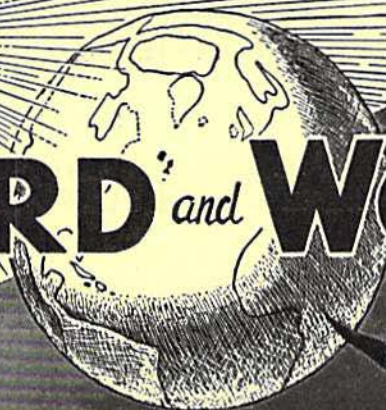


"Holding fast the faithful Word . . ."



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



"Holding forth the Word of life."

JUNE, 1991

YOUR KINGDOM COME, LORD JESUS !

"Of all the future events, that of the Coming of the Lord in power and glory is the most soul-subduing, enrapturing and transcendent. In one sentence, it is 'the Blessed Hope.' The Church has been praying for it and the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain for it for two thousand years."

—Alexander Campbell

"Unless what we learn of prophecy, of the the Lord's coming, of the age to come, as well as any other truth, makes us more humble, more loving and Christlike, we have learned in vain."

—R. H. Boll

"To be ready for the Lord's coming is a necessity. To deny the Lord's coming is heresy. To fix a date for His coming is lunacy."

—Author Unknown

44th Annual Louisville Christian Fellowship Week

AUGUST 5 - 8, 1991

"WHERE ARE THE OLD PATHS"

MONDAY AUGUST 5

- 7:30 - 8:00 Singing (Utica Church of Christ Male Quartet)
8:00 - 8:45 "The Old Paths That Never Die" Julius Hovan

TUESDAY AUGUST 6

OLD PATHS IN THE HOME

- 9:30 - 10:00 PRAYER TIME
10:00 - 10:45 BIBLE EXPOSITION (I Cor. 1, 2, & 3) Richard Ramsey
11:05 - 11:50 "Parents' Responsibility In The Home" Orell Overman
1:30 - 2:15 "Children's Responsibility In The Home" Joe Overman

Evening Session

- 7:00 - 8:00 Singing (Ladies Chorus) Bonnie Colwick
8:00 - 8:45 "What Constitutes A Christian Home" Carl Kitzmiller

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 7

OLD PATHS IN PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- 9:30 - 10:00 PRAYER TIME
10:00 - 10:45 BIBLE EXPOSITION (I Cor. 1, 2, & 3) Richard Ramsey
11:05 - 11:50 "Right and Wrong Relationships" Mark Baker
1:30 - 2:15 "Back to the Basics" Eugene Pound

Evening Session

- 7:30 - 8:00 Singing (LaGrange Unity Singers)
8:00 - 8:45 "Personal Relationships To Our Fellow Man" Nathan Burks

THURSDAY AUGUST 8

OLD PATHS IN THE CHURCH

- 9:30 - 10:00 PRAYER TIME
10:00 - 10:45 BIBLE EXPOSITION (I Cor. 1, 2, & 3) Richard Ramsey
11:05 - 11:50 "Will The Old Paths Still Build Churches" Vernon Lawyer
1:30 - 2:15 "The Paths Of An Approved Servant" T. Y. Clark

Evening Session

- 7:30 - 8:00 Singing (Men's Chorus) T. Y. Clark
8:00 - 8:45 "Where The Old Paths Lead" Harry Coultas

Day Sessions: Portland Avenue Church of Christ

Evening Sessions: Sellersburg Church of Christ

For Homes To Stay In: call Dale Offutt (812) 246 - 2694 or Paul Heid (502) 239 - 3886

Youth Activities will be provided at the night meetings for students in Grades 1 - 6 in the Fellowship Hall from 7:30 until 9:00.

Audio cassette copies of messages will be available from:
IVAN DUNCAN, 3110 Commander Drive, Louisville, KY. 40220
Phone: (502)458-5144

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

The Word and Work (USPS 691-460) is published monthly except December under the auspices of the Portland Ave. Church of Christ, Inc., Louisville, Ky. Subscription: \$6.00 per year; bundles of 10 or more to one address = \$5.50 per subscription. Address correspondence to Word and Work, 2518 Portland Avenue, Louisville, KY 40212. Second class postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Word and Work, 2518 Portland Ave., Louisville, KY 40212.

Vol. LXXXV

JUNE, 1991

No. 6

In This Issue

Theme: *YOUR KINGDOM COME, LORD JESUS!*

Editorial — Alex. V. Wilson	162
Afraid of His Coming? — R. H. Boll	167
“The Millennium” —What It Does and Does Not Mean —Stanford Chambers	169
Now / Not Yet — Dale A. Jorgenson	173
Matthew 24: History or Prophecy? — Julius M. Hovan	175
Have the Jews Ceased to Exist? — David R. Reagan	180
Questions Asked of Us — R. H. Boll	182
God and Jonah — God and Me: God and Jonah at Sea —Florence Olmstead Collins	185
VOICES from the FIELDS	187
In Memory of Mom and In Praise of Faithfulness —Jim David Yarbrough	191
NEWS AND NOTES	192

THEME:

Your Kingdom Come, Lord Jesus!

Alex V. Wilson

The prophetic teachings of the Bible are important, and this month's theme centers on some of them. Next month's, too. Some readers want us to deal with prophecy much oftener than we do, but we seek to avoid making "hobbies" of any aspect of God's truth. Balance is important.

Since prophecy is such a large, complex field of study, we always try to include at least one simpler article. This month it's "Afraid of His Coming?", which is perhaps the most important as well as the easiest article. Until that question is settled, the others don't matter much.

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETING PROPHECY

One reason there are so many different opinions about Biblical predictions is that various methods of interpretation are used. For example, the a-millennialists and post-millennialists (let's call them a-mils and post-mils from here on) tend to "spiritualize," or interpret very loosely.

As a sample of this, look at Loraine Boettner's interpretation of Rev. 19:11-21, which portrays Christ in heaven riding a white horse and followed by the armies of heaven. John writes, "With justice he judges and makes war . . . Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword, with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron sceptre. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God." Vultures are summoned to feast on the corpses of the armies that follow the "Beast," after those armies "were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse."

Here is Boettner's interpretation:

Revelation 19:11-21 describes not the Second Coming of Christ, but rather it describes the progress of the church between the first and second comings of Christ. This section uses the imagery of a great battle in which two mighty contending forces are engaged. This, I believe, is a battle that rages through the centuries, . . . as Christ on His heavenly throne directs the affairs of His kingdom on earth—the church. And it results in an overwhelming victory for Him and His church.

Now it is true that there is symbolism in these verses (winepress, sword coming from Christ's mouth, etc.). It's also true that various other scriptures picture us as "soldiers of Christ" and show that the church is engaged in spiritual warfare and God's word is a spiritual "sword." But it is absurd to make Rev. 19 mean no more than that, with no reference to that Day "when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire [to] punish those who do not . . . obey the gospel, [who] will be punished with everlasting destruction" (2 Thes. 1:7-10). Boettner's view omits any idea of

Christ's justice, or His striking down the nations, or ruling with an iron sceptre, or of the holy wrath of God. But John mentions all these and more: corpses, vultures, the lake of fire. Surely the atmosphere of this scene is much closer to Paul's portrayal of Jesus' return to destroy His unrepentant enemies than it is to Eph. 6:10ff., "Put on the armor of God."

HALF-COCKED AND COCKY ABOUT IT

Yet, while the *pre-mil* interpretation of Scripture seems to me much sounder and truer, I often feel embarrassment or even disgust with extremists in the *pre-mil* camp. And there seem to be so many of them!

In the late 1970's Dwight Wilson, *himself a pre-mil* (and no relative of mine!), wrote a sober warning we need to ponder:

At least some prominent pre-millennialists have interpreted nearly every major international crisis of this century as the harbinger of Armageddon, including the Russo-Japanese War, the two World Wars, the war for Israeli independence and the Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973.

They saw the rise of the revived Roman empire of the last days in the League of Nations, the expansion of Mussolini's Italy, the United Nations, NATO, and the Common Market. They marked the end of the "times of the Gentiles" in 1895, 1917, 1948 and 1967. Among possible candidates for Antichrist, they listed Mussolini, Hitler, and Henry Kissinger, to name just a few.

Thus the various attempts at identifying the signs of the approaching end of the age are strewn with a mass of erroneous speculations which have undermined their credibility. (Armageddon Now!)

And of course we have seen lots of Armageddon hoopla stem from the recent Gulf War.

Don't get me wrong! We *should* look at current events through the lens of Bible prophecy. But we should use a lot more sober caution and a lot less dogmatism and sensationalism than is usually exercised. Of the examples listed above, the Common Market, and Israel's renewed statehood (1948) and its taking all of Jerusalem in 1967 do seem significant to me. And if I were older, Mussolini's power and actions in the 1930's doubtless would have also impressed me. But it is one thing to say, "Hey, keep your eye on this trend or that man, for there *seem* to be parallels with some scriptures here..." and it's another thing to rush off half-cocked and cocky. Let's seek discernment from God.

GUIDELINES IN INTERPRETATION

In the area of prophetic study, it would probably do all of us good if from time to time we restudied our "hermeneutics"—our principles of interpretation. For instance, on what *basis* do we believe that this statement is literal and that statement is figurative? Let me share with you some insights from other writers that have helped me.

When raising questions concerning any prophetic subject, we must distinguish between the "What" and the "How." "What hath the Lord spoken?" is always a legitimate question; but Nicodemus' question, "How can these things be?" may sometimes go begging...

One might imagine a controversy *before* Christ came, like some of the disputes which are in vogue today. Maybe some good Rabbi Simeon who in the simplicity of his heart knows nothing better than to believe what God predicted would contend that the Christ who should come would be the God-man—that He would be born of a virgin; that He would be David's Lord and a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek; that He would not only be the glorious Messiah, Ruler of all, but also a man of sorrows, despised and rejected of men; that He would die at the hands of His enemies, but rise from the dead; and that the Gentiles should share in the blessing of this Christ—what a storm of protest and opposition that would raise! What unanswerable questions they would ask; what insuperable impossibilities they could raise; what cogent counter-arguments they could make! How absurd, how insane, how heretical, how wicked, they would say was Rabbi Simeon's teaching! Does he really think that unto us a child should be born who really was "mighty God, everlasting Father"—a child, helpless, needful of nursing and tending? How could that be? What wild literalism! Anyone can see that this is "highly figurative." And how could this Great One be despised and killed? And raised from the dead? Ah, what speculation! And a priest of another order than Aaron's shall officiate? And Gentiles shall come in?

To all of which good Rabbi Simeon could only answer that so the Scriptures say. It was indeed "because they knew him not, neither the prophets which are read every sabbath" that the Jews "fulfilled them in condemning him" (Acts 13:27). In discussing then questions concerning prophecy, let us endeavor to seek out what the scriptures really say rather than try to prove that this or that cannot be because it does not harmonize with our understanding of things. Let us ask "what," rather than "how."

—R. H. Boll, *The Kingdom of God*, pp. 152ff.

[Some teachers] argue that all of scripture is to be interpreted literally except prophecy. Prophecy, they argue, must be interpreted symbolically or figuratively by spiritualizing its meaning. What makes this position so incredible is that all the Biblical prophecies concerning the first coming of Christ were fulfilled literally, in the sense that their plain sense meaning was fulfilled. Thus, Jesus was born of a virgin, just as Isaiah had prophesied (7:14). And Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and was hailed as King, just as Zechariah had prophesied (9:9-10).

If our present day . . . spiritualizers had lived 200 years before Christ, they would have interpreted these passages to mean that the Messiah would be born spiritually pure (rather than literally born of a virgin) and that His perfect spiritual humility (symbolized by His riding on a donkey)

would cause men to hail Him as king of their hearts. The idea that He would literally ride into Jerusalem on a donkey and literally be hailed as King would have been scoffed at as heartily as the . . . spiritualizers now scoff at Zech. 14 which says Jesus will return to the Mount of Olives, which will be split by an earthquake when His foot touches it.

—David Reagan, *The 2nd Coming of Christ in Prophecy*, p. 29

Yet notice the following, too:

“The true meaning of scripture is the natural and obvious meaning.” [But] to look for the *natural* meaning is not necessarily the same as looking for the *literal* meaning. For sometimes the natural meaning is figurative rather than literal. Jesus Himself had to reproach some of His hearers for their excessive literalism. Nicodemus misunderstood His reference to a second birth so completely that he asked incredulously whether a man can re-enter his mother’s womb and be born. The Samaritan woman seems to have supposed that the living, thirst-quenching water which He offered her was down Jacob’s well. And when later Jesus claimed He could satisfy people’s hunger by giving Himself to them as living bread, they asked, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” These examples should be enough to warn us against a dead and rigid literalism. It should have been obvious that Jesus was using figures of speech.

—John Stott, *Understanding the Bible*, p. 221ff.

Other examples of this last point should be observed: Our Lord warned about the “leaven” of the Pharisees and Sadducees, meaning their false beliefs. He said, “Lazarus sleeps,” meaning he had died. He challenged, “Destroy this ‘temple’ and I’ll rebuild it in three days”—meaning His physical body. In all these instances, as well as those mentioned above, His hearers missed the point because of their *over*-literalism.

LITERAL, BUT TO WHAT EXTENT?

Most Old Testament predictions that have already come to pass were literally fulfilled. The preceding quotations from Boll and Reagan give many examples. Here are some more: Jesus was indeed born in Bethlehem. Psalm 22 tells of a band of evil men encircling Him, staring and gloating over Him, piercing His hands and feet, and dividing up His clothes by casting lots (16-18). Four specific forecasts in three verses, and all literally fulfilled! Yet also notice the Psalmist says, “Many bulls surround me . . . roaring lions open their mouths wide against me” (12-13). And after mentioning the enemies’ casting lots for His clothes, the writer prays to be delivered from the “power of the dogs . . . from the mouth of the lions . . . from the horns of the wild oxen” (20-21). But all those animals turned out to be symbols of wild, savage men.

In the same way, Isa. 40:3-4 foretold someone who “in the desert” would “prepare the way for the Lord.” We know this was fulfilled by John the Baptizer, whose ministry was literally in the desert (Lk. 3:2-6). But his “roadbuilding” activities described by Isaiah

were carried out not literally but figuratively, through his call for repentance.

I mention these things not to quibble but to urge us to greater care and caution, especially in our interpretation of the book of Revelation. While a literal approach (which would better be called a "normal" or "literary" approach) is the *basic method* to use, we should realize the abundance of symbolism in the book, and make proper allowance for it. I heard a preacher once claim that a time will come when no winds will blow anywhere on earth, because Rev. 7:1 says so. It does say that, but doesn't the context show that "winds" here symbolize forces of harm and destruction, from which God will protect His "sealed" people? So we find in 9:3-5 that the pain-inflicting "locusts" from the Abyss were not allowed to harm people who had received the seal of God, as mentioned in 7:1-4. Examples could be multiplied.

We close with this important advice from Brother Boli:

The question will arise whether the descriptions of the trumpet-judgments (Rev. 8ff.) are to be taken literally or whether they are symbolical. The literal interpretation—that is, the plain, grammatical sense—has always first claim to consideration. Nothing is to be taken as "symbolical" or "figurative" without vital reason.

It is good always to let the word of God speak for itself. If we cannot decide whether the language in any particular case is to be taken at simple face value or whether it is a case of symbolism, *let us see first what the plain meaning would be; then let us ascertain, as far as possible, what the symbolic import would be. If after that we cannot decide, let the matter stand as it is until further light is available.* Instead of taking a dogmatic position, let us simply *examine the statements of God's word in the light of either possibility and leave it at that.*

"O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus

I was interested to find in a recent rereading of the life of Charles G. Finney, the great evangelist of another day, the following account of a time of heart-searching and prayer.

"At this time it seemed as if my soul was wedded to Christ, in a sense in which I had never had any thought or conception of before. The language of the Song of Solomon was as natural to me as my breath. I not only had all the freshness of my first love, but a vast accession to it. Indeed, the Lord lifted me so much above anything that I had experienced before and taught me so much of the meaning of the Bible, of Christ's relations, and power and willingness, that I often found myself saying to Him I had not known or conceived that any such thing was true. I then realized what is meant by the saying, that He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. He did at that time teach me, indefinitely above all that I had ever asked or thought. I had had no conception of the length and breadth and height and depth and efficiency of His grace."

—G. R. Crow

Afraid of His Coming?

R. H. Boll

"I want Christ to come," writes a correspondent, "but I expect I would be frightened. I am afraid He will not be pleased with me, and my doom will be eternal punishment. Somehow or another I am afraid of God. I am afraid He will find too many faults in me. I never can be pleased with myself."

This is an utterance of an anxious soul and it strikes the center of a very general trouble. It also goes to show how that the doctrine of the Lord's imminent coming is not really just an accident and speculative view which a man may or may not take, of a future event; but it is a doctrine that profoundly affects the whole tenor of the Christian life, and involves, yea, compels the right attitude toward God and Christ. It is evident that a Christian who is afraid of God and anticipates possible condemnation at the coming of the Lord, cannot look for Christ's return with any real desire. It is not a *hope* to him.

Here in fact lies the crux of the doctrine to many. They do not feel themselves acceptable to the Lord now. Maybe if they could "grow" a while, and do a few more good works, they may arrive at a height at which they are more pleased with themselves and the Lord be pleased with them. But the Lord may come at any time—today or tomorrow. So clearly, that "after-a-while" righteousness will not do. It would be far more comfortable to look forward to dying after a while; for by then—ah! by *then* we shall surely have become much better than we are now. We shall have *grown* some more, and done a great deal more good, and worked ourselves up to a point where we can pass the judgment. At least we shall have time to "make our own peace" with God. But if the Lord is likely to come at any time, on what shall we rely. For we certainly "can't be pleased with ourselves" now. Can we ever be? Can we ever have grown so much, or have done so much good, that our attainment will make us acceptable to God? Can we ever have a minute's real peace with God or feel anything more than anxiety and fear toward Him so long as we stand upon this miserable plan of salvation by works? Surely *we must* be acceptable to Christ when He comes. Since then neither our "growth" nor the abundance of our good works will ever fill up the required measure, our acceptedness and peace and hope must rest upon another foundation.

PEACE THROUGH GRACE

Is there another? Is there a way in which we may have present peace and assurance, and stand in conscious perfect acceptance with God—*right now*? Yes, thank God. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1, 2). Look at this happy position. All fear is gone, all doubt, all dread. There is peace, hope, and joy. "And not only so, but we also rejoice in God through

our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation" (Rom. 5:11). Is this for us? Can we "stand" in such grace as that here and now? That is acceptedness by grace. "And if it is by grace it is no more works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. 11:6). For he that works receives his reward as the due of his own merit. But he who abandons his own works and merit and "believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness . . . Therefore it is of faith that it may be by grace, to the end, that the promise may be sure to all the seed." (Rom. 4:5, 16).

WHAT ABOUT THE WORKS?

But, my anxious friend will reply, does not God expect good works of us? Yea, of those who first have peace with Him through Christ; of those who have obtained first His perfect acceptance, who have been washed in the Blood, who have tasted His grace, who have first by grace been made His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:10). Of those He expects works—the fruits of His planting, and in proportion as they have known and appreciated His grace they will work. For the faith by which we are justified is also the faith that afterward worketh by love.

If we had to come up with a certain amount of works in order to have peace with God it would follow (1) That we would have no peace (and consequently no hope) as yet while working; and (2) That we never could have it, for we would never be sure that we had filled up the necessary measure—or rather we could always be pretty sure, like my correspondent, that we have not fulfilled the required measure perfectly. And the coming of Christ must then needs fill me with dread, and the judgment with terror.

"NO CONDEMNATION"

But there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. We not only were saved by grace in the first place, but we "stand in grace." And not only that but there is more coming—at the coming of Christ. "Set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:13). In the meantime there is constant healing and cleansing; there is ever-ready mercy and grace to help us, also along the way. (Heb. 4:16). And this is the inspiration to us unto a life of obedience, holiness and good works (1 Pet. 1:14-16). And at last, "the God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, shall himself perfect, establish, strengthen you. To him be the dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Pet. 5:10, 11). Now can we say, "Even so, Come Lord Jesus!" "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our father who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word." (Thes. 2 16-17).

The great of the kingdom have been those who loved God more than others did.

—A. W. Tozer

"THE MILLENNIUM"

What It Does and Does Not Mean

Stanford Chambers

We need to consider that error which is gaining in popularity of late, viz., that this, our dispensation, is the thousand-year period of Revelation, the "Golden Age" of prophets and poets, looked and longed for by people of God through the centuries until now. This error which is in fact a *composite error* originated in the reign of the Emperor Constantine when, by his decree, persecutions ceased and Christianity became popular and finally was made the state religion. With the passing over of controls to the church dignitaries came a new and different interpretation of such prophecies as foretell that new order in which peace and righteousness shall universally prevail. The Church of Rome still contends for this view; and strange to say there are many Protestants not far removed from the same error, the "Dark Ages" to the contrary notwithstanding.

This interpretation became the new orthodoxy, and those protesting the same came to be listed as heretics. Yet prior to Constantine's day such interpretation is not to be found. Christianity was older than the United States of America is now before the theory began to be propagated, placing as it does an age between the promise of the Lord's return and its fulfillment. For 300 years the Lord's coming was the Church's "blessed hope." This is undisputed.

Most readers will know that the thousand-years passage involved in the interpretation in question is found in the 20th chapter of Revelation. There in a few verses are found the thousand years, six times mentioned. In connection with it there are described the arrest and imprisonment of Satan, the first resurrection, the retention of the rest of the dead, the relieving of the nations of Satan's deceivings until his thousand years' sentence is served, the enthronement and reign of those having part in said resurrection the while Satan is in the pit of the abyss.

1. *No, Satan is not bound.* Not yet, but he is himself the instigator of such propaganda, and his cause profits as Christians are thereby thrown off guard and are made captives according to his will. Peter's admonition to sober watchfulness is by this and other deceptiveness made of none effect as regards many people.

"But isn't Satan now undeniably under limitations and restrictions?" Yes, thank God. But such has been the case ever since the serpent was sentenced to go on his belly and to eat the dust of the ground. (See Job 1:12; 2:6). The binding of John's foreview is not just restrictions. Read again and see. And such bindings as occurred when demons (as "the strong man's goods") were cast out are not the binding of Revelation (Matt. 12:24-29). John had witnessed that kind of thing and had had a part in it; he had heard Jesus say, "By whom do your sons cast them out?" Clear proof that that kind of

binding had been done even before Matt. 12. But John in the Apocalypse is being shown, not well-known past historical events but "things which shall come to pass hereafter" (Rev. 4:1). Note that.

2. *Satan is not yet in his prison.* (The abyss dreaded by the demons when faced by the Lord Jesus; Luke 8:31). Instead Satan is "the prince of the powers of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). The dispensation had been going on forty years when Paul by inspiration penned these words. When Satan goes to the abyss he will have been dethroned as "prince of the powers of the air." He is not in prison, but John sees him prior to Rev. 20 as about to cast others into prison (Rev. 2:10).

3. *Satan's deceiving of the nations has never ceased.* Never were more nations more deceived than now. Witness Communism and its globe-wide menace. Witness the sweep of unbelief over Christendom. Note "the world rulers of this darkness" in Eph. 6:12. And the coming forth of the "man of sin" which (2 Thess. 2:9) will be "according to the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders." Note that the man of sin is in the very height of his exaltation at the moment of Jesus' appearing. See v. 8.

4. *The saints are not now enthroned, are not now reigning.* Now is the time to bear the cross, not the time to wear the crown. "Hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11). It is laid up for you as was Paul's up for him (2 Tim. 4:8) and is to be received "in that day," not by men and women while in the flesh, neither as disembodied spirits. "If we endure, we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. 2:2). Peter foresees crowns bestowed "when the chief Shepherd shall appear" (1 Peter 5:4).

Paul said to certain men, "Would that we did reign, that we also might reign with you" (1 Cor. 4:8). The reigning time will not be until "that day" (2 Tim. 4:8) when the crowns that are laid up for all them that have loved "his appearing" will be given to all.

5. *The saints are not now judging as John foresees.* He sees judgment given to them only whom he sees on thrones. To those same Corinthians Paul writes, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come" (1 Cor. 4:5). Beware, however, of holding in contempt our Lord's decree that His saints shall judge the world, and angels even. Under divine instruction and discipline saints here may qualify for such functioning when the time does come.

6. *The first resurrection is not past, nor is it now going on.* "They that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Cor. 15:20, 23). True, "many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep arose" at the time Christ the firstfruits "arose" (See Matt. 27:52). That was a token of what is promised to the company who are to compose His great harvest in that day, those who will be "counted worthy to attain unto that age (margin) and the resurrection from the dead" (Luke 20:35), not the resurrection of the unjust, for that takes place without regard to worthiness. See also Phil 3:11 and Paul's yearning to attain to that resurrection, literally the "out-resurrection from among the dead." Over such, of course, the second death can have no power.

Death is swallowed up in victory in this resurrection, but not of the unjust, for the *second* death awaits them. The unjust are not in the resurrection picture of 1 Thess. 4:17, for those having part in it shall be for ever with the Lord. It is the resurrection of the Just.

7. *The resurrection John foresees is not figurative.* "Bodies are not mentioned," they say. True. But are disembodied souls or spirits resurrected? The term resurrection always involves the body. At Pentecost about 3000 souls were added. Bodies are not mentioned. However, most of us believe their bodies were involved in their baptism. Bodies are implied and do not *need* specific mention when the term baptism is used; no more so when the term resurrection is used. Resurrection pertains to that which has died; the spirit does not die.

8. *This is not the glorious age seen by prophets and poets of old.* An age of grace it is indeed, thank God, but not the age when they "beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks" to learn war no more. See Isa. 2 and Micah 4. Paul by inspiration calls it "*this present evil world*," margin, "*age*." See Gal. 1:4. This is not to depreciate the blessedness of our high calling, a calling out of the world to be a people for his name. But "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving" that they should not respond to the call, and as a result "the whole world lieth in the evil one." See 1 John 5:18; 2 Cor. 4:4. Satan is "the deceiver of the whole world" (Rev. 12:9) even until now. The knowledge of the Lord does not "cover the earth as the waters cover the sea," nor do righteousness and justice prevail. "Truth is mighty and will prevail" yet; it will not be left for ever on the scaffold, rest assured.

9. *Jesus is not now reigning as foreseen in John's vision.* His present reigning in the hearts of His faithful who appreciate His having "all authority in heaven and on earth" is a fact in which to rejoice. He is "head over all things to the church," and His "little flock" composes His kingdom *here now*. But His family rejoices to know that He has been anointed and crowned to be "King of kings and Lord of lords," that "the kingdom of the world is" to "become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ" (Rev. 11:15), that He is to be "King over all the earth," to rule "from the River to the ends of the earth," that "all nations shall serve Him," that "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." Isa. 65:23; Ps. 72 et al. They rejoice to be able to see by faith death abolished.

Nevertheless, now we see Him already crowned, qualified, and able effectively to act in God's time and subject all things unto Himself according to the decree of the Second Psalm. "Not only in this age but in that which is to come" (Eph. 1:21 and margin) is He to be "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion." "Though it tarry, wait for it." John sees Him going forth "conquering and to conquer" (Rev. 6:12), and the finish of that is foreseen in Rev. 19:11; 20:3. After that He reigns without a rival, having indeed shown "who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15). Saints rejoice to know that the future of His kingdom will be glorious. May we by His grace have abundant entrance therein. See 2 Peter 1:11.

10. *Nowhere do the Scriptures place the second coming of Christ* after the thousand years. Inspiration does not allow any one to insert such a period between the promise of His coming and its fulfillment. The counsel ever is, "Watch ye at every season," that whether He shall come in the first watch of the night, or the second, or at the cock crowing or in the fourth watch He shall find us in the attitude of watching. Encouragement cannot be found for any one's saying, "My Lord delayeth his coming." And though, within the authority of the Father, much time has indeed elapsed, warrant is not thereby given for the scoffers' challenge, "Where is the promise of his coming?" "For yet a very little while and he that cometh shall come and shall not tarry" (Heb. 10:37).

John is called up to heaven in Rev. 4:1 to be shown "things that shall come to pass hereafter," that is, things to come to pass after the things of the preceding chapters. John sees the Lord Jesus taking the seven-sealed book in chapter five, and in the next He begins opening the seals. Upon the opening of the first he sees Him going forth "conquering and to conquer." From this He never beats a retreat until He does indeed *conquer*. The climax is reached in chapter 19 at His coming there described and the imprisonment of Satan in the next. Then follows the thousand-years reign which is contemporary with Satan's incarceration.

The Lord's *over-ruling*, exercised as it is at the present time, does not constitute the reign foreseen by John. He has *always over-ruled*. That fact was revealed to Nebuchadnezzar with emphasis. He over-ruled *then* as well as *now*. But John sees (Rev. 11:15) "the kingdom of the world . . . become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." That is an assured future event. The fact of His future reign however in nowise detracts from His present reigning in the hearts of His faithful, for "he that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself."

11. *The contention that the thousand years is but a symbolic period is unwarranted, unproved.* "The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished." There are those who make out that the first resurrection is *regeneration*. Then the rest of the dead are not regenerated until the present dispensation is past! John saw those of the first resurrection, many of whom had died as martyrs, "And they lived," lived not to be hurt of the second death as they had been of the first. In whatever sense these "lived" the rest of the dead "lived not." Making the terms and the number out as figurative only complicates matters. Why not allow it as the Bible puts it?

PRAYERS & ANSWERS

Effective prayer is not a lucky charm to gain special favors. Neither is it a pain-killer like a giant aspirin: "Take God three times a day and you won't feel any pain!" as John Powell put it . . .

In every problem situation I am in, I need to ask God to show me the real cause of my difficulty, to face me with my truth so I see how I am contributing to this problem, and to give me the courage to do what I need to do to help resolve it.

—Dick Innes

NOW / NOT YET

Dale A. Jorgenson

Philippians 1:23: I am hard pressed between the two . . .

Many aspects of real-world living require Christians to balance what seem to be mutually-opposing *values*, requiring them to choose between good and better. For example, the followers of Jesus live in one country while seeking a better (heavenly) one (Hebrews 11:15-16). They love and honor their parents (Eph. 6:1-4) while realizing that "He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me . . ." (Mt. 10:37). Taught to respect, value and enjoy human life as God's master creation, they balance that respect for life with the realization that "He who loses his life for my sake will find it."

There are also times when Christian believers encounter *intellectual concepts* which in themselves seem incompatible. One of these situations has positioned Christians for hundreds of years on opposite sides of a basic question about God's act of redemption. Paul's assurance that God has both foreknown and predestined those who are called and justified is a precious teaching for the disciples of Jesus in times of stress. Yet it is also extremely important for the evangelistic thrust of the church to emphasize that "whoever will may come," that the promise of John 3:16 is available to all who will, and that it is not the will of God that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9). Free will, and ordination of believers even before their birth, are both part of the Christian message, difficult as it may be for human wisdom to harmonize them.

R. H. Boll called the forced harmonizing of apparently conflicting texts a "vicious principle of Bible interpretation constantly adapted by theorists." He emphasized:

Here is a passage making a statement; over there is another which seems to declare the opposite. Now for those who simply believe God's word it is not difficult to see that there must be a higher harmony between the two which does violence to neither, and that we are at liberty to believe and preach both these passages just as they stand . . . whether or not we are able to perceive the tie that unites them. But with the theorist it is otherwise. One of these passages is for him, the other against him. One of them, therefore, is accepted at what it says and strongly emphasized; the other has to be knocked out of commission.

—Truth and Grace, p. 115

The principle which is advanced here requires *faith* in believing the Scriptures along with intellectual *humility* in acknowledging the fact that, as yet, we may only see in a mirror darkly. The lack of such humility in the Restoration Movement, particularly in the gray areas which Thomas Campbell called "opinion," or concepts which fall into the cracks of Scriptural silence, has resulted in the fragmentation of the Movement, the loss of Christlike love, and a fiasco over the passionate plea for Christian unity which motivated the first-generation Restoration Movement leaders.

The Implications of Our Prophetic Views

A particular set of tensions which is not always resolvable relates to a futurist premillennial eschatology. This doctrine of prophetic fulfillment holds that the future will see human society deteriorating severely, that Anti-christ will take control of the earth for a limited period while the saints of God are heavily persecuted, that Jesus will return at the Battle of Armageddon, and that He will then establish His millennial kingdom. Premillennial believers include at least two kinds. Many expect a pre-tribulation rapture of the church, and thus hope that present believers will escape the full force of the tribulation period under Anti-christ, seeing only "these things *begin* to come to pass" (Luke 21:28). But post-tribulation believers generally expect that Christians living at the coming of the Anti-christ will have to endure the persecution, thus experiencing a spiritual refinement, until release from such persecution at the coming of Jesus. All premillennial groups, of course by definition, believe that Jesus will return before the millennium.

For premillennial believers, tension in Scriptural understanding arises in the area of *social concern*. Jesus taught, in the Sermon on the Mount, that believers are to be the salt of the earth, a light set on a stand, and a city set on a hill. In the same sermon, Jesus told His disciples to "do good," to lend freely, to share clothing with a demanding soldier, and even to "love your enemies" (Luke 6). The book of Acts reports the discipleship of an active Roman centurion, an Ethiopian who held a responsible position in the queen's government, and a Christian businesswoman who worked in the fabrics trade. Paul greets people of Caesar's household in Rome as fellow-Christians, and Philemon, who appears to have been a man of considerable fiscal success, is addressed as a "beloved fellow worker."

However, for many premillennial people, there is a logical problem in "harmonizing" the Scriptures. If we are to be prepared for a "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:5), and if we are waiting for the "redemption of our bodies," how is it possible to become very deeply concerned about the quality of life in this old world which is passing away? To ask the crew to paint the Titanic after striking the iceberg impresses human logic as a gross absurdity.

Timothy P. Weber, in his comprehensive study of American premillennialism, has discussed the *Now/Not Yet* dilemma of Christians who expect the imminent coming of Christ, but realize they may need to continue laboring in the world throughout their entire life before His coming:

In the areas of personal lifestyle, evangelism, missions, and the like, premillennialists to varying degrees have tried to live in the shadow of the second coming. The possibility of the imminent return of Christ has given a sense of urgency and significance to the daily lives of people. (*Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming*, p. 233)

Weber says, "Premillennialism does not seem to have a negative effect on personal behavior. In fact, . . . it frequently can be a catalyst to holy living and personal purity."

What of *social* responsibility, however? How do premillennial Christians treat the commission to salt the earth for both its preservation and its improvement in taste? Do premillennial believers despair of the sinking ship, or do they faithfully carry on despite their hope for a better country? What of their participation in political and economic life, in the educational standards of public schools, and in the larger culture as positive and “salting” influences? How far do they stand aside from a society struggling with a losing war on drug addiction, abortion at will, people dying with AIDS, a growing academic mediocrity, and a world terrorized by strategic weapons? Weber is less positive in his analysis of this aspect of Christian responsibility:

More dubious, however, has been the effect of premillennialism on social attitudes. Though not all premillennialists have accepted the extreme position on the futility of reform activities, one must finally conclude that in many cases premillennialism broke the spirit of social concern that had played such a prominent role in historic evangelicalism. Its hopeless view of the present order left little room for God or for themselves to work in it. . . . As Martin Marty has said, premillennialists often give up on the world before God does. And that refusal to get involved in social issues has frequently kept them from fulfilling the biblical mandate to do good in the world. (p. 234).

As the second Great Commandment (to love neighbor as self) is a natural derivative of the first (to love the Lord God with soul and heart and mind), so does social responsibility flow naturally in this world out of Christian concern for the next. Thus, evangelism should be a companion activity of caring for whole people in the whole sense—body, mind, and spirit. There is a pietism which, while not willing to sell the farm to wait on top of a hill for Christ to come, still neglects the surrounding culture. True, Jesus’ life and death emphasized sin and forgiveness, yet His great act of grace also extends to God’s working in history and Christians’ working where they live.

In expecting Jesus’ return daily, and serving faithfully in the world until He comes, contemporary believers accept with the Apostle Paul the natural tension involved in *Now/Not Yet*.

Matthew 24: History or Prophecy?

Julius M. Hovan

The passage under consideration is described in one commentary as follows: “This discussion contains some of the most difficult of Jesus’ utterances. The apocalyptic nature of the material resembles some of the prophetic discourses of the O.T. where the mingling of historical & typical elements make interpretation difficult” (Wycliffe Bible Commentary). David Cooper says regarding this Olivet discourse: “It is one of the most important prophetic utterances in the scriptures. If one has a clear understanding of this prediction, one will have an outline into which almost all other subjects of prophecy will fit perfectly.”

We are aware of both of these truths: 1) Matthew 24 is one of the most difficult passages, yet one of great importance. 2) An understanding of Matthew 24 will help us fit together all the pieces of God's prophetic puzzle. A fuller understanding of the discourse will come by studying the accounts also found in Mark 13 and Luke 21.

The goal and purpose of this study is to determine—Is Matthew 24 history or prophecy? Has it happened or will it happen?

Charles E. Brown (who believed it is all history) stated regarding verse 21: "Every student of the subject knows these words were amply fulfilled at the siege of Jerusalem under Titus." Then he adds: "The destruction of Jerusalem was a type of the end of the world."

We contend at the beginning of this study that *both history and prophecy* are found in Matthew 24 as well as in other passages. Pre-fulfillment in types is one of God's ways of teaching truth. Thus, the events of 70 AD are a prophetic type of destruction to come. In the same way the Babylonian captivity and exile is a type of the worldwide despersion of the Jews. And their return from that captivity is a type of their current regathering.

THE SETTING

This discourse takes place a few days before the death of Jesus. He has pronounced the woes upon the Pharisees and wept over the beloved city of Jerusalem. He has just walked for the last time in the shadow of the magnificent temple and leaves it to go again to the Mount of Olives. The conversation begun on the temple mount continues on the Olives Mount as his closest followers come to ask him some specific questions.

In verse one they show him the beautiful buildings. No doubt they did so with much pride and possibly to challenge his words about the destruction of such grandeur. Jesus delivers a terrible blow in verse two. It must have been hard for them to believe that God would allow His grand sanctuary to be devastated. The one they thought would be King and would restore glory to Israel by defeating the Romans now speaks forcefully of much the opposite.

A more stunning blow would occur three days later when Jesus is killed and as a result their faith and hope almost destroyed. For their sake and ours Jesus puts forth much effort to show that their hopes would be realized in a far greater way than they had imagined. May we not be guilty of limiting God by our lack of faith, knowledge or understanding. Remember Ephesians 3:20!

The questions of verse three should come as no surprise. Zechariah 14 and other Old Testament passages present ideas about the destruction of the temple, second coming of Christ and the end of this age. The disciples were familiar with such ideas but did not understand the various details.

It was logical for them to want to know the "when" of such important matters. Please keep in mind question three deals with the end of an age, not of the inhabited earth. We may not be clear about the beginning and ending of this or any other age but we can know God has ordained the ages and He is in control.

Verses 4-8 give a picture of the character of our entire present age. Jesus specifically warns against hasty conclusions regarding wars and rumors of wars. James explains that fighting is the result of our lusty, covetous spirit, and since such has always been in the heart of man, these conditions will mark every age. Verse 7 indicates an increase in both the number and intensity of wars which we have seen fulfilled in our own generation. Such signs to some degree help pinpoint the endtimes but they more specifically emphasize how badly the world needs deliverance. Its groanings and travail will continue until the Deliverer comes.

These are the beginning of travail (v. 8) and it is reasonable to conclude that their increase points to the full outbreak of the coming judgment and tribulation of God's people. So, are verses 4-8 history or prophecy? It is clear, both from the time of Jesus and from our time, that they contain history as well as prophecy. They *have* happened, and they *will* happen with greater intensity.

Verses 9-14 are much like 4-8, they describe past, present and future happenings. An amazing similarity exists between these predictions (4-14) and the order of the seals in Revelation 6. To read of false Christs, wars, famine, pestilence, quakes and martyrs as here described is to see a picture of the first half of the 70th week of Daniel.

If we believe all of Matthew was fulfilled in 70 A.D. and the years just before that, verse 14 poses a problem. First, the gospel of the kingdom was not preached to all the inhabited earth. Second, the Son of Man obviously did not return in 70 A.D. Third, verse 31 says that at His return Israel will be gathered whereas in 70 A.D. they were dispersed.

Thus, although general terms are used in verses 9-14 to describe the past and the present, our Lord's words combined with the Spirit-inspired words of Revelation cause us to conclude this is a passage not yet literally fulfilled.

HISTORY'S MOST AWFUL PERIOD

We always do well to let scripture explain scripture. As we look at verse 15-28 it is especially important to do so. Note particularly the following:

1) The entire passage of Matthew 24 is "very Jewish." Note the emphasis on the temple, abomination of desolation, Judea, Sabbath: and time of tribulation.

2) Jesus knew and used the Old Testament. Is it coincidence that Daniel and Jesus used much the same words to describe this time? See Daniel 9:27; 12:1, 11.

3) Verse 21-22 limit these events to the greatest of all tribulations—yet future. All periods of the past have had tribulation both for Israel and for Christians. But none like this one:

Think of it! It is to be the worst time the world has ever known or ever will know. A worse time than the flood; a worse time than the bondage of Egypt, and a worse time than the destruction of Jerusalem, when women and children were torn in pieces, and the very name of mercy was unknown. A worse time than the reign of Nero; worse than during the Spanish in-

quisition... and worse than during the Dark Ages... A worse time than when... men, women and children were thrown to hungry lions, and worse than when they were dipped in pitch and burned as torches. (Billy Sunday)

4) False Christs enter the scene in verses 23-26. Deliverance will be needed because of the great distress of nations. Many will present themselves as the deliverer. This is why the anti-christ will be so successful. But we will not need to wonder when the Messiah returns if it is really "the same Jesus." His coming will not be secret but visible. This time it will not be by birth but in power and great glory.

5) What could be more impressed upon the Jewish mind than the "abomination of desolation?" such a thing had happened in 170 B.C. under Antiochus Epiphanes. Jesus says it has happened and will happen again. As indeed it did in 70 A.D. when Roman armies captured 97,000 and killed a million people. Even though history confirms such desolation has happened more than once (including the slaughters of Hitler), Jesus predicts that a greater one will take place in the latter days.

COMING WITH GLORY AND GATHERING HIS ELECT

The next paragraph (verses 29-31) deals with what happens "immediately after the tribulation of those days." It is most difficult to say these events have occurred. It logically follows that if they have not, then neither have some of the other events predicted.

It is this Second Coming of the Son of Man that terminates the tribulation as he: 1) destroys the man of sin (2 Thessalonians 2:8), 2) crushes the armies who have followed Satan and 3) is acknowledged as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. His power and authority are evident and openly acknowledged.

In this paragraph are at least four major events that are difficult to find in history: 1) the great tribulation, 2) signs in heaven, 3) appearance of the Son of Man in such visible glory, 4) such a gathering by the angels. The book of Revelation provides a more complete picture of these events.

When His people see Him, having acknowledged and received Him as the pierced One, Matthew 23:39 will be fulfilled also (Revelation 1:7; Zechariah 12:10, Jeremiah 23:7-8).

Our study concludes with a look at verses 32-36. I consider them crucial to determining the facts about Matthew 24.

To explain "this generation" (v. 34) as the lifetime of those living when Jesus spoke these words obligates us to believe all these events took place around 70 A.D. That is impossible to do unless we spiritualize the Second Coming of Christ. One thing made clear and emphasized by Jesus, the angels and New Testament writers is that this "same Jesus will so come in like manner." This confirms the certainty of His personal, visible return.

How then do we deal with this dilemma? I lean to the view that the generation referred to is the one alive when all these final, age-ending events *begin* to happen. In other words, all these endtime events in their final fulfilment will occur within one generation. (Yet

we must avoid the error of date-setting. Some who hold this view have done that, sad to say.)

Another possible interpretation is based on the Greek lexicon which tells us "generation" has a primary meaning of "race or family or stock" (in this case the race of Israel.) This promise of the preservation of Israel is confirmed over and over in the Old Testament and also taught by the Apostle Paul in Romans 11. The surety of all this is the surety that all of God's Word will be fulfilled (Matthew 24:35).

CONCLUSIONS

It is my contention that a literal, normal interpretation of what language means forces us to conclude that not all of Matthew 24 has taken place. We suggest these specifics:

- 1) The Gospel preached to the whole world, followed by the end (14).
- 2) The Great time of tribulation like no other (21-22).
- 3) Coming of Jesus Christ as described in verses 27, 30.
- 4) The events of verses 29-31.

In following verses Jesus turns from the certainty of His return to the uncertainty of the *time* of that return. He tells His followers that their task is to watch and be faithful servants until He comes. We will then share in His glory, power and rule. Let us remember that such sharing does not depend on an ability to interpret difficult passages of scripture or to out-argue someone or to draw a better prophecy chart. It rather depends on a daily faith relationship to God through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

We do well to copy the humble, believing spirit of the unknown negro poet who wrote:

"There's a king and a captain high,
And he's coming bye and bye,
And he'll find me hoeing cotton when he comes.
There's a man they thrust aside,
Who was tortured till he died,
And he'll find me hoeing cotton when he comes.
He was hated and rejected,
He was scorned and crucified,
And he'll find me hoeing cotton when he comes.
When he comes! When he comes!
He'll be crowned by saints and angels when he comes.
They'll be shouting out Hosanna! to the man that men denied,
And I'll kneel among my cotton when he comes."

(Attention is called to a new book, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church* by Marvin Rosenthal; Nelson Publishers. It contains some stimulating re-thinking of some of these points, and is worth studying. —J.M.H.)

* * * * *

Treasures in heaven are laid up when treasures on earth are laid down.

Have the Jews Ceased to Exist?

David R. Reagan

This question may seem ridiculous, but I assure you, it is not. Increasingly, I am running across people within Christendom at large who argue that the Jews have ceased to exist, and therefore God could not have any purpose left for them.

At a large meeting of Church of Christ ministers in Dallas over ten years ago, one of the ministers argued vehemently that the Jews have been mongrelized as a race by inter-marriage with Gentiles and that the Jews have ceased to exist as an identifiable segment of humanity. While listening to this man, I kept sitting there thinking how stunned the Arab world would be to hear the news that there are no Jews in Palestine! Another time I received a letter from another man in the Dallas area who challenged me to debate him on the existence of the Jews. I felt like I should send him a page from the Dallas telephone directory with the Jewish names underlined! And I saw a prophetic newsletter from a group in Ohio who take the position that *all* end time prophecies (the return of Christ, the resurrection, the judgment, and the "end of the world") were fulfilled in 70 A.D. with the destruction of Jerusalem. They, too, deny the continuing existence of the Jewish people.

ISRAEL'S PERMANENCY

This position about the non-existence of the Jews is incredible in the light of what the Bible teaches about the permanency of the Jews. The most definite teaching regarding this matter is contained in Jeremiah 31:35-37. In this passage God says that Israel is as permanent as the "fixed order of the moon and stars." "When this fixed order departs," says the Lord, "then shall the descendants of Israel cease from being a nation before me forever." And then, to emphasize His point, God repeats His promise by saying that Israel will be "cast off" only when the heavens above have been measured and the foundations of the earth explored. In other words, Israel will never be cut off.

I just don't know how God could make His intention any plainer. The language is clear, precise, and graphic. The promise is unconditional. God does not lie, nor does He exaggerate.

In Isaiah 49:15 God says that His commitment to Israel is as permanent as that of a woman to her nursing baby. He asks, "Can a woman forget her suckling child?" He answers His own question by stating that although it might be possible for her to forget (though not probable), it is not possible for Him to forget the Jewish people. And then He adds a startlingly symbolic statement to again emphasize the strength of His commitment: "Behold, I have graven you on the palms of my hands" (Isa. 49:16). In other words, God has the children of Israel tattooed on His hand, and thus He can never forget them.

In Jeremiah 30, God states that He will preserve the Jewish nation until the return of Christ. Speaking of "Jacob's trouble" (the Tribulation period), He says that some of the Jews will be saved out of it (verse 7). Then He adds: "I will make a full end of all the nations among whom I scattered you, but of you I will not make a full end" (verse 11). This promise is repeated in Jeremiah 46:28.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

The permanency of Israel as a nation is also emphasized in God's promises to Abraham. In Genesis 12:1-3 God promises to make a great nation of the descendants of Abraham, and He promises to bless that nation and to curse those who curse that nation. This explains the survival of the Jew in history despite almost 2000 years of dispersion and persecution. It also explains the disappearance into the dust bin of history of such nations as the Philistines, the Canaanites, the Edomites, and many similar groups who persecuted the Jews at one time or another.

It should be emphasized that the Abrahamic covenant is unilateral, unconditional, and everlasting. It was ratified by God only (Gen. 15:7-21). No conditions were specified for its fulfillment. And it is declared repeatedly to be "everlasting" (Gen. 17:1-8). In short, the Abrahamic Covenant is still in effect (Gal. 3:15-18 and Heb. 6:13-18). As Paul puts it in Romans 9:4—"my brethren, my kinsmen by race—They are Israelites, and to them belong... the covenants... and the promises."

THE REGATHERING

The permanency of Israel is also taught in the regathering promises which God has made to the Jews. In Isaiah 11:10-12 the prophet says that the time will come when God will regather the Jews a second time from the "four corners of the earth." There is no way this prophecy can be made to apply to the return from Babylonian captivity. That regathering involved only about 50,000 Jews from two tribes who returned from one city. Isaiah 11 speaks of a *second* regathering that will assemble all the "outcasts of Israel" and the "dispersed of Judah" from all over the world. How can God fulfill this promise unless the Jewish people are preserved through their dispersion?

In Amos 9:14 & 15, God gives an unconditional promise that He will someday "restore the fortunes" of the Jews. Their cities will be rebuilt, their vineyards replanted, and they themselves will be "planted" in their land and "shall never be plucked up again out of the land." This is an unfulfilled, unconditional promise that cannot be fulfilled unless the Jewish people are preserved.

In Zechariah 10:6 God again promises through His prophet that a day will come when He will regather Israel and Judah (that is, all the Jewish people). "I will bring them back because I have compassion on them," He says, "and they shall be as though I had not rejected them." This promise was given *after* the return from Babylonian captivity, and thus it clearly refers to a future, promised

regathering of all Jews that has not yet been fulfilled and which cannot be fulfilled unless the Jews are preserved.

THE REMNANT

The permanency of the Jewish people is also taught in the prophecies of Zechariah and Paul regarding the preservation of a Jewish remnant. Zechariah says that one-third of the Jews will survive the Tribulation and will turn to God in faith (Zech. 13:8 & 9 and 12:10). Likewise, Paul prophesies that God will save a remnant of the Jews *after* the full number of the Gentiles have come into the church (Rom. 11:1-6, 25 & 26).

To summarize, the Bible clearly teaches that God will preserve the Jews in their dispersion, regather them for tribulation, and save a remnant at the return of Christ in glory. God calls the Jews "the apple of His eye" (Zech. 2:8). His rejection of them is as unthinkable as is the rejection by Christ of His bride, the church.

Questions Asked of Us

R. H. Boll

[This month our questions/answers are taken from two books written decades ago by our former editor. They come from *The Second Coming*, and *The Kingdom of God*; both books are out of print. —AVW]

Is not the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ the same thing as the end of the world? The third chapter of 2nd Peter seems to teach that at the coming of Christ the wicked will be judged and the world burned up.

If we had only the third chapter of 2 Peter, we would naturally derive such a conclusion. But in light of other scriptures we see that Peter's prophecy took in the whole wide scope of the "day of God" with all that in the end would be involved in it, including (though not making special mention of) the intervening reign of Christ on earth. This is not unusual, either in prophetic or other parts of scripture. Enoch, for example, before the Flood, warned the evil-doers of the final coming of the Lord with His saints to execute judgment (Jude 14, 15), without taking cognizance of the intervening dispensations, Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian. When in some scriptures we find salvation conditioned upon repentance alone, or faith, or faith and confession (Rom. 10:9, 10); or calling upon the name of the Lord (Rom. 10:13), or faith and baptism (Mark 16:16), we are not slow to point out that the combined testimony of all scripture is needed. So it is here. 2 Peter 3 is not to be set in opposition to other prophecies, whether in Old or New Testament; nor are we to form our conception of the last things from 2 Peter 3 alone.

It should be noted that Peter speaks of certain latter-day scoffers of scientific sort (we have them now!) who base their objections to

the doctrine of the Lord's return on the stability of the present order of the universe, and the constancy of natural law (2 Pet. 3:4). In reply, Peter points out that the Lord, though He may delay beyond expectation, will come unexpectedly; and that the present heaven and earth are destined to be burned up.

If on Christ's return the righteous are translated and the wicked are destroyed, who will be left? Where are "the nations" to come from over whom Christ and the saints shall "rule"?

The question where those nations come from is secondary. If once it is established that there will be nations here, and that Christ's redeemed ones shall reign over them, the question how they could be there is of no great consequence. Our chief responsibility is to set forth the "what"; the "how" can be left with God; lest in attempting to explain how a thing declared in God's word could be, one might even lay himself open to the charge of "speculating." But some go so far as to deny or devise some theory to "explain away" a declared fact, and that for no better reason than that they cannot see how it could be. And that is worse than "speculating."

But that there will be nations here is plainly taught. Take but the statement of Rev. 2:26-27, which occurs not in the midst of a symbolic vision, but in a sober message from the Lord to a church: "And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter are broken to shivers; as I also have received of my Father." Clearly He speaks to the church; He makes a promise of ruling the nations with a rod of iron; the promise to be fulfilled when they have overcome and have kept His works to the end—the nature of the "end" in view being seen in the preceding verse, "hold fast till I come." Evidently *after the coming of the Lord* those Christians whom He has adjudged faithful will rule over "the nations" with Him. Therefore all men are not removed or destroyed at His coming. Besides those "who know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (2 Thes. 1:8) whom He will destroy in flaming fire, on the one hand; and those righteous who are caught up on the other, there are men, sufficient in number to constitute nations, who are not reckoned as belonging to either class; God neither holds them responsible as wilful rebels, nor are they among the saints. Such nations of men still living would come under that Rule. It would be easy to point out other scriptures that show nations left after the sweeping world-judgments of the Day of the Lord (as Jer. 31:35-37; Isa. 66:16-21; Zech. 14:16; Dan. 7:27; Rev. 20:7, 8; etc.), but this is sufficient.

Do you believe that the church is a kingdom, or is it only the vestibule of the kingdom?

There is no kingdom of God on earth now, save the church. All that are in the church are in the kingdom. The church is, as David Lipscomb expressed it "*the kingdom in its present stage.*" It is therefore not merely the vestibule of the kingdom.

To show how "the keys of the *kingdom*" can admit a man into the *church*; and how the man who is in the church is *in the kingdom*, while yet the church is not all there will be of God's kingdom, I have sometimes used the illustration of a man's opening a meeting house—how, after entering the vestibule I was indeed in the meeting house, while yet the "vestibule" is not the same thing as the "meeting house," nor co-extensive with it. *A man cannot be in the vestibule without being in the meeting house; a man cannot be in the church without being in the kingdom.* But to the kingdom in its future stage the church bears a much more important relation than a "vestibule." The church is not merely the subjects of it, but co-rulers with Christ over the nations. She is His Bride and shares His throne (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21).

Do you believe these teachings to be essential?

I believe that all the word of God should be taught. We have no authority for drawing a line through the word of God and distinguishing between "essentials" on the one side and "non-essentials" on the other. We never know what part of God's word may prove essential to move a sinner to be saved (Jer. 26:3) or to help a Christian in time of need. No servant of God has the right to discard or suppress or discredit any part of God's teaching, or to demand his fellow-servant to do so.

These points of doctrine involve no congregational practice, and there is nothing in them that should raise a barrier between brethren who differ concerning them. They are subjects for profitable brotherly investigation and discussion.

Will "all Israel" be saved?

Yes, the entire nation then living. They will be greatly reduced, and refined through the fires of the Great Tribulation through which they shall have passed (Zech. 13:9) and the Lord will have purged all the rebels out from among them (Ezek. 20:37, 38). The remnant of Israel shall be a holy people, forgiven, regenerated, converted, cleansed (Rom. 11:26).

* * * * *

"If I only believe that Christ rose from the dead and returned to heaven, that makes interesting reading but it does not necessarily make any difference in the way I live today. I need someone to help me now. I'm tempted now. I'm weak now. I'm threatened with collapse now. I can't master my passions now, or my fears and frettings, my frustrations and selfishness. I'm a child of the dust, and failure is built into my bones. I need somebody to understand me, and talk to me, and help me . . . now

"Here, at the point of human failure, is where Christ comes in. Here is the personal, present meaning of Christ's resurrection."

—Kenny Joseph

God and Jonah – God and Me

God and Jonah at Sea

Florence Olmstead Collins

The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai; "Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me." But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord.

Then the Lord sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep. The captain went to him and said, "How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us, and we will not perish." Then the sailors said to each other, "Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity." They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. So they asked him, "Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?" He answered, "I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and land." This terrified them and they asked, "What have you done?" (They knew he was running away from the Lord, because he had told them so.)

The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, "What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?" "Pick me up and throw me into the sea," he replied, "and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you." Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not for the sea grew even wilder than before. Then they cried to the Lord, "O Lord, please do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, O Lord, have done as you pleased." Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. At this the men greatly feared the Lord, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows to him.

There is no doubt that Jonah "believed that God is." With his head he believed that God exists. But at the time of the story of the book of Jonah, in his heart he said, "There is no God." He demonstrated this lack of faith by the way he responded to God's command to go to Nineveh. He acted foolishly and didn't do the good he was told to do (Psalm 14:1).

JONAH TURNS FROM GOD

"At sea" in heart, he put himself at sea in body. He took the downward trail to Joppa, then down to the ship, down to its inner part and finally down to the depth of the sea (1:3, 5; 2:6). Apparently feeling no remorse, before he went below deck to sleep he told the sailors that he was running from his God (1:10).

This rebellious behavior of Jonah did not fit into God's plan. Knowing in advance that Nineveh would repent when they heard the message He sent by Jonah, God intervened. He sent a violent storm to buffet the ship and to give Jonah opportunity to have a

change of heart. God is powerful. He allows only one thing to interrupt His purposes, and that only temporarily. That one thing is the sovereign will of each of us. God could have replaced Jonah, but He continued to work with him and train him to be a missionary.

The mariners were religious men and also knew there was a "higher power." The crew worshipped many gods, and fearing the storm, each man prayed to his own god. Knowing that Jonah, too, had a god, the captain waked him and rebuked him for not praying. No mention is made in the text that Jonah prayed at this time.

The situation was terrifying, so the sailors cast lots to find if someone aboard was to blame for their plight. In both pagan and Hebrew religions the casting of lots was used to get information and determine decisions. The lot fell on Jonah. "The lot they cast was in the hand of Jonah's God (Proverbs 16:33)." [Kohlenberger] God still overrules in many matters which we know nothing about and may call "coincidence" or think them to be of no significance.

When the lot fell on Jonah and he was asked about his God, he gave an honest answer. He made no attempt to explain his behavior, but declared his belief and gave one reason for his faith. That reason was that the Lord he honored is God of heaven, and maker of the land and sea (1:9). Jonah's God "does not do battle with the elements as do the gods of Phoenicia and Canaan; he made them and is sovereign over them." [Kohlenberger]

The sailors' fear of the stormy sea turned into respect for the Maker of the sea. They were in awe of this Creator-God and were astonished that Jonah could have defied Him (1:10). Surely the amazement of these pagan Gentiles must have impressed Jonah and he began to learn of the power of words that tell about the God of heaven. This was a good lesson for a missionary.

The innate knowledge of all mankind since Eden is that disobedience deserves punishment (Genesis 2:17). Therefore, the crew began planning how retribution could be made to Jonah's God. Since Jonah had sinned against his god, they believed his god must be appeased. Every sin we commit is primarily against God, for He said "Be ye holy, for I am holy." For example, David sinned contemptibly against Uriah, but felt that his sin against God was greater (2 Sam. 11; Psa. 51:4).

JONAH'S SACRIFICE

Jonah was outnumbered by the heathen seamen, yet he confessed his faith in the God of the Bible. This confession can be costly to anyone. It caused Jonah to back up his words with action. He freely offered to sacrifice his life on behalf of the lives of the sailors. He never expected to survive the raging waters. Although he had been unwilling to give time and effort to spiritually saving the Gentiles of Nineveh, now he was willing to give his physical life for the physical lives of these Gentile sailors. We can criticize him for his misplaced priorities only if we, ourselves, daily devote more time, thought and energy to our spiritual life and to that of others than we do to physical and material things.

The mariners, trying another means of saving themselves, rowed even harder. It was futile. But before they threw Jonah into the

sea, they did as we should do when making decisions—they asked God for His mercy. They used His Hebrew name, showing that their allegiance had turned from their old heathen gods to Jonah's God (1:14).

Jonah later said that it was God Himself Who cast him into the sea. (2:8). Jonah knew the effectiveness of a sin-bearing offering and volunteered to be that offering. He had no doubt that God would calm the sea and save the ship. Jonah didn't dive into the sea, and the action of the seamen in throwing him overboard proves their submission to the Lord and their trust in His power to control the storm and to save them.

When Jonah was thrown into the sea, the Maker of the sea instantly stopped its raging. Then the sailors made the proper response to God's goodness. They offered sacrifice to the Lord, and pledged themselves to the God Jonah worshipped.

It is possible that in eternity we will meet these first converts that God saved through Jonah's preaching.

VOICES from the FIELDS

George Galanis

Athens, Greece

May 17, 1991

My wife and I are grateful to our gracious Heavenly Father for though she passes through the valley of the shadows of cancer, her soul has been comforted. She really faces decisive battles everyday with Satan and suffering. Her health condition is gradually running down, nevertheless she is fighting the good fight of faith.

We have already purchased a lot to erect our church building for our congregation of Coridallos. A Christian architect is working out the drawings and the whole process for a concrete building which will consist of a basement, all-purpose hall about 500 square feet area, the main auditorium 600 square feet area and the upper floor of seven rooms.

We estimate that the total cost of the above building will be about \$150,000. What we have in hand right now is only \$30,000. For the balance of the amount needed, we trust the Lord to provide. The whole project is a matter of trusting the Lord.

Our plans are to fix first the basement as soon as possible to move in to save the money we pay every month for rent, and then we will gradually work on the main auditorium and as the Lord prospers, the upper floor.

We hope to be ready to break the ground by July 20, 1991. Would you please pray for this big project?

Robert & Joy Garrett

Ruwa, Zimbabwe

May 19, 1991

April and May were busy times here at Rockwood Christian Camp. First, there was the Men's Leadership meeting over the

long Easter weekend from Friday through Sunday with an attendance of 74.

Second was our Junior Camp for ages 7-12. This was our largest group and also the first camp planned to last a full week. There were 45 girls and 37 boys making a total of 82 campers.

This was followed a week later by our Senior Camp for ages 13-17. Here we had 75 campers—45 girls and 30 boys. Again this camp lasted a full week. In both of these camps we made use of some graduate campers as teachers. Some of our young men who have gone to university or teacher training and are now teaching or are still in training, or perhaps other occupations, and who are developing as leaders, were used as teachers.

Six faithful women did the cooking for all these camps, and cooking so many meals for so many for so long was no easy task. Yet time was also taken for Joy to lead them in some Bible studies and to practice some new songs.

Nemesio & Myrna Auxtero

Bohol, Philippines

May 1, 1991

We had a wonderful graduation program, with only six graduates though, one woman and five men. A week later it was followed by "Holy Friday" activity gathering the members of at least 85% of the church's outreaches. There were about 700 people at the back of the chapel (we couldn't fit in) in different open tents. When I look at them, the joy was overwhelming. I couldn't help but remember the day we arrived, with only Nemesio and me worshipping. The Lord has been so good.

A week after we had our Missions and Prophetic conference. At the second day, I was down with severe pain in the stomach and went to the doctor for medication. I had peptic ulcer. The medicine is tremendously expensive. The conference struggled financially because of the effects of the last storm, but the Lord led us through. There were 50 delegates and the theme was "Thy Kingdom Come," focusing on the Second Coming and our response in missions. The worship times were times of unspeakable joy and fellowship in the Lord's presence. The conference was so far the best we've ever experienced because of the emphasis on worship. After the conference 5 people were baptized.

We have 6 VBS in 6 different outreaches, each with only a week duration. The faithful teachers suffer persecutions in some of these places. At least a total of 400 children and 200 parents were ministered to. We praise the Lord, that the latest congregation which Nemesio and I pioneered only 2 months ago had 52 students.

Victor N. Broadus: News received from Manila

May 29, 1991

A recent letter from David Moldez, evangelist in Metro Manila area, mentions the formation of another Bible study and worship group in Novaliches (suburb of Manila). They had met for five weeks as of the date of his letter, and it is his hope that soon they may become a congregation. At present they are meeting in a vacant house.

The down-town church in Manila (where Bro. Eniego ministers) had a "family retreat" at a resort outside Manila on March 28 and 29.

They reported attendance of 56 adults. Topics were: God's Sovereignty; Yielding Your Talents; Is Christ Pre-eminent In Your Life?; Jesus Reigns.

Remember to pray for Bro. Jim Yee who ministers in Metro Manila. On April 3 he suffered from second degree burns on his legs and thighs. He was standing near an overheated car when a man removed the radiator cap and hot water shot on to Bro. Yee. I do not have more recent news—but assume he is recovering.

Jonathan & Rozalia Garrett

Honduras

May, 1991

Our arrival date in Kentucky will be June 8. We are sorry to leave this school. But we know now that we are not leaving for any other reason than that God has other plans for us.

In February we sent a letter describing our plans to attend the Summer Institute of Linguistics to prepare for a career in Bible translation. This leading proved to be unconfirmed. As a result of this situation, we have learned a valuable lesson in learning to discern God's leading as a couple in important decisions. To make a long story short, God did not give us His peace about these plans. Instead He gave us a new plan.

Jonathan has been writing music off and on for many years and has always wanted to pursue it more. As time passed and the plans for S.I.L. brought inner turmoil for both of us, the desire to write music began to grow in his heart. When we discussed this in April, we sensed God's blessing and His peace about it and decided to plan to move to a place where we can pursue it best. It turns out that Jonathan's sister, Mary Lynn, lately has been writing music a lot more, so she invited us to come join her. They plan to work together on a part-time basis in Winchester, Kentucky. Jonathan will have to find a job there to be near his sister. Our goal is to bring glory to God through our music.

A topic that has generated much discussion in our school is the New Age Movement. We used audio and video cassettes in our classes to enlighten the students about the many aspects of life that are New Age. Cartoons, comic books, movies, music, yoga, and certain "games" have been exposed in our classrooms. Please pray that the students will not only hear our words but follow them since many students are already involved with Ouija boards, future cards, Nintendo, mediums, etc., *even on the elementary level*. Praise God that one girl in Jonathan's class, a Christian, destroyed all her rock music cassettes and wants to listen only to Christian music!

Earl & Ragena Mullins, Sr.

Mindanao, Philippines

June, 1991

During the month of April to now (May 6) there has been a tremendous amount of sickness among the Christians here requiring special medicine and hospitalization. Few have extra money for such problems, so the church must bear much of this expense. Capison church has a benevolent fund for such emergencies, but help from welfare or social organizations is almost nonexistent. Public hospitals have little financing and about all they can do for a poverty patient is furnish him a bed and nursing care. Even doctor prescribed medi-

cine must be obtained by the patient's family including the I-V setups in solutions to be used.

First, two ladies, who had difficulties arising from child birth, needed special care. Then a young woman had to have a baby by "C" section in a private hospital (very expensive) as there was no electricity in the public hospital due to a "brownout"—both she and the baby were almost lost. A young man came down with an amoebic infection and was hospitalized for two nights. A training school's teacher's wife had an anemic stroke and could not move from the neck down. A telegram from a preacher supported by Words of Life informed us he was hospitalized and in need of prayer and finances. Then May 3rd one of the elderly sisters had a stroke. Since the family could find no one from church the night it happened, their little farm was mortgaged for 500 pesos (less than \$20.00) so the family could buy her initial medications. While visiting the hospital Cyrus and Lyrna learned of a widowed mother who had been in the hospital for a month without medication. So primary prescriptions were obtained for her in the name of the Lord as per Gal. 6:10 and Prov. 19:17. All in all the above has cost well over P20,000 (about \$750.00) and the church's fund was depleted long before the month was over. So we have been brought face to face with needs greater than individuals and government can or will handle.

Pray that sharing in the meeting of these needs will strengthen the faith of believers, and open doors into the lives of those yet out of Christ. We realize we cannot help all the poor of this area, but those whom the Lord puts in our path we believe we must help according to James 2:15-17.

Two days before we were scheduled to leave for the Words of Life Lecture-ship in Cotabato City, we were visited by two missionary families who advised against our going to Cotabato as it has been a hot bed of rebel activity and kidnappings. That left us not knowing whether to proceed or to stay in Cagayan de Oro. We had made arrangements with Cyrus, who had gone earlier, that if anything was wrong, he would contact us. We felt led of the Lord to go on to Cotabato as we felt confident the Gesulgas would get in touch if anything was the least bit unsafe. As it turned out there really was no real danger and we were thankful we went. Marines had been brought into the city and were stationed right across the street from the school where the conference was held. We were very secure, but then those who belong to the Lord always are, even in the midst of the greatest unrest! We took a short cut down the middle of the island through Muslim country which took about eleven hours to get to Cotabato City. If we had gone around the island, as we did before, it would have taken about sixteen hours.

The theme of the lectureship was "Church Growth". Breakfast was at 6 followed by singing and devotions from 7-8. Then the sessions began and ran until 8:30 p.m. with a two hour break for lunch and one hour for supper. Earl had a total of five hours of daytime lectures for the week and Ragena had two. Both enjoyed being there and meeting more of the Christians from Mindanao and Bohol.

In Memory of Mom And In Praise of Faithfulness

by Jim Yarbrough, son of Bob and Margie McNeil Yarbough

Mom's heart stopped beating today. She has now sealed her life in our memories. She will no longer be in our current experiences. Some traditions, some meals, some laughing places are forever gone.

Her struggle with cancer lasted nearly five years longer than science declared likely. During that five years we enjoyed the completed circle of many experiences. There were four high school graduations, one college commencement, three engagements, the birth of two adopted great-grandchildren, snapshots and video tapes of events great and small. There was also a year of hospice care. Even at the end doctors closed the door on her recovering and declared that she would not last the summer of 1990. Yet she defied their pronouncements. And in the meantime, she gave us love and encouragement from her hospital bed.

Her physical suffering was not in vain; it furnished all of us the rare opportunity to observe mom and dad's marriage vows take on near-miraculous reality. The devotion to duty without serious complaining that dad showed has welded my marriage into an unbreakable bond. How could any man exceed his faithful devotion? The secret ministry that he gave mom was done quietly on earth. But the Godly faithfulness of both mom and dad will be recorded in the "Marriage Vow Hall of Fame." In the book of remembrance in heaven the rewards will last an eternity because what is done in secret here get open rewards in heaven.

While the affirmation of their Christian vows spoken 55 years ago proved steadfast, I trust that some who read this will consider the implication of dissolving the vows made to your beloved. God honors faithfulness above almost all other virtues. *Husbands, love your wife even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.* Eternal rewards follow those willing to die to self and live to the ministry of the one whom you promised "till death do us part".

Today mom and dad have proved good on their word. I salute them and I thank them for the example they have left.

I will miss mom, but only for a season. There is a crown of righteousness laid up for her. We saw her wear that crown here. She taught me how to guard the crown that was made for me. I intend to receive mine one day. Then in a great day of celebration I will join her in casting my crown at the feet of Him who is Faithful and True. Then the veil will be lifted, the pain will be understood, the tears will be wiped away, and vows made in time will be rewarded in eternity.

NEWS AND NOTES

Prophecy Theme—Issues

Earlier *Word & Work* issues that contained a number of articles about prophecy were Sept. 1987, "Christ is Coming Again: Rejoice," and Sept. 1988, "Biblical Prophecy," and Nov.-Dec. 1989, "Into the 90's: What May We Expect?" We have a number of extra copies of the 1987 issue, and a few of the others, @ \$1.00 including postage and handling. If we run out, we could xerox the prophecy articles from those months (not the whole magazine) and send them for the same price or a little more.

Then—going back to 1958!—we have about a dozen copies of the *W & W* issue edited by J. R. Clark and devoted entirely to "The Premillennial Position of the Primitive Church." This gives 30 pages of quotes from early church leaders, of church historians, of Christian writers and leaders from the 17th & 18th centuries, of Restoration Movement leaders, and renowned evangelists and missionaries. The quotations prove that many (not all, of course) outstanding followers of Christ through the centuries believed in His pre-mil coming. Such a view is not some new-fangled oddity, nor was it held only by fanatical weirdos (though a number of such people did believe it, too!).

This *W & W* also may be obtained @ \$1.00 including postage and handling, so long as supplies last.

Portland Christian High School, Louisville

The 64th commencement of PCHS was held May 31. There were 24 graduates. Of this number, 4 graduated with first honors (4-year average of 3.51 - 4.00), 4 with second honors (3.00 - 3.50) and 2 with third honors (2.60 - 2.99). One graduate is a Japanese who spent her senior year here, and was one of the first-honors students! Four seniors received college scholarships, from Centre, Cumberland and Lindsay-Wilson colleges, and (4 years' scholarship!) the U. of Louisville.

One of the graduates will go on a summer mission project with Teen Missions, to Papua New Guinea.

We are extremely grateful to God for guiding, strengthening, and using our two new principals—Jodell Seay (elementary) and Don Rucker (high school, and school superintendent). They worked very hard and did a splendid job.

The Lord also blessed financially. As of June 1, the teachers were paid all but two weeks (which is better than last year). Some special gifts to PCS right now would enable it to start next school year in the black (and perhaps even replace/repair some of the three roofs which are in bad condition). Please pray the Lord will send more students, too.

In May a Math League contest was held among 8 member-schools of the Association of Christian Schools International. Of 213 student participants, 18 of the 60 medalists were from PCS. Four of the PCS students placed first in their divisions. Congratulations!

Bayou Jacque, Louisiana

The church at Bayou Jacque recently experienced revival as Don McGee, of Denham Springs, presented a series of eight inspiring messages during April 14 - 19. As a result of the meeting there were seven responses: one for baptism, one for rededication, and five for prayer. The following Sunday, one went forward for rededication and still one more on the next Sunday for prayer.

Sorry About That!

Just a few months ago we advertised a splendid book, *The Pilgrim Church*, @ \$7.95 including postage and handling. But then we learned it is out of print in the U. S. now! We have gotten a few copies from England @ \$12.95, which with postage & handling comes to \$14.50 (and Kentucky residents must add 6% more!). The book is worth even this higher price, but we're sorry for the sharp increase.

(Continued on Inside Back Cover)

NEWS AND NOTES (continued)

Upcoming "Furloughs"

James and Karen Ashley and their children will arrive in the U. S. from the Solomon Islands in early August, Lord willing. They would like to visit the Louisville area some time before December, then will live in Phoenix from January - April 1992, with James' parents.

Ted and Crystal Hardin and their children will be in Louisville during the last three weeks of July. They'll return to Honduras in mid-August, D. V.

Robert and Joy Garrett hope to be in Louisville by December, as mentioned last month.

Cramer & Hanover, Lexington, Ky.

The first three months of our new Sunday School program are nearly gone. It's been a great encouragement to see such a smooth transition. It's always hard to break tradition (but it's needed at times). There has been some renewed interest and attendance has increased. The first Sunday of June begins our second round with three adult classes being offered: 1) O. T. Survey (Bill Hendren; 2) Discipleship (Glen Knauer); 3) Revelation (ladies only with Mae Broadus).

Tell City Church, Indiana

Fathers-Sons: on Friday night we had 24 of us for supper, and 17 spent the night for our camp-out. Everyone had a great time!

Maple Manor Christian Home

This is the time of year that we begin to think about summer vacation for the children and what activities to plan for them. Once again, we would like to take those children who are doing well on a vacation towards the end of the summer. We don't know the location yet, but we will definitely be camping wherever we go. Those who would like to help make this trip possible, address your donations to:

Vacation Fund
Maple Manor Christian Home
P. O. Box 64
Sellersburg, IN 47172

Southeast Church of Christ, Louisville

Operation Golden Apples Update: 52 Bibles were collected and shipped to Lamb & Lion Ministries. Monies collected amounted to \$115.

The "COP" (Cans of Plenty) Program is underway! We asked each person attending Southeast to bring one canned food item. These canned goods will stock the church pantry to be used for any benevolent need that may arise.

Irving Salzman, from the "Chosen People Ministry," was with us on Wednesday night and spoke on "Christ in the Passover."

Have you ever wondered what part women play in the service here at Southeast? Following our Sunday evening worship next week, you'll have an opportunity to find out. The theme for our fellowship will be "Spotlighting Ladies—Opportunities for Service." Come support our women and find out how you can be used of the Lord in a more productive way!

We praise God for the good work Kathleen Williams is doing in our "Hearing-Impaired Ministry."

Ralph Avenue Church, Louisville

Thanks to the church for the banquet for the teachers on Thursday evening. I think everyone really had a good time. Sis. Joyce Zimpelmann spoke to us and encouraged us in our work as teachers. We need to remember the Lord has a job for each of us.

HOME-GOING

Word has come from southern Indiana of the death of Janice (Fortune) Lawyer, wife of Kenneth Lawyer. She had been ill for a number of years and, while her homegoing will mean a loss to the family, it was also a blessed release for her.

"WORDS OF LIFE"

We get letters from all over the world. Every month Words of Life will receive in excess of 50 letters. For instance, in the month of April we received 10 letters from the States, 37 letters from Nigeria, 10 letters from the Philippines, 4 from Ghana, 7 letters from Kenya, 1 from Zambia and 1 from Malawi. —T. Y. Clark

A BOOK YOU'LL WANT TO READ

An outstanding preacher in the early and middle decades of this century was Harold L. Olmstead. He wrote often for this magazine. He also was one of the major founders of Southeastern Christian College. But he is best remembered as the beloved preacher of the Galatin, Tennessee, Church of Christ, where he preached fulltime from 1931 - 1958, when he went to be with the Lord.

Last year his daughter, Florence O. Collins, wrote a colorful, folksy book about not only her father but several generations of her family. It brings to life those early 1900's with humor and inspiration. Containing 145 pages, **The Glory of the Imperfect** is available from our office @\$8.00 including postage and handling. (Kentucky residents add 6% tax.)

ORDER FROM WORD & WORK, 2518 Portland Ave., Louisville, KY 40212. Supplies are LIMITED. Kentucky residents add 6%.