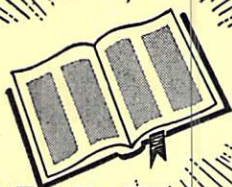
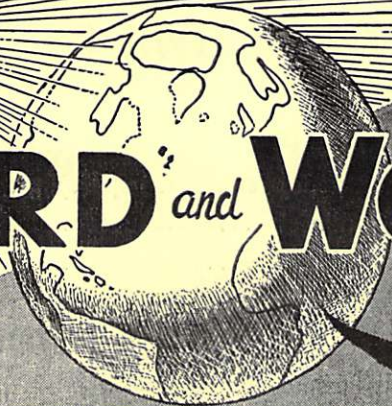


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The **WORD** and **WORK**



"Holding forth the Word of life."

JUNE, 1983

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THE WORD AND WORK

2518 Portland Avenue

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THE WORD AND WORK

"A monthly magazine set to declare the whole counsel of God."

Wm. Robert Heid, Editor

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God's Family

W. R. H.

FATHERHOOD AS A PRIESTHOOD

"And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and renounced God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually." Job 1:5.

In preparing a message for Father's Day, it seemed that the Lord would have us at Portland to consider the priestly responsibilities of parenthood, and examine ourselves a bit in order to put our lives in better spiritual order. The way in which Job is introduced in the fifth verse of the book, gives us some spiritual insight into the very mind of God. I would like to quote here a few sentences from D. Joseph Parker, of London, in his discourses upon Holy Scripture, copyrighted in 1889. Concerning Job, he says:

"Not only have we a complete personal character, a great substantial fortune, but there is in this mysterious man a priestly feeling. The father of the family was then the priest of the household. His sons and daughters were social; they grasped one another with the hand of love; they exchanged liberally all the courtesies which make up much of the happiness of social life. The father was not amongst them; he was away, but still looking on. He said: It may be that in all their feasting and enjoyment my sons have sinned, and have misunderstood God in their hearts; therefore, I will arise early in the morning and offer sacrifices on their account. Although this is now done away ceremonially and literally, yet there abides the priestliness of fatherhood and motherhood—that strange, never-perfectly-described feeling, which says, There is yet something to be done about the children; they are good children, their fine qualities it is impossible to deny, but human nature is human nature after all, and another prayer for them may do good. That prayer may never be offered in words, it may be offered in sighs, in wordless aspirations, in the strange, never-to-be-reported language of the heart. Yet still, there is the fact, that in every true heart there is a priestly instinct that cannot be satisfied until it has remembered in prayer some that may have strayed, and others that may need special vision of light and special communication of grace."

If then, we are to consider the role of father as priest, we need to study out the duties of the priesthood. Only one reference will be cited to establish each of the several duties:

1. To offer sacrifices —Lev. 1:5
2. To offer the Firstfruits —Lev. 23:10-11
3. To pronounce God's benediction —Num. 6:22-27
4. To teach the law of God —Lev. 10:11
5. To light the lamps in the tabernacle —Lev. 24:1-4
6. To keep the sacred fire always burning —Lev. 5:12-13
7. To purify the unclean —Lev. 15:31
8. To examine the Lepers as to their progress —Matt. 8:4

If we only had these examples from the old testament, we might think that there were no real applications of these duties to our day, since we are under the New Covenant. But Peter, in his first letter (2:9) states: "ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of Him that called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." If the Holy Spirit chose to use the word priesthood here, when speaking of the position of Christians, we can be sure it is safe to draw the following parallels.

A priestly parent should continually be offering up sacrifices of prayer and praise, as he holds up his children unto the Lord God. It may be "That they have renounced God," said Job. He was not a doting parent that was blind to his son's frailties. Nor should we be. But he *did know* that the safe course was to pray for them and offer sacrifices to God, day after day; not for just a few occasions as we are wont to do, but "so did Job, continually."

The priests offered to God the firstfruits for the people, waving the offerings before God. All of the people had been commanded to offer the firstfruits of the land and the cattle unto God. Now it was the job of the priests to help, and encourage them to keep this command of God. Parents likewise need to encourage their young to offer to God their "best" and to do so in joyfulness.

The benediction of the priests was to "put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them." What a glorious hint is given to us here, that we, too, can put God's name upon our children and that He will likewise bless them. This is precisely what God wants to do for all of us anyhow. He is good and merciful unto all that call upon Him. We need to be leading in this call.

There should be no need to say that Parents need to be priests in teaching the law of God. This responsibility has ever been placed upon God's people. But failure here is as common as at any other point. Few men are burdened to teach God's word to anyone—particularly in their own house (where they may be too well known to be taken seriously). But God's word still stands, saying "And ye shall teach them to your children, talking of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest in the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

The entrance of God's word giveth light. Just as the priests were to light the lamps in the tabernacle, we need to light the lamps of God in our houses. The orthodox Jewish people have the mezuzah (a small portion of scripture in a tiny metal case) affixed to the right side of their entry doors to their homes. They symbolically touch this "scroll"

as they go in. Do we have any like consideration for the light of God's word, as we go in and out of our doors.

Think of the sacred fire, that was kept burning continually, as parallel with our contact with Jesus through His Holy Spirit. There needs to be a place for rekindling from the fire of God's altar. As we get older and assume the role of parents, this necessity surely rests with us. Paul told Timothy to "stir into flame" the gift that was within him. No doubt, it took a little of that fire from Paul's altar to kindle upon the altar of young Timothy.

Leprosy is certainly symbolic of the ravages of sin upon the souls of men. Priests were able to recognize and to assess the progress or healing thereof. I see a like parallel for parents. There is "a balm in Gilead." There is cleansing in the blood of the Lord Jesus. There is forgiveness with God. Our sin sacrifice has already been made. But still there are, in our own houses, some who still waste away with the leprosy of sin. As Naaman needed to know that there was a God in Israel who could heal leprosy, so today many need to know that there is a Savior in heaven, whose life was given to take away sins. And as priests, we need to recognize when the leprosy of sin has been cleansed, and to welcome the person back into Christian fellowship.

I only partially grasp what it means for me to be a priest of God. Nor would I dare hope to so serve, except for Peter's word quoted earlier. Remember that though Eli was a failure as God's high priest, yet he was able to pronounce blessing upon Hannah and promise that God would hear her request. We have scriptures enough that we can give similar hope to the honest seekers after God. Let us stand up and serve in our priesthood!



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

Some say that we should not partake of the Lord's Supper each Sunday in the light of Acts 20:7 and 1 Cor. 11:26. Please comment.

It is difficult to know what is in the mind of another, but my supposition is that the one making this statement does not mean to say there is something in these passages forbidding a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper, but rather that neither of these passages is sufficient to establish the practice. I do not think I have read or heard of a serious attempt to show *from scripture* that a weekly observance is not from scripture at all but is on some human grounds such as the idea that too frequent observance tends to make a commonplace experience that loses meaning and leads to careless conduct and lack of

thoughtfulness in the observance. The assumption seems to be that there is nothing in scripture to establish how often the observance is to be and, hence, this is a matter of human judgment. Let us examine the matter of "how often."

It is evident that the N. T. contains no commandment, "Thou shalt partake of the Lord's Supper every Sunday." In the first place, the new covenant is not characterized by a list of "shalts" and "shalt nots." There are rights and wrongs revealed, things which should and should not be practiced, along with definite instructions about some things, but a code of law is not in the spirit of the new covenant. The new covenant is not just another set of laws like the O. T. law. It should be sufficient for the Christian to know what His Lord wants without everything being stated as a commandment. Such knowledge becomes a commandment of sorts—like the master's will to a servant who declares, "Your very wish is my command"—but not a commandment to bind on others. We concede the absence of a strictly-stated commandment which demands a weekly observance. Our practice does not depend on this.

Unfortunately there have been those who wanted to help God out of what must have been (in their opinion) an oversight on His part. These have developed a tradition not unlike some of the traditions of the Pharisees of Jesus' day—one which says, in effect, if you do not eat the Lord's Supper every Sunday your salvation is in danger, for you are in gross disobedience. As a further reinforcement, John 6:53 is seen as speaking directly of the Lord's Supper and very subtly the thought is injected that "except you eat . . . and drink (each week) . . . ye have not life in yourselves." Now this writer believes that committed and properly instructed Christians will want to meet each week with the saints of God to remember the Lord in partaking of the Supper, but they will not do so in a mechanical and legalistic way. They will not do so with the idea that this is a requirement for my salvation, which, when performed, "makes me all right—my sins forgiven—for another week." The Lord's Supper is an act of worship, to be done in remembrance of the Lord, not a merit-deserving work nor a "rabbit's foot" to keep me safe.

The weekly observance of the Lord's Supper rests not on a direct command but on the practice of the early church. Their example is one of the guides we have in worship. That some observance is required is clear from Jesus' imperative, "This do . . ." (1 Cor. 11:24, 25). He does not here specify the time except to require that *as often* as we do it, we remember Him (1 Cor. 11:25). But in the practice of the early church we have revealed that their "how often" was weekly. If a people have no intention of following the N. T. pattern, then there is little basis for insisting on any set pattern. The discussion needs to shift to the validity of the example of the early church as a means whereby the Lord has guided us. But if a people recognize the validity of the N. T. pattern as a pattern for us today, then it is not difficult to make a very substantial case for a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper.

What did they practice? Acts 2:42 is our first information. They "continued steadfastly . . . in the breaking of bread." Since the other

acts mentioned along with this are religious acts, we may safely assume the breaking of bread here refers to an act of worship, not the partaking of a common meal. They *steadfastly* observed the Lord's Supper. This summary statement speaks of the three thousand saved on Pentecost and hence reports what happened in a relatively short span of time. It takes more than an occasional act to set forth a steadfast practice. It is true that the verse does not specify the time to be weekly, but it does tell us that the act was frequently repeated. It was not an occasional event without pattern. Sunday became the day of special use for worship, and we can discern that as assembling together characterized this day (which, incidentally, rests, as to the day itself, on their practice—not on a direct command). On these occasions a collection was taken (1 Cor. 16:2). No doubt prayer was offered, along with other acts of worship. But there was a chief reason for this meeting on the first day of the week—the breaking of bread (Acts 20:7). Note that the reason the saints had come together was for the breaking of bread. The language of 1 Cor. 16:2 and Acts 20:7 is such that we are reading of continuing action, not the practice of one single day. This was their custom. Implied in Paul's rebuke of the Corinthians (1 Cor. 11:20) was the fact that their assembling together ought to be the occasion of the Lord's Supper, but their conduct prevented a proper observance. The statements are not so definite that people may not find "loop holes" but there is little doubt as to what they reveal about the practice of the early church. An effort to escape the force of these passages could be likened to a Jew of old refusing to "remember the Sabbath day" on grounds that the Lord was speaking only of a certain sabbath, not a continuing pattern of days. The commandment did not say "*every* Sabbath day" but simply "the Sabbath day."

The writings of the church fathers (uninspired religious writings of the period immediately following the N. T. period) and of church historians confirm our understanding that a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper was indeed the practice of the early church. We cite these simply as fairly reliable historical records of what prevailed in the earliest days. Corruptions crept into the observance of the Supper very early, but the frequency of observance would not have been as subject to abuse as the deeper theological meanings. The frequency of observance in this post-N. T. period is very evidently a continuation of the practice of the early church.

Even if there were no rather compelling indication as to the practice of the early church, we can still have a good cause for a weekly observance based on Paul's words in 1 Cor. 11:26: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come." How often does the Lord's death (and the truths that attend it) need to be proclaimed? These truths lie at the heart of Christianity. They are a vital part of the gospel which we have been commissioned to proclaim. Moreover, the love of Christ for mankind as demonstrated therein is a compelling motivational force for living the Christian life (2 Cor. 5:14). When we reflect on the significance of this Supper, then we realize that a weekly observance is more appropriate than any lesser observance. How could it be wrong, if our

conduct otherwise is right and our hearts are set on the Lord—as long as it is indeed “in remembrance of” Him—to have this frequent an observance? There is no good reason, even if a person were not convinced that the N. T. practice was weekly, why it should not be weekly today. This is a practice that is conducive to unity among God’s people, provoking a scriptural worship for those who are convinced by the N. T. evidence and yet not contrary to any scripture for those who are not.

The argument that a weekly observance tends to make the Supper too common and makes for careless observance does not hold up. This is an excuse, not a well-thought-out reason. We do not limit prayer for such a reason. We have not heard of any monthly or yearly offerings rather than weekly ones. We do not worship in song at rare intervals because singing every week tends to let it become mechanical or without discernment as to meanings. Any act of worship can be performed thoughtlessly, without heart accompaniment and without awareness of its deeper meanings, but the solution is not in less frequent usage. If that were the solution, the folks who get to church services once a year would make those very remarkable occasions! They would be more obedient to the Lord than others!

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



Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

ATTORNEY GENERAL WILLIAM BRADFORD REYNOLDS: “. . . preferential treatment due to race or sex whether it serves to get an individual hired, promoted or retained cuts against the grain of equal opportunity. Which ever way the windmill tilts, no quota system that rests on color or gender distinctions adds up to fairness; no goal demanding racial or sexual preferences is worthy of attainment.” Secretary Reynolds reported that the Justice Department is involved in over 100 employment discrimination lawsuits, 15 of them filed since President Reagan took office.

PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN: “. . . (his) Administration is drawing on the talents and leadership of women in a more significant way than any before it. We in this Administration are

committed to eliminating, once and for all, all traces of unjust discrimination against women. We are making progress, but there is much to be done . . . more than 1,000 women are holding policy-making positions in this Administration, including Secretary of Health and Human Services Margaret Heckler, Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole, and Ambassador to the U.N. Jeane Kirkpatrick, and Sandra Day O’Connor is sitting on the Supreme Court.”

ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER MENACHEM BEGIN: “Israel has absolutely no intention of attacking the Syrians. There is at present a Syrian threat, but we should like to hope that hostilities won’t break out. We will bring our sons home from Lebanon. Both the Syrian and the (PLO) terrorist will leave. I

call on all factions loyal to the state to stand together in this trial, as we have stood together in other times, to attain conditions which will enable our soldiers to return to their homes and families." The Israelis have buried 490 and have hospitalized 2,751 killed and wounded since the invasion of Lebanon a year ago.

HOW TO SKIN A CAT. Remember all the furor concerning the pay raise Congress voted for itself? Well, the House Administration Committee increased each member's expense account by \$15,000 without as much as a roll-call vote. This raised the average member's expense funds to \$137,000 annually. This adds \$6,525,000 to the cost of government which is already costing much, much more than it is worth.

LOVE CANAL. The U.S. Public Health Service reports that Love Canal residents in Niagara Falls, New York, have not suffered chromosomal damage from exposure to toxic chemicals. According to the agency an earlier report by the Environmental Protection Agency had "damaged the credibility of science" and that another such report "cannot be taken seriously as a piece of sound epidemiological research." The Centers for Disease Control reports that there was no evidence for higher cancer rates associated with residents near the Love Canal toxic-waste burial site in comparison with the entire state outside New York City. Because of the false E.P.A. reporting in 1980, the federal government moved 800 families. You know who paid for it, don't you.

"SOVIET INVADERS." Where are they? Ask Vladimir Danchev. He is an ex-radio announcer with Radio Moscow's world service. On May 18, and again on May 23rd in five English-language news broadcasts, Vladimir told Western listeners that the Red Russian soldiers were "Soviet invaders" of Afghanistan. This is quite different from the official mis information that Soviet troops are in Afghanistan by invitation. His little indiscretion got him relieved of his duties at the local radio station, and furthermore he faces a probable psychiatric examination. While he was still able to speak out, Danchev told investigators that the Afghan people are defending their country against "Soviet invaders" and that his broadcasts were fighting for justice."

A WISE CHOICE. Mayor Robert Sell of Salem, Ohio told Randall Menough, 18, and Rolin Jackson, 20, that they must pay a fine of \$250 and spend five days in jail or renounce their U.S. citizenship and head for the Soviet Union. On May 28 the two men were arrested for tearing down four American flags displayed on a downtown street. This was their punishment following a trial and conviction. Rather than move behind the Iron Curtain, they decided to take the jail term and fine, which included reciting the Pledge of Allegiance on the lawn of City Hall each morning of their sentence.

AND BY VOICE VOTE! With only a few members present, the House of Representatives approved by voice vote legislation to increase the national debt ceiling by \$99 billion. Now the debt ceiling is \$1,389 trillion. The conservative republican Administration argued for it through Deputy Treasury Secretary Timothy McNamar: "Action on the debt-limit bill this month is absolutely necessary. If the Congress does not act and the debt limit is not increased, the Government will need to determine which obligations will be paid—Social Security checks, payroll checks, defense contracts, or, indeed, whether for the first time in history, the United States will default on its securities."

WE ARE AT THE HORIZON OF A NEW EPIDEMIC. So says Dr. James Curran of Atlanta. "We are no longer acting like a quick solution is just around the corner. This epidemic will be with us the rest of our lives." What epidemic? The epidemic AIDS which the homosexuals have covered our nation with due to their promiscuous lifestyle. The big question is who will be affected next, since a majority of experts believe that what was once known as the 'Gay plague' will enter the general population. The most widely feared route into the general public is through blood transfusions. The specter of contaminated U.S. blood banks was first raised early last year when AIDS began to be diagnosed in hemophiliacs. It is time to let the pro-homosexual politicians know that they share in the responsibility for this epidemic to a great degree.

FEATURED SPEAKER AT A DINNER last September for the Human Rights Campaign Fund, a homosexual

and lesbian rights political organization, was former Vice-President Walter Mondale. Do you believe that he didn't know the kind of people he was supporting? Neither do I believe that he would have accepted an invitation to address say a Moral Majority or John Birch Society dinner.

A COURT RULING IN LANSING,

MICHIGAN rules that Christian schools do not have to hire state-certified teachers, and the state may not establish required courses of study for church-related schools. The judge ruled that a compelling state interest was not shown with regard to required courses of study in nonpublic schools, since even public schools throughout the state do not conform to each other.



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

"The Free Gift from Many Offenses"

And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. Romans 5:16, 17, NKJV.

In these two verses Paul continues his contrast of the evil results of Adam's sin and the wonderful results from Christ's work for us on the Cross of Calvary. Adam's stepping aside from God's will in eating of the forbidden fruit gave him a sinful nature resulting in condemnation; and that nature and condemnation passed on to every descendant of his—including you and me. What a contrast that is to the popular psychology of our day that teaches that man is by nature good and learns evil from his environment. If that were true, then Adam would never have sinned, for he had a perfect environment! Think of the billions of dollars wasted by our government because many in the government thought they could improve the nature of people by simply building them a better place to live. Some of those places have already been torn down because the nature of the ones living there brought the environment down to their level instead of the reverse. And if that philosophy were true Christ would never have come into the world to save us; He would simply have needed to provide a better environment. But He knew that we could not save ourselves, that we were hopelessly condemned by our nature and by our actions, So He became a man that He might die for us. Praise the Lord for all His mercy to us.

Look at the contrast of Christ's righteous work for us. Paul says it came from "many offenses" (many times of stepping aside from God's will). That does not mean, obviously, that our offenses saved us, but that He took all these on Himself. I still believe that 2 Corinthians 5:21 should be memorized by every Christian and gone over many times while studying the book of Romans—For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. God placed our sinful nature and all our sins upon Christ, so that He truly died for every man that no man need die eternally. While there were many offenses there, it was the one great righteous act of shedding His blood and dying for us that provided this wonderful salvation. It is a great shame that many Christians allow thousands around them to die without ever being told of the salvation that they themselves have laid hold of and then kept for themselves. Let us be more diligent in telling others that God so loved them that He gave His Son to die for us and that that Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, loved us and gave Himself for us. You don't need a theology degree to tell that wonderful story.

When Paul called this the "free gift", he used a Greek word *Charisma*. The first five letters of that word make the word that we translate as "grace." Grace is free or it is not grace. We can do nothing to earn it, we have nothing to pay for it. In other words, as I have said before, it is unmeritable favor. Because God is what He is, He provided salvation for those that He loved and wants every man to respond to that love by accepting His "free gift." That gift, as you see, is something that can not be merited in any way whatsoever. Accept it and rejoice in it, I beg of you. If you have accepted it and are still not sure of your eternal position, turn to I John and read it carefully that you might know what John tells us in chapter 5, verse 13, that what he has written makes it possible for you to *know* that you have eternal life.

Though I discussed verse 17 briefly in my last article, let us look at it again, for the fact that just as by Adam's sin death reigned-as-king (the meaning of the Greek), we now have the greater assurance that we "will reign-as-king in life through the One, Jesus Christ." Now that is quite different from the reigning that the Corinthian Church had felt they had entered into (I Corinthians 4:8). We have victory in Christ over all the things that would pull us down, all the things that lead us to move aside from God's will. Right now ("in life") we can experience the fact that "sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace." Let us not be like Saul, the first king of Israel. When he was chosen king, even though Samuel had explained this to him in advance, instead of presenting himself to be crowned, he was "hidden among the equipment." (I Samuel 10:22). Let us not hide, thinking that we are unworthy of such a wonderful gift. Personally we are unworthy, but Christ has worked a marvelous work for us. He has taken lowly sinners like you and me and proved everything that is needed to be sons of the King, co-heirs with Christ, inheritors of the kingdom of God, ones who will be with Christ through all eternity. And then let us serve Him and look for Him, longing for that day when the fullness of the Gentiles has come and we can be

caught up to meet the Lord in the air. We have no business looking at and longing for the things of this world. We ought to be living in the light of the fact that we are now representatives of God bringing that knowledge to others and seeking the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of the Father. Can you think of a more wonderful expectation? Then, let us live by it every day all our lives.

The Substitute

Earl J. Tapley

In the little community of Madison Hall, Tennessee, where I was raised we had a small, two-room school. All of the children attended that little school through eighth grade.

When I was five, the teacher for the lower grades begged my mother to let me attend. Mother finally relented, and I was off to school to learn reading, writing, arithmetic and much more.

We were a rowdy bunch of kids. Today I sometimes wonder how we ever learned anything.

The big boys in the upper grades were always putting us little kids up to doing mischief. And of course we were always ready to cooperate.

One day the teacher announced corrective measures. On the blackboard she wrote a set of rules, together with the punishment that was to be meted out for any infraction.

Lying, stealing, fighting, arriving late to school were each to be punished by a fixed number of lashes with a switch. The penalty for stealing was ten lashes on the bare back.

Shortly thereafter one of the younger boys reported that his lunch was missing—a development of considerable gravity. The teacher began to question each of us.

In class that day was an impoverished boy who had come without even a shirt. Because he attended infrequently, he stood out in our minds. Some of us remembered that he had arrived without a lunch.

When the teacher got around to questioning him, she looked him straight in the eye. "Son," she demanded, "tell me the truth now. Did you take that lunch in yonder?"

The little fellow was obviously very frightened. No doubt uppermost in his mind was the punishment for stealing—ten lashes on the bare back.

"No, ma'am!" he answered.

Suspecting that his reply was not totally sincere, the teacher pressed him. "Listen now!" she cautioned. "You better tell me the truth! Did you take that lunch in yonder?"

You could have almost heard him breathing, the room was that still.

Finally with a quiver that shook his skinny frame he admitted taking the missing lunch.

As I said, he was very poor; he did not have a thing. Probably he took the lunch because he was plain hungry. Whatever the motive,

the rule was clear and he had broken it. The penalty was to be ten lashes on his bare back.

And then an awesome thing happened. As he was preparing to submit to the punishment, another boy in the classroom stood up.

"Teacher," he asked, "can I take his place?"

The teacher hesitated for a moment. "Well," she finally answered, "I guess you can. The rules have got to be carried out. One way or the other they have got to be satisfied. If you want to take his place, come up here."

The second boy, well-dressed, pulled off his shirt, lay down and took the ten lashes on his bare back. He cried and cried.

Afterward the poor boy, overwhelmed by the turn of events, hugged his benefactor and thanked him for what he had done. The two remained good friends thereafter.

With far less justification than the lad who stole because he was hungry, you and I have broken God's laws. We stand guilty and condemned before the righteous One.

If God is to remain God and not violate His very nature as a Holy God, our transgressions—sins—must be punished. The prescribed punishment is clear: death!

But God is also loving and merciful; He desires that not one of us should perish.

God wants to spare us from the penalty of our sins, yet He cannot ignore our transgressions. The penalty of the law must be carried out; the punishment has to be delivered.

In the eternal counsels of the Trinity a solution was arrived at. Jesus Christ, God's Son—second Person of the Trinity—consented to identify with us sinners and to die on the cross as our substitute.

The death penalty due us was borne by Him. God the Father emptied His wrath upon His innocent Son. For a critical moment Jesus Christ became an adulterer, a murderer, a robber as He bore "our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24).

He who was without sin became sin "so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Through the cross and Jesus' sacrifice on it lies reconciliation and eternal fellowship with God.—from *The Alliance Witness*

The Gospel of John

THE TRUE MESSIAH

John 8:21-29

S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

It is a sad illustration of the ignorance and obduracy of heart of the natural man, the man without Christ. As the revelation from Him concerning Himself increases, so the rebellion against Him expands. The simplest spiritual truths his enemies find incomprehensible. Their stubborn hatred of Him has darkened their spiritual eyes, and it is

becoming clearer and clearer that they are not His sheep. As He will say in a short while, "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God" (John 8:47). Or, as Paul puts it so plainly, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14).

This opposition to Christ is often seen today. When I was a relatively young Christian, I knew a believer in Alabama, whose husband had never come to Christ in faith. She had faithfully witnessed to him for years, but as the time went by, his opposition to the gospel only increased. He was particularly incensed whenever the subject of the blood of Christ in His atoning death was mentioned. The idea of a blood sacrifice as the basis of our salvation was very repugnant to him. In his last days, just before his final illness, she told me that he would often go upstairs and moan audibly like a beast, with the door shut in his room. When he was dying, however, having been afflicted with a stroke, from his hospital bed he said to his wife, "Patty, only your Jesus can help me now."

The scene in which the conversation between our Lord and the Jews is taking place has to do with the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles, and probably on the last day of the feast (cf. John 7:37). During the course of the conversation He has proclaimed Himself to be the True Rock, the True Light, and the Son of the Father. He will now make it clear that He is the True Messiah (cf. vv. 24, 28, 58).

THE REMARKS REGARDING THE JEW'S DOOM

In this section the Lord will make three statements regarding the nation (v. 21).

First, the Jews will seek Him, although they shall not find Him (cf. 7:34). The seeking here is clearly not that of sincere desire to know Him and trust Him; it is that of frustration. He, of course, is referring to His departure by death and resurrection to be with His Father. Their seeking for Him will be like that of Easu's seeking a blessing from Isaac, after Jacob has been given it. It is a seeking from despair after an unattainable blessing (cf. Gen. 27: 34, 38). It just might be that He is referring to the debacle of 70 A.D., when the Romans destroyed the city of Jerusalem, and vain hopes of a Messianic deliverance were expressed by the nation.

Second, He says that they "shall die" in their sin (the AV's "sins" is probably not genuine). This will prevent them from going to the place where He is. As far as the meaning of the expression, "die in your sin," is concerned, Morris explains, "Dying in sin is not further defined. It is an Old Testament expression, but there, as here, it is not explained (Prov. 24:9 LXX; Ezek. 3:18; 18:18). It points to a horror which is all the more terrible for being unexplained. To die with one's sin unrepented and unatoned is the supreme disaster." The moment of insight, if it comes, will come too late.

Barrett sadly notes, "... those who in their self-sufficiency reject the light place themselves outside the scope of its salutary (though not its condemnatory) effect."

Third, Jesus says, "whither I go, ye cannot come." The "cannot come" seals forever the deathknell of the pseudo-doctrine of a second chance after this life. Only in this age may one respond to the gospel. If the opportunity of the present time is lost, there is no opportunity after death.

It gives the expositor no pleasure to expound such texts as this one. One can only hope, as Richard Baxter did, "O God, for a full heaven and an empty hell!" The light of the Word of God, of course, does not support "an empty hell." Unfortunately hell is the destiny of a multitude of souls. May God give us the joy of being the instruments of deliverance from that fate for many souls!

THE REPLY OF THE JEWS

Since the Jews do not think that our Lord seems to be a suicide possibility, they say, "He will not kill Himself, will He?" (Greek). It is unlikely that they are taunting Him, as some have suggested, for they seem to be speaking solely among themselves. It is much more likely that they are simply puzzled by His words. Their words are a bitter caricature of the truth, however. It is true that He will voluntarily hand Himself over to death, but it is in order "to give His life a ransom for many" (cf. Matt. 20:28).

THE RESPONSE OF JESUS

The assertion of origin (John 8:23). In His reply the Lord differentiates Himself from His opponents in two ways. They are "from beneath," while He is "from above." And, further, they are not "of this world." Since He is from a different world, it will be futile for them to seek Him when He leaves them. The word "beneath" is probably to be taken as parallel to "world," but 1 John 5:19 links it with Satan. It is possible that our Lord is linking them with him, too (cf. v 44; Eph. 4:18). Belonging to this world and to the evil one, they will die in their sins.

The admonition of faith (John 8:24). "There is but one way of avoiding this fate," Morris notes, "namely by coming to believe in Jesus. And this involves a right estimate of His person. It is important to believe 'that I am.' This expression is in the style of deity. There is no predicate expressed. The same Greek expression occurs in 6:20; 18:6, neither of which is difficult to understand (and, of course, it is found several times with a predicate; see on 6:35). But it is not easy to see what predicate could be supplied here. The answer of the Jews shows some mystification. We should probably understand it along the lines of the similar expression in LXX, which is the style of deity (cf. Is. 43:10). Its use here involves the very highest estimate of Christ's Person (see further on v. 58). It is worth noting also that this gives a certain intellectual content to faith. Basically faith is trust. But in our reaction against the view that faith means no more than a firm acceptance of certain intellectual propositions we must not go so far as to say that it is entirely a matter of personal relations. It is impossible to have the kind of faith that John envisages without having a certain high view of Christ. Unless we believe that He is more than man we can never trust Him with that faith that is saving faith."

William Temple comments, "The phrase *I am* occurs here (24) and again in 28 and in 58 (cf. iv, 26; xiii, 19). The fact that it occurs three times in this controversy is a pointer. It cannot be reproduced in English, for it combines three meanings: (a) that I am what I say—*sc.* the light of the World; (b) that I am He—the promised Messiah; (c) that I am—absolutely, the divine Name. All three are present; none is actually indicated; the hearers must take that (or those) which their own minds suggest."

THE RETORT OF THE JEWS

It is said that the best defense is a good offense, and that is the method followed by the Jews, who are constantly being pushed into a corner by the Lord. So they respond, "Who art thou?" (lit., *as for you, who are you?*). They did not understand Him, but they understood enough to see that He was making a tremendous claim for Himself, so they explode with their query, "Who are you?"

THE RESPONSE OF JESUS

The reply of our Lord was probably a bit beyond his listeners, and His reply to their, "Who art thou?," is not completely clear to us. The words of verse 25b, "Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning" (AV), may be rendered in several different ways. "Exactly what I declare unto you" is the translation of some, but with our present understanding of the text I like this, "that which I have also spoken unto you from the beginning." The point is simply that His words lead any honest seeker to a true view of Him. If one reads John's book in this way he will come to the view that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and in believing Him he will have life through His name (cf. 20:30-31).

The final words of our Lord in verse 26, "and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him," are some important words for preachers and teachers representing Him. Like Paul, who said, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (cf. Acts 10:27), so we are not to tone down His truth, but speak those things that we have heard of Him.

There is an old story of a preacher who began his discourse by giving out his text and adding, "That is my text. I am now going to preach. Maybe we'll meet again, the text and I, and maybe not." That attitude is not apostolic.

P. T. Forsyth, when he was in the United States some years ago, told of an incident that amused him much. He was staying at a certain seminary, and the professor of homiletics impressed Forsyth, called by some, "the Barth before Barth," because of a habit he had. On Monday morning the professor asked each student in his class what he had taught the preceding day. Forsyth said that he said to one student, "You were preaching last night?"

The student replied, "Yes, sir, I was preaching."

Forsyth said the professor responded, "What text did you take?"

The student said, "I took that text, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?'"

The professor replied, "A great text. Tell us how you treated it." "I didn't try to treat it," the student replied. "I took the two obvious points."

"What are they?" the professor asked.

"First, the greatness of our salvation," the student said, and the professor added, "Very good, what was the second?"

"A little advice on how to escape if we neglect it," the student replied!

Dr. Forsyth added, "I think there is a great deal of preaching along that line just now." Not only then, but now, too.

THE REACTION UPON THE JEWS

"They understood not that he spake to them of the Father," John writes (cf. v. 27). It is clear that they were blind to His words of truth. One thinks of a Jewish scholar's book, written a few years back and entitled, *A Jewish Understanding of the New Testament*, a book that one could not even call fair-minded, much less illuminating.

Spurgeon used to tell the story of Jedidah Buxton, the famous peasant, who could multiply nine figures by nine in his head. He was once taken to see Garrick act. When he went back to his village, he was asked what he thought of the great actor and his doings. "Oh!" he said, "he did not know, he had only seen a little man strut about the stage, and repeat 7,956 words." Here was a want of the ability to appreciate what he saw, and the exercise of the reigning faculty to the exclusion of every other. Similarly, Spurgeon said, hearers of the Word who are destitute of spiritual powers by which the gospel is discerned, fix their thoughts on the words, tones, gestures, or countenances of the preachers and make remarks that are absurd from the spiritual point of view. How futile it is to understand truth without the Holy Spirit!

THE CONCLUDING REMARKS REGARDING THEIR DOOM

The cause of their doom (John 8:28). "When ye have lifted up the Son of man" points to the cause of their doom (cf. 3:14; 12:32-33).

The consequences of the cross (John 8:28). "Then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things," Jesus continues. Evidently He means that the Jews will not understand who He really is before they have crucified Him. Afterwards, due to the revelatory aspect of the cross, those who reflect upon it will find it possible to see in Him more than a mere man. One wonders if He is speaking of the distant future when the nation shall come to an understanding of Him that will mean the national salvation of Israel. Or, as probably the majority of biblical students think, the knowledge to which they shall come is not saving knowledge, such as is referred to in Acts 2:41, but the knowledge referred to in Philippians 2:11, namely, the knowledge that He is Yahweh and their Judge, knowledge forced upon them by a sovereign God.

The confirmation of the truth of His remarks (John 8:29). The statement here is a remarkable confirmation of the sinlessness of Jesus

and, further, of His positive and negative righteousness. He "always" did the things that pleased His Father.

"Nels Ferre," Dale Moody has rightly said, "repeatedly makes the superficial claim that rebellion is a first necessity for freedom. The very opposite seems to be true, for true freedom is found in obedience and lost in disobedience. Jesus lived a life of perfect freedom because of his perfect obedience to the Father's will. Sin is not essential to full humanity. The truly human involves obedience and love."

It is also plain that Karl Barth's claim that Jesus had a "fallen human nature" is blasphemous.

There are, then, just two ways to die. First, one may die in one's sins (cf. vv. 21, 24). Many, sadly, have died this way. Mirabeau, the noted French statesman, has been quoted as saying at his death, "Give me more laudanum, that I may not think of eternity! O Christ! O Jesus Christ!"

Sir Francis Newport said at his death, "Oh, eternity, eternity! forever and forever! Oh, the insufferable pangs of hell!"

The other way to die is "in the Lord" (cf. Rev. 14:13), with the blessing of entrance into everlasting life. Mr. Moody, when he died, died as a Christian, saying, "This is glorious! Earth receding, heaven opening. God calling me!" What a difference it makes to die in the Lord.

There is a saying that no man ever repented of being a Christian on his death-bed.

May the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, that He died for the sins of sinners grip my reader's heart, and may He and His merits won by the blood of His cross be the trust of the soul and spirit for time and eternity.



Timothy Nakahara

Shizuoka Japan

April 27th

Teruko returned home safely after one month's visit to the U.S. She found herself overwhelmed with joy and gratefulness because she received such cordial welcome from good old friends at each place she visited. Since she had only a very limited time of stay, she could drop by Dallas and Louisville on her way up to Grand Rapids, MI., where the school our younger daughter, Stephanie goes was going to give a final recital for her. I was told that she had done a most wonderful job of playing the piano and conducting two different groups of singers in songs of praise to the Lord. The recital drew a large number of audience of about 300. The recital was very successful. Annette was able to take time out to drive her car both ways from

O.C.C. to Grand Rapids. It was the first time in five years for Teruko to be with the two daughters together. So her excitement seemed to be beyond description.

Annette is now on her way to San Paulo, Brazil with 30 other students from O.C.C. to help promote mission work there both among Japanese and Brazilians. She is so much interested in mission work and concerned for the lost. Stephanie wants to take further training in an advanced school. We would like you to remember both of them in your prayer, for we would like to see them useful in His service.

It is our custom to have a Spring Retreat each year in which we usually spend most of our time in Bible study and prayer. This has meant to us so much, helping promote to create more interest in the work of the Lord. The subject this time was, "Sanctification and our Daily Christian Living." The participants have obtained so much good out of it. During the meeting, one of our High School boys expressed his desire to accept the Lord but his parents' strong opposition still keeps him from being baptized. But a little change has taken place since then. The boy told me last Sunday that his father is no longer opposing except for mother. We feel so sure that the Lord is working on them in answer to our prayers. We wish you to join us in prayer on his behalf. The boy's name is Okamura.

It was on March 22nd the very day after the retreat was over, when I went to see Dr. Saigusa, whose speciality is proctology and is widely known not only in all Japan but in some other neighboring countries. He's studied and practised at Buffalo General Hospital in the U.S. The hospital he manages is one of those that accepts no insurance policy of any kind. For more than a year I'd been going to a general hospital near-by in town but with little success. It was during the retreat that I began to feel bad and uneasy, which made me decide to go and see him, not knowing how bad my condition was. Teruko was out at work when I was told that I would need immediate surgery. I had no time to go home to get myself ready for it, so I would have to phone her to come by the hospital right away and when she got there, I was in the middle of operation, which took me for more than one and half hours. It was at 5:30 in the morning of the second day after the surgery when I first came to realize that the Lord was overruling the whole thing. I began to feel really bad at midnight and it continued on till daybreak; when I could bear no longer I asked my wife, who was with me to look after, to call a nurse for help. She went downstairs to look for a nurse but instead she found the doctor reading a book in the office at such an early hour, and she told him about my trouble. While he was treating me on the operation table, he said, "You're a preacher, aren't you? I cannot and shouldn't take any money from you!" I thought he was joking, then, and I paid no attention, for he had already given Teruko a bill for the surgery, which was 250,000 Yen in cash (\$1,100.00). The Lord was gracious enough to cause the church, some individual members and other friends to give and it added up to more than half the bill. She got the money ready and when she went to the office to pay it off, he came and told her to wait and took the bill away from her, tearing it in two and throwing it into a trash can. It was the same Lord who

caused the pain in my stomach and put him in the office at the same hour. Our meeting together at 5:30 in the morning, separate from the rest of the patients and the nurses, would have never come. It was the Lord who made him say as though he himself was a Christian. On the 15th day of my stay, he told me I could leave the hospital, but no word about the bill. At the 2nd time I went back for a check-up I asked him what I should do about my payment and he asked me if I felt uneasy about it. And I said, "Yes, indeed!" Then, he said, "Come with me to my room," not his office, where he said the same thing again and again that he shouldn't take any money from me. Finally he said "Let me settle the matter this way. You would actually owe me 640,000 Yen (\$1,960.00) but if you give me only 300,00 Yen (\$1,277.00) it will take care of everything now and hereafter.

The Lord has done a marvellous thing for us indeed. While in the hospital, we got a letter from Bro. Oehlschlaeger saying that he'd asked the bank to send an extra \$1,000 to me. Alexandria Church of Christ sent it for my use in helping with my operation and for any other extra expenses I might have. We thanked God for the church in Alexandria. Needless to say, it came in right time to supplement our need.

DECLARE HIS GLORY

Our God is *mighty*, worthy of all praising;
Sing unto Him a glad, triumphant song;
He is the Lord, supreme in earth and heaven;
To Him all strength and majesty belong.

Our God is *gracious*, infinite in mercy;
He bridged the hopeless gulf our sin had made;
He gave His Son to purchase our salvation:
In Jesus Christ we meet God unafraid!

Our God is *faithful*, He will work within us,
Fulfilling all the purpose He has planned;
Cleansing our hearts and filling with His Spirit,
Making us strong to keep His last command.

Our Lord is *human*: Son of God and Mary,
He lived our life, He suffered all our pain;
He bids us go to minister His mercy,
To be to men God's Word made flesh again.

Our God is *sovereign* over all creation,
And soon His earth shall hear His mighty voice.
With shout of joy the King shall come in splendor
Lift up your hearts, confess Him and rejoice!

*Declare His glory among the nations;
Through all creation His triumph sing,
Till all earth's peoples bow in adoration
And Jesus Christ be everlasting King.*

—Author unknown

Monday Afternoon

Judy Rees

"I tried reading the Bible on my own but I just got bored. I started at the beginning of the New Testament and it was all 'so and so and so'—it didn't mean a thing to me."

"Although I do read the Bible every day myself, I don't get as much out of it as I do here. You get other people's ideas and they point out things you hadn't thought about."

Every Monday afternoon at half past two, four or five housewives meet in an apartment in a housing project to read the Bible together.

TEA AND A PRAYER

Keynote of the group is informality. There's a cup of tea to start with, and then someone says a short prayer (often written down beforehand, as most find it hard to pray aloud at first). A passage for the day is read—always in a modern translation, and generally something from the New Testament—and ideas about it are pooled.

The discussion is kept practical and related to people's everyday lives and situations. Of course it goes off the point at times, but someone usually notices and does something about it.

CARE FOR EACH OTHER

Coming to the group has meant a lot to the people concerned, for an openness over problems and care for each other has developed over the months.

One person said, "At the beginning I had not long been a Christian. I had a desperate need to mix with Christians and learn more. I find that when you go away from here you have a lot more strength to cope with the problems when you go back home.

Another had to rely on tranquilizers to enable her to get out and mix with people. She was invited to the group nine months before she actually made it. When she eventually did come, something about the way people talked of how God helped them in their problems, and the way they seemed to care about each other, helped her to see her own problems in a different light.

After a couple of months, not only had she been able to cut down on the tranquilizers, but when something cropped up on the day the group normally met, she asked whether it could be changed to a day she could manage. "Coming here has done a lot for me," she claims.

Officially the group meets for three quarters of an hour. In practice it goes on longer than that for everyone has so much to say. At the end people mention things to pray about: not only their own needs, but needs in the neighborhood as well.

Its quite a simple thing to get a few people together and start this sort of group: What's needed is not a vast knowledge of the Bible, but an openness to learn and share together. An hour spent this way can make a lot of difference to the rest of the week.

—from "Women's Page" in *News Extra*

"KNOW YOUR BIBLE" CLASS

by H. L. Olmstead

The following article is from previously unprinted manuscript of a radio class.

RULES FOR BIBLE STUDY

The object of the lesson is to study together God's word with no other thought in mind than to let God say to us just what He has said in His word. The studies will not be either theological or philosophical, but will approach the word of God with the attitude of young Samuel in I Samuel 3:9, who said, "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth", or like Cornelius in Acts 10:33 who said, "We are all here present in the sight of God to hear all things commanded thee of the Lord."

So in this, our first lesson, we wish to give you some simple rules for studying God's word.

First, have a Bible. That is obvious. Have a Bible that is not so large and unwieldy that you cannot use it with ease and convenience. Have a Bible with print large enough to read with ease. I have seen some Bibles with print so small that if the person who owned it had read the Bible as much as a Christian should read it, he would have been stone blind years ago. First then, have a readable, usable Bible.

Second, as you study these lessons, have a little pad and pencil handy so you can take down the scriptures referred to and read them yourself. A concordance, either in your Bible or at hand, is a good help, as is also a Bible Dictionary.

So much then for the physical preparation, which is important, but is not the chief thing. Man might say that a good mind is the next thing necessary, meaning a keen intellect and great knowledge. But suppose you and I approach it with whatever mind we have—approach it with whatever mind God gave us. That is as far as our responsibility in that matter goes but we *do* have a responsibility according as God has dealt every man his ability. So let us say, "God speak to the mind you have given me and say to me what thou wilt."

There are those who might say that no one can understand the word of God unless he be trained in theology or have a long list of degrees from some school of higher learning. Without speaking or even thinking in a deprecatory manner of education, we are sure that a great many educated people do not have a spiritual grasp of the word of God and, in our experience, we have met many uneducated people who do have a deep and abiding knowledge of God and his word. So the real conditions of understanding God's word must be deeper than intellectual power or acquired knowledge. The real rules we wish to lay down for understanding God's word are in the word itself and are conditions which can be fully met by a normal mind regardless of outward advantages.

So the first scripture we wish to mark in this lesson is I Corinthians 1:19, 20. This reads, "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning will I bring to nought. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the

disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?" The word of God cannot be apprehended by worldly wisdom. It takes something more than a "smart" man to understand the Bible. The worldly "disputer" who in fleshly wisdom tries to make of Christ and Christianity something through which he can exhibit his intellectual greatness has no real grasp of God's word or power. The second scripture in today's lesson we want you to mark is I Corinthians 1:26, 27: "For behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God chose the foolish things of the world that he might put to shame the things that are strong." In fact, the whole first chapter of I Corinthians from the eighteenth to the twenty-sixth verse shows us that worldly wisdom has no place in the scheme of redemption. So *rule one* for studying the Bible is: *dispense* with your worldly wisdom.

Our next scripture to be marked is from the Gospel of John, chapter seven, verse 17: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself." A willingness to *do* precedes the acquisition of knowledge. Some of you who are reading this lesson may not be Christians. You may be unbelievers in Christianity. Well, here we give you the clue to understanding and knowledge. Are you willing to say even this much: "O God, if there is a God, show me and I will at once go to acting like there is a God; O Christ, if thou art the Son of God, show me and I will at once begin to live like you are the Christ; O God, if the Bible be your word I am willing to act like it is your word"? Unless you are willing to walk in the light when you find it, God is under no obligation to lead you to any more light. So *rule two* for understanding the Bible is: *will to do His will* when you find it and you will know.

Now mark on your notebook this scripture: Psalm 25:9. "The meek he will guide in justice; and the meek he will teach his way." There is no use for any person, college trained or otherwise, to come to the word of God full of himself and expect God to teach him. Such a person cannot be taught, for he thinks he already knows. He is like the Pharisees Jesus spoke to in John 9:41, "But now ye say, 'We see,' your sin remaineth." And now *rule three*: approach God's word in meekness and humility.

If you desire to turn to it in your Bible, the next scripture to be used is Psalm 25:14. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him and he will show them his covenant." Another like it is up in verse 12 of the same Psalm: "What man is he that feareth Jehovah? Him will he instruct in the way that he shall choose." However, the classic verse on this subject is Psalm 111:10. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Mark all of these verses.) Nothing is more badly needed today than a genuine respect and reverence for God—a consciousness of His presence like Cornelius had when he said, "We are all here in the sight of God to hear of thee all things commanded of the Lord." The *rule four* would be: Approach God's word as you would approach His very presence in fear and awe.

There is yet one more scripture we would like for you to note and that is found in II Thessalonians 2:11, 12. "And for this cause God

sendeth them a working of error that they should believe a lie; that they all might be judged who believed not the truth but have pleasure in unrighteousness." That sounds like a strange thing for God to do: to send men a working of error. Now look up in the tenth verse of this chapter and you will see why he does it. He says it is *because they* receive not the love of the truth. While the apostle is here talking about the great delusion of the end time, the man of sin, the Son of Perdition, the Anti-Christ, still the principle holds good anywhere. If men do not have a love of the truth God lets them believe a lie and even sends them a working of error that they may believe a lie and be damned. God lets people have what they want in that respect.

How important this is in studying anything, especially the Bible! The love of the truth! The scientist, the physician, the philosopher must all possess a love of the truth or they get nowhere. Do you have love enough for the truth to let it take you anywhere it directs? If it leads you to believe something you have always condemned will you follow it? If it leads you away from something you have always thought true will you still go where it leads? If so, you can become a student of God's word—a good student, for God promises to guide the honest hearted into truth. If you will approach God's word in the love of the truth, you, my friend, whoever you are, can know it. But if you approach it just to prove you are right or to prove someone else is wrong, you will miss it. So our *fifth rule* for today is: approach the study of the Bible in the love of the truth.

Lastly, ask God's guidance through *prayer*. We intend in these studies to take a look first at the Bible itself, and then to take up some of its great teachings which gather around certain great words—great words such as sin, death, righteousness, life, the diety of Jesus, the grace of God, the atonement, justification, sanctification, glorification, the Lord's return, salvation, and other themes of vital interest.

STILL GROWING

This life, therefore,
is not righteousness
but growth in righteousness,
not health but healing,
not being but becoming,
not rest but exercise.

We are not yet what we shall be,
but we are growing toward it;
the process is not yet finished
but it is going on;
this is not the end
but it is the road.

All does not yet gleam in glory
but all is being purified.

—Luther

The "Gunshot Blues" Don't Help You Hear The Angels Sing

Walter Mohr

A young man I recently met in Eastern Canada found great pleasure in drugs and rock music. One day as he listened repeatedly to the "Gunshot Blues" by Belushi and Ackroyd, he felt compelled to act out what he was hearing. He grabbed his shotgun, dropped the barrel below his chin and pulled the trigger. Miraculously he survived. When he woke from the coma three days later, he realized with horror that, though he had missed his brain, the whole lower part of his head was gone. Medical science has helped him survive and he now has thrown off the bondage of Satan and given his life to Christ, but he has suffered agony because of that Satanic compulsion.

Jesus called Satan a murderer and a liar and said of him, "When he lies he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (Jn. 8:44 NIV). Throughout history we see the working of this evil personage. His initial taste of victory came in Eden when he led our first parents, Adam and Eve, into sin.

THE ENEMY

Satan is called "the enemy" in scripture (Lk. 10:19; Mt. 13:39). He is, indeed, the enemy of God and of all that is good. He is also the enemy of man, though many humans who are held firmly in his grasp do not see this fact. He leads men to oppose their own best interests (2 Tim. 2:25).

Satan is a *powerful enemy*. In the book of Daniel we read that through one of his emissaries Satan was able to detain one of God's powerful angels (Dan. 10:13). Our Lord Jesus calls him the Prince of this world, a title indicating a position of authority and power (Jn. 16:11).

Satan is also a *well-organized* enemy. He rules over a network of fallen angels. (Ephesians 6 describes this hierarchy.) Through these his demons, he girdles the globe, though Satan himself, as an evil spirit, is not omnipresent. The effect of this wide, tyrannical reach has touched all humans and shaped the history of wars and brutalities.

Satan is a *cunning enemy*. Deception is the central plank of his platform. Through years of experience, since Adam and Eve, he has honed his deceptive skills to a fine art. He promises pleasure and deep wisdom and riches and power—but always at a price. He knows well what will entice people of every culture. In primitive areas of the world he often holds sway through crude sorcery and witchcraft. In advanced cultures he finds it expedient to mask his malignant cause through advanced scientific and humanistic teaching.

A lady we knew well in Indonesia one day visited the witchdoctor to ask for some help in recovering her stolen bicycle. As this agent of Satan went into a trance, the information the woman sought was given. But she was told other matters that frightened her deeply. A few days later a midnight knock at our door presented an urgent call to her home. We found her in a state of utter physical exhaustion

and in deep mental and emotional confusion. Satan had given her the answer she sought but brought with it a legacy of terror and suffering.

EVERYBODY'S ENEMY

Satan directs his fiery barbs at both Christians and non-Christians. Those still totally under his sway are blinded in their minds to the truth of God's love and goodness (2 Cor. 4:4).

The mind, in fact, is one of his chief targets. The mind is for Satan the bridgehead of lies and fears, of fantasies and passions that lead to oppression and even total possession of the person. Whether Christians can be controlled by Satan is a matter of controversy. I, personally, was involved with one Christian lady who came so totally under demonic control that she foamed from the mouth and did not recognize her husband. Thank God, in response to the believing prayer of Christians and the authority of the name of Jesus Christ, she was instantly set free from this bondage.

THE ENEMY'S ARTILLERY

The Bible speaks of the "wiles" of the devil and these are legion. They are the snares he lays to capture the unwary into his grip. Among the common ones are: charms, spiritistic seances, occult participation (often learned through occult do-it-yourself books), the ouija board, astrology and horoscopes, rock music and drugs, meditation techniques and demon-centered films such as "The Exorist."

Indications of demonic control are as varied as his wiles. In some he arouses insatiable sexual lusts and sexual aberrations; in others the demons incite thoughts of suicide and murder. Sometimes a deep sense of guilt and depression manifests itself. At other times a great hatred for the very name of Jesus is evident. When one new Christian in Java neglected to worship his heirloom daggers, a vile odor filled his house. Release came only through burning these charms and totally renouncing Satan in Jesus' name.

A DEFEATED ENEMY

Paul reminded the Corinthian Christians that they were involved in a war and that spiritual, not fleshly, weapons were needed (1 Cor. 10:3-5). He warned Timothy that seducing spirits would lead to heresy and apostasy (1 Tim. 4:1). The apostle John, writing in the book of Revelation, sees the conflict of the ages as a spiritual war. He saw Satan warring especially with those who belonged to Christ (Rev. 12:7-17). He also saw frog-like, unclean demon spirits move into the world to deceive men and gather them for the final conflict (Rev. 16:13-14).

Despite this litany of demonic powers and schemes, the Christian knows that Satan is a defeated enemy. He is still a roaring lion (1 Pet. 5:8), but for those enlightened by the Word and God's Spirit his roar is a wail of defeat. It was to Christians that Paul wrote of God bruising Satan under the feet of His children (Rom. 16:20). This is possible as we learn to successfully apply several vital keys to this whole area of Satan's attack and our response. God intends for His people a life of victory, not cowering fear or continual defeat.

SECRETS OF VICTORY

The first essential secret of victory in this warfare is found in Dan.

11:32: "The people who know their God will be strong and will do exploits." Knowing God in a personal experiential manner is the first step. This comes through turning from sin and entrusting our lives to the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no substitute for knowing God, and no other step forward can precede this simple step.

The second essential in a life of victory is given by Jesus Christ in John 8:32: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." This "truth" is not some particular magic word we learn to use, but all of God's truth as revealed in His Word. This is one reason it is all-important to study God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to enlighten our minds as His truth becomes a part of our lives.

THE FREEING TRUTH

Among the vital truths that have set me free from Satanic bondage and fear are the following: "Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world" (1 Jn. 4:4). "Behold I give unto you power . . . over all the power of the enemy" (Lk. 10:19). "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:3-5). "And having disarmed the powers and authorities, Jesus made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross" (Col. 2:15 NIV). The capstone of this body of truth is the fact that we are sharers in the victory of Christ. Not only did God put Satan and his hosts under the feet of our living Christ now seated in the heavenlies, but also under the feet of those who are in Christ and are now seated with Him in that same position (Eph. 1:19 - 2:6).

A final essential to victory is using to full advantage the full armor and weapons that God has provided. Ephesians 6 gives us one list of what that armor includes. We will note that the Word of God and the truth it teaches form a major part. The shield of faith is listed as a weapon which will quench Satan's fiery darts. That these are darts of doubt aimed at the mind, accentuates the importance of having a mind stayed on God and His Word. The name of Jesus is another mighty weapon to be wielded by those standing fast in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

The world is under seige! Satan is the attacker and his goal is nothing less than total control over all mankind and their eternal damnation.

But, though the warfare in the realm of the spirit is a reality, as Christians we need not cringe. Our Risen Lord sits on the right hand of the throne of God and His feet are planted firmly on the head of our foe. And praise God, our feet, too, stand on Satan's bruised head.

REPRINTS:

Men As Trees Walking

N. B. Wright

Behold! What answers! The writer just finished the reading of Mark 8. Nothing especially stood out. Before the second reading

was the offering of the same prayer: "Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderous things out of thy law" (Ps. 119:18). It was a case of asking again.

What vistas! Men as trees walking! Now look steadfastly; see all things clearly.

From verse 22 we read of Christ's ministry to the blind man. He asked him: "Seest thou aught?" The man looked up and replied: "I see men; for I behold them as trees walking." Thereupon the Savior laid His hands upon the man's eyes the second time. The man "looked steadfastly." He was restored and saw all things clearly. His eyes not only comprehended light, form and shadows; they now were focused properly.

We conclude that it is possible for us to see spiritual truths in a distorted way. Also that it is possible to understand some of the truths of God and still be blinded to others. Let us stay with the text. Here comes Peter!

PETER – THE QUICK SPOKEN ONE

Peter Saw Christ Clearly. When the Master and the disciples came into the regions of Caesarea Philippi, He asked two questions. They are of equal importance today. Your salvation depends upon your answer to them; be careful and prayerful. "Who do men say that I am?" The disciples answered. Question number two—the important one for us—was: "But who say ye that I am?" It is a very personal matter. The wrong answer comes out of an evil, unbelieving heart. The right one from a meek, obedient heart. Which is yours?

Peter answered correctly: "Thou art the Christ." He answered correctly; he saw Christ clearly; he saw the Person of the Son of God and rightly identified Him. We believe the statement is true, because in Matt. 16:17 the Master replied: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed in unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." A slap on the back for Peter. But look out! It is no time for Peter or for us to wear a high hat. Let us examine the text further.

Peter Did Not See God's Plan. The Master continued His teaching ministry—it is for our instruction, as well. He told them that He must suffer many things, be rejected by the leaders of Israel, be killed and rise again after three days.

Show who you are, Peter! Let your loyalties come to the forefront! You love the Master and truly believe that He is the Son of God! "And Peter took him aside, and began to rebuke him."

Something must give; someone is in error. "But he turning about, and seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter, and saith, Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men."

Peter did not understand the plan of God even after Christ spoke of it. How true today.

On Pentecost—Look At Peter! With the coming of the Holy Spirit, Peter was restored and saw God's plan clearly; i.e., that Christ must suffer and die for the sins of the world. "Him being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hands of lawless men did crucify and slay: whom God raised up..."

TODAY'S EYES OUT OF FOCUS

True, teachers differ in their presentation of the plan of God for the ages; His plan for Israel, the nations and the individual. The minds of some of the Lord's people are confused. But instead of doing the thing the man in Mark 8 did, these folk take the easy way out.

And what is this way of responsibility-shifting? You've heard it often. "Just so we love the Lord and live right, whatever He does in the future is all right with me." You believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah. Good. Remember, when Peter did not see the revealed plan of God and opposed it, the Lord called him "Satan." Peter was being used of Satan.

Small comfort to you, my friend, to use this "dodge" of Satan, to which you have just given expression.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

We mean Biblical examples of using the prophetic Word, which reveals God's plans, reach sinners in the world. It is used as a basis to warn them of judgment to come and to invite them to be reconciled to God.

Enoch, The First Prophet (Jude 14, 15). This man prophesied before the flood of the Second Coming of Christ and used this truth to warn the wicked. "And to them also Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Noah, A Preacher of Righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5). He was not only warning of a flood to come, but stands as a type. Genesis 5:29 gives the naming of Noah. Lamech, the father, said: "This same shall comfort us in our work and in the toil of our hands, which cometh because of the ground which Jehovah hath cursed." Noah stands as a type of the Comforter, Messiah, Who shall come and lift the curse from the earth. Yes, hard-working sinners, a better day is coming; you be ready to enjoy it.

Paul, the Apostle. This man under the inspiration of God went to a community where there were no believers and preached the second coming of Christ (1 Thes. 1:9, 10): "...how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven..." The fact of His coming was an incentive for these idolators to turn to the living and true God.

Christ's Method. Read Matthew 24, Luke 17 and 21. The truth comes to light that the prophetic Word is a basis for right living.

Peter's Appeal. At the close of his first epistle he says: "This is the true grace of God: stand ye fast therein." In the second letter he speaks of the ungodliness (ch. 2) and of the burning of the earth at the second coming (ch. 3). In this last chapter he says we are "to remember the word" (vs.2); "trust the word" (vs. 9); and to "live the word" (vs. 14). The last named verse reads as follows: "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things"—the second coming, the

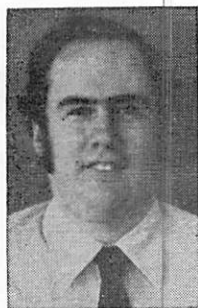
burning of the earth, and the millennial reign of Messiah—"give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight."

The Whole Bible. We believe the Bible bears a unified testimony to the fact that the revelation of God and of His plans are to the end that men may give heed to the warnings of judgments to come and be reconciled to God. His plans are a basis for right living. How different from the easy way of the "royal order of buck passers" who say: "Believe in the Lord, live right, and whatever He does will be all right with us." He wants His people to be an informed people.

THINGS VS. THINGS

The Things of God. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it" (Mk. 8:34, 35).

The things of Men. "For whosoever would save his life shall lose it. For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? For what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" Now read the next verse if you are prone to ask a question as to the use for prophecy. "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (v. 35-38).



GLEANINGS

Larry Miles

IN CHRIST THERE IS NO EAST OR WEST

In Christ there is no East or West, in Him no South or North.
But one great fellowship of love throughout the whole wide earth.
In Him shall true hearts everywhere their high communion find.
His service is the golden cord, closely binding all mankind.
Join hands, then, brothers of the faith, whatever your race may be!
Who serves my Father as his own, is surely kin to me.
In Christ meet both East and West. In Him meet South and North.
All Christly souls are one in Him, throughout the whole wide earth.

—John Oxenham

THE VICTORY THAT OVERCOMES THE WORLD

The Church of Christ today can have the same victory that overcomes the world only by looking to Jesus and by being a pilgrim community with a destiny that bears it upward and homeward.

—Leroy Garrett, in *Restoration Review*

REALITY BEHIND REALITY

Our eyes are fixed, not on the things that are seen, but on the things that are unseen; for what is seen passes away; what is unseen is eternal.

—II Corinthian 4:18

LOVE EACH OTHER

This is the covenant that I will make with them in those days says the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts and write them on their minds.

—Hebrews 10:16

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

Youth: Too happy to think. There is plenty of time yet.
Manhood: To busy to think. I must get more money.
Prime: Too anxious to think. I am overburdened with worry.
Declining Years: Too old to think. The years are fast slipping away.
Dying Bed: Too ill to think. I am weak, suffering, and all alone.
Eternity: Forever now to think. God's mercy is past.

—Selected

THE ROAD TO GOD

From the depths of the doom and darkness
Ascends that wondrous road,
Which leads the heart of the sinner
Up to the heart of God.
For from the heights of the Golden City,
He made the glorious road,
Which leads to the heart of the sinner
Down from the heart of God.

—From a fourteenth century manuscript

THE MEANS OF INDUCTION INTO CHRIST

We have reduced this to a sort of five step, kitchen stepladder method, by which men have become convinced that they can pull themselves up into God's grace and place Him under obligation to save them. We have the whole thing worked out in a simple and easy method, a sort of five finger exercise, which has been handed down to us and is sacred because of its longevity.

The idea of a personal covenant with the Lord, based upon conviction, conversion and consecration is almost foreign to our thinking. The concept of a covenant with God is wholly unknown to thousands among us. The congregations are filled with many who were converted to water baptism but were never converted to the Lord Jesus Christ. They have confused the physician with his prescription, the captain with his orders, and the sower with his seed. Immersion in water is essential. But we should be immersed not because we believe in baptism but because we believe in Jesus. We have but one Savior. It is not a rite, ritual or ordinance, but entrance into a divine person.

—Carl Ketcherside

NEWS AND NOTES

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

BORDEN SAINT GOES HOME

Brother Joseph T. McKinley, December 25, 1904, quietly slipped away, following their evening prayer, April 18, 1983, to be with the God and Savior he loved and served so ably and faithfully. Brother Joe served the Borden, Ind. church as one of her song leaders for more than 50 years, as a deacon for many years, as an elder since 1970, and the Lord used him as a teacher in the adult class for years. In all this he was faithful to the Lord and the fullness of His whole Truth. It has been my joy to share these 50 years with Brother McKinley.

E. C. Ringer

The Fern Creek Church of Christ is happy to announce that Paul Kitzmiller accepted an invitation to become a full time minister here, beginning June 5, 1983. Many Word and Work subscribers know Brother Paul personally, and all Louisville area brethren will be pleased to have him back in this community.

The congregation at Fern Creek desires a more effective outreach and, with strengthened leadership, is looking forward to greater things for God. Please remember this work in your prayers.

—Ray Hatfield

I thought the readers of the Word and Work would like to know how East Dallas Christian School ended up the school year.

May 25th marked the conclusion of the twenty-second year of operation for East Dallas Christian School. This year has been a good year for us. 90 students were enrolled in Kindergarten through grade eight. Several children and parents became Christians during the year, and we feel some definite progress has been made in our academic program. Both our girls and boys athletic teams have done quite well this year.

We have had many good Chapel speakers this year. One of the favorites of both students and faculty was Bro. Stan Broussard from Louisiana.

Our annual Bar-B-Q Dinner Summer Expense program was headed by Bro. Jim Binford from the Piedmont Church of Christ. A total of \$6,500 in funds was pledged to the school. In turn, our parents and friends were to match this amount, with a grand total of \$13,000. As of this date, we have almost reached our goal, for which we praise God. The monies will be used for teacher salaries and building improvements during the Summer.

Bro. John Martin from the Prairie Creek Church of Christ continues to do a fine job of serving as our School Board president. Other members include Roy Miller, Terry Yates, Bill McNeil, and Rosaland Ferguson from Piedmont Church of Christ, Scott Stevens from Prairie Creek and Kevin McCarty and Lynn Owen from Eastern Hills Church of Christ.

Enrollment for 1983-84 is under way, and we have 70 students enrolled as of this date. We plan on 100 students this Fall. Please continue to remember this ministry in your prayers.

—Chuck Gilbert

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MONDAY

Dale Offutt, Chairman

Evening Session

7:30 - 9:00

Freedom To Choose

Kenneth Preston

TUESDAY

Robert Heid, Chairman

Day Session

9:00 - 9:30	Prayer Time	
9:30 - 10:30	Exposition: Philippians	Carl Kitzmiller
10:30 - 11:00	Break	
11:00 - 12:00	Growth is Expected	Nathan Burks
12:00 - 1:30	Lunch & Fellowship	
1:30 - 2:15	Counting the Cost (Commitment)	Vernon Lawyer
2:15 - 2:25	Break	
2:25 - 3:10	The Surrendering Process	Jack Thompson

Evening Session

7:30 - 9:00	Maturity Toward God	Ben Rake, Jr.
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WEDNESDAY

Kenneth Lawyer, Chairman

Day Session

9:00 - 9:30	Prayer Time	
9:30 - 10:30	Exposition: Philippians	Carl Kitzmiller
10:30 - 11:00	Break	
11:00 - 12:00	Symptoms of an Immature Individual	Stan Broussard
12:00 - 1:30	Lunch & Fellowship	
1:30 - 2:15	Symptoms of an Immature Family	Paul Kitzmiller
2:15 - 2:25	Break	
2:25 - 3:10	Symptoms of an Immature Congregation	Robert Boyd

Evening Session

7:30 - 9:00	Maturity Toward Man	Alex Wilson
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THURSDAY

Rick Coleman, Chairman

Day Session

9:00 - 9:30	Prayer Time	
9:30 - 10:30	Exposition: Philippians	Carl Kitzmiller
10:30 - 11:00	Break	
11:00 - 12:00	Personal Responsibility for Growth	E. C. Mullins, Jr.
12:00 - 1:30	Lunch & Fellowship	
1:30 - 2:15	Concern for Others Growth	F. D. Yarbrough
2:15 - 2:25	Break	
2:25 - 3:10	Methods of Assisting In Growth	David Tapp

Evening Session

7:30 - 9:00	Discerning the Will of God	Mike Sanders
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FRIDAY

Ron Flora, Chairman

Day Session

9:00 - 9:30	Prayer Time	
9:30 - 10:30	Exposition: Philippians	Carl Kitzmiller
10:30 - 11:00	Break	
11:00 - 12:00	Obstacles to Maturity	David Ingalls
12:00 - 1:30	Lunch & Fellowship	
1:30 - 2:15	Provisions for Maturity	Victor Broadus
2:15 - 2:25	Break	
2:25 - 3:10	Questions & Answers Session	Selected Speakers

Evening Session

7:30 - 9:00	Full Grown Man	Earl C. Mullins, Sr.
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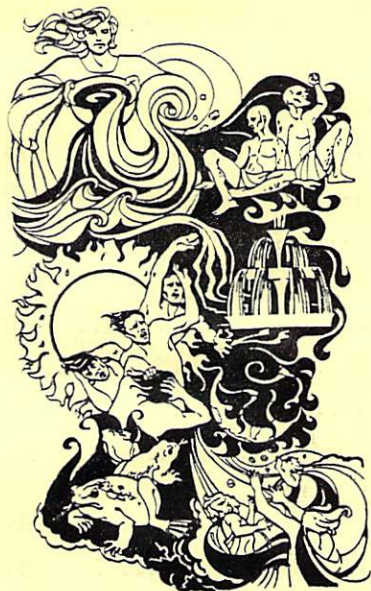
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