (And the exciting thing about the Scriptures is that as time goes on, further study turns some of the bones into good meat.) So a healthy approach to Rev. 12 would be, "I know that the dragon stands for the Devil. So let's see what this chapter teaches about him."

SATAN'S MALICE AND MIGHT

Satan is pictured as a ferocious monster—a great red dragon with seven heads and crowns and ten horns (v. 3,4). He is so huge that his tail knocks down one-third of the stars of heaven. He is so wild and vicious that he waits in front of the pregnant woman, eager to pounce upon and devour her child. What a fierce monster! What power! What intelligence—not just one brain, but seven! How impossible to defeat—chop off one or two of his heads and five or six still remain to grab you and chew you up and swallow you down! This, then, is the symbol of our spiritual enemy, the Devil. And therefore we had better be careful. When a dragon is after you, it is no time to relax!

Next we notice in verse 7 that "the dragon and his angels waged war." This reminds us that it is not Satan alone who opposes us. He has many allies. Perhaps we remember that Paul in Eph. 6:10ff. speaks of various kinds and ranks of Satan-led angels: principalities, **powers, spiritual hosts, etc.** No doubt demons also are part of his army. We must not underestimate our enemy. Our spiritual warfare is a cosmic conflict, involving mysterious and mighty angelic creatures as well as human beings.

Then in verse 9 we read a list of the Devil's awful names: "The great dragon." "The serpent of old," a reminder of the temptation in the Garden of Eden. "The Devil"; perhaps you have heard that this literally means "slanderer." "Satan," which literally is "adversary." "The accuser of our brethren, who accuses them before God day and night." He hates us so much that he delights in constantly running us down. When we run down one another, we are doing the Devil's business. Then the most awful expression of all, in fact one of the saddest statements in human literature: "The deceiver of the whole world." That phrase alone is worth pondering for five or ten minutes, or longer . . .

So if we learned nothing else from Rev. 12, the facts mentioned above would be a worthwhile reward for our study. But don't stop now, there is more to come. In fact, to stop now would leave an erroneous impression, for one of the main lessons this chapter teaches is Satan's failure and defeat (or, to put it the other way around, God's preservation of His people in spite of Satan's attacks). As you study this scripture carefully, if you don't watch out you might even begin to feel sorry for the Devil before you get through!

SATAN'S FAILURES AND FRUSTRATIONS

Frustration No. 1. The dragon waits for the woman to give birth so he can eat her child. But he is foiled, for the child is caught up to God's throne (4,5).

Frustration No. 2. The woman herself also escapes his clutches, by fleeing into the wilderness where God sustains her (6).

Frustration No. 3. Verses 7-8, which list the terrifying names and titles of Satan which we mentioned above, actually stress his defeat rather than his victories. "The dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated and . . . thrown out" of heaven, "hurled down" to earth. Because of this he is in a furious rage, knowing he has only a little time left (12). His days are numbered, and he knows it.

Frustration No. 4. After being thrown down to earth, he pursues the woman. But she grows wings and flies away to the desert, out of his reach. (13,14).

Frustration No. 5. The Dragon devises a secret weapon. He "vomited water from his mouth, like a river, after the woman, to sweep her away in the current." But again, all his efforts are in vain. The earth "opened its mouth and swallowed the river thrown up by the dragon's jaws" (15,16, Jerusalem Bible).

Thus we see from this highly dramatic chapter that over and over Satan's attacks fall short of his goal. He can neither defeat God's purposes nor destroy God's people. Though he is powerful—and we dare not forget that fact—yet our God is *all-powerful*, and in His care we are secure.

HOW TO DEFEAT THE DEVIL

So far we have skipped over the best verse in the chapter. Ponder these thrilling words: "Our brothers won the victory over him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the truth which they proclaimed; and they were willing to give up their lives and die" (v. 11, TEV). Here we learn how to conquer the Evil One. Three of his favorite weapons are described in this chapter, and this verse shows how to overcome all three of them.

One weapon he wields is seen in the terms "accuser" and "devil" (slanderer). When we sin, he constantly accuses us. He does it in heaven, and he also does it in our own consciences, though that fact is not mentioned here by John. He slanders us before God: "Look, see your child down there! He has sinned again. What a miserable failure he is. Why don't You give him up? If You are just, why don't You punish him? I demand justice! Even when he does right, he does it for wrong motives." (Remember Job 1 and 2?) But we have a divine defense attorney in heaven, Jesus Christ the righteous. "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins," and thus God can be just even while forgiving us (1 John 2:1,2). "The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Because of this, the Devil's accusations are brought to nought, found to be invalid, and thrown out of court. We overcome him "by the

blood of the Lamb." Let this be our confidence when he attacks our conscience and says, "See—you're no good! You've failed again. You're hopeless; you may as well quit." Answer him back. "Yes, I have sinned, but I'm sorry and I won't give up! I conquer you because of Jesus' death! My confidence is in Him, not in myself. He triumphed over you at the cross, and I share in His triumph. Because He died for me, my guilt is removed and your accusations fall to the ground."

Another devilish weapon is deception, as seen in the terms "Serpent" and "deceiver." How can we avoid being fooled and misled by this expert trickster? Our defense here is God's truth. "They overcame him . . . by the word of their testimony (NIV) or "through the Word to which they bore witness" (J. B. Phillips). Two ideas are present here, our "witness" and God's "word." We should boldly bear testimony to God's message; Satan is not defeated by Christians who are ashamed and mute. But the emphasis in this verse is probably on God's Word itself—its contents or teachings. By arming ourselves with the truths revealed in Scripture, we can avoid being deceived by Satan's lies and half-truths, his false philosophies and doctrinal errors.

His third weapon is persecution, as seen in the terms "Dragon" and "Satan" (adversary). He arouses intense opposition against us and attempts to wipe us out altogether. This is seen in the following chapter of Revelation, which portrays the final Antichrist and worldwide persecution against God's people. Martyrs are mentioned repeatedly in Revelation. How can we conquer Satan if he kills us? By being willing to give up our lives and die, rather than deny our Lord. If we remain faithful though the enemy kill us, he simply sends our spirit to heaven (see Acts 7:59,60). That's no victory for him, and no loss for us! Devil-inspired men may kill us physically, but not a hair of our head will perish, spiritually and eternally (Luke 21:16-18).

Do you get the picture? It's beautiful. We overcome Satan's *accusations* by the *blood of the Lamb*. We overcome his *deceitfulness* by *God's Word* to which we testify. We overcome his *Persecutions* by being *willing to die* for our Savior. Praise God, our fierce foe can be defeated, through Christ and the resources He provides us.

CONCLUSION

This dark, mysterious chapter has taught us a lot, hasn't it? It would be a shame to miss these lessons just because many points in the passage still perplex us. So let's believe Paul when he says that "*all scripture is inspired . . . and profitable,*" even the puzzling parts.

And your next time through the Bible, you will probably understand more about the woman, her child, the "rest of her offspring" (v. 17), the war in heaven (v. 7), and the 1,260 days (vs. 6,14). But if we *ignore* the hard passages, then of course we can *never* hope to understand them.

Bible Exposition -- Matthew

THE BEGINNING OF THE KING'S MINISTRY

S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

INTRODUCTION

All the needed preparations for the beginning of the ministry of the King have been completed. His supernatural birth has been accomplished by virtue of the supernatural activity of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary. And when Joseph received the young maiden, at the behest of the angel of the Lord, into his home as his wife, the right and title of the young child to the Davidic throne was established. Gentiles from far away, guided by the miraculous star, came and worshipped Him, a sign of the reverence in which the Gentile nations should hold Him in the days of His future kingdom.

Divinely protected by heaven from the wrath of King Herod, the puppet king, the divine King eventually came to Nazareth and made His home there until the inception of the ministry of His forerunner, John the Baptist. Recognizing the need of every Israelite to be prepared for the coming of the King, whom John was heralding, the Lord Jesus appeared before John to be baptized by the Forerunner. The baptism was the inauguration into the Messianic office, and the voice from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17), was the coronation formula. The coming of the Spirit of God upon Him was His endowment with power for the coming ministry.

Having been properly informed by the Father's prophetic word that He was "born to suffer, born a King," one might have expected an immediate entrance into the Messianic ministry of preaching, teaching, and healing. Surprisingly, He is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be thoroughly tried by the devil. By His victorious stand amid the wild beasts, it becomes clearly evident that He is perfectly qualified morally to be the Davidic Sovereign and Saviour, as well as the sympathetic high priest of the saved. It is no wonder that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews exhorts the saints, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). What privileges the saints have!

1. THE COMING INTO GALILEE

It is helpful to remember the relationship of the Synoptic Gospels to the Gospel of John at this point. The Synoptics pass over the early Judean ministry of the Lord Jesus. That ministry is preserved for us in the early chapters of the Fourth Gospel. Since that ministry was informal, accomplished before His confirmation at the baptism as Israel's promised Messiah, it is fitting that Matthew omit

it. Matthew begins with the great Galilean ministry, which had its inception about a year after the Lord's baptism. The reason is obvious: It is Matthew's intention to present the King in His *official* ministry. Therefore, He *begins* with the Forerunner's *end*. And most of the ministry recorded in this gospel, before the final days in the south, is given in Galilee. "To the end of chapter xiii. the scene is chiefly in Galilee," Plummer points out, adding, "the scene of xiv.-xviii. is chiefly in or near Galilee."

The motive of His Coming (4:12-13). The key expression in the twelfth verse is the opening clause, "Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison." It is evident that one consuming reason for the removal of the Lord from the south to the north was the news of John's imprisonment. That was the clue that His ministry was about to begin, for the Forerunner's was coming to an end.

There were probably two other reasons why the Lord made the long journey north. The first is that He knew from the study of the prophetic Word that the beginning of the ministry of the Messiah would be accomplished in Galilee. Matthew will point that out himself in the 14th through the 16th verses. We shall comment upon them in a moment. The second reason is that it had probably become evident to Him that, if He continued His ministry in the south of Judea, his early popularity among the people in the country regions would undoubtedly provoke keen resentment among the leaders. And, if that happened, a premature crisis, endangering the whole Messianic program of several years duration, might arise. He must die, but He must die at the time set by the Father, called often by Him His "hour." "As soon as that moment arrived," Hendriksen points out, "He would voluntarily lay down His life (John 10:18; 13:1; 14:31). He would do so *then*, but not before then. Hence, he must now leave Judea."

After arriving in the north, the Lord moved from His home in Nazareth to a new home in Capernaum, the town in which Matthew, the author of the gospel, had his office, that of "publican," or tax-collector. It was in the vicinity of this village that the Lord had called His first disciples (cf. John 1:35-42). The place became the center of the Messianic activities and the headquarters of the great Galilean ministry. Here the King performed many of His miracles, customarily attended the synagogue, and preached some of His most famous messages, such as that on The Bread of Life (cf. John 6:24-65).

The Matthean commentary on the move (4:14-16). The move from the ecclesiastical prejudices of Jerusalem and the local jealousies of Nazareth for coastal Capernaum leads the evangelist to relate it to prophecy. He finds in Isaiah 9:1-2 the prophecy of the dawning of the light of the Messianic ministry over Galilee rather than over Judea. The prophecy is significant in that it occurs in the midst of a section of Isaiah which portrays the judgment and doom that is to come upon the land by virtue of the invasion of the As-

syrian hordes. And yet, in the very region where the Assyrians bring terror and death, the light from the Messianic King and His deliverance shall arise and shine. In Galilee shall He appear whose name shall be called, "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:6-7).

The use of the words, "that it might be fulfilled," indicate plainly that Matthew found a divine purpose in the change of location. Morison comments that the sojourn in Capernaum of Galilee was brought about by an overruling Divine Hand that, among other important purposes which were subserved, an oracle might receive its fulfillment, an oracle which had been uttered of old through Isaiah the Seer.

It seems certain that one of Matthew's purposes in citing the prophecy, then, is *geographical* and, as Morison says, "it is finely explicit geographically, clause after clause holding out its finger and pointing to the Saviour." Capernaum is the center from which radiated the Messianic ministry, and Scripture foretold its place in God's program.

Another purpose of the evangelist is suggested by the description of the land and the people in the citation. One might call this the *spiritual locale* to which the Savior came. Capernaum is also the capital and spiritual center of a kingdom of darkness and death (cf. Psalms 23:4), to the remnant of which there appeared the Bright and Morning Star of Light, the "Sunrise from on high" (cf. Luke 1:78, NASB). There is a very important and instructive lesson here. Will you notice the clear teaching that this citation affords on two of the most important truths in all of the divine revelation. First of all, men are depraved, sitting in darkness and "in the region and shadow of death." Of course, when we say that men are "depraved," we do not mean: (1) that every man is as bad as he can be, nor: (2) that man has no knowledge of God's will, nor a conscience, nor: (3) that man is incapable of disinterested affections and actions toward other men, nor: (4) that every man will commit every sin. It simply means that corruption touches *every part* of man's nature, and that he cannot produce any spiritual good acceptable to God (cf. John 5:42; 2 Tim. 3:2-4; Tit. 1:15). God is not in all his thoughts, and he cannot save himself. As far as his self-recuperation is concerned, he is decisively helpless, the disease of sin affecting all his members. In a word, it is spiritual death. It is not the total corruption of human nature, but the corruption of total human nature. If there is no recovery of human nature by divine grace, its total depravity shall finally reach the intensity of the rebellion of the damned in Gehenna.

Dostoevski, in one of his darker moments, wrote that "there never was a crime that I couldn't conceive of committing myself." Left to itself this is the proper evaluation of the potential of human nature due to its sin.

A second truth is before us here also, namely, the related truth of human inability. It is evident that, since the inhabitants of Galilee are sitting in "the shadow of death," that there is no hope of recovery from their condition by their own efforts. They are in darkness and in death, and their corrupt understanding (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14), emotions (cf. Eph. 4:18), and will (cf. Rom. 8:7) make it impossible for them to respond of themselves to divine things. Free will can be of no help to them. The Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglican Church express it pointedly, "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works to faith, and calling upon God." The Westminster Confession puts it this way, "Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly LOST ALL ABILITY OF WILL TO ANY SPIRITUAL GOOD accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is NOT ABLE, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto." That puts it beautifully, and such passages as Romans 5:6, 8:7, John 15:5, 6:44, 65 confirm the teaching. There is hardly any more important truth for a man to learn.

But, it is just when men are in their most desperate condition that the grace of God often appears. As Lenski says, "In both the prophecy and its fulfillment we must not miss the strong note of UNDESERVED GRACE. The people were at their lowest ebb, all spiritual light was gone, there was absolutely no hope or help in themselves: then God stepped in and in pure grace sent them a heavenly gift, the help of salvation in Christ Jesus." And those whose minds and hearts have been opened rejoice and sing,

"O gift of gifts! O grace of faith!
My God, how can it be
That Thou, who hast discerning love
Shouldst give that gift to me?
"Ah, grace, into unlikeliest hearts
It is thy boast to come;
The glory of thy light to find
In darkest spots a home."

—Frederick W. Faber

The message of the Lord (4:17). The seventeenth verse gives the reader a summary of the message of the Redeemer. The expression, "From that time," occurs again in 16:21, where the evangelist states that, from the time of the confession at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus began to teach His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and die. It would seem, then, that the two occurrences of the same expression set forth the two primary aspects of His teaching. The public teaching in Galilee in the first part of His ministry centers in

the message, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This is the identical message that the Baptist preached, and it is not necessary for us to comment upon it.

Then, from 16:21, in an essentially private ministry to the disciples, He proclaims His coming death, burial, and resurrection, after they have confessed Him as the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, through their spokesman Peter.

The message of Jesus, then, concerned the near approach of the Messianic kingdom, proclaimed by the prophets and writers of the Old Testament. Israel is called upon to repent, that is, to return to Jehovah, in the light of this soon-coming decisive event.

2. THE CALL OF THE FOUR GALILEANS

The call of Peter and Andrew (4:18-20). It must not be thought that this is the first meeting of the Lord with these men. It is evident from a careful study of John 1:35-41 that the four men referred to in this section had come to a saving faith in Christ about a year earlier, but they had continued to pursue their secular occupations. As a result of this call they became the steady companions of the Lord. It is a call to *service*, not *salvation*, and the four men respond. While there is some disagreement over the point, it would seem that Luke 5:1-11 occurs somewhat later than the events mentioned in Matthew 4, and probably that chapter refers to the final call to apostleship. There they leave all, and they become His permanent companions.

The purpose of the call here is fully consonant with the inception of the King's Messianic ministry. If He is to inaugurate His rule upon the earth after His sufferings, death, and resurrection, it is reasonable to expect Him to do it through disciples. And, therefore, He begins the work of training men to accomplish the program He has determined under His guidance and enablement.

The call of James and John (4:21-22). The call of James and John concludes the section. If a King is to have a kingdom, then He must have subjects. And if one is a subject of a King, then he must render to his royal head implicit obedience. It is, therefore, not surprising to notice that the four choice and chosen men give Him such obedience. The text, with its twofold use of the Greek word *eutheos* (AV, "straightway," v. 20; "immediately," v. 22), vividly illustrates this. And again, we notice the recurring truth of the Word of God: The initiative in the calling comes, not from the apostles, but from the Lord (cf. John 15:16).

We should not pass this section by without noticing that the call of our Lord comes principally to the lowly, the insignificant, and the unsophisticated, not to the cultured, the noble, and the highly educated (cf. 1 Cor. 1:26). It is wholly unexpected, but then that is the usual work of sovereign grace. So, it is not surprising that the Lord Jesus grew up in Galilee, did much of His traveling and preaching there, walking the dusty paths and roads of the region, gathered His disciples principally from that land, and finally from that area and with His Galilean band He made His final trek to

Jerusalem to die, only to meet with them again, following the resurrection, in Galilee (cf. 26:32).

3. THE CHARACTER OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY

The teaching ministry (cf. 5:1-7:29). These verses (4:23-25) epitomize the Great Galilean Ministry, and the first of the characteristics of it that the evangelist mentions is "teaching." A beautiful illustration of His teaching is that found in the Sermon on the Mount, but there was undoubtedly more. It is hard to see Him preaching without picturing Him taking the Old Testament prophetic passages and relating them to the great events that were transpiring in His words and deeds. This we see in the great chapter on the parables and in the Olivet Discourse.

The preaching ministry (cf. 4:17; 10:5, etc.). It may not be possible to distinguish preaching from teaching. Something of each seems to accompany the other. The word *to preach* does, however, stress *the heralding, the proclaiming*, of a message, while the word *to teach* suggests the impartation of more detailed information regarding the announcements, or proclamations, made.

The healing ministry (cf. 8:1-11:1; 11:2-6; Heb. 6:5). The healing miracles were designed to authenticate, or better, to identify the King and His ministry. They proclaimed in the loudest of fashion that the divine and authoritative King was present. He was shown to be the Messiah, and that salvation was found in Him alone.

CONCLUSION

We close our study with a few comments concerning the section.

(1) First, we must not forget the plain and pointed picture of the lost given us in verses 14-16. Apart from divine initiative and enablement through regeneration all men are afflicted with spiritual blindness, human inability, and spiritual death.

(2) Second, we must not forget the touching and telling picture of the grace of God, both in the bringing of the light of the Messianic ministry to Galilee and to us, as well as in the calling of the unlikely Galilean apostles to their notable ministries. Further, their decision to throw in their lot with the Lord Jesus testifies to the commanding force of His personality and influence over the minds and hearts of men. When He calls, men follow "straightway." The reason is simple: He is the divine Son of God.

(3) Third, we must not forget the commanding and constraining picture of the love of God for the lost and of His desire that we join Him in reaching them. The fact that the Lord Jesus calls the apostles to be "fishers of men" indicates that the good news is for the ages. He intends that His work be perpetuated in the unfolding years until all His own are gathered together like wheat into His barn. It is no wonder, then, that we read in Proverbs 11:30, "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and HE THAT WINNETH SOULS IS WISE." May God help us to learn these lessons well.

The writer is a professor of music at the University of Louisville, and minister of the Highland Church of Christ.



Viewing the News

Ernest E. Lyon

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION: When you read this (written the middle of October) the election will be history and no one can think I wrote it to influence your voting, so I would like to point out a few things that may be of use in looking at developments under the new administration. Last month I quoted Billy Graham on the religious beliefs of the candidates for president in the two major parties. Since I did not believe that any other candidate had the slightest chance this time, I did not look up quotations on the others. If Gerald Ford has been elected, then the chances are that he will continue the policies of co-operation with the communists that have characterized administrations of both parties for a good many years. That will mean we will be working for a world-wide government that will be socialistic if not outright communist and that we will continue to inflate our money until it falls and we are ready for the world-wide computer-controlled money system that will make it handy for the world ruler (the beast of Revelation 13) to control buying and selling. If Jimmy Carter has been elected and he follows the platform his party adopted, we will inflate even faster and head into that system slightly quicker. Neither candidate showed the slightest understanding of the satanic nature of the communist conspiracy or of the fact that many in high places in our government are working for a world run by Satan. Neither candidate showed the slightest conception of a world that lieth in the evil one. Neither one showed any conception of the fact that the constitutional republic that our forefathers established in this country has

long been bypassed for a welfare state that operates on the assumption that the almighty state must watch over the political, social, and economic needs of its people instead of the concept the writers of our constitution had that power in the hands of a few is very dangerous and we must check such power constantly and work for a government that does only for its citizens what they cannot do for themselves. This all is personal opinion, of course, and is written only as a suggestion that you should be looking up and praying, for our redemption draweth nigh!

The Church League of America, 422 North Prospect Street, Wheaton, Ill. 60187, has published the complete court decision of the Ohio Supreme Court (6 to 0) in the case of State against Whisner, the case where the state was forcing families to send their children to a government school instead of to a Christian school that did not meet the standards set up by the state government. It costs 50¢ for one copy to League contributors, 75¢ to non-contributors, and goes down in price for orders of 100. On a single copy there is a postage charge of 25¢. Ask for *News and Views* vol. 39, no. 11, November 1976. It is worth reading, especially if you are interested in Christian schools.

BEN KAUFMAN, in his column in *The Cincinnati Enquirer* pointed out an interesting fact about the election last month. He said that the left-wing group that poses as a church-state separation group under the name of "Americans United" preferred Carter to Ford because Carter was more strongly opposed to church and state

cooperation, while the Republicans were for tax credit for people sending children to Christian schools, for anti-abortion laws, and laws favoring prayer in the schools . . . In an issue in September Kaufman pointed out that a Catholic "sister" was to teach last month a lunch-hour series (actually ending Nov. 3, a total of five Wednesdays) on understanding the New Testament. The cost for the "course" was \$1 for each of the 5 lectures or \$4 for the series . . . Also in September Kaufman summarized some of the work of the NCC, including: Workshops on the sexual needs and rights of the mentally retarded, moral implications of energy use and production, historical and contemporary contributions of church-related colleges, panel discussion, seminars and workshops on Christian-Jewish relations, a book that is "a guide to non-sexist interpretation of the Bible," expanded plans to help the WCC send "relief" to various places, and a program on "cash management service." Some list! . . . Incidentally, Kaufman rather showed his own religious preference in writing about the Episcopal Convention when he referred to the liberals who won as "progressives" (they won the right to ordain female priests and to consecrate female bishops, won preliminary acceptance of a radical prayer book, etc.) and those who opposed such things as "traditionalists."

AN ORGANIZATION that I had not read about before got space in The National Laymen's Digest, October 15, 1976, when the paper quoted from the Newsletter of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS). It was concerned with the development of socialized medicine in this country and gave portions of a speech by a West German doctor. Those portions the Digest quoted were startling but in line with predictions I have made: There are more bureaucrats running the health program in West Germany than there are doctors in the nation. [It would take 400,000 bureaucrats here for our 300,000 physicians if we had the same proportion]. Cost of health care is 25 per cent to 30 per cent of the gross national product. "70 per cent of the income of German workers is taken in taxes to the government." He said that

few patients get more than 3 to 5 minutes with a doctor, so 60 per cent of all cases referred to specialists or sent to hospitals are misdiagnosed. Etc., ad infinitum.

I HAVE SEEN so many times the case of a Rhodesian (black) being terrorized (but have never seen it in the mass media), that I feel maybe you should read it too. A 30-year-old black named Chikombe Mazvida refused to give food to the terrorists (who are supported by the WCC and now, according to Scranton, by the U.S.A.) was treated this way: His hands were tied behind his back; his wrists were both broken; his ears, lips, and all the flesh from the bridge of his nose to his chin were cut off and his wife Steria forced to roast them on an open fire and then eat them while the couple's five children (age 7 mos. to 11 years) were forced to watch; and then Mazvida's mother was forced to lie on the ground while they burned her with a heated stick applied to her thigh and vagina. Does it please you to know that we are trying to turn over the government of Rhodesia to those who sympathize with those terrorists?

THE MEANS THAT Dr. Kissinger used to force the Rhodesian government to give in was to persuade the South African government (how this persuasion was done I do not know) to stop all aid to Rhodesia and make it clear that no free-world power would in any way help them. I am sure that Kissinger did not know of the character of those described in the preceding paragraph, but he should have known about such things. He did not visit Rhodesia at any time. Incidentally, many sources of news commentary say that Dr. Kissinger hopes by control of food and energy to bring about a world-wide government by 1980. It looks like this is the compelling force behind his actions rather than that he is a Russian agent as many have tried to make him out to be. Of course, that is my private opinion rather than anything backed by substantial evidence.

DID YOU REALIZE that most national currencies today are being ruined rather deliberately in preparation for a computer-controlled world-wide cur-

rency? When that happens purchases will be paid for by transfer from one account to another (everyone must have a number—what part will 666 play in that?). Automatic banking in the U.S.A. is a preview of how it will work. I read recently that a computer large enough to handle data on every person in the world is already being built in Europe.

FAME WITH the mass media and politicians passes quickly if you turn out to be a person who believes in freedom from government oppression. Just think how quickly Alexandr Solzhenitsyn passed from being a celebrity to an "artist with rather antiquated ideas" when he got out of Russia and began revealing how oppressive that government is and how we are moving in that direction. Too bad, for he could do much good if people would only listen and act.

DID YOU KNOW THAT Jeane Dixon predicted that Ronald Reagan would be the presidential nominee of the Republican party and that President Ford would be wounded "slightly" in an assassination attempt "probably in July" in "a northern city," and that Ford would resign shortly before the Republican nominating convention

because of a health crisis. She also predicted that Carter and Humphrey would have a battle for the nomination of the convention but that Carter would win and then win a very close victory over Reagan in the election. Maybe people should leave her to her astrology!

IT WAS SAD to see one of the finest men in congress, John Conlan, go down to defeat in the Republican primary in Arizona. It was a dirty campaign against him but the forces aligned against this evangelical Christian with a fine Christian witness were too great. I am afraid that bodes ill for our country.

"After eighteen years and more than 700 sermons, Southern Baptist Herschel H. Hobbs, 68, is bowing out as preacher on *The Baptist Hour*, a radio broadcast aired on 394 stations. His final message was scheduled for September 26.—*Christianity Today*, Sept. 24, 1976.

THANK YOU again for helping write this column by sending material. Keep looking for someone to take over the column and keep sending material till then to Ernest E. Lyon, 2629 Valletta Road, Louisville, Kentucky 40205.

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Thomas W. Hartle

Cape Town, R. S. A.

September 21, 1976

We are very happy to announce that our series of gospel meetings held September 1-5 with a guest speaker, was a success to the glory of God, with commendable attendance. While there were no immediate results, nevertheless the messages delivered on the theme "Back to the Bible" were potent, thought-provoking, meaningful and purposeful to all who attended. With the knowledge that the truth has been presented, all we can do is pray that the future, Lord willing, shall show forth cause for great rejoicing for some dear soul who did attend. We are very grateful to those members of other local congregations who afforded themselves the opportunity to attend these series, and by their presence augmented the success of the meeting.

We have been busy with cottage meetings, but since the tir

of the present unrest, which is in the areas where we labor, we have decided to cancel all other requests for cottage meetings until things subside. Thanks for your concern over us, and I'm sure this includes all of God's people here, and we can pray and ask you to share in our prayers to the intent that peace, joy, happiness and satisfaction shall soon reign. But let us also pray for those men who day and night are protecting the safety of all concerned.

J. R. Stewart-Brown Simonstown, R. S. A. August 9, 1976

We, if God still wills it so, are moving to Cape Town on October the 1st to be closer to the church at Bellville. We love it at Simonstown, but the only snag is, it is so very far from everything, especially the church. Now it will only be 15 or 20 minutes to get there.

God has answered our prayers in opening up the doors for us in this place where we are going. Our new address will be: Disa House, Flat 221, 70, Orange Street; 8001, Cape Town.

We have had many riots (by the coloreds) all over the place. The police had to use tear gas, etc. and what a horrible thing this tear gas is, when it gets in your eyes, throat and chest; we know, as we were caught in one of them, doing shopping.

We had a very cold winter, but spring is now just around the corner. The wild flowers really make a lovely show this year, due to our early rains.

Thanks again for your love and prayers.

Donald R. Harris Salisbury, Rhodesia September 23, 1976

We praise God for all you people and all the help you've given us these past three years. Most of all we give thanks for all the prayers that have gone up. The new home is underway and the foundation is complete. We are soon to get some fill dirt to fill in all the low spots and we believe it will take about 10 loads. I'm trying to contact a man that I have been notified of, he just might supply us with our needs. We cannot pour the floor slab until the filling is done. Our funds have depleted but we have enough concrete on hand, already paid for, to do the floor slab. If we can get the free dirt, then we will be able to carry on. If not, we will just have to wait until more funds come.

Dollie Garrett Salisbury, Rhodesia September 25, 1976

This is the last term of this school year. Five of our older ones take their final exams in December. Barbara, the eldest girl, has applied to take up nursing, and received a lot of forms to fill out the other day. The four boys haven't anything definite yet except to be called up for army duty. The Prime Minister gave his speech last night after his talk with Dr. Kissinger and South African Prime Minister. Much pressure was put on him I am sure. One of his statements: 'The Government has accepted the proposals put forward by the U.S. Secretary of State, Dr. Kissinger, for majority rule in Rhodesia in two years.'

Donald and Delores have gone to visit one of the families so I am "baby-sitting." The youngest is ten, the eldest nearly 18. The three oldest boys have gone visiting relatives today after they finished their Saturday jobs, which are cleaning and polishing the church. They will be back tonight at nine. I just went into Florence's room to ask her about what some of the others were planning. George John hopes to train as a male nurse. Florence will be 18 in January. I have my suspicion that the boy friend is going to persuade her to get married. One is hoping to go overseas for further study. Pray for these young folk that they may not drift away.

Addie Brown

Salisbury, Rhodesia

September 22, 1976

Daddy Brown is quite well these days. His scripture class in the High School opened again last week for the last term of this year. He has been invited to preach for a Euro-African congregation several times recently and he enjoyed going and meeting with them. He had a cable last week saying his youngest brother had passed away.

Another scripture that has been a source of blessing to me recently is 1 Pet. 1:13. It is also relevant to our day of problems and worry and also points to the coming of the Lord for His own. The battle is for the minds of men—how Christians need to *gird up* the loins of their minds and set their hope on the *grace* the Lord will bring when He appears. Worry, fear and cares of life can hinder our walk with God. And they do take away our joy. I have found this one a tremendous blessing. Someone asked me Sunday how I got victory in my life. I gave them this verse, for one—there are others.

Tonight is Bible study. David is teaching Acts. Dora invited us to eat supper with them.

Mr. Kissinger has been in Africa, as you know. Rhodesia has a great decision to make. Thank you for your prayers!

Georgia Hobby

October, 1976

Alvin and I are still in the hospital—he as a patient and I as his nurse-companion. It has meant a lot to both of us that I have been allowed to stay in the hospital with him since August 1. We don't yet know when he will be discharged or when his next surgery will be done.

Many prayers have been prayed for him and God has helped him to have a very high percentage of "take" on the graft areas which are nearly healed. It is the donor sites which are slow in some places. But the healing of burns and donor sites is always a slow process. Alvin looks well and walks about the halls, using a walker to steady himself.

We still hope and expect to return to our home and work in Zambia in early January.

We ask that prayers for us, and for Rhodesia and Zambia, continue.

CBI opened again last night and it seems there'll be a very good enrollment. Students who come from a certain church spread the word on it in their church, thus bringing new ones all the time, as well, as of course, some "unchurched" ones.

Our spate of baptisms seems to have come to an end, I'm afraid, and the year's goal is far off. But a recent beginning of the neighborhood survey was encouraging. During semester break, some students helped Jimmy with this, and on just the block next to the church, five homes opened up for home Bible studies.

Glued to the Boob Tube

Dear Billy Graham,

I have been lying awake thinking. You spoke tonight on television about the gods of the American people. You mentioned "sex" as one and right away I said, "Aha! That's not my god." But afterward it struck me what my god really is.

This god of mine is television. You do not know how faithfully I worship my god. Every morning it is turned on and it stays on all day and all evening. My god is there while I fix the children's breakfast, and while I make their lunches. The dishes usually stay unwashed and the beds unmade because I cannot leave my god to take care of them.

During commercials I throw in some wash. My little boy wants to talk but I have no time. The baby cries and I resent him because I cannot leave my god. I shove a bottle in his mouth and change his diaper and go back to my worship. Through lunch I continue to watch. I send my boy out to play so I can enjoy my favorite program. The dust piles up. I may fold some wash or iron a few pieces of clothing, but I can do this while I worship.

The children come home to watch their afternoon cartoons. I am raising them also to worship my god. Now I do what work must be done, for at 6:30 my worship starts again. Because I don't like to hear about the troubles and problems of others, I switch around from channel to channel.

The supper dishes must wait. My children want to talk but I have no time. My husband is overseas; I write him every other day—what else can I do? At least he's not here to interfere with my worship time.

On Sunday I go to church. My daughter pouts because she wants to worship her favorite cartoons. I don't go to prayer meeting on Wednesday because my favorite show is on. I have no time to write my parents or my husband's mother or my grandmother. Bad schools, pollution, politics? I can't be bothered.

If you had asked me before tonight whether I obeyed the commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," I would

have said that I did. Now I know better. My children know more TV programs than Bible stories.

Will I be saved when I get to heaven because I went forward at the age of sixteen and said I believed Jesus is the Son of God? Or will God say, "Depart from me, I never knew you. You were too busy with your god to worship me or to live as I commanded. You would not be happy in heaven, there are no TV sets here."

Mrs. D. F.

Tallahassee, Florida

—(From *Decision Magazine*, date unknown—but several years ago)

ALCOHOL AND AMERICA

Luella Van't Kerkhoff

Sobering Statistics

Jim is a high school student. He picks up some friends for an evening drive. They bring beer with them. In a few hours Jim is dead. He is one of the *fifty* young Americans who die *each day* in alcohol-related accidents. Surveys show that half of our high school students drink regularly, much of it during driving situations. Also 20% of seventh grade students drink without supervision.

Alcohol is America's No. 3 health problem and her No. 1 drug problem. There are 18 million alcoholics and problem drinkers in our country today. Ninety-seven per cent of these are in homes, offices and factories.

Each year problem drinkers are involved in one million traffic collisions with more than 28,000 deaths and 500,000 injured. Over 55% of all highway deaths are alcohol-related. Between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. one in every ten drivers on the road is intoxicated.

Alcohol is a contributing factor in 31% of homicides, 36% of suicides, 31% of non-auto accidents and 75% of crimes. The cost of alcohol-related crimes in each state is staggering. Industry also experiences great losses. The latest available figure was 25.3 billion dollars annually.

The number of chronic alcoholics in our navy alone is estimated at 30,000, and their alcoholism costs the taxpayers \$45 million a year!

A Frightening Future

Consider further the outlook for the future of our country if alcohol continues to rule.

Since alcoholism has been called a disease, hospitals and mental institutions have accepted alcoholics. They constitute 52% of all hospital admissions. They are "revolving door" patients. Readmission has increased 25%, which shows that the treatment is rarely effective or permanent. Should our hospitals be overcrowded, understaffed, with rapidly rising medical costs because of alcoholism?

Going back 25 years, we find that about one person in 15 who drank became an alcoholic. Today the figure is one in 10. If this trend continues, what will it be in another generation?

Powerful liquor lobbies in every state and in our nation's capitol have influenced our government to label alcohol a "food product." The liquor industry has one common objective in all states: the sale of *more liquor!*

Parents, the liquor industry is after your children! "Get the young to drink and you will have a customer for life." Recent production of "pop wines" is making a big hit with teenagers. Alcohol is claimed to be the "perfect answer" for those who need a replacement for other drugs.

One brewing company poses as virtuous, saying it is interested in "keeping the environment beautiful." "Cash for cans" is nothing more than paying someone else to clean up their own litter! One well-known company prints full page "Father's Day Messages." These reflect an increasingly permissive use of hard liquors for the young boy who asks, "When can I start to drink, Dad?" Drinking is held to be something enjoyable along with the "rest of the good things of life." Some companies have their names printed on the front of T-shirts for youngsters. Every attempt is made to orient them to a life style where alcohol is a natural and acceptable part of living.

Some concern has been expressed about airline costs which have been increased, due in part to serving free liquor. So far the Airline Pilot's Association has not been able to get a bill out of committee opposing this. As one pilot put it, "Too many congressmen like their drinks while flying."

The rapid increase in cost of automobile insurance is another instance of the non-drinker paying for the accidents caused by the drinking driver.

Intoxicating beverages are glamorized by deceitful advertising on radio and television and in newspapers and magazines. It is difficult to find a movie or play in which drinking is not socially accepted.

There was a time when drinks could be purchased only in bars and taverns. Today, nearly all supermarkets and drug stores sell liquor.

Think of the nationally viewed athletic events being sponsored by brewing companies. Youngsters associate their athletic heroes with drinking. Many children learn to drink at home where their parents keep the refrigerator and cupboard stocked with wine, beer and hard liquor. And, have you watched what a featured part of a new home is when it is advertised? A wet bar, for "toasting the troops"! What chance do children have to know anything different than that drinking is a necessary and desirable part of life?

Conscientious Concern

One voice will not be strong enough to stem this fearsome tide. Many voices joined together can get action. We must remember that the liquor industry is organized, wealthy and unscrupulous. Are you thinking that any effort on your part will be like using a firecracker for blasting in a rock quarry?

Can those who sell liquor be held responsible for what happens to those who use it? Can the alcohol industry be required at least to post a warning of the possible bad effect of consuming their product? The federal government has restricted cigarette advertising. If this can be done, liquor advertising can also be restricted.

When we oppose or try to slow the liquor traffic, there is an outcry that we want prohibition. We are not so naive as to think we can bring this to pass in this day of permissiveness. Since the sale of alcoholic beverages is the second greatest source of revenue for our federal government, we can realize the outcry of the brewing industry if anything is done to curtail it.

There are better ways for us to use our influence:

1. Present the truth about alcohol. It is a dangerous drug — a poison! (The medical profession is beginning to call alcoholism an addiction instead of a disease.)
2. Join and organize drug seminars, and include alcohol.
3. Lobby against liquor advertising — a mail campaign to Congress.
4. Personally refuse to accept alcohol as a requirement for success.
5. Be optimistic. There are no instant solutions. It takes time and hard work.
6. Insist that drivers' education courses deal realistically with the effects of drinking and that an applicant for a driver's license show knowledge of the effect of alcohol.
7. If social pressure to drink is too great, say "No thanks, I'm a potential alcoholic." That is true. No one ever became an alcoholic without that first drink.

Christian Concern

Now, to the Christians reading this, we want to press the matter further. While we can make use of the above suggestions, we also have God's Word. We cannot deny that drinking is not forbidden in the Bible. But drunkenness is definitely condemned. God calls drunkenness a sin so serious that the drunkard will be barred from Heaven (1 Cor. 6:9,10; Gal. 5:21).

In today's emotionally frustrating and technologically complicated society many people are turning to the bottle as an escape. As Christians we have a responsibility not only for our own well-being, but also for that of others who are looking to us as examples (Habakkuk 2:15). We must translate our love and care for others into responsible living. Though as Christians we may have a legal right to drink, in light of God's Word and current statistics we need to seriously consider our Christian responsibility with regard to the critical problems caused by alcohol.

—In *Pioneer*

A TRIBUTE TO A WORTHY WOMAN "At Home With The Lord"

On May 30, 1976 Mary Adele Davidson Rutherford went home to be with her Lord.

As a child and young girl she lived in Louisville, neighbor to Don Carlos

Janes and his Word and Work office and home. Her association with "Janey" and Don Carlos Janes along with the privilege of attending R. H. Boll's Bible classes mixed in with her wonderful home training with "Aunt Sally" Davidson and her wonderful Christian mother, Fanny Hitt Davidson, encouraged her to love God's word. She chose as her Christian life mate, Homer Neely Rutherford, minister of the gospel at Parkland Church in Louisville, Ky.; Lynnville, Tennessee; Riverside Church in Jacksonville, Florida; and then the Cramer & Hanover Church of Christ in Lexington, Kentucky for thirty-eight years. They truly lived according to God's word "and the two shall become one flesh" for sixty-two years.

On her casket was her open Bible with one beautiful pink rose marking the passage Proverbs 31. She was indeed a worthy woman who brought honor to her husband, whose children rose up and called her blessed, who feared Jehovah above everyone and everything in the world. She was not easily discouraged or depressed because she kept her eyes always on the Lord instead of self. She delighted in the word of God and meditated on it day and night reading and praying continually. Her faith and fervent prayers kept her children and other foster children, whom she nurtured and brought into her home, close to the Lord. She was very strict and strong in her beliefs and convictions, living a disciplined life. She was a true model of a minister's wife.

Her one aim in life was to please the Lord and seek first His kingdom.

—By H. N. Rutherford, Fannie Hamilton, Amy Reeves

NEWS AND NOTES

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

Gallatin Church of Christ, Gallatin, Tenn.: Our elders received a request from Sei Bok Kim that they acknowledge him as a minister of the gospel so that he might begin work among the Korean populace in Tampa, Fla. They agreed to back him in this effort by sending a letter recommending him for this good work.

Henryville, Ind. Church of Christ.

The church of Sellersburg gives their offering to the Children's Home on the Sunday before Thanksgiving Day. On this Sunday they ask that our children give their annual memory work and program there. Brother Charles Weber will fill the pulpit here on that day which is Nov. 21. On the following Wednesday we will be traveling to Dugger for our 27th annual Thanksgiving service.—Howard T. Marsh.

Buechel Church, Louisville: Many of our young people visited East Jefferson for their Homecoming. They hoped to encourage Bro. Jim Wilson, who had been their director at Echo Valley Camp.

The Kyana A Cappella Chorus met again on Monday, Oct. 25 for a recording session for radio use.

The Ebenezer church now has a minister. Bro. Terry Morrison will be preaching there each Lord's day. He will continue with the young people at Buechel.

Brother Ron Flora, a student in the School of Biblical Studies, filled the pulpit for Brother Sanders when he and his family were out of town on October 24. He had a good message.

From Here and There

The Word and Work continues to be a fine magazine and such as can be handed out to any one without any apology.

Fraternally in the Lord—H. N. Rutherford.

Dear Christian, I am sending a check for \$2.50 to renew my subscription to the Word and Work. It is very inspirational and informative. — In Christian love, Mrs. T. E. Daniels.

I really enjoy Word and Work. August's issue was especially great. Enclosed is this year's subscription check. Keep sending to my Bloomington, Ind. address. I'm now in Oklahoma City preaching for a while.—Michael Hall.

Dear Ones, I continue to enjoy Word and Work. May God bless your work. —Dick Lewis.

Linton, Ind: The area churches of Christ are now assuming the financial responsibility for the one hour and 54 minutes of weekly radio broadcast of Good Tidings produced by Orell Overman for over 23 years.

The Youth Retreat at Woodland Bible Camp directed by Robin Neal, David Pound and Ted Rhodes was a full house October 22-24. A great time in the Lord was enjoyed in spite of the rain and cool temperatures. Tooger Smith did a fine job coaching. —Dick Lewis

Portland Ave. Church, Louisville, Ky.

Meetings at Portland were unusually inspiring on Nov. 14. After a stirring message in the morning, the young people moved us greatly in the evening service. Under the direction of Bro. Leroy Friedley they are growing mightily in the grace and power of the Lord.

After a couple of numbers were sung by the girls, four young men in turn made brief talks. Their testimonies reached the hearts of the listeners. Afterward Bro. Wilson publicly challenged them to let the Lord prepare them for the ministry of the word. Surely many, if not all, who heard them will be praying for them concerning this.

Sellersburg Church, Ind.: We were saddened at the recent passing of Bro. Joe White. Our sympathy is extended to his family and to the larger family at Maple Manor Christian Homes, where his loving example was a pattern to many. He left his mark not only there but in places where his influence was felt before he came there. His tracks and hand prints can be seen in the finest construction work, a trail of blessing throughout his area of the brotherhood.

Henryville, Ind.: The meeting with Bro. Ray Naugle as God's messenger closed on Sunday evening, Oct. 10. There was one new birth during the meeting and three or more rededications and at least one request for prayer. The messages were delivered with power. They were truth spoken in love.

Eighteenth Street Church, Louisville:

Bro. B. D. Fields, minister at 18th

Street church has a fifteen minute program on FM radio, WFIA at 4:20-4:35 p.m. on Saturdays.

One from Eighteenth Street was buried with his Lord in baptism on Oct. 17.

Cherry St. Church, New Albany, Ind.:

A good meeting was had recently with Bro. Julius Hovan in the pulpit. Messages were good, and so was attendance and interest. There was one response for rededication. The seed was sown and visible results are yet expected, for "no word of God is void of power."

Annual Thanksgiving Service

The Annual Thanksgiving service of the Louisville area churches will be from 10:00 to 11:00 on Nov. 25, at Atherton High School auditorium on Dundee Road. Rick Coleman is to be the speaker.

October 31 was a day of great blessing at Portland Avenue. The message, brought by Bro. C. V. Wilson on Psalm 86 with special emphasis on verse 5, delivered in the power of the Holy Spirit, brought nine responses when the invitation was given. Among them was one new birth from the Roman Catholic church and one prodigal returned to the Lord. Some of the others came for rededication, requesting prayer, or thanksgiving for answered prayer.

Immediately following the immersion a group from the Eighteenth St. Church came in to use the pool for another baptism. It was a day of rejoicing on earth and in heaven.

Cramer & Hanover Church, Lexington, Ky.: A letter from Joe Goins from Belgium expresses joy for what the Lord has done in supplying workers and vehicles for India. He requests prayer for the work.

Glenmora, La.: The Cypress Creek congregation has offered their Sunday School Building for use of the Central Louisiana Christian School. Next September we plan to offer Kindergarten through grade 2. We plan to have application blanks in the hands of the churches for the school by February. Keep Central Louisiana Christian School on your prayer list.

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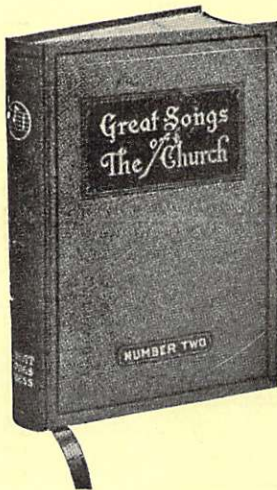
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